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*There is always room for a man of force, and he makes room for many.*—EMERSON.

## Faith Healing.

IN 1910 a conference of clergymen and medical men was held to consider the question of "Faith" healing. That conference appointed a committee of twenty-one persons—eleven doctors and ten clergymen—to collect evidence and report. After about three years labor the committee has just issued its report, and it is quite what one might have expected. The outsider will find himself very little "forrader," and the points on which the committee agree are practically those on which, among people of intelligence—whether they were Freethinkers or Pietists—there was little or no dispute. The mountain has labored and brought forth a mouse. The committee proposes to continue its sittings, and, in due course, may be expected to issue another report, which we hope will be more definite than the present one.

By a great many the report has been taken—as one might have expected—as an endorsement of "Spiritual Healing." Writing in the *Evening News*, the Rev. Percy Dearmer says "It is of great importance that the committee have blessed spiritual healing." This, in a sense, may be true, but it is not borne out by the evidence offered. The committee was essentially a pious one, and it naturally couched its conclusions in pietistic terminology. Thus, in its "Conclusions," the report says that the committee:

"Would say at the outset that they can conceive no limitation to the exercise of the power of God.....in inspiring courage and hope to resist morbid conditions of the body. They fully recognise that the operation of the Divine Power can be limited only by the Divine Will, and desire to express their belief in the efficacy of prayer."

Clearly that is not the language of a committee of men collecting, examining, and sifting evidence in a scientific spirit. It is an expression of religious belief that would have been suitable to any religious meeting. We do not want to know, and do not care, whether the committee believes in the power of prayer, or whether they can conceive limits to the "Divine Power"—although one might say that the "Divine Power" was evidently not equal to the task of making the committee do its business in a sensible and scientific manner.

Although two of the questions submitted to witnesses were "What do you understand by 'Spiritual' healing?" and "Do you make any distinction between 'Spiritual' healing and 'Mental' healing?" the committee made no very serious attempt to discriminate between the two. There is a remark to the effect that "the physical results of what is called 'Faith' or 'Spiritual' healing do not prove, on investigation, to be different from those of 'Mental' healing, or healing by 'Suggestion'"; but the committee do not appear to have grasped the significance of the admission. The witnesses were not very helpful in this direction. The Rev. F. Boyd said he would "define 'Spiritual' healing as the healing of the body by spiritual means"—a perfectly circuitous answer. Rev. W. F. Cobb said that

he "considered religious faith to be nine-tenths of the battle." He also added that he was connected with several "prayer groups" in which persons were prayed for *without their knowledge*, but he could furnish no proofs of any case of cure. Of course not. Prayer is only helpful when the person prayed for is aware of it, and believes in its efficacy. And that is suggestion pure and simple.

Rev. Percy Dearmer, in his *Evening News* article, writes jubilantly that "At last we have a declaration of eminent scientific medical men which acknowledges the new light that has burst into the realms of scientific Materialism." This is pure verbiage, and Mr. Dearmer would do well to make himself acquainted with what it is that "Scientific Materialists" believe, and what is the attitude of medical men on the question. Personally, I do not know of a medical man who has ever denied the beneficial effects of a cheerful mind, or of the desire to get better. What is meant by the doctor's invariable advice to keep a patient cheerful? Or by his keeping saddening aspects of the case from the patient? No one—least of all a medical man—has ever denied that by giving any sort of a mental stimulus, a patient's recovery is helped. And this is all that the evidence collected really amounts to. Dr. Milne Bramwell, author of a work on *Hypnotism and Healing by Suggestion*, quite rightly said there was much loose talk, and more precise definitions were required. He said he could not differentiate between "spiritual healing and suggestion," and was of opinion that:—

"Mental healing might exclude the religious element.....He himself did not introduce any religious element into his treatment by suggestion. He was unaware of any power of suggestion which might be possessed by a clergyman which could not also be possessed by a medical man. He deemed the treatment by a clergyman as unnecessary."

These strike one as the most sensible comments in the whole of the report. The subject is really not a religious one at all, although religious quacks have tried to make it their own. It is a question of psychology. The problem is really one of how to set up a nervous stimulus that will react favorably on the condition of the patient. This may be done through prayer—if the patient believes in prayer; it may be done equally well by wearing the salted hair of a black cat; or it may be done by other means. But religion has really nothing to do with it, except so far as it operates as a belief. As a matter of fact, I know several medical men who rely very much on the power of suggestion in dealing with certain cases, and who are avowed Atheists. The essential thing is a stimulus in the right direction, and the possibility of this is one of the commonest of everyday experiences. Any purely functional derangement may be corrected in this way. This is a truth that Materialists have never failed to recognise; and all the talk about the irruption of new light into Materialism is sheer nonsense. The light has been there all along; the only new feature is the attempt of a number of religious cranks to create a science of "Spiritual" healing in the interests of a set of unscientific theologians.

In spite of its faith in the power of God and of prayer, the committee was "forced" to the conclusion that "Spiritual" healing is only effective in functional disorders. "No satisfactorily certified case was adduced of any organic disease, competently

diagnosed as such, which had been cured by these means alone." The alleged exceptions are so disputable that they cannot be taken into account." Mr. McComb, founder of the American "Emmanuel Movement," confessed that he had found no evidence "that a truly organic disease can be cured by mental influence alone." Quite a number of cases were offered to the committee, including cirrhosis of liver, pneumonia, blindness, hip disease, Raymond's disease, etc. On these the committee say that—

"No medical evidence was obtainable. The only confirmation available as to the nature of the disease and the result of the treatment was offered by the 'Healers' or their friends.....But in no instance was medical evidence forthcoming to confirm any cure by 'Spiritual' or mental healing of such disease. For example, in the case of cancer, Raymond's disease, and disseminated sclerosis.....it did not appear that the course of the actual disease was in any way retarded."

In the light of the above, one may judge the value of the Rev. Dearmer's statement that "the committee have blessed spiritual healing."

Mr. Dearmer says there is always "a great danger lest the faith-healer will give a wrong diagnosis, through lack of medical training," and the Rev. W. F. Cobb said "a wise person praying for a sick person would consult a doctor to know what to pray for." Both the warning and the advice strike one as curious. Correct diagnosis is everything in medical practice, because the doctor is treating a definite complaint with definite remedies. But what is the need of diagnosis to a "Spiritual" healer? All diseases are on the same level, and subject to the same remedy. It is not diagnosis but faith that is important. And why find out what the disease is before praying to God to cure it? Would not a general request to the Deity to cure a certain person be enough? Of course, the name and address might be included in the petition; but that is all that seems necessary. When we call in a doctor, we do not tell him what is the matter—we simply ask him to call at such an address and set to work. Why is not that enough? Or, if it is necessary to tell God what he has to cure, then, it seems to me, we ought to go further. We should include in our prayers the latest discoveries concerning the nature of the disease, and include the report of the doctor whose opinion has been invited. If we must instruct God, let us do it thoroughly.

The committee have added nothing whatever to what intelligent people already knew about the subject—and intelligent people never expected they would. "Spiritual" healers write and talk as though the easement or cure of functional complaints by mental action was a startlingly new discovery with profound religious implications. As a matter of fact, for generations text-books have never failed to recognise it. What of hysteria?—which, contrary to popular opinion, is about as common with men as with women. Hysterical patients are constantly professing complaints and exhibiting their symptoms—so far as they know them. And, in the main, the treatment here is mental or suggestive. Everyone knows, also, the beneficial effects of a cheerful disposition, of cultivating habits of mental serenity, just as all doctors are aware that for a patient to have faith in his medical adviser is half the battle. There is nothing new in all this; there is nothing religious. It is a question of psychology.

Naturally, as Dean Inge sarcastically said, the "priests are overjoyed at the unexpected boom in their earliest line of business." The situation has in it just enough truth to weigh with those who crave for a religious teaching that shall not be in obvious and avowed conflict with science, and enough falsehood to allow for any amount of imposture and quackery. It is the kind of situation that delights the soul of a priesthood, and they may be expected to make the most of it. Hopes and fears concerning a future life are not now very powerful, but hopes and fears concerning our own health and the health of those near to us are still active, and are likely to remain so. And where, as in the case of disease, there is so

much that is obscure, religion sees its opportunity, and will not let it pass unutilised. The committee profess to have great faith in the power of God, and I must confess to a lively, if sorrowful, faith in the credulity of man. And where the one is, the other is certain to flourish.

C. COHEN.

### Reason versus Authority.

ANOTHER notable work on apologetics has just appeared from the pen of the Rev. George Freeman, Chaplain of the prison at Shepton Mallet. It is entitled *Authority* (published by Messrs. H. R. Allenson, Ltd., at the price of 2s. 6d. net), and deals with the subject from five points of view, namely, Individualism, the Church, the Scriptures, Tradition, and Pragmatism. It is an exceedingly able book, well-written, fair to opponents, and characterised by obvious sincerity. There are several points on which we are gladly in full agreement with the author. In the last analysis authority in religion naturally signifies the voice of God. The Pope is believed to be infallible simply because he is regarded as the mouthpiece of the Deity. The Bible Leaguers point to the Bible as the only perfect rule of faith and practice merely because they declare it to be the Word of the Lord. On these points there is no room for the slightest divergence of opinion. By Tradition is meant the body of Christian doctrine, handed down from one generation of faithful believers to another, and looked upon by the Church as belonging to the inerrant deposit of faith, even though it may not be found in the Bible; and in tradition, as thus understood, many claim to recognise the unmistakable voice of God. According to Pragmatism, religious ideas are true and authoritative only when they can be "assimilated, validated, corroborated, and verified" in practice. It is to be borne in mind, however, that the late William James, the chief exponent of this system, confessed, in a letter to a friend (quoted in the *Hibbert Journal* for October, 1911, pp. 233-4), that he had "no living sense of commerce with God," and that he had grown completely out of Christianity. He did admit that deep down in his nature there was "a mystical germ," because of which he could withstand "all purely Atheistical criticism." Then, in the same letter, he added: "Dogmatic Atheism or Naturalism is a consistent position. Without any mystical germ at all in us, I believe that is where we would probably all be to-day." Thus, we see that for James, at any rate, Pragmatism was not one of the sources of Christian authority.

For Mr. Freeman, Tradition and Pragmatism possess very little value. Of the former he says that, "in some respects, it may be nothing more than gossip that has outlived its time," or "shaky history," while he charges the latter with leading to Materialism. "Pragmatism," he says (p. 164) "is virtuous, but yet it is entirely unredemptive. Perhaps some may ask, 'Then is morality antagonistic to Christianity?' There need be no questioning on this point. Morality is included in Christianity." Then, on the same page, he proceeds thus:—

"Christianity embraces morality. But morality is not equivalent to Christianity, any more than the part is equal to the whole. Our Lord's teaching upon the distinction between the two is recorded for us in the pages of the Gospel narrative. The young ruler who came to Christ was a moralist; he had kept all the commandments of the law from his youth up, and was an admirable specimen of a moral man."

We endorse the statement that "morality is not equivalent to Christianity," but maintain that Christianity is conspicuous in the Four Gospels merely by its absence. What we find there, as Professor Bacon so aptly observes, is the religion of Jesus, and not the religion about Jesus. Certainly the young ruler was found fault with, not because he was "an admirable specimen of a moral man," and nothing more, but because he was not. It was his morality,

not his piety, that was defective. What he lacked was the real sense of human brotherhood, the genuine moral touch. There is nothing higher and nobler than morality, but it must involve a deep sense of the solidarity of all mankind. To say that a man cannot be truly moral unless he is something more and better is to go in the teeth of well-established facts. Let us examine the narrative concerning the rich young ruler for a moment. The young man's question was significant: "Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Now mark the Master's answer:—

"If thou wouldest enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? And Jesus said, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I observed: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" (Matt. xix. 16-21).

Here is eternal life freely offered in return for the discharge of certain purely social duties. The name of God is not mentioned, nor any duty towards him. For being simply a good neighbor, cheerfully sharing his good things with those around him, the young man is promised treasure in heaven. If Mr. Freeman will look again at the narrative, we are convinced that he will pronounce this exegesis perfectly correct. On further examination he will also find that the Pharisees were rebuked, not for being merely "the sternest of moralists," but for not being such. Let him carefully read and consider the words attributed to the Gospel Jesus:—

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat: all things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe: but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not. Yea, they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger" (Matt. xxiii. 2-5).

Not once did the Gospel Jesus draw a line of demarcation between religion and morality. All he did was to urge his hearers to perform their duties to their neighbor in imitation of their Father in heaven.

Now, the only authority or sanction of the morality taught by Confucius and the Buddha, as well as by later moral leaders, lies in human nature itself, or in the requirements of social life. No voice of God is needed to assure us that murder, adultery, theft, false witness, disrespect to parents, and unneighborliness are anti-social evils, to be severely avoided by all members of society. When Mr. Freeman says that "the only man who can work with and for the people, to the people's lasting good, is the man who is inspired by the Christian message, the man who finds his driving force in the Christian redemption" (p. 161), he only betrays gross ignorance of the moral elevation of the leading nations of the Pagan East. Has he never read Chester Holcombe's *Real Chinese Question*, Eugene Simon's *China: Its Social, Political, and Religious Life*, Robertson Scott's *People of China*, Professor H. A. Giles' *Chinese Sketches, Religion of Ancient China*, or Fielding Hall's *Soul of a People, and A People at School*? These are only a few of scores of works written by men specially qualified by long residence among, and intimate first-hand knowledge of, the people concerned to speak with absolute authority about them, all of which give the lie direct to the assertion so confidently made by our author. Surely nothing more need be said on the subject.

We admit that Christianity, as conceived by the orthodox Church, is to be radically distinguished from morality, and treats of a world and its interests whereof the reason is totally ignorant. God, Christ, Virgin Birth, Resurrection, Redemption, Eternal Life, all these are terms utterly unintelligible to the intellect, and for which there is no authority save the word of mere men. It is a human voice that ever utters itself, and when it calls transcendental fancies spiritual realities, the only authority it can fall back upon is that of its own ignorance, and con-

sequent credulity. Our author tells us that Rationalists are guilty of "refusing to recognise a power superior to the human reason," but he ignores the fact that their refusal is based upon a complete lack of evidence. Mr. Freeman is so generous as to allow that both Roman Catholics and Nonconformists have authority for their distinctive positions, but at the same time claims that in the Church of England "alone can be found complete, comprehensive, and inerrant authority." Take the following extract:—

"The average Nonconformist thinks his Bible or his minister is invested with all the authority he needs; and so they both are for certain things. The Roman Catholic belongs to a Church which says to him, 'I am Authority'; and so it is indeed for certain things. But without ostentation or pretension, the Anglican is the only one who hears, accepts, and obeys the Voice of God as expressed in its completeness and finality" (pp. 15, 16).

Far be it from us to impugn the sincerity of the writer of that extract; but we must candidly confess that we have never before come across such an absolutely absurd claim. It goes infinitely beyond any assertion made by even Bishop Gore or his Lordship of London. What ideally perfect and miserable people Anglicans must be if they are the "only ones who hear, accept, and obey the Voice of God, as expressed in its completeness and finality." As a matter of fact, they are neither perfect nor miserable, neither better nor worse than other Christians, as all Christians are neither better nor happier than non-Christians. Perhaps, on the whole, the best and happiest people on the planet are the Burmese, who are tormented by neither God nor the Devil, but who thoroughly enjoy communion with one another as brothers and sisters in the same human family. To the dictates of reason, warmed by the heart, alone they bow, and by the rule of reason alone they live, Nature being their all in all. J. T. LLOYD.

## The Fauna and Flora of the British Isles.

PLANT and animal life in our islands presents many interesting problems to the student of science. At the first glance, many of the apparently anomalous phenomena which our flora and fauna display make them as enigmatical as the famous fly in amber. We wonder how the dickens they got there. But the patient industry of a couple of generations of careful and thoughtful inquirers has thrown a flood of light on these intensely interesting problems.

The study of Geographical Distribution is of recent and rapid development. When once it was realised that living forms were not specially created for the habitat in which they flourish, but were the outcome of a natural process of evolution, it became a matter of surpassing importance to inquire into the reasons of past and present organic distribution. Men asked themselves why tapirs were restricted to the Malayan region and South America, why camels were confined to Asiatic deserts and the Andes, and why marsupials were special to the Australian area and America. Why should the birds and mammals of North America show closer kinship with those of Europe than those of South America?

Mountains and rivers present serious obstacles to the migrations of plants and animals. Climate is also an important barrier to such wanderings; but the greatest obstacle of all is to be found in a wide expanse of water. It is perfectly true that, since the European peoples invaded America, the entire northern continent has been overrun by our native weeds, and that, wherever the European sailor has travelled, the European black and brown rats have been his companions, and have frequently settled in the new lands his ship has visited. But in the days with which we are about to deal no ships existed, and few, if any, men who were capable of crossing anything larger than a lake or stream.

One of the pioneers in the study of organic distribution was the celebrated Edward Forbes, who wrote

an essay on the living fauna of the British Isles, in which he argued that the majority of our plants and animals had spread from the Continent before our islands were severed from the land-mass of Europe by the sea. Forbes contended that the vegetation of Britain was made up of five distinctly marked floras, "four of which are restricted to definite provinces, whilst the fifth, besides exclusively claiming a great part of the area, tends to overspread and commingle with the others." These facts had not escaped the notice of at least one earlier observer, but Forbes appears to have been the first naturalist to point out that the animal groups to some extent correspond with those of the plants in each area. For example, in what he termed the Germanic group, Forbes included the polecat, the English hare, the mole, and the dormouse, which are all restricted to Southern Britain, and become rarer as we travel towards the north.

As a result of his inquiries, Forbes reached the conclusion that the flora and fauna of our islands established themselves at different periods, and that their entrance was from a continuous land surface, prior to, during, and after the Glacial Epoch. He also espoused the view that the Germanic organisms are of post-Glacial date, but that the organisms of Scandinavian origin arrived during Glacial times; whereas the groups he termed Kentish and Devon were with us before the Ice King began his gloomy reign. And he was likewise of opinion that, as the Miocene Period neared its close, the Lusitanian group wandered to the south-west of Ireland from Northern Spain, along a bridge of land which at that time connected the two countries.

For several years the matter remained where Forbes had left it, but his example ultimately stimulated various other observers along the same fruitful path. To Dr. Buchanan White, Dr. A. R. Wallace, Professor James Geikie, to mention three only out of a crowd of brilliant investigators, we are indebted for the wealth of knowledge now possessed by science.

More recently the problems under review have been very ably considered by Dr. R. F. Scharff, in his fascinating work on *European Animals*, and in this volume we possess the findings of one of Forbes' most faithful and discriminating disciples. As Scharff points out, in Lough Neagh, the largest sheet of fresh water in these isles, there dwells a fish called the pollan, which is also to be found in other Irish lakes and in the upper reaches of the River Shannon. Now, in the English Lake District two closely allied fish are met with, the vendace and gwyniad.

"Both species also inhabit the south-west of Scotland, while the gwyniad has also been taken in a small mountain lake in Wales. All the British lakes in which these fish of the genus *Coregonus* occur communicate with the Irish Sea, and it is probable that the Irish lakes alluded to did so in former times."

Under the present distribution of land and water, the habitat of these fishes fails to find any reasonable explanation. But the land surface of North-Western Europe has only to be raised a few hundred feet to cause the larger part of the Irish Sea to rise above sea level, leaving a deep channel in its centre into which the leading rivers of North-Western England and Eastern Ireland would empty themselves, thus creating a great lake. Such conditions would furnish all that is necessary to explain the present distribution of the pollan and its kinsmen. There is nothing unreasonable in the theory that if the common ancestor of the three species resided in this prehistoric lake, and that as the sea invaded the land the fish would naturally wander along the rivers and find a home in their adjoining lakes, and as time rolled on would become transformed into the three nearly related species as we now know them.

It has long been a matter for remark that, near as Ireland is to Britain, many of our most characteristic organisms are unknown in Erin. The mole, whose mounds are so familiar in English pastures, is not found in Ireland. Twenty-one British species of animals are there unrepresented. Ireland has no voles,

no blind worms, no snakes, and stranger still, various of our fishes and songsters are absent. Many of our commonest insects and molluscs are likewise not present there. "A naturalist who visits Ireland for the first time," writes Dr. Scharff,

"and extends his travels beyond the east coast into the south-western or western parts, cannot help being astonished at the assemblage there of a set of plants some of which are cultivated in England as garden species, and which there grow wild. And if he investigates the lower animals, he will meet with many strange forms which he never expected to find across the Irish Channel."

Patriotic Irishmen are justified in denying the oft-repeated assertion that the fauna and flora of Erin form but a feeble copy of the wealth of life in the larger island of Britain proper. Although numerous English species are not indigenous to Ireland, that country contains numerous northern and southern organisms which our own land cannot claim. The evergreen strawberry, which abounds in southern Europe, finds its only wild resting-place in Cork and Kerry throughout the entire British Islands. London pride (*Saxifraga umbrosa*) flourishes in a state of untended nature in Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula alone. There are two kinds of heather—the Mediterranean heath and St. Dabeoc's heath—which grow luxuriantly in Connemara, and these must be elsewhere sought for in Spain and Southern France.

In addition to these, other Irish plants have a similar geographical range, and there are animals whose distribution is of a like character. Among the lichens of Cork and Kerry lives a spotted slug nowhere else to be found in Britain, but it reappears in Spain and Portugal in company with other related species. A millipede occurs in Ireland which is unknown with us, but it dwells in Southern Europe and in the Azores. A County Waterford woodlouse has no relatives nearer than those of Southern Europe, and the same seems to be true of a large spider of the South of Ireland. A large beetle common on the east coast of Erin, but so far undiscovered in Britain, is found in the Auvergne and also in the Pyrenees. Again, a dragon-fly not known in England and Scotland is constantly encountered in Southern France and throughout the Iberian Peninsula.

These are, however, but a few of many instances of a similar character which all point to a period when Ireland and Western Europe were joined together. All these members of the Lusitanian group found in Ireland appear to be of Southern origin, and date from a time when the climate was more genial than at present. As we have seen, their distribution is discontinuous; the land bridge which enabled them to reach Ireland has long since disappeared beneath the waves. And it is also to be observed that where these ancient organisms survive in Ireland, they are favored by a very open climate and a comparative freedom from the keener struggle for existence.

There is another series of organisms which presents distinct evidences of discontinuous distribution, but, unlike those previously dealt with, these have reached Ireland from more boreal lands. These northern migrants appear to have settled in Ireland at two separate periods. Certain sponges, elsewhere unknown save on the eastern shores of North America, dwell in some of the coast lakes of Western Ireland. These, and other survivals from the past are the lingering representatives of the early period when Ireland formed part of a continent which stretched over the Northern Atlantic and linked up boreal Europe with Northern America. The distribution of the European fresh-water pearl mussel strengthens the evidence. This mussel is absent from Eastern Europe and Western Asia, but it is widely dispersed through Western Europe from Scandinavia to Spain. Its European habitat is very striking in the light of its circumscribed area, and it survives as a relic from a long past. Several species of the New World flora are in Ireland indigenous. Two of these, as Dr. Scharff em-

phases, are of outstanding interest, as they confirm the theory of the origin of the fresh-water organisms just mentioned. One of these plants is a water weed—the slender naiad—which lives in three Irish lakes near the west coast. It also grows in Perthshire and on the Scottish Isle of Skye. The other is the pipe wort, a bog-loving plant, and this like most of the other species mentioned is more or less restricted to the West coast of Ireland. It is, however, met with in the Isles of Coll and Skye. Again, a pretty orchid, the “Irish lady’s tresses” has been plucked on the Western coast as well as in the Ulster counties of Londonderry and Armagh.

The great auk, a recently extinct bird, may be added to the foregoing examples. Although one might suppose that the distribution of bird-life has little bearing on the subject under discussion, Wallace, a great authority on the question, was of opinion that the distribution of mammals (which is of supreme importance in arranging zoogeographical areas) corresponds to that of birds to a quite startling extent. Now the powers of flight possessed by the auk family are very meagre, and its area is limited. The great auk was living in Ireland and Scotland less than a century ago. Its remains have been unearthed in the refuse heaps of our barbarian ancestors in Durham, Ireland, Scotland, and Denmark, and doubtless it formed part of their food. Great flocks of these birds congregated in Iceland, Greenland, in Maine, and Massachusetts, and on Funk Island near the Newfoundland coast, thus forming a further link between the fauna of North America and north-western Europe. Another series of organisms, seemingly of Arctic origin, and of later date than the foregoing American forms remains for notice. The Irish hare (*Lepus timidus*) is merely a variety of the Arctic hare and is the only species found in Ireland. The English hare is known in Scotland mainly in the lowlands, while the Arctic hare prefers the hilly districts. The distribution of this northern rodent, which is very extensive, ranging as it does through the Caucasus, the Pyrenees, the Alps, and even in the mountains of Japan, is instructive. From the fact that its fossils are unknown beyond the southern boundaries of its present habitat, it is to be inferred that its primeval home was within the Arctic area. It appears highly probable that during the Glacial Period the Arctic hare wandered to more genial southern climes, and that as the ice retreated again to the north the animal was left in its present upland solitudes. The English hare, on the other hand, came from the south, and its absence from Ireland is explained by the circumstance that the green island was severed from the European continent before its advent in Britain. Herein seems to be the solution of the problem set up by the presence of the Arctic hare in Ireland, both in mountain and plain. It was not incommoded by the appearance of the southern rodent, and was consequently left in sole possession of the feeding grounds upon which the newcomer, had it ever arrived, would have been bound to encroach.

There are various plants and insects of contemporary Ireland which are either restricted to that country or are elsewhere very rare in our wave-girt isles. And the secrets yielded by the Irish caves also support the views already advanced. The tools and implements of prehistoric savages are amongst these relics. But what is more germane to the present argument is the evidence they afford that thousands of years ago, the fauna of Ireland was composed of animals of a character which indicates their separate northern and southern origin. The remains of the reindeer, arctic fox, and lemming are intermingled with those of the African wild cat, hyæna, brown bear, wild boar, and Irish elk. Surviving organisms, such as the red deer, badger, common fox, and others have also been discovered among the remains of animals long since extinct in Ireland.

To sum up this first part of the case. There are now living in Ireland numerous very ancient forms

of plants and animals that are almost entirely confined to the west and south-west of the island. These came into the country along a land bridge from south-western Europe. At about the same period there occurred a migration of organisms from the north. Ireland was subsequently isolated from the near mainland masses, and therein lies the solution of the problems presented by a flora and fauna which were previously so puzzling to the student of geographical distribution.

T. F. PALMER.

(To be concluded.)

## Is Religious Belief Universal?—II.

(Continued from p. 381.)

“Whether he [primitive man] were the ferocious wild beast described by some, or a puny, feeble, naked being, chipping his first weapons among the rolled flints of a river-bed, keeping up with difficulty his famished life from day to day, and finding a precarious shelter from incessant dangers in the hollows of the rocks, it is in any case certain that he made originally but a poor figure on the surface of the globe. How has he progressed from primitive cannibalism to his present moral and social culture? from the bestial sexual act to chivalrous love? from coarse fetishism to religious metaphysics or mysticism? from the rude drawings of the Neolithic age to the refinements of the æsthetic sentiment? from a narrow and limited curiosity to a disinterested enthusiasm for science?.....The principal, essential, fundamental cause is intellectual development.”—RIBOT, *The Psychology of the Emotions*, p. 189.

“Religion and religious ideas are among the most remarkable products of the human spirit. With all their reason-defying assertions and astounding incongruities, they seem at first sight inexplicable. Time out of mind, therefore, men have found it difficult to conceive them as having arisen otherwise than through a supernatural or divine revelation, which, it would follow, must originally have been imparted to all men alike. But gradually, as people became acquainted with the more or less rudimentary religions of the various races, which often differ greatly on the most essential matters, they began to doubt the accuracy of this assumption, and came more and more to consider whether religious ideas must not be reckoned as a natural product of the human mind itself, under the influence of its surroundings.”—FRITJOF NANSEN, *Esquimo Life* (1894), p. 209.

PROFESSOR TYLOR, who, like Waitz, includes a belief in witchcraft, magic, ghosts, fear of the dead, etc., under the name of religion, also reproves several travellers for saying that certain tribes had no religion when all the while they held these beliefs, the fact being that the travellers in question did not recognise these beliefs as religion, but superstition. Professor Tylor observes:—

“Even with much time and care and knowledge of language, it is not always easy to elicit from savages the details of their theology. They try to hide from the prying and contemptuous foreigner their worship of gods who seem to shrink, like their worshippers, before the white man and his mightier Deity.”\*

And he cites the case of Sproat, who lived among the Ahts for two years before discovering their religious ideas; of Moffat, who declared that the Bechuanas had no belief in man’s immortality, and yet in the previous sentence had remarked that their word for the shades of the dead is “liriti.” But it by no means follows that because a tribe believe in shades or spirits of the dead that they also believe in “man’s immortality.” Many of them, as we have seen, believe that the spirit does not survive the destruction of the body. Even the civilised Egyptians held this belief; hence their practice of embalming and burying in pyramids. Then, of Dr. Mouat’s assertion that the Andaman Islanders had “not the rudest elements of a religious faith,” Tylor remarks that the natives “did not even display to the foreigners the rude music which they actually possessed”; but he does not produce any evidence to rebut Dr. Mouat’s statement. He is especially severe with Sir Samuel Baker for stating that the northern tribes of the White Nile were “without a belief in a Supreme Being, neither have they any form of worship or

\* *Primitive Culture*, vol. i., p. 424.

idolatry; nor is the darkness of their minds enlightened by even a ray of superstition"; and remarks that the details of the religion of the White Nile tribes had been recorded "years before Sir S. Baker's rash denial that they had any religion at all" (vol. i., p. 424).

Sir Samuel Baker was mistaken, but Professor Tylor does not tell us how he came to make the mistake; but we can find the cause for ourselves in Sir Samuel Baker's book on *The Albert N'Yanza* (1867; vol. i., p. 235), where Sir Samuel retails a conversation he had with an African chief named Comoro, to whom he attempted to prove the existence and immortality of the soul. After several unsuccessful analogies, Sir Samuel tried the effect of St. Paul's argument. Taking a grain of corn, and making a hole in the ground, Sir Samuel placed the grain within it:—

"That," I said, "represents you when you die." Covering it with earth, I continued, "That grain will decay, but from it will rise again the plant that will produce a reappearance of the original form." "Exactly so," replied Comoro, "that I understand. But the original grain does not rise again; it rots like the dead man, and is ended; the fruit produced is not the same grain that we buried, but the production of that grain: so it is with man—I die and decay, and am ended, but my children grow up like the fruit of the grain. Some men have no children, and some grains perish without fruit; then all is ended." I was obliged to change the subject of conversation. In this wild savage there was not even a superstition upon which to found a religious feeling; there was a belief in matter; and to his understanding everything was material. It was extraordinary to find so much clearness of perception combined with such complete obtuseness to anything ideal."

Sir Samuel Baker evidently made the error of attributing to the natives of the country as a whole the independent and advanced views of this exceptional chief.

Professor Tylor has pointed out the danger of a too hasty conclusion as to the lack of religious ideas among savage tribes. On the other hand, there is the danger, equally great, of attributing religious ideas to these people when they do not exist.

Bonwick says:—

"All persons who have lived among barbarians are aware of their readiness to acquiesce in a statement, from inability to comprehend the remark; from idleness arresting thought, or from a disposition to be agreeable, especially if there be any chance of 'white money.' Hence, as the Rev. John West said of the Tasmanians, 'Persons of sanguine minds are apt to attribute to them religious ideas, which they never possessed in their original state.'

"I know a gentleman who, by dint of questioning, astonished himself and his friends by ascertaining that the Blacks were well acquainted with the doctrines of the Trinity, justification, sanctification, and the millennium! The good-natured fellow whom he had interrogated had nodded his head with a very grave face to every inquiry of the worthy Christian, and ended with a solemn protestation of 'Me b'lieve every ting.' The ardent Millenarian, though delighted with the native recognition of his favorite dogma, was rather scandalised when the believer asked him for some grog."\*

Wake quotes Thunberg to the same effect, who says quaintly:—

"It is, however, not always easy to get the truth out of the Hottentots. One must never attack them with questions to the point, when one wishes to know the truth of anything; but it must be fished out of them by degrees.' The same complaint is made by travellers with reference to the Australians, who are so polite that they never contradict, and always agree with a question."†

The Rev. Duff Macdonald, the African missionary, observes:—

"As we tried to reduce native beliefs to an intelligible form, we were often discouraged by finding that one man would make a statement that his nearest neighbor would contradict. But as years passed on, I discovered that this accident was not so much the fault

of the African, or of his belief, as of the European that questioned him.

"One cause of error is that we mix up what the African tells us with our own ideas, which are European. As a consequence of this, we put questions to him that he cannot understand. Many of our questions strike the African exactly as a question like the following would strike a European, 'If seventy miles of the sea were burned, who would be the losers, the Insurance Companies? or the Harbor Commissioners? or —?' If an African put this question to a European, the European would laugh at him; but if the European put it to an African, the latter would be more polite, and would think the European was very ingenious in finding out a supposition that would never have occurred to himself; and although the African knows that the difficulty could never arise in his own country, yet he feels bound to believe that the poor European is perplexed by it, and states what he thinks would happen in Africa on such an extraordinary occurrence: thus he gives an answer, which the ingenious European carefully lays past."\*

The same writer also observes:—

"Bishop Steere says—'In Africa they never say no, they always say yes, certainly; but possibly you are no nearer your object.' One must be careful never to suggest an answer to a native; if the native and his questioner are strangers to each other, the former will make it a point of etiquette to find out what answer the stranger would like, and may by-and-by take occasion to compliment him on his cleverness and the accuracy of his knowledge! Statements made in answer to direct questions are not to be relied on unless the questioner has had years of experience in conversation with natives, and knows the subject he converses about" (p. 5).

Then, again, these primitive people have not the clear and definite ideas which are the result of education and science among Europeans. As Herbert Spencer remarks:—

"Just as the child, ignorant of the course of things, gives credence to an impossible fiction as readily as to a familiar fact; so the savage, similarly without classified and systematised knowledge, feels no incongruity between any absurd falsehood propounded to him and some general truth which we class as established: there being for him no established truth. Hence his credulity."†

Nansen says of the faith of the Greenland Eskimos:—

"It is so primitive that I doubt whether it deserves the name of a religion. There are many legends and much superstition, but it all lacks clear and definite form; conceptions of the supernatural vary from individual to individual, and they produce, as a whole, the impression of a religion in process of formation, a mass of incoherent and fantastic notions which have not yet crystallised into a definite view of the world."‡

Thus, it will be seen that it is by no means a simple matter to ascertain the beliefs of savages; and only especially gifted men, scientifically trained, who have lived with, and gained the confidence of, these primitive folk, and understand their language, can be relied upon to describe what they believe and disbelieve.

(To be concluded.)

W. MANN.

Men are like sheep. They do things and think things, not because the things are useful and true, but because they have been done and thought by those who have gone before. They imitate their ancestors. They are chained to tradition. Look at the sheep-like procession of the generations of men. Each generation jumps over the same hurdles that preceding generations have jumped over, although in most cases the usefulness of the activities, if they ever had any in the first place, has long ago passed away. We eat like our ancestors, reverence the same creeds, and cling to the same customs, institutions, and idiocies. Why should we have kings, and queens, and poets laureate, and wars, and etiquette, and beliefs in creation, and quail-on-toast, and millionaires, and the study of Latin and Greek, and the dread of "13," and "styles," and gods, and criers calling from court windows "Oyez, Oyez, Oyez?" It is the call of the past—the oldest and most hopeless of human slaveries.—J. H. Moore, "Ethics and Education."

\* Rev. Duff Macdonald, *Africana, or the Heart of Heathen Africa*, vol. ii., pp. 2-4.

† Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, vol. i., p. 85.

‡ Nansen, *Eskimo Life*, p. 224.

\* Bonwick, *Daily Life of the Tasmanians*, p. 173.

† Wake, *Chapters on Man* (1868), p. 194.

## Acid Drops.

"Mrs. Annie Besant: an Appreciation. By L. Haden Guest," is the heading of an article in *T. P.'s Weekly*. It is a mass of eulogy without an atom of discrimination. Nobody could gain from it the least idea of Mrs. Besant's mental and moral idiosyncracies, except that she is very energetic and a big "draw" as a public speaker. But energy is a physical quality, and really has a great deal to do with drawing a big audience from a public platform. Nobody disputes Mrs. Besant's "eloquence" in the common sense of the word. "Eloquence" belongs to every fluent speaker who is able to voice the ideas, whatever they are, of a considerable body of people. But what a vulgar test of greatness is the ability to fill Queen's Hall. According to that test Billy Sunday, the American pugilist-turned-evangelist, is a far greater thinker and apostle than even Mrs. Besant.

This article on Mrs. Besant says that she was wrong, and admits it, with regard to the publication of the Knowlton pamphlet, and nearly everything else she did in the old Bradlaugh days—and even with regard to what she did in her early Socialist days. Quite so. And she was just as cocksure she was right then as she is now—and just as modest now as she was then.

Mrs. Besant understands advertising—or those who "run" her do. Every time she lectures the Oriental get-up in which she indulges is worth half her audience.

The long and short of the eulogy is this: "Mrs. Besant is a Prophetess of the Order of the Star in the East which proclaims the near coming of the World Teacher, He whom the western world calls Christ." What a mouthful of moonshine!

English parsons are always pretending that Freethought is dead. Presumably the Pope knows his business as well as any simple-minded Anglican curate. At a recent consistory, His Holiness lamented the irreligion of the day and the persistent spread of Modernist ideas within the Church.

In October, 1,400 churches in the United States are to be fitted with a cinematograph apparatus, in order to give a weekly performance. The project has the "unofficial" sanction of the Presbyterian Church. We do not doubt that if they only have the parson preaching on the screen, it will, in many cases, be preferable to hearing him.

One of life's little ironies occurred at an alfresco concert at a seaside place near London. The vocalist was warbling pianissimo, and the program boy shouting fortissimo. To the audience, therefore, the words of the singer sounded: "Good night, love, good night! God keep thee in his—Program!"

"A breach of promise case is like prehistoric times, starting with terrific heat and ending in glacial coldness," said the counsel in a law case a few days since. The same thing is true of religious revivals and special missions.

Fashionable women now wear their hair drawn back from their foreheads, with side-whisker curls. Maybe the famous sausage-curls, as worn by the Ever-Blessed Wielder of the Jack Plane, will become popular before long.

The Suffragette who hacked the £2,000 picture by Romney in the Birmingham Art Gallery told the police that she acted under "divine guidance." That was the excuse of the Old Testament lady who hammered a tennypenny nail through Sisera's head.

"The London Miracle Girl," Miss Dorothy Kerim, would be a "godsend" to a class of medical students. She is almost an encyclopædia of diseases in herself, and the student who walked round her for a week or two, instead of "walking" the hospitals, would be ready for his certificate. The other day, according to the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, this young lady told a Sanderland audience that about five years ago, when dying, she was restored to health by a vision. Since then she has had a fractured skull, appendicitis, and gastric ulcer—all cured by faith. Still bent on piling up a record, she enjoyed a further experience last summer. She was knocked senseless, her skull fractured, and lay "between life and death." Then the usual thing happened. "The Lord appeared" to her, the fever left her suddenly, her

temperature dropped from 105 to 98, and she "was instantly and suddenly well." She got up at once and walked two miles. Another time, when seriously ill, she had a vision of the Lord, and she at once rose and ate a big meal of cold beef, pickled walnuts, and cold apple tart—"an enormous meal such as you would give a navvy." Next morning she had increased in weight, and could run upstairs. Bravo Miss Kerim! And we don't suppose she is done yet. There are still a number of diseases Miss Kerim hasn't had. But she'll get them sooner or later.

Theosophists are not the only ones that are to have a £100,000 building devoted to an Eastern religion. Mohammedans are forming plans for a London mosque of equal value. A Moslem campaign for the conversion of England was inaugurated at the Albert Hall the other day, and a young Englishwoman was publicly converted to Islam. Last year Lord Headley joined them, and the Mohammedan missionaries are looking forward to many converts. We shouldn't be surprised if they get them.

The *Christian World* asks whether those who are resorting to prayer as a political power "realise the harm they are doing to belief in prayer as a spiritual force?" We confess that we do not see why prayer, if of use at all, should not be used in politics as well as elsewhere. Prayers are offered in the House of Commons, and there doesn't seem any valid objection, from the religious side, against people praying to God for either positive or negative political ends. We expect the *Christian World* realises that this kind of prayer is likely to give the game away. Usually, when people pray, it is left an open question whether they get an answer or not. But if people pray for a political end, we can all see within a reasonable time whether the prayer is answered or not. And that is clearly dangerous. It is bringing religious faith to the test of fact—always an unwise procedure.

In a recent issue of the expansive but inexpensive *Daily Mail* a reference was made in a leading article to "Browning's" "Abou-Ben-Adhem." Browning never wrote it, but Leigh Hunt did; and, as the poem is in almost all anthologies and school reading-books, we may assume that the writer, the printer, proof-reader, and editor are not "literary gents."

So huge is the glut of cherries at Covent Garden that it has been found necessary to have auction sales every day to dispose of the stock, and fruit-growers are destroying the fruit rather than further cheapen the market. Evidently the Lord thinks more of "apples" than he does of cherries.

Defenders of the exploded Design Argument will kindly note that flies, which are frequent carriers of disease, have become an absolute pest in many districts. A "Kill that Fly" agitation has been started, in order to do what Providence has neglected.

Three men were killed by lightning during the violent thunderstorms of last week. As they were not Freethinkers, it is not considered a judgment of "God."

"What are the wild waves saying?" asked little Paul Dombey. At this season of the year, with so many "blood and fire" evangelists on the sands of seaside resorts, the word is Hades—in the vernacular.

Amongst the mottoes displayed at the Salvation Army Congress was "Live for Others." Very likely the Boothites thought this was taken from the Bible. It was really taken from Auguste Comte:—"Vivre pour Autrui."

General Booth did not tell the Congress much about "Blood and Fire," but he told them that the Army holds firmly by its belief in "the old and simple things" of Christianity—including "a real Bible that tells the truth," and "a real Devil." But what about "a real Deity"? It is not so difficult to find the Devil in this world as to find God.

Mr. Asquith's message to the Salvation Army Congress was highly applauded. He had a right to send his own "warm congratulations," but how about those of "His Majesty's Government"? What right had Mr. Asquith to use the name of the Government in delivering religious messages to individual religious denominations? The State in England is secular—or should be. Not even the price of a piece of paper should be spent by the Prime Minister on letters to religious denominations.

One of the exhibits at the Salvation Army Congress was "a platform of six tiny girls, children of a criminal tribe in India. Their parents were Thugs, and the children had been rescued from their evil surroundings, and had come to the great West to bear testimony, in their own childish way, to the wonderful work of the Salvation Army." This is quoted from the *Daily Chronicle* of Saturday, June 13. And it is of a piece with Salvation Army reports of every description. Mr. Mason's book abounds with instances of their positive hatred of the truth. They appear to avoid it on principle.

Tiny girls! The children of Thugs! And who are (or were) the Thugs? We take the following answer from the great *Standard Dictionary* :—

"Thug.—One of an organisation of religious assassins in India, bound by vows to secret murder in the service of Devi (Kali, Durga), the Hindu goddess of destruction: a phansigar or strangler. They often disguised themselves as pilgrims or travellers, and killed by strangling. They arose in the 13th century, and were finally exterminated by Lord Bentinck in 1828-35, when 1,562 of them were hanged, transported, or imprisoned for life."

The Thugs were not a race; they were a voluntarily associated body, bound together by religious vows. They were deliberately broken up by the Government of India some eighty years ago. Yet six little girl "Thugs" are produced by General Booth after all that lapse of time. "Their parents were Thugs!" No wonder General Booth is fond of the Bible.

The "Thugs" were very wicked people, of course. But there was no need to go all the way to India to find them. All the Christians who murdered their fellow men on religious grounds, and robbed them of their property to boot, in order to make their destruction complete, by delivering over their wives and families to destitution—were Thugs. Torquemada was a Thug. Alva was a Thug. Laud was a Thug. There are many Christians now who would kill Freethinkers if they could. They are all Thugs.

Pastor A. S. O. Birch, of Sheffield, writes to the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* that he is greatly perplexed over the loss of 140 Salvationists in the *Empress of Ireland*. It does not seem that Pastor Birch is at all troubled about the drowning of the other people, but he cannot understand what the Lord was about to drown so many of his uniformed servants. This has "greatly perplexed and staggered" Mr. Birch, and he would like to know whether before sailing there was any meeting of members of the Army "definitely committing them to the care of God." Of course, if there was not, the Lord may, we presume, be held guiltless. But if such a meeting was held, then it looks as though Pastor Birch is ready to rise up in the streets of Sheffield and charge God with gross carelessness. He concludes that many people are anxious to discover what "such a staggering blow really means." "Has the Almighty forgotten his people, or is there a flaw somewhere?" We fancy the proper person for Pastor Birch to consult would be a specialist in brain disorders.

It seems that wrecking ships is a favorite plan of God's when he is displeased with anything that is done on earth. Rev. J. K. Jacques, of Carlton-on-Trent, writes to the *Guardian* pointing out that the *Delhi* sank just after Delhi was made the capital of India, and the *Empress of Ireland* the same week that the Home Rule Bill was passed. We wonder if there are any passenger ships called the *Prince of Wales*? If so, we advise everybody to give them the go-by. For the Lord is certain to mark his opinion of the Welsh Disestablishment Bill in the same way. The best plan would be to drop giving ships names, and stick to numbers. Then the Lord would have to find some other manner of expressing his displeasure. Seriously, it seems a sheer impertinence for men like Mr. Jacques to call themselves civilised.

How easily in print defenders of the Faith ward off the attacks of naughty infidels. In Mr. A. G. Gardiner's book, *Prophets, Priests, and Kings*, he tells us that the Bishop of London "has gone out into Victoria Park to meet the Atheists face to face, answer their pet posers with ready wit, and win their hearts by his genial comradeship." Mr. Gardiner is an idealist.

A new work on the Gods of India is announced as being illustrated from "photographs specially taken." By kind permission of the originals, we assume.

Three hundred and seventy invalid pilgrims, accompanied by ten nurses, left Victoria Station, London, in two special

trains for Lourdes. Yet English people smile at the idea of Mohammedan pilgrims journeying to Mecca.

A small Russian bear belonging to the 11th Hussars Regiment has collected over £50 for charity. The animal will help to wipe out the bad reputation earned by the bears who ate the children in the Old Testament.

"To experiment is to ask God a question," says Mr. J. Stephen. When the experiment is a failure, presumably the result is a divine snubbing.

Pope Taylor has banned three books of Philosopher Bergson's—*Matter and Memory*, *Creative Evolution*, and the *Immediate Effect of Consciousness*. Philosopher Bergson may now expect a larger sale. We wonder that "G. B. S." hasn't tried for this advertisement. Perhaps it will be a case of "My turn next!"

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued a joint manifesto on the question of Disestablishment in Wales, protesting against the measure being put into force. In the course of the manifesto they say that they have no desire to have the Church of England placed in an unfair position, and in any reconstructed Second Chamber they would have no objection to the presence of other representatives of the religious life of the nation. We daresay not; although we don't feel convinced that they are anxious for the presence of Nonconformists. And we are quite willing to believe that this would quite suit many of the Nonconformist leaders. As we have often pointed out, what they desire is not the disestablishment of religion, but the equal establishment of all religions. That is the utmost that they mean by religious equality—all Christian sects receiving equal support and patronage from the State, and all non-Christians forced to put up with it and pay the piper.

It is the sheer impudence of this bargaining that strikes us most forcibly. Both Nonconformists and Episcopalians write and speak as though they alone are to be considered. No one else matters. If they agree, all must be content. What we should like to know is, What rational justification is there for religious leaders of any kind having a place in a legislative chamber? Why should the religious life of the nation be represented in the House of Lords more than any other aspect of national existence? Art, literature, science, commerce are all unrepresented, as such, in the House of Lords; why should religion be the sole exception? The truth is that the two Archbishops—with many other religious leaders—are living away back in the Middle Ages. They belong, mentally, to a time when the medicine-man was looked upon as possessing a power that ordinary men lacked. But we no longer believe this to be the case. The priest is only a man, of no greater value to the community than any other, and often, because he is a priest, of less value. No one to-day believes that a parson is better informed than other people, or possesses any more genuine authority. It is really time that these medicine-men were made to realise that we are living in the twentieth century not in the tenth.

What is British Nonconformity coming to? With imported Yankee preachers as numerous as soda-fountains; the formation of a feminist church in the North of England; and clerics of the Government religion coquetting with Unitarians, it looks as if the Free Churches were in the melting-pot.

Some humanitarians are up in arms concerning the treatment of lobsters by plunging them into boiling water. Millions of Christians, for many centuries, regarded the idea of the eternal "frying" of the bulk of the human race with touching equanimity. The Roman Catholic Church and some of the "fancy religions" still teach the same inhuman dogmas.

A particularly interesting exhibit at the Leipzig Exhibition is a number of copies of translations of Shakespeare's plays into the various dialects of the Indian Empire. Unlike the subsidised versions of the Bible, Shakespeare's works make their way by the sheer force of his splendid genius.

Two items from the *Times* Summary of June 15: "The Cambridge May Races ended on Saturday, Jesus retaining the head of the river." "A dog at Mannheim named 'Rolf' is credited with answering theological questions." Evidently religion has gone to the dogs at last.



### To Correspondents.

**PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1914.**—Previously acknowledged, £166 10s. 6d. Received since:—S. Burns, £1; Mr. and Mrs. King, 10s.; C. Costa, 10s.; Dr. F. de Lisle (New Zealand), £2 2s.

**F. W. HALL.**—We endorse what you say; but, after all, isn't the reverend gentleman quite right according to orthodox Christianity? If the very hairs of our head are numbered, and the fall of every sparrow is noted, it is a logical inference that every ocean liner is carefully watched.

**B. N. KOTAKE.**—We cannot deal with the historicity of Jesus Christ in a sentence or a paragraph, or even an ordinary article.

**A. CAIFER.**—Sorry we do not know of any institution such as you require. There are one or two schools managed on secular principles, but that is all.

**J. CALLAGHAN.**—Sorry your newsagent has delayed getting your paper. The fault is none of ours, and while we regret the annoyance, we hope you will press until you get what you require.

**J. D. REID.**—Thanks for good wishes.

**R. KENNEDY.**—We cannot afford an Index to the *Freethinker*.

**W. J. RAMSEY.**—We have declined all outside advertisements for a good while. You are welcome to the editorial paragraph.

**E. BUTLER.**—We are almost tired of answering questions concerning the highly imaginative statements of Musgrave Reads. His chief asset is evidently that of the "converted infidel." His being "a great friend of the late Charles Bradlaugh" is too ridiculous for comment.

**H. SHAW.**—See "Sugar Plums."

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

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

Lecturer 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.

Mr. Cohen's article on "Christianity and Politics" is reprinted from our issue of May 10 in *Town Topics*, Edmonton, Alberta. A friend of the movement on the spot paid for its insertion at full advertising rates as a means of introducing a little Freethought among the people. This is a very good, although rather expensive, form of propaganda, and we hope the results will justify the effort. The article is accompanied by full acknowledgment of the source from which it is taken, and an advertisement of the *Freethinker* rates of subscription.

We are reminded by the above that letters continue to reach us concerning the difficulties subscribers have in procuring their copies of the *Freethinker*. Newsagents report it as out of print, or even dead; and, in the case of those unacquainted with the paper, the lie probably does its work. Of course, the *Freethinker* is not dead; it is not even ailing. Its health—and health with a paper, as with a human being, is largely a matter of circulation—is as lusty as ever. Seriously, however, we would ask our readers to be on their guard, and to do what they can to check these attempts to prevent the *Freethinker* reaching the public. There is no difficulty whatever in procuring the paper. It is offered to the trade on the most advantageous terms, and Freethinkers should insist on their newsagents getting the copies required. If they can induce them to display the paper, so much the better. Wherever this is done, the sale increases. We are not fond of boycotting, but the newsagent who declines to procure the *Freethinker* when requested should not be permitted to supply other papers. This would soon bring the more bigoted to their senses.

We regret to learn that Father Caverner still continues his boorish behavior at Edmonton. This gentleman's policy is to hang round the platform, interjecting more or less

impolite remarks during the whole of the meeting, and then moving off to the Christian Evidence platform to offer what he is pleased to call a "reply." Last Sunday Miss Kough was subjected to this treatment during the whole of her address. We hope that Freethinkers with an hour to spare will do what they can to favor Edmonton with a visit.

The Bradlaugh Fellowship has arranged for its (seventh) annual visit to the grave of Charles Bradlaugh on Sunday, July 5. The train leaves Waterloo (No. 5 Platform) at 11.15. The Brookwood Club will be open for the accommodation of the party, and dinner and tea at moderate prices will be provided at Marshall's Dining Rooms, close to the Station.

Miss Durham is a lady who went out to the near East during the Balkan War, and did much excellent work among the wounded. She has just issued a volume detailing her experiences of Montenegro and the Montenegrins, and endorses all that has been said by adverse critics of the "Crusaders." She describes the behavior of both officers and privates in the Montenegrin Army as a compound of "booze and boast," who subjected the conquered to horrible atrocities. She gives an account of hospitals in which Turks had their noses cut off by their captors, and sums up as follows:—

"There are people, I believe, who still imagine that war brings forth fine qualities. To me it had appeared only as a sort of X-ray, which showed up pitilessly all that is most base, most foul, and most bestial in human nature.....In the sacred names of Liberty, Civilisation, and Christianity, the Montenegrin people, blood-drunk, lust-drunk, loot-drunk, had reverted to primitive savagery—and in so doing had lost the very small idea of discipline they had acquired. Judging by their talk, they proposed to live in future as a marauding army. Never fond of work, they declared that they had conquered enough people to do the work for them, and looked forward to a life of something like slave-driving."

Most wars are brutalising, but this Christian Crusade bids fair to establish a record in savagery.

Those of our readers who happen to be Esperantists may be interested to learn that the Esperantist Freethought Society will be holding meetings in connection with the Esperanto Congress to be held in Paris in the August of this year. The Society has published—in Esperanto, of course—works by the Polish Freethinker, Niemojewski, and the Plea for Ferrer delivered before the military tribunal. The name and address of the secretary of the Society is R. Deshays, Sens, France.

### Notes and Views.

By a report in the *Daily Chronicle* I see that Mrs. Besant has had "a splendid reception at Brighton," where she lectured "before a crowded audience" on "Reincarnation and Social Problems." I learn that the lady "made an impressive figure," and I can well believe it. She was dressed in oriental fashion in white silk robes, and the living portrait was framed in "choice pink and white flowers." Sooner or later the people who deal in mystery find out the value of tickling the bump of wonder through the eyesight. There was nothing very "impressive" about Mrs. Besant's figure on the platform in her old Atheistic days. A plain little woman—though with expressive eyes—dressed very quietly, and with no histrionic appeal whatever, occupied an ordinary chair, on the right of which there was a table and another chair occupied by a plain gentleman (probably a workman in Sunday clothes) who technically presided over the meeting and regulated any discussion that took place,—for Mrs. Besant was not an oracle then but an advocate of reason, willing to answer questions and reply to criticism. At that time she sought the aid of nothing adventitious. The spoken word was her sole passport to her audience. She has different ideas now—and different practices. What she says has to be eked out with oracular attitudes and sacrosanct costumes. To question such a figure is an affront, to think of discussing with it is insolence. Mrs. Besant is no longer an Atheist: she is a Theosophist,—that is one of the huge army of "spiritual" practitioners who are spread over the whole globe, and whether "savage" or "civilised," are all engaged in imposing

on the weakness of their fellow human beings by the pretentious and hypnotic arts of what—in African witch doctor, in Church of England clergyman, or in Theosophic mahatma—is nothing but priestcraft.

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Mrs. Besant's lecture began with a compliment to Christ, which she herself would be one of the first to smile at in the days when she "dealt" less in "futures"; and it ended with the common gabble of religious circles to-day about "the gospel of despair" which is taught by the advocates of irreligion. Irreligious people don't look despairing, but they are, for the religious people say so. They suffer from an interior malady; and they are not aware of its presence until they are ripe for an operation or ready for a funeral. They appear to be happy enough, but they are full of *despair*, if they only knew it; and they will never be sound and happy again until they undergo a drastic clearance by one or other of the many pious pills that are offered for sale in the religious medicine market.

\* \* \*

Between the opening and the close of Mrs. Besant's lecture there was some sensible teaching which was familiar to her audiences when she preached Atheism. One need not become a Theosophist to understand the need of prison reform, the folly and wickedness of beating children, and the uselessness of punishment in the formation of character. I should have learnt all that from Godwin, and Shelley, and Mary Woolstonecraft, and Robert Owen, and John Stuart Mill, and other "infidel" teachers—if Nature and my own reflections had not taught me without them—even if Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant had never been born and Theosophy had never existed. No child of mine, for instance, was ever beaten or subjected to any form of violence; and I was an Atheist before I was a father. I have learnt by experience that Freethinkers are much more in danger of spoiling than of ill-using their offspring. It is a fact which deserves pondering that only in Christian countries is there the slightest need of a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Nor should I go to a Theosophist for the loveliest words about the loveliest things on earth, without which the world were a desert, whose babble is the divinest of languages. I should turn to the atheist Ingersoll.

\* \* \*

I am far from being a Catholic, but when I think of all the mental and moral energy which went to the building up of the Catholic Church (wrong as it is) and then reflect on the mental and moral sloppiness of Theosophy in comparison, I feel that if ever my brain wearied of thinking for itself, and yearned for a soft and satisfactory pillow, I should despise the latter and unhesitatingly accept the former—in spite of all its crimes against reason and humanity. When all is said and done it is the real thing. It is the logical development of Faith, founded, as faith must be, on the principle of authority. Who is going to bow before such a coarse creature as Madame Blavatsky was, with her ascetic professions and gross appetites and her pretentious parade of stolen learning? Who is going to take his beliefs from such an unoriginal and unstable person as Mrs. Besant, whose intellectual life has been a long round of helpless discipleship? There is no use in talking of her many fine qualities. They are not to be disputed, but they are not the facts which are to the purpose in this discussion. Her "eloquence" may be admitted, but eloquence proves nothing, you cannot rest anything on eloquence; it may be ever so precious in its way, but it is only an intellectual luxury, after all. And some of us are fastidious in our taste for eloquence. Listen to the Scripture which the Church of England takes for the opening of its Burial Service: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." It isn't true, but what a magnificent challenge! Merely as eloquence, is there in all Theosophic writings extant, including

Mrs. Besant's, any sentence to put in comparison with it? Any sentence to be placed within a million miles of it? Many glorious sentences are marked in my set of Newman—many in my copy of Shelley, at the other extreme. Both had Nature's great gift of genius, though one was a Catholic and the other an Atheist. Yes, an Atheist; for Shelley was not in any sense a "spiritualist." I admit he was an *idealist*. But that does not depend upon religion in any sense of the word whatever. It depends upon sympathy and imagination, which are natural human faculties, whose rudiments are clearly perceptible in several of the lower animals.

\* \* \*

Outside the Catholic religion what is the real religion of England to-day? What is the "Religion of Protestants," as Chillingworth called it? For the most part it is Monarchy. The classes and Churches are working that superstition for all it is worth. Even with the Blasphemy Laws unrepealed, you may talk about God with far greater freedom than you may talk about King George. From the King downwards, the royal family is worked for all it is worth in laying foundation-stones, opening bazaars and institutions, and fulfilling social functions of all kinds. Recently the Prince of Wales was put up to deliver his first public speech—it was written for him, of course, and read by him—at the laying of the foundation-stone of the new Church of St. Anselm at Kennington. The *Daily Chronicle* rather unkindly printed a snap-shot of this performance. A bowed clerical on the right of the photograph seemed to be worshiping the Prince in the middle. The Prince himself looked like a poor little schoolboy. On the other side was the Archbishop of Canterbury, with a ferociously envious expression. One felt amazed at such a scene. The poor lad was being initiated into a wretched business, and the nonsense given him to utter was worthy of the occasion. He was glad that his "first public duty should be on behalf of the Church," and he said in conclusion:—

"I pray that it may please God to pour his blessings on all who shall worship in this place and to prosper the work of those who now or hereafter may be called upon to minister in this parish."

Why "this" parish more than any other parish? One sees the priest's hand behind the Prince's pen. And the working people of England wink at it as a perfectly honorable game. At the same time they complain (how foolishly!) of the slow progress of improvement in their own condition. How comic it would be if it were not so tragic.

\* \* \*

I desire to say a word, before it is too late, about the death of Mr. Watts-Dunton. I think he was ridiculously overrated, but I do not wish to discuss that subject now. I want to recall the fact that he buried Swinburne like a Christian. It was an outrage and a betrayal. George Meredith in writing to me could only "suppose" that he "was ill and feeble at the time of the funeral." But the real explanation seems to be given in Sir Robertson Nicoll's account of a dinner party at the Pines, where he took "Mark Rutherford" to meet Swinburne. "At one point our kind host asked 'Mark Rutherford' if he had read Kipling. 'No,' was the reply. 'I am getting to be an old man now, and I read my Bible.' 'Oh,' said Mr. Watts-Dunton, 'that's what I do.'" I understand now.

G. W. FOOTE.

### "Orthodox" Atrocities in the Balkans.

ABOUT this time last year, the feelings of the civilised world were shocked by the atrocities committed in the course of the two recent wars in the Balkans, and especially by the abominations which stamped with special, if not unexampled, inhumanity the second Balkan War which was waged between the Bulgarians on the one hand and the Greeks and

Servians on the other. Impartial observers of the dreadful spectacle of carnage in the Balkans did not fail to distinguish between the first war, which, in any case, was an inevitable outburst of national revolt, a war of liberation planned and concerted by the long-time oppressed Montenegrins, Servians, Bulgarians, and Greeks who had grown strong and won astounding victory by mutual alliance, and the second war, a war of fratricidal fury between vultures gorged with carrion on the field of battle.

The first war was practically a religious crusade of Christian against Moslem, but the second was a war of senseless and selfish conquest and mutual spoliation which, in effect, compromised the fruits of victory in the earlier contest, brought the Turks back to effect the recovery of Andrinople, tempted Rumania to enter bargulariously upon the scene in order to dismember Bulgaria, and finally delivered Bulgaria over to her former allies for her territory to be plundered and the men and women of Bulgaria to be massacred and outraged.

During that second war the Christian nations of the nearer east showed to the world at large what a thin veneer of civilisation covers the brute beast in man lurking amongst the deeply religious and half-moralised races whose attachment to a boasted religion of love was centuries old before some of the non-Balkan races had emerged into the twilight of Christianity. During the worse than mediævalised atrocities of the second Balkan War we saw the torch of destruction carried from village to village and from district to district not only by the fanaticised armies of the holy allies and their irregular Comitadjis, or bands of freebooters, but by the different populations themselves, by the hostile and hopelessly intermingled populations who for ages had been rendered antagonistic to each other by furious rivalries and conflicts of race, religion, language, culture, and national traditions of a mixed medley of Turks, Slavs, Albanians, Jews, Gypsies, Servians, Bulgarians, Rumanians, and Montenegrins. Europe—Christian Europe—looked down on the scene of horror with the impassive serenity of God himself; there were no goldfields to grab, no oilwells to be exploited, in the Balkan towns where, for many months, murder held high carnival and young girls were raped before the eyes of their agonised parents.

The Committee of Inquiry, appointed by the Carnegie Endowment for the Promotion of International Peace, will soon be issuing its report, giving the results of its investigations into these Balkan atrocities. The report, which will simultaneously appear in several languages, will be published in Paris, Washington, New York, and, I believe, in London, and there is abundant reason that it will shed a flood of light upon one of the darkest episodes in the history of civilisation. An admirable summary of the findings of the Report has just been published by Professor Th. Ruysen.\* In his article, which was written with the impatiently awaited Report before him, the Professor tells us that the Balkan War (the second to a greater degree than the first) takes us very far back from the twentieth century; it not merely transports us to the darkest periods of the Middle Ages, but to "the times of Assyrian conquests," to the deeds of primitive ages when regular hand-to-hand fighting was followed by abominable excesses which civilised races have for ages past banished—"or nearly so"—from the established curriculum of war, viz., the systematic murder of the population on their native soil, the infliction of torture upon prisoners of war, the slaughter of non-belligerents, or the pillage and arson of their property, and, more frequently, we are told, in the Balkans than anything else in the way of horror, innumerable acts of violence upon women, not to mention, as an additional feature of horror, the violation of wounded or dying young girls. The documentary testimony in proof of these "Evidences of Christianity" in the Balkans will be published in

the Appendices to the volume in which these accusing crimes are detailed. When the book reaches my hands it will be my painful duty to place some of these appalling facts before the readers of this journal in order that they may taste and see how lordly is the man of war when he is let loose upon a defenceless population.

Professor Ruysen points out that these savage outbursts of bestiality cannot be explained merely as the awakening of the base passions as yet unstified in the heart of man. The war in the Balkans was something more than a duel between nations which measured their strength in mortal conflict. The Carnegie Committee appears to have taken into account the psychological reason for this bubbling over of the cauldron of horrors during the war, at any rate, during the first war, when it explains that the results of the conflict reversed the secular relationship of master and slave between the dominant Turk and the subject races. In principle, the Balkan atrocities were acts of reprisal—savage and senseless, and therefore unjust—after a long and painful period of racial oppression.

The Report declares that—

"in nearly every case the conquerors were followed by local bodies of armed men, by volunteers on the margin of the regular army, and that these licensed ruffians, sure in advance of impunity, took revenge upon their adversaries for unexpiated personal or national injuries. The Committee declares that 'in North Macedonia it was the victorious population that organised the systematic suppression of the Mussulmans.'"

Moreover, the Report states that—

"the populations themselves killed and rooted out each other with all the greater ferocity because of the fact that they knew each other well and nourished in their hearts old quarrels and hatreds of many years' standing."

On the vexed question of the responsibility of the different Governments in regard to these horrors, it has been difficult in every case for the Committee to arrive at a definite conclusion, as quite naturally the orders given would in most cases be shrouded in mystery—at any rate, to the probing vision of the present generation—but Professor Ruysen is able to state that the Committee has in several cases been able to fix the responsibility of the authorities. The instances given include the responsibility of the Bulgarians for the massacre of the Turks at Serrès; that of Turkey for the acts of violence committed on the victorious return of the Ottoman troops in Thrace and at Andrinople; that of Serbia in respect of the forced conversions of the Bulgarians in Eastern Macedonia, and the responsibility of the Greeks for the massacre of Bulgarians and other outrages during the second war. Apparently, on a general survey, the Committee's Report finds that the case of Serbia was not so black as that of the other co-partners in these atrocities; but, on the other hand, the Report takes an extremely severe view of the culpability of Greece, and is able to support its view upon an imposing mass of facts of incontestable weight and authority. One of the most important and reassuring facts brought to light is that the Bulgarians are certainly disculpated from a portion of the sensational crimes which the Greeks laid to their charge during the second war. Professor Ruysen, however, thinks that public opinion will scarcely relieve the Bulgarians from responsibility for the atrocities which they are alleged to have committed at Serrès, Doxato, and elsewhere.

The cases last cited by Professor Ruysen leave me more than sceptical as to the justice of these reflections upon the criminality of Bulgaria. I have before me at the present moment the terrible\* volume of Bulgarian recriminations against the Greeks which Professor L. Miletitch (of the University of Sofia) has recently issued. It would be difficult to estimate or even imagine the amount of human misery, of moral turpitude on the one hand and physical misery on the other, contained in this

\* In *Le Paix par le Droit*. Paris: May 14, 1914; pp. 273-285.

\* *Atrocités Grecques en Macédoine*, par Prof. Dr. L. Miletitch. (Sofia; 1913; pp. 180, and 53 photo reproductions.)

eloquent and touching book. We must remember that the Greeks had every incentive, on the grounds of national aggrandisement and racial animosity, to vilify the reputation of the Bulgarian people, and that, during the combined onslaught of the Allies upon Bulgaria, Sofia was cut off from intercourse with Europe and the European press deluged with anti-Bulgarian stories furnished or fabricated by the Greek press agencies. The perusal of Professor Miletitch's book, which is categorical and crushingly convincing in its detailed proofs of the atrocities wrought in Macedonia by the Greeks upon the defeated or captured Bulgarian troops and the despised civilians of Bulgarian race, read in conjunction with the very moderately worded "Answer"\* which Dr. Stephen Kyroff writes as Rector for and on behalf of his colleagues, the professors of the University of Sofia, will, I think, put quite a different complexion upon the weirdly harrowing story of these Macedonian atrocities, and must be read side by side with the Carnegie Report if a sound judgment is to be arrived at. There can be no doubt that last year the public opinion of Europe was largely ricked and deceived by Greekophile sources, and that something strongly resembling to myth was created in the minds of many well-meaning people as to the degree of Bulgaria's culpability in these crimes. It is to the credit of Bulgaria that she courted inquiry, and to the discredit of Greece and Servia that they shunned, and endeavored to thwart, the investigation undertaken by the Carnegie Committee into these atrocities.

No one will pretend that Bulgarian victory was not sullied by excesses, and even by horrifying and exceptional excesses—it was in the psychology of the Balkan peoples that this should be so, at least in the course of the first war. But history, when it gathers the documents together, and especially when it reads, as I have done during the last few days, the *Fac-similes*† of the Greek letters seized before transmission through the post at Razlog last year, will moderate, if not revise, some of the one-sided and over-prejudiced views which have recently prevailed concerning the nature of Bulgaria's responsibilities in the recent horrors and her degree of complicity in the sensational horrors which the Greeks have laid to her charge. In the meantime we can wonder how two Christian nations can afford to love each other so well.

In a future article I propose to examine a few out of the multitude of horrors which the foregoing volumes accumulate to the charge of the Greeks. In the meantime, it will suffice to state here and now that the documents adduced by Dr. Miletitch show, with terrifying detail of horror and inhumanity, that women of all ages, from children of 12 years to old dames of 80 and 85, were violated by the Greek soldiers; that mutilation and even crucifixion were inflicted upon certain victims; that the daughter of a Bulgarian priest, Theodor Staeff, was carried off, and himself colported about the village for two days after his eyes were gouged out, and then killed, together with other inhabitants. The participation of the Greek Archbishop of Serrès in Greek atrocities at that place seems fully established; and it is no less fully established that all the Greek bishops in the district, without exception, were the accomplices, if not the actual instigators, of the outrages at Drama and Cavalla. When I resume this subject I shall have some fuller details to give concerning these and similar horrifying facts, and especially in reference to the Greek fabrications which have been wrought for the discrediting of the sister Christian State and some damning facts of appalling inhumanity which Christian and Orthodox hands of Greek patriots were willing to perpetrate against the hated and maligned Bulgarian race.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

\* *Reponse à la Brochure des Professeurs des Universités d'Athènes.* (Sofia; 1913; pp. 129.)

† (i.) *Fac-similes de certaines lettres.* (Sofia; 1913; pp. 48.)  
(ii.) *Nouvelle serie de lettres, etc.* (Sofia; 1913; pp. 42.)

## The Pitman's Prayer.

IT was a hot Sunday afternoon, one of those days when the spirit of languor steals sweetly over the senses and you listen to a tale of reminiscences as in a dream. I was returning from a short walk, and was nearing the town, when I lighted upon a friend of my boyhood sitting all alone upon a seat by the wayside. We had been boys at school together, but I had seen little of him during the long intervening years. In those far-off days we had both lived in the same colliery row of houses, and daily trudged the long distance between our homes and the school at West Moor.

We sat and chatted leisurely of the days of our boyhood, and recalled many an incident in our youthful escapades. He was generally a ring-leader in any mischief that was afoot, the indulgent leniency of his uncle and aunt, with whom he lived, being accountable, perhaps, for his waywardness. His guardians, having no family of their own, were better circumstanced than most of their neighbors, whose proverbial quivers were all well filled. We were Presbyterians, they were Methodists, and attended the chapel in the distant village where the day school was situated. His uncle had a good voice, and was one of the principal singers in the meeting. They were people, too, who enjoyed the good things of life, as pitmen usually do, and they were in a position to indulge their hospitable bent. The Methodist pastors were fairly frequent visitors at their house; for you can always trust a parson of any denomination to discover the houses of his flock that keep a good table.

About half-way between where we lived and the village in which the Methodist chapel was situated was a public-house known as the "Clousden Hill," where the pitmen used to congregate at the week-ends to spend their spare cash, and some also that could ill be spared, in exchange for the doubtful pleasures of inebriation, and sometimes the certain one of a broken head in a drunken melee. This public-house was in bad repute among the religious folk. My friend's uncle probably had as little sympathy with such carousals as he had with teetotalers and their fad.

"I always had a high opinion of my uncle," he said, when we came to talk of our separate homes. "Although he was a religious man, there was not the least trace of any bigotry in his composition. He believed everyone had a right to their own opinion, and he was not ashamed of his own, even if they happened to be unpopular among his particular friends. I remember one evening there was a preacher waiting to accompany him to the week-night prayer-meeting. After he had washed and changed his clothes, they set out on the road. I suppose there must have been a quantity of coal-dust about my uncle's throat which the evening's tea had not successfully washed away. When they came to the 'Clousden Hill,' he somewhat astonished the minister by asking him if he was 'gannin in to hev a drink?' In very solemn and reproving tones the reverend gentleman replied: 'Mc. McPhail! considering the solemn function to which I am proceeding, it would scarcely be seemly of me to enter a public-house.'

"'Well, thoo can please thisel', of course," said my uncle, 'if that's the way thoo looks at it; but A've a duty t' mi throat t' discharge, and if thoo dis'n't care t' wait, thoo can gan on t' the meeting, and Aw'll follow.'

"My uncle arrived at the meeting all in good time, and although he could put up a good prayer at any time, that night he seemed to surpass all his previous performances. The religious emotion of the meeting was so exalted that many declared their belief that they were on the eve of a great revival. Even the minister himself wondered at the marvellous spall of his outpourings.

"'What a grand man McPhail is,' said Mrs. Brown, as the meeting dispersed; 'and to-night he

seemed to be filled with the Spirit.' 'Yes,' said her husband, 'I felt lifted nearer to God while he was praying than I ever remember since my conversion. Surely the power of the Lord was present with us to-night.'

"But, as you know," added my friend, "little boys often come to some very matter-of-fact conclusions, and I think I could have made a good guess as to the source of my uncle's inspiration."

As my friend pulled out his tobacco-pouch to refill his pipe, he found it was empty. "I am going to call at the tobacconist's a little further on," I said, "and I hope you will let me have the pleasure of refilling it." I thought the story was worth it.

JOSEPH BRYCE.

### The Growing Fame of Paine.

As fast as open-minded persons become acquainted with the record and merits of Thomas Paine they begin to praise him. On invitation of Treasurer Harvey of the Thomas Paine National Historical Association, Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox became a member of that organisation, and having read the literature of the Society, wrote the following article, which has been published in the Hearst papers throughout the country. It is one brilliant writer's tribute to another:—

Thomas Paine (1737-1809): "The world is my country; to do good is my religion."

The man who named our country.

The man first to advocate independence for our country.

The man who did more to achieve this independence than any other man, giving his pen, tongue, sword, and pocket-book to the cause.

The man who in the darkest hour of the revolution wrote the *Crisis*, commencing with the words, "These are the times that try men's souls." (General Washington ordered this mighty work to be read to the Army once a week.)

The man who was joint author of the Declaration of Independence with Jefferson.

The man who borrowed ten million dollars from Louis XVI. to feed and clothe the American Army.

The man who established the Bank of North America in order to supply the Army.

Napoleon said in toasting him at a banquet: "Every city in the world should erect a gold statue to you."

The author of the *Rights of Man*, acknowledged to be the greatest work ever written for political freedom. This masterpiece gave free speech and a free press to England and America.

The man known as the "The Great Commoner of Mankind," the "Founder of the Republic of the World."

The man first to urge the making of our Constitution.

The man first to suggest the Federal Union of the States and to bring it about.

The man first to propose the Louisiana Purchase.

The man first to demand justice for women.

The man first to plead for dumb animals.

The man first to advocate international arbitration.

The man first to propose old age pensions.

The man first to propose "The land for the people" (single tax).

The man first to propose the care for the children of the poor at public expense.

The man who invented and built the first iron bridge.

For a century the world has forgotten its debt to Thomas Paine.

Indeed, that name has been branded by bigots and fanatics with all imaginable obloquy.

He was called an Atheist, a Freethinker, a blasphemer, simply because he could not believe in some old traditions which to-day are known to be allegorical, and which few intelligent minds regards seriously.

Thomas Paine was one of the founders of our great United States of America. We would undoubtedly be under British rule to-day but for the wise and wonderful efforts of Thomas Paine.

In January, 1776, he wrote and published a plea for American independence. Previous to this he had made a strong argument urging separation from the Mother Country.

No one had been daring enough to think of such a move before.

All the Colonists had rebelled against the unjust taxes and impositions, but Paine was the bold rebel who dared say Liberty.

After his pamphlet, *Common Sense*, was published the people were electrified. No pamphlet ever written sold in such vast numbers, nor did any ever before or since produce such marvelous results. Paine donated all the financial

proceeds of the pamphlet to the cause of liberty (as he did with all of his other works). Washington, now converted, wrote to his friends in praise of *Common Sense*, asserting that Paine's words were "sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning."

Jefferson, John Adams, Franklin, Madison—all the great statesmen of the time, wrote praisefully of Paine's "flaming arguments."

In July, six months after *Common Sense* had awakened the people, the Declaration of Independence, embracing the chief arguments of Paine's great pamphlet and much of its actual wording, was signed by the committee of patriots in Philadelphia.

The great revolution commenced at home. The oppressed Colonists took up arms at a great disadvantage, by reason of the lack of food, clothes, money, and munitions of war; but, inspired by the forceful message of *Common Sense*, they fought bravely and well.

When winter set in, however, the ill-clad, poorly nourished little Army had been greatly reduced in numbers by desertions from its ranks. Many of the soldiers were shoeless and left bloody footprints on the snow-covered line of march. All were but half-hearted at this time, and many utterly discouraged. Washington wrote most apprehensively concerning the situation to the Congress.

Paine, in the meantime (himself a soldier with General Greene's army on the retreat from Fort Lee, N.J., to Newark), realising the necessity of at once instilling renewed hope and courage in the soldiers if the cause of liberty were to be saved, wrote by campfire at night the first number of his soul-stirring *Crisis*, commencing with the words:—

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country, but he who stands it now deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap we esteem too lightly; it is dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated."

Washington ordered the *Crisis* to be read aloud to every regiment of the Army. The effect was magical. Hope was renewed in every breast. Deserters returned to the ranks; men who had half-heartedly withheld from joining the Patriot Army took courage from Paine's thrilling words and shouldered muskets with the rest. The great cause, tottering on the brink of dissolution, was saved. Paine's *Crisis* did it.

Following the first number of the *Crisis* came others—thirteen in all—the last commencing with the words: "The times that tried men's souls are over."

Paine was not only a great author and statesman, but he was distinctively a pioneer, an originator, an inventor and creator. To him we are indebted for many of the world's greatest ideas and reforms.

It was Paine who first proposed the abolition of negro slavery; Paine was the first to suggest arbitration and international peace. Paine originally proposed old age pensions. These are a few of the other great ideas he fostered. He first suggested international copyright; first proposed the education of the children of the poor at public expense; first suggested a great republic of all the nations of the world; first proposed "the land for the people"; first suggested "the religion of humanity"; first proposed and first wrote the words "United States of America"; first suggested protection for dumb animals; first suggested justice to women; first proposed the purchase of the Louisiana territory; first suggested the Federal Union of States.

It is time the world awakened to his merits. With that end in view the Thomas Paine National Historical Association was organised in New York some years ago. Through the efforts of this Association, Thomas Paine is at last coming into his own. The Association intends that Thomas Paine shall occupy that niche in the world's Temple of Fame where it properly belongs, and to that end it bends its every endeavor. The Association has established its home at New Rochelle, N. Y., in the house that Paine built.

—*Truthseeker* (New York). ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

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EDMONTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Edmonton Green): 7.30, a Lecture.

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