

# THE Freethinker

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*The fear of genius is the beginning of taste.*

—VICTOR HUGO.

## Thoughts on War.

THE man-eating monster of fiction is terrible enough to romantic young minds under the spell of the story-teller, but he is almost genial and harmless in comparison with the real Ogre of war. Generation after generation this frightful monster gorges himself on human flesh and blood, solacing his intervals of satiety with the wine of human tears. And every time he prepares for a fresh repast he demands a larger provision for his ravenous appetite.

Awful as the Ogre's blood-tax is, his impositions between meals are even worse. In the palmy days of the Roman Empire, less than four hundred thousand troops sufficed to preserve the peace of the world; and, if we except petty frontier tussles with barbarians, they often did so for thirty or forty years together. But Europe has now its standing armies, whose total is reckoned in millions, and the peace is broken several times in a generation. Let it also be remembered that the Roman soldier was a worker as well as a fighter, helping to carry the practical civilisation of Rome wherever her eagles floated. Our high roads, the arteries of pedestrian and vehicular traffic through England, were first made by the imperial legions, who used the pick and the spade more frequently than the sword. But the armies of modern Europe are all idlers. Their sole business is destruction. In peace they consume without producing, and in war they devour like the locust and the caterpillar. They are not the lame, the blind, the maimed, and the imbecile, but the young flower of the male population, withdrawn from productive industry, and supported by the labor of others while they "learn the art of killing men."

The British Army is in one sense voluntary, as it is filled by enlistment, and not by conscription. But, for all that, it is not democratic. The "masses" supply the rank and file; the "classes" supply the officers. Tommy Atkins has nothing to do with any war except risking his life; all the direction, and all the glory and profit, rest with his superiors.

Go through the Peerage and see what an enormous number of military and naval posts are held by its scions. They command our forces, they get the lion's share of pay, they shine in the Gazettes, and they receive all the honors and rewards worth having. Poor Tommy Atkins dies unannaled and unknown, or, if he survives, has to content himself with the reflection that virtue is its own reward. His wife and children (if the celibate rule of the army for *privates* allows him those luxuries) are left to semi-starvation or vice or crime, unless they gravitate to the workhouse. Tommy had much better be at home earning an honest living, as he himself generally knows; but he goes abroad to fight the battles of the upper classes because their villainous laws have starved him into the able-bodied citizen's last resource.

Much has been written of late about the "great truth" that war cannot be avoided, and is indeed often beneficial in the present condition of human society. We admit that peace at any price is as mad a policy as war at every opportunity.

John Bright once said that without declaring all wars unjustifiable, he would like to see a single war justified. It was a request very difficult to comply with. Every war we enter upon is perfectly righteous, but somehow the historian afterwards writes them all down as crimes or mistakes. Self-defence is a natural instinct; it never can be eradicated, and it never should. But it implies an aggressor; and consequently all justification of war on the one side only serves to heighten its guiltiness on the other. A great conqueror is only another name for a great criminal. Nature quietly buries and conceals every trace of his ravages. Would that the world could as soon forget him, or remember him only to condemn.

Great Britain may, as the world goes, be technically right in the present war with Germany. It is difficult to see, on the face of it, at the climax of negotiations, how this nation could have avoided a conflict. It may be that the Kaiser has gone mad, and is dragging as many nations as he can with him into the abyss. But what went on *before* war became inevitable? Any fool can fall into a pit. Any simpleton can get into a row. Any ninny can cause mischief. Statesmen should prove their wisdom by keeping the peace where it is possible. They are placed on an eminence, as Burke said, to command a wider prospect than their fellow-citizens. If they cannot see more, or judge better, they are unworthy of the positions they occupy.

The Churches' only prescription is prayer. They pray for peace beforehand, but when war breaks out they remind "God" that he is bound in honor to give the victory to his old friends the British. And the clergy of all other Churches in all other lands pursue the same policy.

Priests may consecrate our banners, without regard to the merits of the side on which they are ranged, or the awful scenes over which they float; every regiment may carry its chaplain for ghostly succor; and the Church may solicit God's blessing on every bloody enterprise we engage in. But the teachers of religion cannot decree right and wrong, nor have they any magic to transform crime into virtue. "The primal duties shine aloft like stars" beyond the reach of chance and change, however momentarily obscured by clouds of incense from a thousand altars. And if the ministers of the Prince of Peace cannot see the monstrous wickedness of war, there happily remains enough instinctive justice and mercy in the breasts of heretics to brand it as a capital crime against humanity.

Religion never was, and never could be a friend of peace. The word "religion" is said to be derived from the Latin *religare*—"to bind back." Certainly religion binds men together; it bound the Thugs together; but it only binds them together in opposition to all other religions than their own. The one kindling and unifying word is Humanity. It is better even than the Balance of Power, which Mr. Bernard Shaw offers as the ideal of European diplomacy.

G. W. FOOTE.

## Liverpool and the Slave Trade.—II.

(Concluded from p. 499.)

MOST of the old Liverpool families were more or less steeped in the slave trade, and their enterprise made Liverpool the greatest slave town in Europe. Some of its "brands" were famous, particularly that of "D.D." Many of the slaves were sold openly on the Custom House steps, and the announcements of the sale and the descriptions of the slaves differs in no respect from those of cattle. Indeed, they were so much cattle. They were branded exactly as cattle are branded. The slave was made to kneel down, and the red-hot branding-iron was placed on the bare flesh—usually on the buttock. No one, for a long time, seems to have seen anything unusual or cruel in this. It was just part of a commercial transaction. And, what with the horrors of the passage on board ship and the treatment afterwards, it may safely be said that the slave trade as organised by Christian merchants far outdid, in deliberate cruelty, anything that ancient times could show.

I referred in my last article to the slave-ship *Thomas*. Here is a copy of one of its bills of lading:—

"Shipped by the grace of God in good order, and well conditioned, by James Dodd, in and upon the good ship *Thomas*, master under God for this present voyage, Captain Peter Roberts, and now at anchor at Calabar, and by God's grace bound for Jamaica, with 630 slaves, men and women, branded D.D., and numbered in the margin 31 D.D., and are to be delivered in good, and well conditioned, at the port of Kingston (the dangers of the seas and mortality alone excepted) unto Messrs. Broughton & Smith. In witness whereof the master and purser of the ship *Thomas* hath affirmed to this bill of lading, and God send the good ship to her destined port in safety, Amen. October 31st, 1767."

This unctuous piety was made to cover the most villainous traffic that the world has ever seen. African villages were burned, and the inhabitants—men, women, and children—marched to the coast, branded, pushed into the holds, and carried away to Kingston or elsewhere for sale. Parties of negroes were invited on board ships to trade, and were seized and made slaves of. Slaves that fell sick were so much useless lumber, and were often thrown overboard out of hand. Some attempt to keep them in health was made by bringing them out of the hold in batches and compelling them to jump about the decks under the persuasive influence of a cat-o'-nine-tails. The deaths of a few slaves more or less, however, roused no comment so long as the dividends remained high.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century voices began to be raised, first for the humanising of the traffic, and later for its abolition. But as late as the Parliamentary election of 1761 the speeches of all the political candidates were unanimously in favor of resisting attempts to restrict the trade in "black ivory." Had there been a readiness to permit an increase of regulations concerning the slave traffic, it is possible that it might have continued for more years than was actually the case. But resistance to reform paved the way for abolition, although to the last, Liverpool put up a strong fight for its perpetuation. As late as 1790, in the Parliamentary election, the Gascoyne party enforced their claims in the following doggerel:—

"Be true to the man who stood true to his trust,  
Remember our real situation we must;  
When our African business was near at an end,  
Remember, my lads, 'twas Gascoyne was our friend;  
If our slave trade had gone, there's an end to our lives,  
Beggars all we must be, our children and wives;  
No ships from our ports their proud sails e'er would spread,  
And our streets grown with grass, where the cows might be fed."

The ruin of Liverpool was freely predicted if the slave traffic was to be abolished. When the Bill for its abolition was finally before Parliament a petition was drawn up, signed by over 2,000 Liverpool merchants and citizens, demanding the withdrawal of

the measure. This petition was signed by no less than eight ex-Mayors of Liverpool, and set forth:—

"That many of your petitioners having, under the protection of the legislature, embarked a considerable part of their property in that trade, will be very materially injured if the said Bill should pass into law. That such abolition, in your petitioners' judgment, would not only be a great detriment to the town of Liverpool, but in its consequences produce great distress to the extensive manufactures of the County of Lancaster, and to many of the other rich, opulent, and industrious manufacturing towns in the kingdom, and would in no way answer the benevolent purposes of humanity, but only serve to remove the advantages of this trade to foreign States. Your petitioners, therefore, most humbly pray that the said Bill may not pass into law, and that they may be heard by their Council at your Lordships' bar."

As a matter of fact, the number of ships entering and leaving Liverpool fell off considerably with the abolition of the slave trade, and dock dues fell by about a third. In a few years, however, outlets were found in other directions, and the port continued to grow steadily. But it must be recorded as an indication of the state of opinion in Liverpool, that when, in 1788, the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade published its list of members, only two Liverpool names were found in it—William Rathbone and Dr. Binns.

As in America at a later date, the defenders of the traffic fell back upon religion and the Bible as authority for slave dealing. It was argued that the Bible had instituted slavery, and whatever abuses might occur in particular cases could not be urged against the institution. This, it must be remembered, was the line taken by W. E. Gladstone in his first address to the electors of Newark. There is nothing whatever in either the Old or New Testaments against slavery. The Old Testament recognises its legitimacy, and lays down laws for its regulation. It even lays down the cash value for men, women, and children at different ages (Lev. xxvii.). And in the New Testament the advice given to "servants" to obey their masters, to render all obedience, to suffer wrong treatment, etc., is really directed to slaves, "servant" being a mistranslation in the interests of Christian apologetics.

Foremost amongst those who gained fame in Liverpool as a champion of slavery was the Rev. Raymond Harris, a clergyman of the Church of England. In 1788 he published a pamphlet with the title, "Scriptural Researches on the Licitness of the Slave Trade, showing its conformity with the principles of Natural and Revealed Religion, delineated in the sacred writings of the Word of God." He points out that slavery was sanctioned by God, and so remains unless explicitly cancelled. He draws a number of illustrations from the Bible, and concludes that those who do not believe the slave trade to be a "licit" occupation, really do not believe their Bibles. There were other clerical champions of the trade, and it is worth while noting that the Rev. John Newton, friend of Cowper, author of the *Olney Hymns*, and Rector of St. Mary's, Woolnoth, actually commanded a slave-ship during the time he was studying for the ministry. Many years later, a clerical defender of slavery in the United States wrote:—

"If slavery be a sin, and if advertising and apprehending slaves with a view to restoring them to their masters is a direct violation of the divine law, and if the buying, selling, or holding a slave for the sake of gain is a heinous sin and scandal, then, verily, three-fourths of all the Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians in slave States of the Union are of the Devil. They hold, if they do not buy and sell slaves; and, with few exceptions, they hesitate not to apprehend and restore runaway slaves when in their power."

With a slight variation of terms this would seem to voice the opinions of Liverpool Christians at the end of the eighteenth century.

In 1776 the question was raised in the House of Commons by Mr. David Hartley, M.P. for Hull. His motion was, however, defeated. In 1789 Pitt intro-

duced a Bill against the African Slave Trade, which was followed up by Wilberforce. The first motion of Wilberforce was rejected by 163 votes to 88. Three times it met with the same fate, and when it had passed the Lower and went to the Upper House it was rejected on an equal number of occasions. One member of the House of Commons said it appeared to him "to be the intention of Providence that one set of men should always be slaves to another." The incapacity of Parliament to deal with the matter was generally asserted. General Gascoigne fell back upon the Bible in opposing the measure, and argued for slavery on the ground that it opened up to the Negro the blessing of Christianity. Later, when Clarkson's Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was before the House of Lords, Lord Thurlow denounced the measure as contrary to the spirit of the Bible. "Slavery," he said, "had flourished in the early ages when men communed with God, and to attack its legality was an insidious and heretical attack on the principles of religion."

It is a matter of history that the Abolitionists eventually gained the day; but is also a matter of historic truth that while it obtained it had all those sanctions of established Christianity that vested interests have never failed to find. With the Bible in their hands, with Christianity in full possession of the field, Christians created a traffic that for sheer cold-blooded brutality holds the world's record. They established it in places where it had been hitherto unknown. Even in Africa, Livingstone asserts that slavery was unknown until Europeans introduced it. They made it a penal offence for a slave to learn to read and write, and then when the growth of a more enlightened opinion had made the continuation of the traffic impossible, turned their backs upon the Bible and upon Christian history, and declared it to be contrary to both. The truth is well put by Finlay, the historian of Greece, that "no Christian community of shareholders has ever voluntarily abolished slavery," and that "slavery had, in fact, ceased to exist in most European countries while many Christians still upheld its legality, and maintained that its existence was not at variance with the doctrines of their religion."

C. COHEN.

### An Oft-Repeated but Worthless Argument.

JESUS is reported to have said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Mark xiii. 31); but the authenticity of the saying is exceedingly questionable. However, the generality of divines accept it as a genuine saying of Jesus, and expatiate upon its truth. The teaching of the Galilean, they tell us, is imperishable. The Rev. A. C. Hill, of Tollington Park Congregational Church, London, recently preached an eloquent sermon, entitled "The Eternal Words of Jesus," which was thought worthy of publication in the *Christian World Pulpit* for August 5. Of course, taking the Gospel Jesus as historical, which comparatively few now do, we admit that the title of Mr. Hill's discourse is quite legitimate. In the verse just quoted the Gospel Jesus claims eternity for his words; but we contend that it is an utterly groundless claim. The words of the Gospel Jesus are no more eternal than they are original. Mr. Hill spends a good deal of time in telling us what he fancies the Gospel Jesus knew and thought about himself and his words, as well as what he knew and thought of the world in which we live. According to this preacher, the Gospel Jesus was sure of two things, namely, "that the material world, to most of us the only world, in the long run will pass away," and "that civilisations do rise and fall." Yes, he "knew that there are civilisations lying underneath the sand," which are "the material out of which the new and better world is to arise." Then Mr. Hill adds:—

"Jesus saw this with the eye of the seer. He recognised alterations going on around him. Yet he dared

to say that there was one thing that did not change—'my words shall not pass away. Everything else is under the law of mutability, but the words that I utter shall abide.'"

Such is the claim of the Gospel Jesus as expanded by a twentieth-century pulpiteer. Now, what proof is adduced, or what facts are advanced in attestation, of the truth of such unique claim? Having stated the claim at length, Mr. Hill keeps on repeating it. What is the use of asserting over and over again that the words of Jesus "enter into the soul and become the property of a spiritual being"? Does it prove anything to declare that our inventions, our palaces, our motor-cars, and our aeroplanes are but the things of a day, and, if looked at from Sirius, "may be no more than the fluctuations of a fly's wing"? We incline to the opinion that the things just enumerated, looked at from Sirius, would not be seen at all. In any case, we are perfectly sure that a man who thinks that the movements of an aeroplane, looked at from the height of the Dog Star, "may be no more than the fluctuations of a fly's wing," cannot bear a very reliable witness to the eternity of the words of Jesus. A man who can see an aeroplane from the height of Sirius, though appearing no bigger than a fly on the wing, can see anything he wishes. From him will naturally issue such an irrational statement as the following:—

"Whatever enters into the life of the soul, whatever becomes incorporated in the spiritual essence of a man, that remains; even when his body has turned to dust, when every one of his bones and members has been gathered up into the material of the world, the man himself still abides, a living creature, having come from God and going back to God."

It is amazing how easy it is for ignorance to strut about in the guise of knowledge. Mr. Hill's cocksureness on subjects concerning which absolutely no knowledge is obtainable marks him out as the biggest dogmatist it is possible to imagine. He does not know, it is not possible to know, that "the man himself still abides" when his body has turned to dust. What he offers us is a superstitious belief, uncorroborated by a single ascertained fact.

The words of Jesus shall not pass away, we are told, because "they always find that within us which is nearest unto God." Here is the dogmatist again in the fullness of his audacity. Again: "The words of Jesus are founded upon what is permanently Divine. They speak to us precisely as we believe in our best moments God himself must speak." We do not know "what is permanently Divine," we have no means of discovering how God speaks, or that he ever speaks at all; but we do know, and make bold to proclaim, that the words of the Gospel Jesus are practically of no account whatever in the world. And on this point Mr. Hill agrees with us. He takes the saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," and says:—

"It is a word that contradicts the precepts and practice of ninety-nine out of every hundred of human beings. It runs against the general philosophy of every age that has tried to improve its position in the world. It contradicts everything that is said in the House of Commons and the Chamber of Deputies and the American Senate. Because, wherever you meet with men who are, as they say, practical men and accustomed to the handling of affairs, who deal with the concrete things of life, you meet with men who believe, whether they actually express it or not, that it is force that finally rules, that the Almighty is on the side of the great battalions, that unless your ships are larger and stronger, and your guns of a heavier calibre than those of other people, you may preach until your audience is deaf, and pray until you are dumb from exhaustion, but it makes no difference to the result. In this world it is not true that the poor in spirit are blessed."

That is entirely true and extremely well said. Poverty of spirit is a greater curse than poverty of pocket, though it is probable that in its earlier form the saying had reference only to the latter. Poverty in any form has never been a blessing. Neither has meekness. And yet Mr. Hill says he is certain that Jesus is right, "that in the long run it is the meekness,

the piety, the humility of the soul that wins the day in the battles that are the real Armageddons of the world." Will he be good enough to name one great battle in which the victory was won by means of those so-called passive virtues? In the long run, they are said to conquer; but they have never triumphed yet. The reverend gentleman alludes to Bismarck in terms of admiration; but does he really mean to imply that Bismarck was a man in whom the Sermon on the Mount found exemplification? And to what is Europe making its supreme appeal at this moment? To poverty of spirit, meekness, piety? Eight Christian countries have resolved to unsheathe the sword and plunge it into one another's blood. We have had the long run of nigh two thousand years since Jesus spoke on earth, and at this very hour Christendom pays no practical heed whatever either to him or his words.

It is a radical error to call the words of Jesus words of liberation. Not one of them can be quoted as having in the slightest degree made for freedom. Was not Guizot right when he described the Christian Church of the eighth and ninth centuries as "a population of slaves"? Christians have never been lovers of liberty, except their own. The Buddhists did love liberty and grant it fully to all who differed from them. They have never played at the evil game of persecution. Christianity has never taken the part of the poor against the rich, nor of the proletariat against the privileged classes. Mr. Hill is either ignorant or does not desire to be fair when he refers to Aristotle's views on slavery. It is true that the illustrious philosopher approved of that wicked institution; but it is false to jump from him to Jesus, saying that it required only that the latter should teach his doctrine of the eternal value of the soul to prove that doctrine wrong. If he had taken the trouble to consult Harnack's *Expansion of Christianity* (vol. i., p. 24) he would have seen how essentially unjust his observation is. Harnack is a famous theologian, and yet in this work we find this: "The Stoics had passed the word that all men were equal, and had spoken of brotherhood as well as of the duties of man towards man." Pliny saw in slaves his serving friends; and it had been plainly taught that slavery was contrary to the law of nature and ought to be abolished.

We have meditated on the words of Jesus quite as much as Mr. Hill has done, and we have carefully examined them in the light of history, with the result that we now regard them, in so far as they are true, as having been afloat in the world, in one form or another, for hundreds and thousands of years before Jesus was ever heard of; and in so far as they are not true, as having originated with himself in his rôle of a would-be reformer of Judaism. But whether true or false, the point is that in Christendom nobody ever dreams of putting them into practice. It is a minister's profession to eulogise them in the pulpit, but minister and people alike ignore them in the practical conduct of life.

J. T. LLOYD.

### An Ideal Holiday Book.

*The Best of Lamb.* Compiled by Mr. E. V. Lucas. (Methuen; 1914.) 1s. net.

CHARLES LAMB is the most lovable of writers, and, despite his own quaint jest that he wrote for antiquity, he becomes every year a more popular writer with his posterity. "A fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy," it could not be otherwise, for much that he writes awakens a sense of personal affection in the reader. Writing of youth, of death, of familiar faces, of homely things, he keeps marvellously close to life. It was, we feel, just so with us in childhood, at school, in this sad or glad experience. This power, together with the humanist temperament of getting at the heart of things, makes him keenly alive to life.

This little volume, though its title will jar upon Vegetarians, does give us the quintessence of Lamb's unique genius. For Mr. Lucas, who has given his nights and days to the study of Lamb, has brought together a number of the most entertaining, most beautiful, and, in the case of the letters, most amusing of his writings, and it is certain to drive the reader to Lamb's complete works, the output of a rare and delightful genius.

The man himself was well worth knowing. What would it not be worth to have a few hours of his company? In his buoyant humor or in his more serious vein, it were all one. Suppose we could have dined with him that day when the dish was the sucking-pig that Farmer Collier sent him, and heard the good wishes wafted to the giver:—

"May your granaries be full, and your rats empty, and your chickens plump, and your envious neighbors lean, and your laborers busy, and you as idle and as happy as the day is long."

Or imagine we had been present when the stately Coleridge asked him, "Charles, did you ever hear me preach?" and he replied in his stuttering way, "I never heard you do anything else." Or what if we had taken a hand at whist when Burney was his partner and he called out, "Martin, if dirt were trumps, what a hand you'd have." Or, better still, had been with him that Saturday night when he brought home the folio Beaumont and Fletcher that he had coveted for weeks, while he saved the price of it, and he could not think of going to bed till the loose leaves had been pasted in, and he had read his favorite passages. Or, best of all, had we been among those to whom his door was open on the famous Wednesday evenings in the Inner Temple Lane. Wordsworth was one of the number when he was in town, and Coleridge, Haydon, Hazlitt, Barry Cornwall and Talfourd. It must have been a rich memory, an abiding delight, to have been with Lamb at times like these. It must have been a festal evening like those ever-memorable nights at Frederick's palace when the nimble wit of Voltaire challenged the best brains of Europe, or those suppers at the "Mermaid" when rare Ben Jonson exchanged quips and cranks with the smiling Shakespeare.

Carlyle was the only man of note who misunderstood Lamb. His austerity, his want of humor, his dogmatism, shut the doors of sympathy. When they met the atmosphere was electric. On one occasion, while they were waiting for their host, Carlyle looked out of the window, watching the flight of some pigeons. Lamb, hurt perhaps at his silence, went up to him and asked, "Mr. Carlyle, are you a poulterer?" Another time, as they were together in the hall, preparing to leave a party after the sage had monopolised the conversation, Lamb handed Carlyle his wide-awake hat with the remark, "Is this your turban?" Accordingly, we find the philosopher writing in his journal: "Charles Lamb I sincerely believe to be in some considerable degree insane! A more pitiful, rickety, gasping, staggering, stammering tomfool I do not know." Carlyle was as wrong with regard to Lamb as he was in error concerning Heine and Voltaire. Lamb's jests often contained shrewd observation, as in his ironic expression of regret that the Royalists did not hang Milton, for then we might have laughed at them.

The other men of genius who knew Lamb realised his worth. They saw the good nature under the uncouth exterior. He was ready both with sympathy and help, generous and unselfish. Like Dumas, he had pensioners on his bounty, among whom were an old teacher of his own, and a cripple whose only claim was that he was recommended by his friend, Southey. Barry Cornwall tells a characteristic story. He was in Lamb's company one day, in low spirits, which Lamb thought due to want of money. Turning suddenly, Lamb said, "My dear boy, I have a quantity of useless things, including a hundred pounds in my desk, that I don't know what to do with. Take it."

Lamb was a hero, modest, and unobtrusive. There was insanity in the family, and Lamb never married

His sister Mary killed her mother in a fit of frenzy. A few weeks' restraint restored her to her right mind, but insanity recurred at intervals ever afterwards, and a retreat was provided in a private asylum. There was warning of their coming, and a friend has related how he met the brother and sister at such a time, walking hand-in-hand across the fields to the asylum, both in tears.

If Charles Lamb waged an unequal war against fate, he was, at least, a happy soldier. When his turn came he yielded up his broken sword to fate, the conqueror, with a brave and a humble heart.

"Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail  
Or knock the breast, no weakness, no contempt,  
Dispraise or blame, nothing but well and fair;  
And what may quiet us in a death so noble."

MIMNERMUS.

### Alfaro and the Ecuadorian Bigots.

"Eloy Alfaro was an Eagle who had the heart of a dove; that is why his wings were burnt in the flames."—VARGAS VILA in his new poem, *La Muerte del Condor*, p. 45.

In the *Freethinker* of March 8, 1912, I related the terrible story of the atrocities which crowned the triumph of reaction in the Republic of Ecuador, and my subsequent article of March 17, of the same year, set out in fuller detail the fiendish work of the Ecuadorian clericals as displayed in the murder of the ex-President, Eloy Alfaro, and his associates. The Ecuadorian papers which at that time came to my hands left no manner of doubt in my mind that the indecent mutilation of these victims, the cutting out of their tongues and the infliction of wounds upon the most sensitive parts of their bodies, the tearing out of Flavio Alfaro's heart, its slicing into pieces to be publicly eaten by a bigoted and priest-maddened populace, were atrocities committed in Quito and Guayaquil only two years ago under the holy auspices of the Archbishop and other mild but mitred men of God who were glad of the opportunity of letting loose the tiger of religious intolerance upon the old, freethinking Eloy Alfaro and his friends.

The murderers in high places who wrought these abominations have not yet been brought to account, and the Ecuadorian Republic still continues under the stigma, which any civilised community would refuse tamely to bear, of allowing these crimes against humanity to go unpunished. The almost incredible record of these infamies stands fresh and unrefuted in the pages of the *Freethinker*, in the *Daily News* of March 16 and 20, 1912, and in the issue for June, 1912, of *Hispania*, a well-known South American review in the Spanish language, which hails every month from our cosmopolitan London.

But although the avenging hand of justice—Ecuadorian justice—remains for the time being limp with paralysis, all memory of the horrid crime is not yet obliterated. In flaming words of indignation, a distinguished South American writer, Vargas Vila, has just published a superb prose-poem\* which nobly vindicates the character of the murdered Eloy Alfaro and brands with infamy the men who compassed his death. For the story of this man's heroic life and the tragedy of his fateful death, to be framed with the laurels of these splendid pages, is perhaps the most brilliant apotheosis that this stricken martyr of noble ideals, foully murdered in his eightieth year, could obtain. The throbbing pathos, the poetic beauty, the Olympian grandeur of this Homeric poem-tragedy, should secure immortality, if not to the illustrious victim, at any rate to his cowardly assassins.

Senor Vargas Vila calls his vindication "A Poem, a Tragedy, and a History." Few poems of recent years have soared to such heights of sublimity or plumbed such depths of pathos. It is not, however, a poem in the conventional sense of

the word; it is rather a combination of fervid poetry and heroic prose such as Victor Hugo, Thomas Carlyle, and Walt Whitman would write in their most characteristic moods. If Vila had written his poem of vindication in orthodox poetic lines, or framed his tragedy—a tragedy, alas! in real life and in our own times—in the conventional mode, or had he tamely pamphletised a matter-of-fact history of his hero, most likely he would have bored a public which lives so near to the lingering echoes of the awful tragedy of two years ago. But the martial grandeur of these majestic lines, which at times soar to the highest peaks of Parnassus, fascinate and enthrill according as they dazzle our imagination with their rugged splendor of beauty, or strike awe within our soul by the colossal force and daring of the mental pictures evoked. I have seen no specimen of Vargas Vila's art other than this wonderful prose-poem, but I am satisfied that he shows himself here with the poet's stride, with the bardic voice that rings clear, with the seer's eye that penetrates and reveals the essential facts with lightning flashes of intuition.

Nothing more Jove-like in its thunders of invective, in the corrosive vehemence of its poetic fervor, than the three opening chapters in which the poet describes the tyranny of "the inferior Cæsars," who tyrannise over the Republics of Central South America and over its various tribes, "who filled the terrible abyss with their lamentations during their crucifixion between heaven and earth, as though transfixed between two infinites bereft of mercy." Amongst these tyrants we read of Archbishop Merino, the recent President of San Domingo, who in one day shot forty innocent students who were accused of the *crime* of conspiring against him. Vargas Vila calls him the "mitred panther, whose mantle, bathed in blood, showed him to be a sinister purple-robed minister of death, in whose hands the elevated Host became red....." The moving spectacle, as here disclosed, of anarchy in these despoiled unfortunate lands, should stir up the torpor of the Central American Republics and shame its public men into getting in closer conformity with the underlying principles of true civilisation. If only for that reason, the apocalyptic terrors which this tragic poem foreshadows as the ultimate doom of the neo-Latin Republics, unless they mend their ways, should serve for warning and admonition to the nations concerned.

In my *Freethinker* article of March 12, 1912, I gave particulars of the secularising spirit which animated the drastic and much-needed work of social reform in Ecuador carried on by President Eloy Alfaro and by the Liberal (*i.e.*, the Radical Freethinking) party which he represented in the country. I now find that Vargas Vila, in his poem, confirms this view and points out how the enmity of the Church against Alfaro was aroused to savage fury by his zeal for secular education and ample religious toleration. This is how Vila describes the situation preceding the advent of Alfaro:—

"The night that had reigned over these skies was that profound night, starless and merciless, the night of fear and dismay, beneath which the nations disappear in a silent orgy, during which they are devoured by all the vultures that spring from the frozen heart of the abyss—it was the Night of Religion!

"What think you would bubble forth from that unshapen chaos in which during an interminable succession of years the Priest and the Executioner, those twin brothers of Death, reigned supreme like absolute Gods?

"The reign of the priests had been in Ecuador, as in all the countries of Latin America, a feast of jackals."

Vargas Vila glorifies his hero, and perhaps over-idealises him. For Vila, Alfaro was the Hero of the Sword, the Hero of Ideas; the Liberator, the Soldier who was dreamer as well. Chapter xi. describes his creative work of social reorganisation, the scheme of which (page 105) was apparently too vast for immediate realisation amidst a backward people with whom "a slavish and religious sediment" found favor, "whose policy consisted in putting one hand

\* *La Muerte del Condor*. Barcelona: Casa editorial Maucci; 1914. Pp. 260. 2 pesetas.

into the public treasury without withdrawing the other which was slimy with the waters that surged in the baptismal font." But the great constructional works of Alfaro still remain, although his enemies literally lopped off the hands of the man whose public spirit contrived them.

Vargas Vila, who is evidently a Freethinker, holds the view that when reaction took its revenge upon Alfaro its instrument was Carlos Freile Zaldumbide, whom Alfaro had appointed Vice-President of the Republic; who, as he tells us, had the "soul of a priest and of an executioner." It was Zaldumbide's hand that released the storm that overwhelmed Alfaro, and he it was who, acting as "the bacillus of assassination," organised the butcheries that made the name of Ecuador a by-word of reproach to South American civilisation. When the incomplete documents concerning these atrocities reached me two years ago I had my suspicions of the treachery of Zaldumbide. The terrible eighteenth chapter of *La Muerte del Condor* which gibbets him as "a slimy and corrupt Jesuit who presided over a band of assassins," sheds new light on the problem. But the moving spirit amidst these horrors, which will for ever darken the memory of January 28, 1912, was, we are assured, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Charles R. Tobar. He it was who repudiated the act of capitulation by which the lives of the defeated Alfarists were to be spared; and who hypnotised Zaldumbide into compliance with an act of odious public treachery, which soon gave birth to scenes of nameless barbarity (see Cap. xxii. *et seq.*). All the horrors described in the *Freethinker* two years ago, and many additional touches, are shown with terrifying vividness in these later chapters. The obscene mutilation of Eloy Alfaro by a monk, if you please, is described on page 239, and we learn on page 240 that these mutilations and tortures were inflicted to the cry of "Death to the Freemasons; Long live Religion; Death to the heretics; Long live the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

It is well, if horrors of this nature are still to go on to the disgrace of our common humanity, or if revivals of mediævalism are to be inaugurated to-day and blessed and perpetrated in the sacred name of religion, that some indignant pen, like that so splendidly wielded by Vargas Vila, should flash forth like an avenging sword in the pale faces of the holy assassins and of their would-be imitators. Already *La Muerte del Condor* is in its second edition—an augury, we trust, of many more editions to come. Let us hope that the flaming pen of the indignant poet will brand his lightning words deep into the consciences of the Ecuadorian people and of the South American Republics generally, in order to warn them of the danger that lurks for them in the unquelled spirit of fratricidal strife which ignorance engenders and which religious bigotry fans into devouring flames.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

The supposition, that the terrors of hell-fire are essential or even conducive to good morals, is contradicted by the facts of history. In the Dark Ages there was not a man or a woman, from Scotland to Naples, who doubted that sinners were sent to hell. The religion which they had was the same as ours, with this exception—that everyone believed in it. The state of Europe in that pious epoch need not be described.—*Winwood Reads.*

Were half the power that fills the world with terror,  
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,  
Given to redeem the human mind from error,  
There were no need of arsenals or forts.

—*Longfellow.*

#### THE "AMPHION."

Poor souls, they perished.  
Had I been any God of power, I would  
Have sunk the sea within the earth, or ere  
It should the good ship so have swallowed, and  
The fraughting souls within her.

—*The Tempest*, i., 2.

## Acid Drops

It is rumored that the Kaiser has been induced to postpone his ultimatum to Almighty God.

The Kaiser's last words to his Army were "God help us." Looking backward, he might very well exclaim "Oh my prophetic soul!"

The papers inform us that the Prince of Wales has joined his regiment for active service. He motored down to where it is stationed, near Brentwood. We have not heard that the Germans are in strong force in that locality, but it contains a famous lunatic asylum.

Mr. Arnold White, writing in the *Referee*, says that "The British National Anthem assumes that the Most High is British in sympathy and hostile to all aliens opposed to the King of England." Just so! And the priests of the Government religion bless the battleships and consecrate the colours of the regiments in the name of "The Prince of Peace."

A few years ago a well-known member of the House of Lords exclaimed in the course of a public speech, "Damn the consequences." Dr. Campbell Morgan wouldn't for the world use a swear-word, but the other day he said in effect, "Damn the facts; whatever happens, whether peace or war, we must not allow ourselves for a single moment, whatever tragedy may be awaiting us, to question the truth of the text, 'The Lord sitteth King for ever.'" Then God is the direct cause of what Dr. Morgan himself called "the weird and devilish situation" in which Europe finds itself at this hour, and it is he who must be held responsible for the awful deluge of blood and misery which will soon overwhelm us. But, be the facts what they may, we must not permit ourselves to doubt his sovereignty.

Dr. Morgan made a sillier observation still. He said, "What is our duty at this hour? First, that of courage; second, that of co-operation with God." According to this clinical wiseacre, Atheists cannot have courage, because "true courage is born of certainty of God." What sheer nonsense! Then, how can we co-operate at this hour with him who "sitteth King for ever," except by doing our utmost to promote war, as he has so successfully done? Of course, these men of God conveniently ignore the obvious implications of their own foolish teaching.

Ministers of religion, in particular, are just now placing God in a most awkward position. All parties to the present European conflict are his peculiar people, who believe that he is a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering Father, and passionately implore him to grant success to opposing arms. In the circumstances, how on earth can he act with impartiality? Germany believes that she is fighting in a just cause, and fervently prays for victory; but as all her enemies do the same, God must find himself in a peculiarly unenviable quandary. Do his ordained servants never think of this?

The Archbishop of Canterbury considers the military situation "the work of the Devil." There's £15,000 worth of wisdom for the devout believer. A colored medicine man would have given the same advice for a bottle of fire-water.

"When old King William of Prussia was on his death-bed he sent for his grandson, the present Kaiser. His last words to the future ruler of the German people were, 'Keep in with the Czar of Russia.' And now—well, well! I wonder what grandpapa, looking down from above, thinks of the situation." This gem was written by Mr. George R. Sims in the *Referee*. But what if grandpapa is sweating tallow candles in the other place?

The Bishop of London is going to accompany the London troops while the war is on. We wonder what the soldiers will think of it. On board a ship the presence of a man of God is deemed unlucky. Perhaps it is a reminiscence of Jonah.

When we went to America in 1896 on the old *Germanic* with the late Charles Watts, a well-known artist, Mr. Harry Furness, was a fellow-passenger. Talking about the weather with an old sailor, he was told that the voyage could hardly be a smooth one with so many clericals on board. Mr. Furness told him that there were two Atheists in the saloon,

and asked him what he thought of the prospect with that fact in view. The old sailor replied that in those circumstances it ought to be *middling*, or rather better. And middling or rather better it was. The Atheists were not lightweights. They kept the scale down on their side. Some days were positively beautiful.

The Rev. Edward Shillito says that "if ever it has been easy to doubt the rule of the holy God over his world, it has been easy this week." Does the reverend gentleman vorily believe that there is a holy Ruler of the world? Can he look history in the face and honestly say that "the moment, in all its sinister meaning, is arrayed against the experience of the past, and against the faith tested in other ages?" We boldly affirm that the belief in a holy Governor of the world has never been justified by the facts, and that the facts of to-day give the complete lie to it. Mr. Shillito knows, as well as we do, how utterly useless and senseless prayer is in such a deplorable state of things, or in any other state for that matter.

The organ of the New Theology that was, informs us that on Sunday, August 2, prayers were offered for the nations in the crisis through which they were passing. Now we see the answer—WAR. He who "knows and cares and guides," as the Archbishop of Canterbury said, to whom the prayers were supposed to ascend on the wings of faith, has seen fit, in his infinite wisdom and love, to send fire and sword, death and destruction, pain and sorrow. And yet the very people who admit that this is a fact aver that he "doeth all things well." On August 2 we saw a nation at prayer, and three days later we saw, and still see, the nations at war.

The Government doesn't seem to understand its own Post Office work. The following happened in one and the same office in a few minutes. A young lady tried to get a *bond-fide* postal order cashed, and the lady clerk refused to cash it. She merely wanted to buy some stamps, by means of a Government order (duly paid for), which the said Government declined to honor. That is to say, the Government refused its own currency. After a lot of haggling, the stamps were passed over and the change given in the form of another postal order. So much for transaction number one. Transaction number two was as follows. A gentleman wanted to buy a postal order to send away as a remittance, and the lady clerk refused to supply him. He tendered coin of the realm, and she wouldn't take it. Surely this is chaos come again. We always knew that the Post Office was the silliest and most impudent institution in England, but we hardly thought it would come to this.

The Government should interfere with the currency as little as possible. Stopping a panic run on banks on a declaration of war is sensible and quite easy. That is all that needs to be done. The currency was enough before the panic began, and it will be enough (perhaps too much) when the panic is ended. Bank notes for smaller sums than £5 are right enough: you meet them everywhere and every day in Scotland, for instance; but to try to make postal orders currency is madness or fraudulency. It means that the Government takes our money, and gives us none of it back. Gold is still hoarded, but the Government itself does the hoarding.

And that list of prices which the Government recommended to buyers and sellers in shops! Fancy the economics of fixing prices without fixing wages and the food supply! A poor man who had paid a shilling a pound for butter could not pay one and sixpence, unless his wages were raised proportionately. He would buy two pounds instead of three. In this case it was easy to see that Germany, the only people we were fighting, could not seriously interfere with our food supply, which would soon settle down to normal when it was recognised that the panic had nothing real to rest upon.

The interests involved in the Austrian-Servian trouble are of a very mixed character, but amongst these it is impossible to overlook the part played by religion. And, as usual, it only serves to accentuate bitterness that already exists, creates a new one, and does nothing whatever to foster the possibilities of friendly intercourse. Pan-Slavism stands for the supremacy of the Greek Church in South-Eastern Europe, just as behind Austria is the force of the Roman Catholic Church. The composite nationality of the Austrian Empire has its internal animosities sharpened by religious differences, and these, with a people like those of South-Eastern Europe, tend to create troubles where none would otherwise exist. It is thus a curious fact that in both the great political questions of the moment—the Home

Rule question and the European war, religious belief is the most disturbing factor. In Ireland, but for religious belief the whole problem would be fairly easy of solution; and in the near East, for generations the great trouble has been how to get people of rival sects and religions to live peaceably together.

A United Council Sunday Defence Committee for London has been formed with the Bishop of London at its head. It is curious how the various sects can agree when it is a question of enforcing their opinions upon others. No one in London has the least desire to prevent any members or supporters of the committee attending church or chapel, or to force them to go to secular places of entertainment. All other people ask in this matter is freedom; what the Defence Committee demand is compulsion—the power to force its own ideas of Sunday on the rest of the community. The Bishop of London said that the number of cinema palaces open on Sunday had increased, and thought it was hypocrisy to pretend that they are opened for charity. Very likely. But hypocrisy in some form or another is the usual result of religious legislation. And we quite fail to see the justice in insisting that the proprietors of cinema palaces, if they open on Sunday, shall give their profits to charitable institutions. If the picture palaces have any bad results these are quite independent of where the profits go. And it is passing strange to find religious people winking at these consequences so long as the proprietors do not make a profit.

The truth is that all the hypocrisy lies with the Sabbatarians. They do not want the picture palaces open at all. They hope that if the proprietors are prevented making a profit they will not open. Moreover, the sheer hypocrisy of the religious party has been exposed by reports received from the police from all parts of the country. There are no reports of bad behavior or evil pictures. There is a general agreement that they provide clean, healthy entertainment, and that the behavior of young people about the streets has undergone an improvement. One would have thought that religious leaders with their loudly expressed desire for the moral betterment of the people would have welcomed the appearance of anything that would keep the rising generation from the attractions of the public-house and the hoodliganism of the streets. But they keep people away from Church. That is the really unforgivable offence of the picture palaces. The talk of a seven-day working week is only additional hypocrisy. That could be easily enough prevented. The community may be justified in demanding that every employee shall have one day's rest out of seven. It is certainly not justified in demanding that everybody shall rest on the same day. And one could imagine that as working-men were able to win the Saturday half-holiday, and a shortened labor week-day, they might be trusted to guard themselves against being compelled to work seven days a week.

What a frightfully low opinion of the Christian Church the *Church Times* entertains. In its issue for August 7 it says that, though nearly two thousand years old, she has not yet learned "to draw a sharp distinction between the forces of truth and error." We are familiar with the popular adages, "It is never too late to mend" and "One is never too old to learn"; but when one has arrived at the state of decrepitude one is much more likely to forget things already learned than to learn new ones. The Church is now too busy trying to put off the dying hour to be able to devote any time to the acquisition of fresh knowledge. Any lines she draws to-day are the opposite of "sharp."

Great Britain is decidedly on the downgrade. She is rapidly losing the things she ought to value more than life. She is becoming reckless, parting with her ideals, turning its back on the sterner virtues, selling her birthright for a mess of pottage, treating sport as if it were the end of life, and flinging her ancient piety and reverence for the things of God down the wind. Hence the present "weird and devilish situation." So says Canon Newbolt, who speaks in the name of God, and who consequently must be right. God has sent the present war as a chastisement for our sins. It comes as "a call to prayer, but even more as a call to mend our ways. In spite of former chastisements we have grown careless and indifferent. We are becoming the Godless nation which tries to live without God in the world." What horrible claptrap! This is one of the very few wars we cannot truthfully accuse of being religious wars. It is a war of ambition, undertaken solely with the object of gaining additional territory and power, though it is claimed that God is actively on the side of all the parties to it.

At the Wesleyan Methodist Conference the Rev. W. H. Armstrong bade his fellow-preachers take courage, because

of late Rationalists themselves had been doing something to advance the Christian faith. This "something" turned out to consist in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle having affirmed the presence of design in the universe and an alleged statement by Professor Gilbert Murray that psychology was against "Rationalism." We believe that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has never ceased to affirm design in the universe, and we are not seriously alarmed at his statement in any case. Very much greater men than Sir Arthur Conan Doyle have said the same thing, but it has never affected the facts, nor has it prevented a growing number giving up the belief as unjustifiable. Besides, if there is design in nature, it should be quite independent of whether any particular person believes in it or not, the facts should be there to convince anyone who cares to examine them. The idea of so important a belief as the existence of God depending upon whether a popular novelist believes in design or not is really laughable. It is clear evidence of the straits to which religionists are reduced, that they should find comfort in such a circumstance.

As to Professor Gilbert Murray saying that psychology is against Rationalism, we seriously question the accuracy of the statement. In any case it is not true. Some psychologists—mostly of the variety that call "psychology" anything that is labelled "occult"—may, but the science of psychology is dead against the religious position. It will be instructive to any Christian to only glance down the index attached to any acknowledged text-book of psychology. In the vast majority of cases he will either not find the "soul" mentioned at all, or he will find it dismissed as having no scientific value. Yet psychology began as the science of the soul. But in course of time, as the study of mental functions became more accurate, it was found that not only was there no evidence for the existence of a soul, but even as a working theory it had no value whatever. Even the late Professor James was forced to admit this much, and Professor McDougal—who does argue for a real "soul"—practically admits that he is a free-lance fighting the great body of modern psychologists. Psychology, in fact, has followed the course that every one of the sciences has taken. It began with a host of theological and animistic conceptions, and it shed them just as soon and just as certainly as it reached positive results.

As soon as war was declared between Great Britain and Germany, a lot of Christians, who cared more for the meat which perisheth than for any patriotic virtue, rushed off to the shops in a disgusting panic, and bought large supplies of food, which act, of course, helped to raise the price of provisions for all their poorer fellow-citizens. A lot of Christian shopkeepers played up to this contemptible game, and helped to rob (that is the real word for it) their poor fellow-citizens who could least afford to pay from 50 to 100 per cent. higher prices for all the necessaries of life. The Christian shopkeepers (most shopkeepers are Christians) were simply taking a mean advantage of their fellow-citizens in a time of national distress. It was so like them.

We heard of one curious case. The morning after the declaration of war an angler at a seaside town went to the usual place to buy worms. To his surprise he found the price doubled. It was on account of the war.

Mr. Harold Begbie lets the truth out now and then. The following passage occurred in his article in the *Daily Chronicle* (Aug. 5) on "The War of Civilisation":—

"And where are Good Manners gone? Look for them in Asia, but not in Europe. At every Christian frontier you can pick up a broken treaty and a dishonored bond."

On the same page of the *Daily Chronicle* there is an editorial article in which a half-hearted plea is put forward for such prayer as the Archbishop of Canterbury is (professionally) recommending to the English people. Some other ecclesiastic looks after this sort of thing for the Scotch, Irish, and Welsh. We ask our readers' attention to the following passage:—

"Clever ridicule is sometimes poured on the prayers which opposite combatants offer to the same God; but the scoffers forget something, which simpler people know. It is that in this world of unplumbed mysteries, where frail, short-lived, short-sighted humanity gropes amid unmeasured forces, conflicts arise that are past our solving or averting or reconciling. Human wisdom is sorely limited at its best, but we believe that there is a Wisdom beyond it; and to that in the tremendous hour when the resources of human prudence have all been tried and tried in vain, we humbly commit our destiny, our lives, and the lives of our nearest and dearest."

What connection has the end of this passage with the beginning? What resemblance is there between rival combatants asking the same God for victory, and begging his assistance when one or the other of them has got a good

licking? The latter prayer may or may not be answered; it is simply a question of probability. The former is a clear absurdity.

Mr. Coulson Kernahan is sometimes original, and, occasionally, antediluvian in his suggestions. His latest idea is that the best solution of the European crisis is for us to "humble ourselves before God in prayer." Perhaps some of his friends will provide him with some velvet knee-caps, but we hardly think he will set the fashion.

The Rev. Hugh Chapman, of the Savoy Chapel, London, says man is "a combination of mud and angel." We must not call this a dirty mistake; but it is altogether wrong scientifically.

Lieut.-Gen. Sir R. Baden-Powell, distributing prizes at a Hammersmith Girls' School, said "a lady was one who wore silk stockings. If cotton gloves were worn she was a woman, and if she did not wear gloves and had a dress of calico she was a person." How would the witty warrior describe Eve in the Garden of Eden?

The authorities of Atlantic City—the Brighton of New Jersey, U.S.A.—have been trying for some time to put a stop to Sunday bathing and dancing on the sands on the Sabbath. Municipal bands play on Sunday, and in order to stop the dancing the musicians were ordered to play none but hymn tunes. The dancers, however, were equal to the occasion, and the tango and other freak dances have been carried on to the accompaniment of "Abide With Me," "Rock of Ages," and "Lead Kindly Light." The next move, we presume, will be either to stop the bands altogether or to turn the show into a religious service by opening with a prayer and ending with a collection.

"Gladness enters largely into the religion of the Christ," says the Rev. F. W. Turner, of the Baptist Church, Evesham. Then why is it that male Christians wear their chins on the fifth button of their waistcoats, and the girls look as if they were fresh from a funeral?

With regard to Mr. Lucas's *The Best of Lamb*, the title tempts one to ask "Welsh or New Zealand?"

Here's an advertisement from a West Country paper:—"Wanted, capable Farm Laborer, hedger, buttermaker; active Churchman, regular communicant, with good tenor voice, and family of musical boys, play cornet or violin; change ringer preferred. High wages; light work." This is an extreme example of Christian "cheek." Not only must the laborer be a man of extraordinary ability; but he must provide a family of musicians.

From the agony column of a contemporary:—"Christian gentleman, lonely, tired, seeks friendship with sensible, sincere, Christian lady. Write Rev. ---." A parson ought not to be lonely when he is in constant communion with two gods and a ghost. Apparently this one, like so many of his profession, prefers female society.

Puritanism has always been associated with cant, and its modern preachers seem determined that its association shall continue. Rev. D. B. Fraser, of Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool, lecturing on "Puritanism v. Pugilism," said that "Puritanism in this country was a genuine attempt to place the emphasis on the higher side of man's nature." We do not believe that Puritanism is, or was, anything of the kind. It was an attempt to emphasise the religious side of man's nature, which is not necessarily the higher side. Macaulay's epigram that the seventeenth century Puritans objected to bear-baiting, not because it hurt the bear, but because it pleased the onlookers, is eternally true of the type. And whether in England, America, or elsewhere, the prevalence of Puritanism has never succeeded in inducing a permanently healthy, social life. It creates a standard of value that is essentially jaundiced and unhealthy. And while it has encouraged, during its seasons of power, a thoroughly unhealthy type of character and tone of public mind, the reaction against it has usually been of a depressing kind. One need go no further than the history of the seventeenth century in England to prove this. When Mr. Fraser says that "Puritanism arrested England in her headlong plunge into prurient artificiality," and created "a new type of strong man," he is talking arrant nonsense. Puritanism did not arrest prurency and artificiality at any time or anywhere. There are only three occasions on which it has been in power—in England, in Geneva, in parts of North America. And in each case, instead of preventing evil, it brought about disaster.

### To Correspondents.

**PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1914.**—Previously acknowledged, £160 2s. 6d. Received since—H. M. Ridgway, £1.  
*Per F. Rose. Bloemfontein:*—N. M., 10s. 6d.; H. M., 10s. 6d.; E. W., 10s. 6d.

**S. ALMAN.**—Colonel Ingersoll did not recant on his deathbed. He had no deathbed at all. His doctor had told him that he had heart trouble, and might die suddenly at any moment. This information he kept to himself, in order not to upset his wife and daughters and other persons attached to him. One day, after a bad night, he was sitting on a chair in his house at Dobb's Ferry, with Mrs. Ingersoll standing by him. She expressed concern about his looks, and presently asked, "Are you better now, dear?" "Yes," he replied, with a pleasant smile, "better now." And in a sense he was, for death took him that very instant, the pleasant smile remaining stereotyped upon his face. You see what time he had to say "how sorry he was he could not burn all he had written against religion." The same story, by the way, was told of Thomas Paine, and, before him, of Voltaire. There is very little variety in the performance of these Christian liars.

**E. BURKE.**—(1) Pleased to hear from you again; also to see such a good report of the debate between yourself and a Christian Evidence speaker. (2) The N. S. S. does not distribute Free-thought speakers over London; they are engaged by the Branches. (3) You are right about our "enormous correspondence." And we have no one to help us; no secretary, no clerk, no assistant of any kind; one pair of hands is all we have to rely on.

**W. BRADBURN.**—Some attention of the kind should certainly be shown to old or feeble Freethinkers who are driven to reliance on public charity. That is the common name for it, we believe. A copy of the *Freethinker* weekly would be most acceptable. We will put the matter before the next N. S. S. Executive meeting.

"ABRACADABRA."—We are waiting to hear from you.

**E. B.**—Thanks for useful cuttings.

**G. O. McDONALL (Montreal).**—Thanks for cutting from your *Daily Star*. When the editor quotes from a letter of George Meredith's in 1872 as giving a true view of his attitude towards religion, he is playing the fool or something worse. Meredith lived 37 years longer and broadened all the time. He denied the supernatural.

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

**F. LONSDALE.**—We can quite understand that Glasgow was "war mad" when you wrote. We hope it has settled down a bit by this.

**J. F. TURNBULL.**—Had to make it very short, for insertion this week.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Sugar Plums. .

Many newspapers have had to reduce their size, and we may have to do the same. We make no definite announcement, but we warn our readers of what is at least "on the cards" in order to guard them against a possible surprise.

We are publishing in this week's *Freethinker* a first instalment of an address on the woman question by Mr. M. M. Mangasarian, of Chicago, who is the leading Freethought propagandist in America at the present time. We do not mean as an editor, of course, for he is not connected with any journal; and the first place on that side of the movement over there belongs to George Macdonald, of the *Truth-seeker*. Mr. Mangasarian's "church" at Chicago gives him the widest latitude as to the subject he selects for treatment every Sunday morning, and it publishes his discourses

in large pamphlet form. This woman question is suited to Mr. Mangasarian's genius. It requires insight, sympathy, delicacy, and also mental firmness. It will not satisfy fanatics on either side, but it gives suggestions as to nature's *via media*, and it is nature that will have the last word on these matters, after all. Anyhow, we think Mr. Mangasarian ought to be heard, as he desires, on this side of the Atlantic, as well as the other, on any important topic he chooses to speak upon.

Just as we go to press we receive a message from Mr. Mangasarian stating that he has arrived in London. We shall be delighted to meet him again. And, by the way, when is George Macdonald going to pass this way? We hope, at least, to hear from our Chicago friend that our old New York friend is well.

"The Unmarried Mother" is, perhaps, the most important article in the August *English Review*. Its author is Mrs. W. M. Gallichan. It is ably written and full of humanity. But one wonders, after all, if the disadvantages of illegitimacy can be done away with as the writer suggests. The sins of the parents ought not to be visited upon the children, but all through life they are, and Nature will always have her way in the long run! Mr. Norman Douglas contributes an informing and entertaining article on "Southern Saintliness." Mr. Alister Crowley contributes some clever "Chants Before Battle." There is another of Henri Fabre's delightful (though sometimes awful) etymological articles—this time on "Parasites." The editor's article on Ulster would be well worth reading if the great War had not snowed all other politics under.

### INDIAN MISSIONS.

A report on the work of the Forman Christian College, at Lahore, has been issued by the Principal, the Rev. Dr. Ewing. If judged by its staff, he says—thirteen Christians and five non-Christians—the college is largely a Christian college; but, if judged by its students—582 non-Christians and 28 Christians—then it is largely a non-Christian institution. The proportion of non-Christian to Christian students in a Christian college certainly seems a trifle paradoxical; it is, however, ingeniously pointed out by the learned Principal that it is the *fees* of the non-Christian students, and the grant which the Government is justified in giving on their account, that has made the development of the college possible.

The well-equipped institution that now represents the Forman Christian College could never have been built and kept up from the funds forthcoming from the *Christian* students. Dr. Ewing compares what he terms two "mass movements" in the Punjab—the movement of the low castes towards Christianity, and that of the higher, and better educated, classes. It is easy to baptise, but hard to educate, the former; it is easy to educate, but hard to baptise, the latter.

Last year, of the 582 non-Christian students only one, a Mohammedan student in his second year, became a Christian.

—*The Pioneer, India, July 4, 1914.*

Give up material fire, and you lose the bodily resurrection. Renounce the bodily resurrection, and away goes the visible coming of Christ to a general judgment, and the climacteric completeness of the Church scheme of redemption is wanting. Mar the wholeness of the redemption plan, and farewell to the incarnation and vicarious atonement. Neglect the vicarious atonement, and down crumbles the hollow and broken shell of the popular theology helplessly into its grave.—*William Rounseville Alger.*

### SECOND THOUGHT IS BEST.

"Every time I see grandfather's sword I want to go to war."

"Well?"

"But every time I notice grandfather's wooden leg I cool down."

"You say man is a vapor?" "Yes; so the Bible says." "Well, I'm downright glad to hear it." "Why, what difference does it make to you?" "Well, it backs up a remark I made to the parson last night. I told him he was all gas."

Mrs. Bowers: "I do wish you would go to church with me occasionally. How are people to know that I am married if they never see you with me?"

Mr. Bowers: "Easy. Take the children with you."

## The Origin of Supernatural Ideas.—IV.

(Continued from p. 502.)

"We cannot forbear pausing for a moment to note the vast mental schemes that have resulted from his first supernal concept of luck and his after-elimination of the dream-ghost. In these original conceptions lay hid all the possibilities of the spiritual world—fate, destiny, the spirits, the godheads, heaven and hell, all the religions of the past, all supernatural schemes for the future, every test-power to divine the unknown, every evil influence that crushes humanity, every transcendental power, a lost world, and a saved humanity.....Of the great Egyptian faith, how small now seems the heritage of humanity, and the thunders of Jove and the cognate Olympian deities exist as mere school-boy rhapsodies. So all the great mental forces that have been expressed in dynasties, empires, faiths, now remain as mere blotches on the escutcheon of time. There has been nothing eternal in human thought save the early fetish deductions man made from his supernal concept of luck and the presence of the dream-ghost. These early deductions of the mystic are ever-living, men conceive and re-conceive them, and to most men they have the same nature and express the same sentiments as when the pre-glacial man bowed in awe before the silent concepts of his own soul. From their long persistent immortality, we are bound to expect they will outlast all the divine schemes that now encumber the human soul."—J. H. KING. *The Supernatural: Its Origin, Nature, and Evolution*, pp. 181-2.

"The doctrine of Evolution has no 'favored-nation clause' for man. It admits no break in the psychical chain which links him to the lowest life-forms, be these plant or animal. It finds no arrest of continuity between the bark of the dog and the orations of Demosthenes, or between the pulsations of an amoeba and the ecstasies of a saint."—EDWARD CLODD, *Animism: The Seed of Religion*, p. 14.

CLOSELY allied to the idea of luck is the idea of magic. It is a further step towards the evolution of religion, but it is not religion. As Frazer remarks:—

"The theory that in the history of mankind religion has been preceded by magic is confirmed inductively by the observation that among the aborigines of Australia, the rudest savages as to whom we possess accurate information, magic is universally practised; whereas religion, in the sense of a propitiation or conciliation of the higher powers, seems to be nearly unknown."

"Similarly," says the same writer,

"among the Fuegians, another of the lowest races of mankind, almost every old man is a magician, who is supposed to have the power of life and to be able to control the weather. But the members of the French scientific expedition to Cape Horn could detect nothing worthy the name of religion among these savages."\*

Sir John Lubbock (Lord Avebury) holds that "magic is not only not religion, but the very opposite of religion," and points out that the tedious, and almost interminable, magical ceremonies which occupy a large part of the lives of Australian savages contain no prayers or sacrifices, no appeals for help to any superior power, but are "an attempt to control nature and secure material advantages—mainly rain and food."†

In this stage, as Mr. Clodd remarks,

"Man and brute alike tremble before the unusual; they fear, but know not why, or what, they fear. As yet man has no conception of body as home of an indwelling spirit, and no conception of surroundings as natural and supernatural; therefore no idea of an after life, no idea of heaven and no dread of hell."‡

"This," he continues, "to all intents and purposes, is Naturalism; or, as Professor Flint calls it, Naturism: a stage antecedent to Animism, or the belief in spirits everywhere, in the non-living as well as in the living." "Naturism" is a far better word than "Naturalism" in this connection, seeing that Naturalism has already a definite meaning, and its use would only lead to misunderstanding. The word also has the approval of Professor Leuba, who says: "The word *naturism* should be adopted as a name for the pre-animistic and pre-religious stage of culture, a stage corresponding to the one through which a child passes before he inquires into hidden causes and mechanisms."§

\* J. G. Frazer, "The Beginnings of Religion and Totemism Among the Australian Aborigines," *Fortnightly Review*, July, 1905.

† Lord Avebury, *Marriage, Totemism, and Religion*, pp. 142-3.

‡ E. Clodd, *Animism*, p. 22.

§ J. H. Leuba, *The Psychological Origin and Nature of Religion*, Note to page 65.

"Most forms of magic can be performed by anybody, provided he knows what to do," says Dr. Haddon;\* the practice of it requires no churches, temples, or priests. But just as we have specialists in medicine, or science, or art, so the savage has his specialist in magic, known as the medicine-man or witch-doctor. Intelligent people are surprised that anyone can believe in such puerile and foolish ideas as magic and witchcraft; but, as Professor Tylor remarks, "they are intelligible if one can only bring one's mind down to the childish state they belong to."† He explains the principle of it as follows:—

"The practical knowledge of nature possessed by savages is so great that it cannot have been gained by mere chance observations; they must have been for ages constantly noticing and trying new things, to see how far their behavior corresponded with that of things partly like them. And where the matter can be brought to practical trial by experiment, this is a thoroughly scientific method. But the rude man wants to learn and do far more difficult things—how to find where there is plenty of game, or whether his enemies are coming; how to save himself from the lightning, or how to hurt someone he hates but cannot safely throw a spear at. In such matters beyond his limited knowledge, he contents himself with working on resemblances or analogies of thought, which thus become the foundation of magic" (p. 339).

He gives as an illustration the action of "The North American Indian, eager to kill a bear to-morrow, will hang up a rude grass image of one and shoot it, reckoning that this symbolic act will make the real one happen," and that "The Zulu who has to buy cattle may be seen chewing a bit of wood, in order to soften the hard heart of the seller he is dealing with" (p. 340). As he remarks, a volume might be filled with accounts of such practices. When rain is wanted by the Wara tribe of Australia, a native goes secretly to a pool, "bends over and 'sings' to the water; then he takes some up in his hands, drinks it, and spits it out in various directions. After that he throws water all over himself, and, after scattering some all round, he returns quietly to his camp, and rain is supposed to follow."‡ Nor do we see how those among us who believe that because a man has never seen a certain football team defeated, therefore that team will never suffer defeat while he remains a spectator, can afford to smile at these savages.

The logic of the belief is this, says Dr. Tylor:—

"Things which are like one another behave in the same way—shooting this image of a bear is like shooting a real bear; therefore, if I shoot the image, I shall shoot a real bear. It is true that such magical proceedings, if tested by facts, prove to be worthless. But if we wonder that nevertheless they should so prevail among mankind, it may be answered that they last on even in our own country among those who are too ignorant to test them by the facts—the rustics who believe a neighbor's ill-wishing has killed their cow, and who, on true savage principles, try to punish the evil doer by putting a heart spitefully stuck full of pins up the chimney to shrivel in the smoke, that in like manner sharp pangs may pierce him and he may waste away."§

We now come to that stage in the evolution of the supernatural known as "Animism," a name applied by Dr. Tylor, in his very valuable work, *Primitive Culture*, to denote the belief by primitive man that inanimate objects, such as trees, rocks, and rivers, are possessed with a soul or living principle. From Animism has sprung all the brood of spirits, gods, angels, and devils which have afflicted mankind for uncounted ages.

Primitive man, like the child, could not clearly distinguish between what psychologists call the "objective" and the "subjective"; that is, he was unable to distinguish what went on inside his mind (the subjective) from what happened outside (the objective). As the very young child is unable to distinguish between his dreams and the realities of life,

\* A. C. Haddon, *Magic and Fetishism*, p. 50.

† E. B. Tylor, *Anthropology*, p. 339.

‡ A. C. Haddon, *Magic and Fetishism*, p. 44.

§ E. B. Tylor, *Anthropology*, pp. 340-1.

so primitive man in like manner is unable to distinguish any difference. With the savage, seeing is believing; and when he sees his friends, or enemies, or relatives, some of whom may have been dead many years, he believes he really has seen them. And when his squaw tells him that he has not moved from his place during the night, then he believes that something went out of him while he slept to meet those he had seen and spoken with.

"To what other conclusion," asks Mr. Clodd,

"can the barbaric mind come than that everybody has another self, as it has been called, which does the things dreamed of, which leaves a man for a time when he is asleep or in a fit, which leaves him altogether when he dies, but comes back, and seems the very man himself to the dreamer? The Malays do not like to wake a sleeper, lest they should hurt him by disturbing his body while his soul is out. When the Greenlander dreams of hunting or fishing or courting, he believes that the soul quits the body. The Melanesians say that the soul 'goes out of the body in some dreams, and if for some reason it does not come back, the man is found dead in the morning; when a man faints, his soul really starts on the way to Panoi [the underworld], but is sent back; the other ghosts hustle him away from the mouth [of Panoi], or his father or friend turn him back, telling him that his time is not yet come.'"

Mr. Clodd cites the personal experience of Sir Everard im Thurn, who, in his book, *Among the Indians of Guiana*, says:—

"The morning when it was important to me to get away from a camp on the Essequibo River, at which I had been detained for some days by the illness of some of my Indian companions, I found one of the invalids so enraged against me that he refused to stir. For he declared that I had taken him out during the night and had made him haul the canoe up a series of difficult cataracts. Nothing could persuade him that this was but a dream, and it was some time before he was so far pacified as to throw himself sulkily into the bottom of the canoe. At that time we were all suffering from scarcity of food, and hunger having its usual effect in producing vivid dreams, similar events frequently occurred."†

It has been observed that the dreams of primitive man are probably much more realistic than ours. Fasting and over-eating both cause vivid dreams; and savages, especially hunting tribes, often have to fast, which is followed by a gluttonous feast after a successful hunt.

Having arrived at this idea of a soul, or spirit, he carries it to its logical conclusion. Says Dr. Tylor:—

"It may have occurred to some readers that the savage philosopher ought, on precisely the same grounds, to believe his horse or dog to have a soul, a phantom-likeness of its body. This is, in fact, what the lower races always have thought, and think still; and they follow the reasoning out in a way that surprises the modern mind, though it is quite consistent from the barbarian's point of view. If a human soul seen in a dream is a real object, then the spear and shield it carries and the mantle over its shoulders are real objects too, and all lifeless things must have their thin fitting shadow-souls."‡

This idea of another self, which could come and go from the body, was reinforced and confirmed when the savage, kneeling to drink from the water, beheld a shadowy reflection of himself, which disappeared upon his trying to grasp it. Also of his shadow thrown by the sun, and the echo of his own voice mocking him from the rocks.

W. MANN.

(To be continued.)

## Bible Makers.—II.

### THE VERSATILE JOSHUA.

It is now admitted that what Freethinkers have been saying about the authorship of many of the books of the Bible is quite true; that nobody knows

when they were written, or by whom; and I think there can be no doubt in the mind of any thoughtful person that Joshua was no more the author of the book that bears his name than Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. For the purpose of having names to refer to as the accredited authors of the various books of the Bible, it will be convenient to assume that these persons were in reality responsible for the books of which they are the alleged authors. And it may at once be said that the contents of the book of Joshua show that that personage entertained not only a very good opinion of himself but a very poor one of everybody else.

When an author is writing reminiscences of his career as a General, and describing in vivid language the rapine and murder of which the soldiers under his command are guilty, is it not positively in bad taste to say a word in his own behalf, as though pleading for promotion or a pension, and to declare that "his [Joshua's] fame was noised throughout all the country"? Joshua seemed to think that fame and notoriety were much the same. In this, however, as in most other things, he greatly erred. Any murderer may get notoriety if he only displays enough brutality or callousness in the execution of the deed; but fame can only be achieved by meritorious conduct, and we have no evidence that Joshua understood what that meant.

Being the successor of Moses, he thought it incumbent on him to imitate, as far as possible, the deeds of wanton cruelty, deceit, and villainy which characterised his predecessor. Or, supposing that Joshua did not do these things, but merely recorded them as having happened for the edification of future generations, then he must have imagined that the people would be satisfied with stories of bloodshed or of the wonders wrought by the Lord for the special behoof of his chosen people. He must have thought, too, that the credulity of his readers was practically unlimited, and that it did not matter much how stupid the event was that he recorded, so long as something similar was said to have occurred before, or that nobody could doubt that such and such a miracle had been performed, if only the Lord could be placed in the background—behind the curtain, as it were—to act as the performer.

As an historian, Joshua was a dead failure. He was too ignorant to understand even ordinary events, and extraordinary occurrences simply bemuddled what little reason he may have possessed. Like all careless students of nature, he was prone to exaggerate the things he saw, and to exaggerate still more monstrously the things he did not see, but only heard spoken of by his friends and co-workers. He would have done very well for the war correspondent of a sensational Ha'penny Daily; for his special telegrams of one day could have been very easily contradicted on the day following by some other correspondent who was an "eye-witness" to the event, but did not see it "in the same light" as the gentleman who did the special.

In point of truth, Joshua was one of that class of writers who could have done his correspondence and appeared to have been on the field, just as well as in the back parlor of a Fleet-street restaurant, or in a rude tent near the seat of war. Indeed, his services during the great war that is now raging all over Europe would have been specially valuable to the proprietors of illustrated journals, who, no doubt, would have offered special terms to such a highly imaginative writer.

When Joshua wrote the account of the sun standing still upon Gideon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, he forgot for the moment in which department of the literary staff of the said journal he was engaged, and thought that his views on astronomical phenomena would be quite as acceptable to the Jewish public as his opinion on the best method of decapitating the Midianites. It was as though the sporting correspondent of a paper had ventured to send in a descriptive account of an archbishop's last sermon, or the musical critic had supplied an article on the "germ theory of disease." If Joshua meant

\* Edward Clodd, *The Story of Primitive Man*, p. 113 (1895).

† Clodd, *The Story of Primitive Man*, p. 114.

‡ Tylor, *Anthropology*, p. 346.

that the sun stood still in order to allow him to win a battle, he must have been joking; for, as every little boy now knows, the sun, so far as this earth is concerned, never moves. I once heard a parson—the Rev. J. Wilkie—say that what the writer really meant was *that the earth stood still*. But that would only make the matter a good deal worse; for if the earth, which is travelling along in space at the rate of hundreds of miles an hour, were suddenly to come to a standstill, the people and all the movable objects would be precipitated into space, and leave not one person alive to record the tale.

But what about the moon? Was not the light of the sun enough? Did Joshua imagine that a night-light would be of assistance to the daylight—a rush-light an important auxiliary to the sun? If we suppose that Joshua tried to be poetic in referring to the sun and moon, his figurative language must have got slightly mixed—he made too much of the moon. As Thomas Paine pointed out, as a figurative declaration, Joshua's is inferior to one by Mohammed, who, when a person came to expostulate with him upon his doings, retorted: "Wert thou to come to me with the sun in thy right hand, and the moon in thy left, it should not alter my career." For Joshua to have eclipsed Mohammed, he should have put the sun in one pocket of his waistcoat and the moon in the other, and used them as watches—one to time his doings by day and the other to regulate his conduct by night; or, as Paine remarks, carried them as Guy Fawkes carried his dark lanterns, and taken them out to shine "as he might happen to want them." In addition to being special reporter, historian, poet, and commander of the Israelites, Joshua varied these occupations by occasionally acting as Lord High Executioner. Among his many achievements, I find that he burned the city of Ai, and hanged the king, and performed the office of executioner (without special request) to five other crowned heads. I will not question the wisdom of this last performance; he may have got rid of some awful pests by this method, and established a precedent for similar action on behalf of outraged humanity in subsequent ages of the world's history.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

### The Radical Woman.

*A Public Address by M. M. Mangasarian,  
to the Free Religious Association (Rationalist), Chicago.  
(Reprinted with Permission.)*

WHAT other people call us, or what we call them, is of little importance. Names and labels have no more to do with ideas than the chips which float on the surface of the sea have with its weight or depth. We are as little interested in the word *radical* as in the word *conservative*. What we should conscientiously cultivate is reasonableness in everything. There are times when to be rational we have to be conservative; and then there are times when conservatism would be cowardly. The important test at all times is whether we can command for our views or acts the full support of the facts.

What is a radical? Without entering into its etymology, the word radical may be used in either a commendable or an objectionable sense. Anyone who goes to the roots of a subject, for example, or is thorough in his investigations, or follows his premises clear to the end, is a radical. In that sense of the word, I wish we were all radicals. But I am using the word this morning to designate the extremist—the man or woman who swings too far, either to the right or to the left, from what Aristotle calls "the golden mean."

In music the dividing line between harmony and discord is a very fine one. A trifle above or below the right key is discord. The right pitch alone is music. It is so in everything else. Morality is moderation. Too much, or too little, spells moral, as well as musical discord. I am using the word radical this morning to describe the out of tune man

or woman—who, instead of singing, screams. The radical, in this sense of the word, is the person who though he sings much, does not sing *true*, or though he thinks a great deal, does not think *true*.

Why do some people scream instead of speaking or singing? Perhaps it is because they have no ear for harmony and do not know that they are pitching their voices too high. In the same way there are those who have no sense of proportion, which accounts for the extravagance of the intellectual or moral notes they strike.

There are, of course, other reasons for the lack of harmony. To sing true, one must have one's voice placed. It requires time and patience to find out whether one has a soprano, or a contralto voice. In the same way there are thinkers whose thoughts are not yet placed. Drifting or floating on the waters is not navigation. Having ideas or opinions, is not reasoning. Not all well informed people are educated people. If I may mention still another cause for lack of musical harmony, it is that it is not enough to possess a splendid singing voice; the voice has to be trained to get the best results from it. Likewise, it is not enough to have knowledge or an abundance of data—to think *true* one must have an intellect that has been schooled.

But one may have all the qualifications for correct reasoning or singing, and still *scream*. In a class of children studying music, for example, when any one of them purposely raises his voice higher than the notes warrant, he does so, as a rule, to attract attention. The radical thinker is often actuated by the same motive. He is so eager to let the whole world know he is thinking, that to make sure of it he thinks *loud*. The desire to attract attention is very deeply rooted in us all, and is more responsible for eccentricity than we are, perhaps, willing to admit. Why does a man dress as a dandy, or why is a woman overdressed, or the other way? The loud dress, the loud voice, the loud ideas prove the *penchant* for attention. To be singled out, to be observed, to make people see us, to talk about us, wonder at us, tempts us to ignore the limitations imposed by the evidence, or by good taste. When men or women wear bizarre mental costumes, it is to satisfy an itching for notoriety.

Of course, there is a legitimate use for the desire for distinction. If we did not care to be pointed out and looked up to, we would lose one of the most effective inducements to great and brave deeds. It is fortunate that we do seek praise, since seeking praise encourages the effort to merit it. This criticism is directed against those who, not willing to pay the price for fame, try to steal it. To be able, for example to weigh the sun and describe the movements of the planets is knowledge, which justly honors its possessor; but the man who attracts notice by offering to communicate with the dead, or to introduce us to the society of ghosts, steals the attention of the public instead of deserving it. The witch-doctor gains notoriety by *imitating* a Darwin. Notoriety is imitation fame. Peculiar, startling, or sensational ideas and theories are often advocated for the sake of emerging from the obscurity to which our talents or character condemns us.

We never quite cease to be children. Everybody knows how very anxious children are to be observed. And what capers they play in order to occupy the centre of the stage! It is the desire to have interested and wondering auditors which causes the little boy or girl to see five hundred cats in the yard. If they saw only their cat and another, who would stop to listen to the tale? To compel attention the child resorts to exaggeration. That is often the infirmity of the *radical*.

The child nature is at least as strong in woman as it is in man. Yet a radical woman is a much more uncommon phenomenon than a radical man, and is, therefore, more likely to attract attention and to arouse interest. The average woman is hyper-conservative, which is also a form of radicalism. It is the other extreme. The objection against being too forward, or too backward is that it disturbs what

we call balance. If some women are now pitching their voices too high, the majority of them still strike a note which is too low to rhyme with modern scientific thought. In the case of the radical woman the pendulum has swung from one extreme to the other. Of the two "pitches" the low pitch is really the more alarming. The woman who screams is less of a menace than the woman who is dumb. The scream is a sign of life and lung power, as well as of will power. Muteness is a sign of intellectual anæmia. The emancipated scream; the captives are tongue-tied. But between the loud woman and the subdued, there is the *rational* woman.

The present mental qualities of woman are largely the result of her past education or miseducation. What we call *mind* is not an entity, a something ready made, or made to order, and deposited somewhere in the human frame. Mind is a record of experience. The experience makes the mind, just as climate makes the complexion. The question, Are women as gifted as the men? is a vain question, for the reason that gifts are acquired only when necessary to survival. If men are, let us say, mentally stronger, it is not because they are men, but because, for their self-preservation, mental vigor and resourcefulness were indispensable. The experience of the male was of such a nature as to friction the brain into activity and expand the faculties. If women, on the other hand, have been deficient in intellectuality, it is not because they are women, but because another set of qualities was needed for *their* self-preservation.

In primitive times, a mentally virile woman would have had scant chance for survival. The intellectually indifferent, not to say, mediocre, woman survived, because she was better adapted to the then existing environment. In those days the quality which a man admired in his wife was weakness. I am not thinking of the exceptions. The more dependent a woman, the more flattering it was to man's vanity. It gave him an opportunity to play the role of protector. The primitive husband did not ask for an equal or a rival in his wife, but for a subordinate. How could an intellectual woman have survived in a market, if I may so express myself, in which there were no bids for brains in a woman? The intellectual woman necessarily died childless, and her weaker sisters became the mothers of men. I am trying to explain that what we call *mind* is a product of experience—a supply created only by the demand. Men and women have not had the same experience; that is why they have not the same minds.

It was the woman whom man selected that survived. To express the same idea differently, it was the woman who pleased man that had a chance to live. Man also picked out the qualities which the average woman possesses to-day. To find out what were the mental and moral traits which the husband desired in his wife, we must ask what kind of a husband was the primitive man? He was a warrior—autocratic, aggressive, domineering. Only the woman who could please him became his wife, and to please him meant to submit to him, to agree with him in everything, to let him rule without conditions, to allow him his way in every instance—to let him think for her, choose for her, and decide for her. The woman, therefore, who consented to efface herself completely and to become an echo, a copy, a *thing*, so as to give all the honor and the glory to her warrior husband, became a mother, while the strong-minded woman died without issue. It pleased the husband to call his wife "the weaker vessel," which was at the same time a suggestion to her to be delicate, dependent, fragile, timid—leaning upon his strong arm for protection.

Of course, woman herself contributed to the subjugation of her sex by selecting for husband the kind of man who could defend her against the equally big and brutal men of other and hostile tribes. Thus it will be seen that what we call *mind*, is a product of circumstances. As woman's environment changes, her mentality changes too,

and the improvement in her mentality in turn becomes a new and better environment for her. The environment or experience fashions the mind, and the mind, as soon as it begins to function, becomes itself a factor in diverting or modifying experience. The parents produce the child, but the child in turn affects the character of the parents. In the same way, mind as the product of circumstances, becomes in time, not only the moulder of circumstances, but the chief circumstance.

The life of the mind is practically a new experience for woman. In view of this fact, it is not at all strange that feminine thinking, generally speaking, should still be in a formative or even chaotic stage, even more than man's, since man too is comparatively a novice in reasoning. To show their ability to think, as already explained, beginners are apt to think *loud*, hence out of tune. The newness of the experience tempts them to overplay their minds, as a child does with a new weapon.

(To be continued.)

Shall I ask the brave soldier who fights by my side  
In the cause of mankind, if our creeds agree?  
Shall I give up the friend I have valued and tried,  
If he kneel not before the same altar as me?  
From the heretic girl of my soul should I fly  
To seek somewhere else a more orthodox kiss?  
No, perish the hearts, and the laws that try  
Truth, valor, or love, by a standard like this.  
—Thomas Moore, "Come, Send Round the Wine."

The doctor sees the weakness of mankind, the lawyer its wickedness, and the theologian its stupidity.—Schopenhauer.

### In Memoriam.

AN old reader of the *Freethinker*, and, before its advent, of the *National Reformer*, Senor Adolfo de Maglia, has just sent to me the announcement of the death of his widowed mother, the Senora Ana Galbis y Tudela de Maglia.

Like her son, the deceased was a staunch Freethinker, and in her will gave the following directions (cited textually from the document itself):—

".....That the interment of her body is to be in a purely secular way, that is to say, without the presence of any priest or the use of any rite or emblem of religion, in conformity with the Freethought ideas and convictions which the testatrix practised, and as an energetic and fervid protest against all dogmatic religions opposed to reason, truth, and justice."

This decided attitude of an old Spanish Freethought lady of over ninety summers is an example worthy of record and emulation. Some ten years ago I had the pleasure of receiving her kind hospitality in Paris, and noted at the time the energy and fire of her devotion to Freethought.

The veteran of Spanish Freethinkers, José Nakens, who knew her well, speaks of the Senora de Maglia as one "who never wavered in her honest convictions." One of the provisions of her will, as stated in *El Motin*, is especially sane and sensible. She directed that her funeral should be simple and inexpensive, and that the difference in expense between a costly funeral and the cheap one which she desiderated was to be distributed in charity for the relief of necessitous Freethinkers. Her son, Adolfo de Maglia, faithfully carried out these directions.

The deceased lady, Senora de Maglia, was born on December 24, 1823, and died in Barcelona on July 10 this year, beloved of her son and admired by all who knew her.

WM. HEAFORD.

### Obituary.

We regret to report the death of Mrs. Jones, of Bearsden, daughter of Mrs. Turnbull, of Raeberry-street, Glasgow, which occurred on August 4. She bore long suffering with great fortitude. It was something of a release when this devoted wife and loving mother passed to her rest. As a sterling Freethinker she was buried at the new Kirkpatrick Cemetery with Freethought rites.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

### LONDON.

#### INDOOR.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Mr. Banham's, 56 Richmond-road, Barnsbury): Monday, August 17, at 8.30, Business Meeting—Finance, etc.

#### OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15 and 6.15, E. Burke, Lectures.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 6, Mr. Schaller, a Lecture.

EDMONTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Edmonton Green): 7.30, J. W. Rowney, a Lecture. Derby-road, Ponders End (opposite "Two Brewers"): Wednesday, August 19, at 8.30, W. Davidson, a Lecture.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley-road): 11.30, E. Burke, "The Evolution of the Solar System"; 7.30, Mr. Davidson, "Christianity and War."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Finsbury Park): 11.30, Mr. Davidson, a Lecture. Parliament Hill: 3.30, Miss Kough, a Lecture. Regent's Park (near the Fountain): 3.30, Mr. Davidson, a Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford, E.): 7, Miss Kough, a Lecture.

PROPAGANDIST LEAFLETS. New Issue. 1. *Christianity a Stupendous Failure*, J. T. Lloyd; 2. *Bible and Teetotalism*, J. M. Wheeler; 3. *Principles of Secularism*, C. Watts; 4. *Where Are Your Hospitals?* R. Ingersoll. 5. *Because the Bible Tells Me So*, W. P. Ball; 6. *Why Be Good?* by G. W. Foote. *The Parson's Creed*. Often the means of arresting attention and making new members. Price 6d. per hundred, post free 7d. Special rates for larger quantities. Samples on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—MISS E. M. VANCE, N. S. S. Secretary, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

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

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