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*Words are the only things that last for ever.*

—WILLIAM HAZLITT.

## The Great War.—I.

IT was very fortunate for me that I spent the past summer in Europe. While at times I felt a bit nervous, and was afraid I would never be able to find a ship to take me home, on the whole, I had enough stimulating experiences to compensate me fully for any anxiety or inconvenience the War may have caused me. For the first time in my life, I was face to face with the sternest realities. Such a storm had never burst upon me before. The state of mind I was in was very provocative of thought. My head was like a bee hive. In my sleep, even, I was at war—giving and receiving blows—at war with the institutions, the civilisation, the religion, which was too dilapidated, too shabby, too threadbare, too hollow, to be of any help in a crisis. I kept a diary of the impressions and events of the day, and of the alternating sunshine and storm in my own mind. I intend to quote freely from my notebook. Without going to the front, or anywhere near the firing line, I was close enough to the heart of things to catch the throb and fever of the battlefield—to feel the smart of the bullets in my flesh and hear their shrieking in the air. I was wounded and died with every brave soldier in action. I wept with every mother upon the neck of her son; and with every sweetheart I kissed her lover good-bye. At the thought of the Germans marching in shining armor and singing as they marched, "Der Wacht am Rhein"; and of the French facing the deadly fire of the siege guns, singing the "Marseillaise"; and of the English lads *playing* under the murderous fire of the enemy, and singing "It's a long way to Tipperary" I glowed all over with pride and wonder.

London offered excellent opportunities for an investigation into the causes and persons responsible for a war which, in a short time, had converted Christendom into a shambles. I had also as fair a chance to study the French phase of the question in London as I should have had if I had been in Paris. London was full of Frenchmen, and more of them kept pouring into the city every day, until one heard so much French spoken in the streets, the restaurants, the hotels, and the theatres, as to give one the illusion of being in France instead of in England. I also met many Belgian refugees, and heard their tales of woe. But, of course, I had no immediate contact with the Germans, and am not so well informed of their explanations of the causes of the conflict now raging in Western Europe. I may say that I did my best to read impartially everything I could procure about all the belligerents—the German "White Book," Bernhardt's *Germany and the Next War*, Professor Cramb's work on Treitschke and his school, and the Germanistic pamphlets containing contributions from distinguished American professors. I also read what our friend and teacher, Professor Ernst Haeckel, had to say on England's responsibility for the gory scenes of which Europe is the theatre to-day. I have, therefore, some preparation for a discussion of the War between Germany and Austria on the one hand, and the Allies on the other.

At times London had the appearance of a camp. The railway stations were jammed with departing soldiers and arriving wounded. Mere lads not yet fifteen or sixteen years old could be seen by the hundreds, dressed in soldiers' uniform and carrying rifles. Children at the age of ten, and younger even, with paper caps, wooden swords, and tin cans for drums, were marching through the streets, dressed in rags, with enough holes in their trousers to show that they had been in action. Everybody had caught the war fever. The hotel parlors were turned over to women sewing for the wounded. The newspapers, announcing now a victory and now a disaster, kept the people in a swing between hope and fear—enough to make the stoutest of them dizzy. Hardly an hour passed without witnessing the tramping of the recruits through the streets—the dear boys, marching straight into the cannon's mouth, inspired by love and duty—and the girls walking at their sides, and trying to smile.

Yet London was not so deeply moved by the War as Paris. That joyous city was a veritable sepulchre; her radiant boulevards were as sombre as the alleys in a cemetery. Imagine Paris at night—the lights extinguished, the stores closed, the amusement halls like morgues! The only signs of life were in the clouds, dropping fire upon the heads of those below. Were the awful scenes of 1870 to be re-enacted! Poor Paris! Was she again to become the target for Prussian guns!

In Berlin—in splendid Berlin, fast getting to be the rival in beauty of Paris, and in activity of London—the agitation of the people must have been equally intense. Germany exposed to the attacks of seven nations! Whose fault was that? Seven nations on top of one! A nation for each day in the week for the Germans to fight! Whose diplomacy was that? Think of a country, in the noon-day of its prosperity, in the zenith of its power—young and lusty—manœuvred into the mouths of the cannons of seven nations! Whose *chef-d'oeuvre* was that? We cannot even imagine the state of feeling of the people of Germany when the distant thud or *r-r-r-ump* of the cannon called every able-bodied man to the front. "We win, or we perish!" cries the nation, as it leaps forth as one man—one against seven iron-clad powers!

I see by my notebook that the first word I have written down and commented on is the word *militarism*. By militarism the majority of people mean the Prussian War Party. The indiscriminate outcry against militarism did not impress me. If by militarism be meant extensive and expensive warlike preparations, all the nations of the world are guilty in proportion to their resources. Great Britain spent eighty millions—nearly half a billion dollars—annually on her Army and Navy. To say that a nation with so colossal a war budget was not prepared for war, or that it is free from militarism, would not be a defensible statement to make. But if by militarism be meant the nation armed for defensive purposes, armed to maintain its sovereignty, armed to compel aggressors, invaders, chauvinists, or imperialists dreaming of world conquests, to beware, then I am for it heart and soul.

—A lecture delivered in Chicago, by

M. M. MANGASARIAN.

## Sir Oliver Lodge and Immortality.—II.

(Concluded from p. 803.)

I SAID last week that Sir Oliver Lodge's lecture might properly be called a "tendency lecture." Statements are made in order to support a desired conclusion, and without, apparently, any other reason. For example, I do not think that any careful scientific thinker would, to-day, define evolution as being an "unfolding." That conception properly belongs to what one may call the infantile stages of evolution. The root idea here was that a seed contained a miniature plant, a germ or a cell contained a miniature animal, and the evolution of plant or animal consisted in an "unfolding"—on a larger scale—of their microscopical contents. Of course, this is not true. The seed does not contain the fully formed flower, any more than the germ contains the fully formed animal, or the acorn an oak tree. All we have is the possibility of growth or development along a particular line, partly determined by the arrangement of forces represented by the seed or germ, and partly determined by environmental forces. That is the true conception of evolution; but it is easy to see why this conception of "unfolding" is stressed by Sir Oliver Lodge and other religious writers. It supports the notion that instead of living phenomena being a part of natural phenomena as a whole, it belongs to a class apart, and is merely seeking the appropriate physical conditions to "unfold" itself. And of that there is not the slightest shred of evidence.

Here is another example of the same kind. Everyone must have observed how fond the modern "mystical" Christian—perhaps one ought to say "mystified" Christian—is of appealing to the East. The East is a long way off; its habits are far removed from ours; and in this we find another illustration of the truth that the less we know about anything the more useful it is to religion. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries most Europeans were willing to credit almost any marvel concerning the East. Fabulous wealth, men with eyes between their shoulders, heads under their arms, or stupendous powers of magic, were all attributed to the East; and although we have outgrown the physical aspect of these wonders, mental marvels are still placed to the credit of the gorgeous East. So Sir Oliver, having to admit that Western science is not inclined to support his view of the soul, says:—

"Mind you, some nations have attended more to spiritual things than to the others. We have some friends from the East here. The East has very much to instruct the West in. We can instruct them in business habits and practical life; they can instruct us in things relating to the soul and meditation. They enter into the silence and meditate a great deal more than we do."

Now this appeal to the East is pure delusion. The notion that because in the East the figure of the religious Fakir has never died out, therefore it *knows* more about the soul than the West is simply ridiculous. True knowledge on any subject is not gained by retiring into solitude and merely meditating; that is to invite and to secure illusion. Meditation is only valuable on the basis of actual knowledge. Meditation without knowledge is of no use to anyone. There was a time when the West did as the Eastern religious Fakir still does. It meditated without knowledge; and the result was the religious rubbish of the Dark Ages. Sir Oliver does not realise, apparently, that the West has passed through, has actually outgrown, that stage of religious thought which still has power in the East. Nor does he appreciate the fact that the development of life and knowledge in the East is killing the method of the religious Fakir in the East in exactly the same way as it has been killed in the West.

"Once you realise," says Sir Oliver, "that consciousness is something outside the particular mechanism which it makes use of, you will realise

that survival of existence is natural, that it is the simplest thing." Quite so. Once we bring ourselves to the point of believing that twice two make five, it is a simple thing to agree that half of the sum of twice two equals two-and-a-half. But it is not a question of believing this or that; it is solely a question as to whether we have enough evidence to justify the holding of a particular belief. Sir Oliver says that he possesses this evidence, which may or may not be so; but in any case it is evidence only to him, and may be quite inadequate to compel belief in others. The evidence, we are told, "is recorded in the volumes of a scientific society such as we have got, and there is more evidence for everybody who is able to study the subject." Sir Oliver is referring to the Society for Psychical Research, and he speaks as though the evidence published in the Society's volumes was absolutely conclusive, and as though this evidence was unknown to sceptics. Neither of these assumptions are justified by the facts. Far from the evidence being conclusive, it is not even the fact that all the members of the Psychical Research Society are convinced that the evidence collected proves the reality of a future life. Many doubt it very strongly; and while that is the case it is hardly admissible to point to these volumes as though they contained unimpeachable evidence for a future life.

Nor is there any need to recommend these volumes to sceptics as though here was a whole field of evidence with which they were unacquainted. Thoughtful students of the question know these volumes well. They are able to study the evidence that has been collected—some of them have written about it, and they have not been slow to point out its inconclusive character. And their dissidence, along with that of many members of the Society for Psychical Research, quite destroys the value of Sir Oliver's declaration "on definite scientific grounds" that "we shall continue to exist." Such language is quite out of place. To state a thing "on definite scientific grounds" should mean, and ought to mean, that the evidence is of such a nature that it will compel conviction with all who examine it. But in the case of Sir Oliver Lodge this is no more than a personal conviction. It may be a guarantee of his sincerity in the matter; but it is his accuracy, not his sincerity, that is in question.

Sir Oliver Lodge believes that "we ourselves are not limited to the few years that we live on this earth; we shall go on without it; we shall continue to exist; we shall certainly survive," on the ground that he has actually conversed with departed friends. That is, he believes not in a mere survival, but in the survival of *personality*—which is what one ought to mean when they talk about immortality. Well, it is interesting to note how this belief is introduced by him. He says:—

"Mind and consciousness are not limited to the brain. That is an extraordinary doctrine that people have—that the brain is the mind. Why do they think that? Because if you destroy the brain your mind appears to go. What goes? Not your mind really out of existence. Your consciousness is still there, but it can no longer manifest itself, for it has lost its instrument of manifestation."

Now, I do not know that I should care to say that the brain is the mind, any more than I should care to say that motion is heat. From one point of view the statement would be true enough, but it would, from another point of view, be a very loose way of stating the case, and it is curious that Sir Oliver should prefer the loose to the more exact statement.

Still, even accepting Sir Oliver's position that brain and mind are two quite distinct things, bearing to each other, to follow his own illustration, the relation that an organist bears to an organ, it is impossible to see how he can get the survival of personal identity on this ground. For, note, that there are all sorts of personalities. As Sir Oliver Lodge would say, the manifestations of mind are varied in form. How is this to be accounted for? The materialistic expla-

nation is, of course, simple—and it covers the facts. Brain and mind being related as organs to function, variation in the one corresponds to variation in the other. And this is so self-evident that the Spiritualist admits its truth. He does not, at least he need not, deny that in some way mind and brain are related, as organs to function, and, consequently, that the variations in the two will synchronise. But he argues that this is not due to the inseparability of brain and mind, but because mind manifests itself through a material organism, and its expression is therefore conditioned by the medium through which it passes.

Now, granting all this to be the case, it does not help in the least a theory of the survival of personality. For, even on this theory, the creation of the personalities, we know, is due to the difference of bodily constitution. Sir Oliver Lodge is different from Bill Sykes, because the instrument through which mind manifests itself is different. If Bill Sykes possessed the brain that Sir Oliver Lodge possesses and had passed through the same experiences, he would think and believe as Sir Oliver thinks and believes. This truth is still further emphasised by the fact—admitted by the Spiritualist and Materialist—that any alteration in the brain, by accident or by disease, entails a corresponding alteration in the mental manifestations. From both points of view, then, the brain remains the condition of the persistence of personality. Destroy the brain—and there is no question of its destruction—and, so far as we can see, the sole condition of the continued existence of personality disappears. The survival of mind—in the shape of personality—is thus as inconceivable on the hypothesis advanced by Sir Oliver Lodge as it is on that held by the Materialist.

The truth is, that what Sir Oliver Lodge puts forward as a scientifically demonstrated truth is no more than a personal conviction that owes its being to strong religious prepossessions. He has experienced certain things, and assumes that they demonstrate the reality of a future life. Others have had much the same experience, and have regarded either the experiences themselves, or the explanations offered, with grave suspicion. It is not quite true to say, as Sir Oliver Lodge does, that the scientific world refuses to listen or to examine the evidence. It has done both, and its conclusion has been adverse. To say that people will not listen because they will not believe, is acting as religious preachers have always acted. It is the badge of their tribe. And there is a limit even to the utility of listening. When one has listened for ninety-nine times to a story and found it worthless, it is hardly to be guilty of culpable scepticism to decline listening on the hundredth occasion. From the dawn of history men have been proclaiming the reality of a future life. They have professed to have the strongest convictions and the clearest proofs. It has enlisted human attention and sympathy more than any other single subject. And the fact that, in spite of everything, the number believing in it steadily grows smaller, is surely presumptive proof against its veracity.

C. COHEN.

### God's Sexlessness.

NOTHING is more marvellous than the garrulity of ignorance. The less a man knows about a subject the greater is his fluency in discussing it. Of God absolutely no knowledge is obtainable, and yet his alleged spokesmen are innumerable, and their communications of the most voluminous and intimate character. There is no building in the world large enough to contain the books which have been written about him, or even the sermons delivered in his name. Judging by their discourses, one would naturally infer that preachers possess encyclopædic knowledge of the Supreme Being; but it is their total ignorance that inspires their tongues. Three or four times a week

they undertake to supply their fellow-beings with full information concerning his thoughts, purposes, and deeds. Prebendary Webster, of London, assured us a few weeks ago that God has thrust us into the present War; that it is his quarrel, not ours; and that our prayers for victory are not answered because we do not praise him sufficiently. But the most startling statement about God comes from Mr. R. J. Campbell, of the City Temple. It occurs in a sermon published in the *Christian World Pulpit* for December 16, and we must give it in his own words:—

"Deity is of no sex. We have to use limiting terms when alluding to the Divine Being. It is just as inadequate to describe God as father as to describe him as mother; he is neither—and both."

We are aware that the theories of sex are practically numberless, but sexless beings are non-existent. We were told in our childhood that angels were of no sex, and that after death mankind would resemble them; but we have learned since that angels and a second life are alike figments. But even as children we were taught to regard God as belonging to the male sex, and it is well known that throughout the Bible the pronouns "he," "him," and "his" are applied to him. Both Jehovah and the Christian Deity have invariably been spoken of as males. There are, indeed, a few indications that Jehovah was double-sexed. In Genesis i. 26, 27, we find this remarkable language:—

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.....And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

Be that as it may, it is a well-attested fact that most Pagan deities were double-sexed. Herodotus informs us that, originally, the Persians did not think that the gods had the same nature with man, but he adds:—

"At a later period they began the worship of Urania, which they borrowed from the Arabians and Assyrians. Mylitta is the name by which the Assyrians know this Goddess, whom the Arabians call Alitta, and the Persians Mitra" (B. I. C. 131).

Who has not read of the Gods and Goddesses of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, all of whom had zealous worshippers? Indeed, a sexless deity is inconceivable.

"Deity is of no sex," Mr. Campbell dogmatically asserts; but, though of no sex, he is said to be in possession of all the qualities of fatherhood and motherhood at their best. It is an inadequate description of God to say that he *is* father, or that he *is* mother; "he is neither—and both." What can you make of a man who talks like that? "Deity is of no sex"; he is neither father nor mother, though he acts as if he were both. He is neither male nor female, yet partakes of the characteristics of both sexes. The following is a fine sample of Mr. Campbell's method of reasoning:—

"Those qualities which we are accustomed to associate with motherhood at its best must be Divine qualities; they come forth from God, or we should never know them. If human motherhood is beautiful and worthy of reverence, if it possesses a value for us which nothing can replace, it is because its source is in the heart of God, and it is unceasingly nourished and inspired therefrom."

As a matter of undeniable fact, motherhood at its best is an instinct that has taken countless millenniums to develop into its present state of perfection in woman. Maternal qualities, of a high order, are exhibited among exceedingly low animals, and they steadily improve as one ascends towards the present summit of the evolutionary process. A female stork is as devoted to her offspring as any human mother can be, and nothing can be more beautiful than the unhesitating manner in which she sacrifices her life in their defence when their safety is threatened. No, "those qualities which we are accustomed to associate with motherhood at its best" have not come forth from God, but are the products of an extremely long course of evolution. Does Mr. Campbell really mean to say that motherhood at its best would be an impossibility if

there were no God with an infinite maternal heart? With most of what he tells us about human motherhood we are, of course, in complete agreement. Whatever is distinctive and special in motherhood is the most beautiful thing in the world. There is nothing that can for a moment be compared with it. It is the holiest and most exalted reality known to us. Above and beyond it there is nothing, Mr. Campbell's God being merely misguided fancy's product.

The reverend gentleman's description of his sexless Deity is highly amusing. Listen:—

"We can think of God as strong and masculine, inflexibly righteous, sternly just in his judgments. We can visualise him under these aspects without any difficulty, cannot think of him without them; but perhaps his more gracious qualities do not so readily force themselves upon the imagination. Even though we call him a God of love, and our Father, fully believing what we say, and deriving great comfort from it, the thought of his mercifulness and faithfulness, his inalienable, yearning solicitude for our welfare, is not, as a rule, equally clear to our conceptions."

We maintain, on the contrary, that it is quite impossible, with the history of the world in our mind's eye, to think intelligently and honestly of God in either of those capacities. Can you point to a single occasion during the last two thousand years on which he whom you call the absolute Sovereign of the Universe granted a tangible manifestation of his strength and masculinity, his inflexible righteousness, and his sternly just judgment? In what war has he ever defended right against might? The Bible tells us that he has a mighty arm, but when did he put it forth to protect the weak against the greed and lust of the strong? Has he not permitted beautiful Belgium to become a vast heap of black ruins, and its innocent people miserable exiles on the face of the earth? Has he not allowed Germany to shell three important towns on our north-east coast and kill and wound many harmless civilians within their borders? Surely such happenings cannot be cited as evidences that the world is governed by a God of justice and love. Mr. Campbell is of opinion that our Heavenly Father is neither the soft sentimentalist preached by many modern evangelists, nor the stern, cold-hearted sovereign the Paritans believed him to be, but the sexless being who is really neither father nor mother, yet possesses and exercises the attributes of both. Well, whatever God is or is not, whether he exists or does not exist, there is no doubt whatever but that the minister of the City Temple plays the part of a sentimentalist with a vengeance in the pulpit. Fancy his having the temerity to assure a man that what he cannot bear, God will bear for him; that if he suffers, it is not because God is indifferent to his case, but because he needs that pain in order to bless and exalt him, and that not one pang will be permitted beyond what that holy purpose requires. Such a Gospel is a lie, and tends to emasculate those who are foolish enough to listen to it.

The sexless Deity has an only begotten Son who became a man, and Mr. Campbell declares that we do not need to look further than the man Christ Jesus "for the meaning of motherhood in God." "Was ever any man so strong as Jesus?" he exultantly asks; to which question we have no hesitation in returning an affirmative answer. Many men have been much stronger than the Gospel Jesus. A genuinely strong man would not have broken down, as Jesus is reported to have done when he realised that a cruel death was at hand. Socrates did not enter Gethsemane and pray that he might not drink the hemlock. Giordano Bruno faced the flames without a tremor, and died a braver death than Jesus, which he would not have had to die had it not been for the superstitious belief in the Galilean. "Was ever woman more loyally tender to her own?" Mr. Campbell again asks; and again we boldly answer in the affirmative. Tenderness was not a conspicuous feature of Jesus' treatment of his disciples, while all others were denounced in the strongest terms. How often did he lose patience

with and severely scold his small band of followers. Against all who did not take him at his own valuation his wrath was terrible, and Mr. Campbell exaggerates when he characterises his love for his own as "sweet beyond words." Well, out of the Gospel Jesus the Church has constructed Christ, and Christ reigns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords; and we know to our sorrow with what disastrous results. God is now in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and in the name of both Christendom is waging the bloodiest and savagest war in all history.

We conclude, therefore, that whether the Deity be of no sex or not, the belief in him has done nothing but harm, and that the sooner it dies out the better it will be for mankind.

J. T. LLOYD.

### "The Cosmic Roots of Love."—III.

BY REV. HENRY M. SIMMONS.

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(Concluded from p. 806.)

THE harmony of nations and the folly of their quarrels was also taught more and more by eminent men, from Sully and Grotius onward. Voltaire wrote most earnestly against wars. Benjamin Franklin said there never had been and never would be a good one. Jeremy Bentham denounced war as "mischief on the largest scale." Robert Hall condemned it as "the temporary repeal of all the principles of virtue." Carlyle asked whether the French and English soldiers who "blow the souls out of one another" have any real reason for it; and he answered, "Busy as the devil is, not the slightest." Long before General Sherman, Channing said that a battlefield is a vast "exhibition of crime," and that "a more fearful hell in any region of the universe cannot well be conceived." Auguste Comte closed his "Positive Philosophy" with congratulation that the old evil was ending; and at about the same time Emerson wrote that "war is on its last legs" and "begins to look like an epidemic insanity." Charles Sumner called it "international lynch-law" with words "infinitely evil and accursed;" and he said that the greatest value of the Springfield arsenal was that it had inspired Longfellow's poem against war. Theodore Parker wrote, "Posterity will damn into deep infamy that government which allows a war to take place in the middle of the nineteenth century." Even during our Mexican War, Parker denounced it as "mean and infamous"—as not only a "great boy fighting a little one," but as a fight where "the big boy is in the wrong, and tells solemn lies to make his side seem right." So Lowell opposed that war of his own country—made Hosea Biglow "call it murder," and made Parson Wilbur rebuke it in behalf of a higher "patriotism" and of that truer country which is not territory, but justice. In 1848 and 1849 great Peace Congresses for international arbitration and disarmament met in Brussels and Paris. At the latter Victor Hugo predicted the day when cannon would be obsolete and seen only in museums as curiosities. Even England, during a whole generation of peace, had reached the "belief that wars were things of the past;" and Buckle soon after wrote that the national taste for them had become "utterly extinct."

The work of union continued, and even the wars that followed were sometimes in its favor. Our own Civil War was in the name of "the Union." Italy was at last united again. The great German empire was organised where a score of petty States had once opposed each other. But union has been advanced most by the peaceful processes of industry, trade, travel, intercourse of every kind. Victor Hugo contrasted the great Industrial Exposition at Paris, where the nations had come together to learn good from each other, with "that terrible international exposition called a battlefield." Even the electric

flashes through the Atlantic cable moved Whittier to sing,—

"Weave on, swift shuttle of the Lord,  
Beneath the sea so far,  
The bridal-robe of earth's accord,  
The funeral-shroud of war."

Every peaceable ship is a fuller shuttle for that shroud; every railway train, with its merchandise and mail, adds its thread to that bridal-robe. Through these secular agencies, human sympathy has already widened until men give their tears and treasure for suffering heathen around the earth, whom once they would have thought it sacred duty to slay. The very laws of the world are working for the true Christianity and the final union of mankind.

Not, indeed, that we are near it yet. The nations still try to out-trick each other in trade. In the most "Christian" nations the citizens sometimes do; and possessions are not shared with perfect brotherhood even in the Church. No longer is Ananias struck dead for keeping back part of his property, but he and Sapphira sit safely in their pew, with no question about their land. No longer is Dives sent to "hell" on account of his wealth, but has become a deacon, and the preacher has found a way to get the camel through the needle's eye. Nor is Lazarus as peaceful as he used to be. He is ready to dynamite, not Dives only, but every Lazarus who will not join his strike to cut off the country's needed coal or beef.

For the spirit of *violence* still survives to rend society. It inspires not only the poor and ignorant, but their leaders and rulers, and sometimes takes possession of a nation. That long dream of peace to which we have referred was broken by a most destructive series of wars. Those of the ten years ending in 1871 are said by Mulhall to have cost nearly a million and a half of lives and nearly six billions of dollars. Since then the armaments in Europe have much further increased. A standard new History tells us that the "civilised Christian nations" now occupying the old Roman territory, though no longer in danger from outside barbarians, yet keep "under arms ten or twelve times the forces" of the pagan emperors. Military expenditures are vastly greater than any other. Even in our own country, in 1899, the Naval and War Departments and pensions consumed nearly three-fourths of the entire expenditures of the national government. President Eliot recently reminded us that the sum granted to our great Agricultural Department for a year was "about the cost of one day of the war with Spain;" while the annual amount given to the beneficent work of fish-culture was less than that spent in maintaining one battleship. Fifty years ago Charles Sumner said: "Every ship of war that floats costs more than a well-endowed college; every sloop of war, more than the largest library in our country." To-day, battleships are far more costly and numerous, and eminent Americans who profess much zeal for Christ want to increase them.

They want to use them, too; and even preachers are not always opposed to this. General Francis A. Walker wrote, in 1869, that in five years' pretty constant attendance at church, and in listening to sermons from fifty different pulpits, he had "not heard a single discourse which was devoted to the primitive Christian idea of peace, or which contained a perceptible strain of argument or appeal for international good will." A few years ago we kept our Christmas season of "peace on earth" by a clamor for a mighty war with England about a Venezuelan boundary. Our people and press had just been crying out against the horror of a proposed pugilistic fight between two fools in Texas, but now became eager to send into the ring half a million Christians to engage in battles beside which prize-fights would be bland and benevolent. Some even argued that our national character would be ennobled by a war, and our moral tone improved by bombarding a few towns and butchering their people. The excitement passed, and how that boundary question was settled few now know or care. But we have since tried that method of ethical training, though on a much smaller

and safer scale. The ideals of the battlefield and of the "water-cure" have spread among the people, yet without the predicted moral improvement. Indeed, violence seems to have become unusually popular, strikers club and kill other workmen with mediæval ardor, and now and then a community gathers with the greatest delight to watch the writhings of a negro burning to death. In pessimistic moments one sometimes feels that our civilisation is little more than a film, beneath which the old savagery is still seething.

These evils, however, are exceptional, and we must not make too much of them. A little bad gets all attention, while the great current of good ones goes on unheeded, just because it is so great and common. The bad may even be a sign of progress; and part of the violence to-day is a passionate outcry against wrongs that have long been allowed, and that must be ended. But, amid the violence, peaceful methods are advancing, and arbitration is more and more settling labor troubles and preventing wars. Even the wars that do come are no longer between the foremost nations, but have mostly sunk into expeditions of some powerful people to conquer some feeble one. Even these inglorious conquests have become so difficult and expensive that they will not often be attempted; while real war between two great powers would be so vastly more so that M. Bloch pronounced it already impossible. Certainly, war seems destined to die at length by its own growth, to kill itself by its costliness. Even now, two equal nations could not long continue it without the bankruptcy of both.

So do the laws of progress work for peace. A wise man, when challenged, replied that any fool can propose a duel, but it takes two fools to fight. The nations will yet learn this. Already they are questioning the wisdom of wasting most of their wealth in endless preparation for wars which can be avoided, and which cannot come without mutual ruin. Already they see a fallacy in the system which spends millions on a battleship that soon becomes useless by the invention of a better one, and which is for ever improving walls to resist cannon, and then improving cannon to destroy the walls. They begin to see the folly of fortifying boundaries at infinite expense, when that long one between us and British America has been safe for nearly a century, without walls or warship, by mere mutual agreement. They see something worse than folly in the system which uses our noble youth like Falstaff's ragamuffins—as "food for powder" and "to fill a pit"—and, sometimes, to fulfil viler purposes. For the moral fallacy, too, is more and more seen. Why condemn brutality and crime at home, and then cultivate them abroad? Why hang for killing one man, and honor for killing a hundred? Why imprison a starving woman for stealing a loaf, and then praise rulers or soldiers for looting cities and stealing a whole country? Shall justice be abolished by a national boundary, and the moral law stop at the State line?

Emerson once said, "The arch-abolitionist, older than John Brown, and older than the Shenandoah Mountains, is Love, whose other name is Justice, which was before Alfred, before Lycurgus, before slavery, and will be after it." That same Love and Justice, older than battleships or the brutality that wants them, is still here—was alive before wars began, and will be after they are ended.

Doubtless this principle of union will work on until it links all nations by just laws, and settles their quarrels by peaceful courts. It will also unite all classes in them. It will not, however, cement society in any spiritless communism like an archaic sponge, or bind men in any tyrannic labor union which denies liberty to its members. For individualism also has been an aim in Nature—from rushing worlds to roaming bees and soaring birds and free souls. The perfect system will combine fraternity with freedom—"liberty and union, one and inseparable, now and for ever."

This principle will perfect religion also. So ancient prophets and apostles taught. So the best modern ones have taught. Dr. Putnam said the one thing

he worked for was "the sense of universal unity and brotherhood." Dr. Channing not only made this his chief aim, but saw it as the substance of religion, and said, "The love of God is but another name for the love of essential benevolence and justice." So Emerson declared this sentiment not only "the essence of all religion," but the essence of Deity: "If a man is at heart just, then in so far is he God: the immortality of God, the majesty of God, do enter into that man with justice." These words seemed profane, but they are almost the same which the apostle wrote: "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us," for "God is love." Some pious people slur love as "not religion," but "only ethics." Only ethics! Only love; that is, according to the apostle, only *God*! But this is exactly what pious people were seeking. The "cosmic roots of love" are also those of religion.

Such is the sweep of this principle of union. It is indeed a "cosmic" principle, working from the nebula to now—from the primal atoms to the perfect civilisation and religion. The great Kant adored two wonders—the stars above and the moral law within. But the two wonders are one, and all the more wonderful because one. The moral law within is the higher music of the same law which "the morning stars sang together" and have been singing ever since. It is sung ever more clearly through creation—from solar systems up to human society, from nebular mist up to minds that outshine the stars, and to souls and sentiments that hope to outlast the stars. It has brought love. Rather, it is love, and has been love from the first. Its lesson is to work for love now, and to trust the Love eternal.

### The Desert of Theology.

THERE is a land where sunshine never cheers  
The garish day, the bleak and woeful earth;  
No moon e'er gilds the joyless barren spheres,  
No sound of song, no whisperings of mirth,  
No bridal blossoms and no happy birth;  
But all is gloom with musings of despair,  
Each day declines lived out with little worth,  
Each season brings no brightened vision rare,  
For joy of life can find no place to wander there.

The confines of this land of blood and tears  
Are wrought of parchment, force, and bitter hate;  
Flunkeys and fools, and madmen with their leers,  
Patch up the walls of this forlorn estate,  
Doomed to decay forever by stern Fate;  
Yet those who live and toil within its walls  
Make fearful moan, but not their toil abate,  
From birth, from early morn, or when night falls,  
But struggle on, till Death his love words sweetly calls.

WILLIAM REPTON.

### THE LITTLE VAGABOND.

Dear mother, dear mother, the Church is cold,  
But the alehouse is healthy, and pleasant, and warm;  
Besides, I can tell where I am used well,  
Such usage in heaven will never do well.

But, if at the Church they would give us some ale,  
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,  
We'd sing and we'd pray all the livelong day,  
Nor never once wish from the Church to stray.

Then the parson might preach, and drink, and sing,  
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring;  
And modest Dame Lurch, who is always at Church,  
Would not have bandy children, nor fasting, nor birch.

And God; like a father, rejoicing to see  
His children as pleasant and happy as he,  
Would have no more quarrel with the devil or the barrel,  
But kiss him, and give him both drink and apparel.

—William Blake.

### Acid Drops

Mr. Lloyd George writes to the *Methodist Times* that he has been visiting the battlefield in France, and was quite surprised at what he saw. Among other things he observed a French officer telling a wounded Prussian prisoner that he need be under no alarm as the Allies treated all the wounded alike—which we quite believe to be the truth. It is no more than is usual amongst civilised nations, even when they are engaged in such an uncivilised thing as warfare. But Mr. Lloyd George had to find a *Christian* moral, and he does it in this way:—

"I marvelled that this exhibition of goodwill amongst men who were sworn foes should be possible amid such surroundings, until my eyes happened to wander down a lane, where I saw a long row of wagons each marked with a great red cross. Then I knew who had taught these brave men the lesson of humanity that will gradually, surely, overthrow the reign of hate. Christ had not died in vain."

Mr. Lloyd George ought to know that wounded enemies received attention long before the institution of the Red Cross Society. That, indeed, had nothing Christian about its origin. It was started to look after the wounded because the purely military arrangements to this end were so ineffective. Its adoption of the Cross as a mark of recognition was natural, but yet accidental. To say that the Cross had taught these men humanity is sheer nonsense. Mr. Lloyd George ought to recollect that the wars in which wounded enemies have received least consideration have been those in which religion has entered most largely. When men are fighting an ordinary battle the expression, "sworn foes," is more or less symbolic. Very few of the men on the one side bear any personal enmity to those on the other; and, therefore, when the fighting is over the enmity dies down. But when people are led to fight in a religious war, each man feels himself to be in grim reality a sworn foe of everyone on the other side. And that feeling, as all experience teaches, dies out neither easily nor rapidly.

Mr. Lloyd George rather ingenuously cites massacres by troops in pre-Christian times, and adds "these were the accompaniments of civilised warfare before the advent of Christ." But why go back so far? Our pious Chancellor must surely be aware of the fact that massacres have commonly accompanied all wars until very recent times. More, for cold-blooded brutality, he need go no farther away than the country that has suffered so terribly during the present War—Belgium. History—Christian or non-Christian—contains nothing so deliberately barbarous as the massacres of the inhabitants of the Belgian cities by the Spanish Christians, and the slaughter of the Waldenses and Albigenses by Christian soldiers outdid in horror anything that the present War has seen. Such special pleading is quite unnecessary. The atrocities committed, when every allowance has been made, are bad enough, and ought to excite the indignation of decent people everywhere. Mr. Lloyd George's way of putting it must just be taken as an example of the disturbing influence of Christian prejudice.

The English Churches did well the other day by their special time of prayer. The Kaiser rested a bit in communion with the Lord, and during that time a powerful German fleet was prepared to make a raid upon some undefended towns on the English East Coast, in direct violation of the Hague Convention which the Kaiser himself had signed—but that, we all know, was "only a scrap of paper." Scarborough, Whitby, and other seaside resorts were nicely bombarded, without a gun to reply with. All they had to trust to was the God of intercession, who appears to have neglected them altogether. Hundreds of peaceable civilians—men, women, and children—were slain without a moment's notice. Then the German fleet heard the distant thunder of the British ships that were not made in Germany, so they made fast tracks for the land of their birth, which they reached in safety. We wonder what the British Christians think of their God now? What he thinks of them must be an easy problem.

From 8 o'clock on Wednesday morning until 8 o'clock on Thursday morning was the time devoted to prayer in the Cathedral. It was at first decided that women should not be allowed to remain after 9 o'clock at night, but eventually the hour was altered to 11 o'clock, and those who were there at that hour were allowed to remain, but newcomers were not admitted. One wonders why women could not be trusted in a Christian cathedral, or what a twenty-four hours' praying was supposed to accomplish? These people seem to treat God as a cute youngster

does its parents. Sheer persistency often does the trick. However, the value of the performance may be gauged by the fact that it was during the time these people were praying that the German gunboats were bombarding the East Coast.

January 3 is the day set apart in England as a day of prayer on account of the War. We should have thought the St. Paul's experiment was enough for awhile, but the motto of the clergy is evidently "Business as usual." In this Day of Prayer, however, the English clergy are not to have it all their own way. The Archbishops and Bishops of Germany have ordered Sunday, January 10, to be observed as a general day of prayer and repentance. Both sides will pray; both will repent—and both will go on as usual.

In issuing a notice for the English "Day of Humble Prayer and Intercession," the Archbishops of Canterbury and York say:—

"Never was there a time when the 'agreement' in prayer, to which so much is promised, has been so widely extended. The Roman Catholics and the Nonconformists in the United Kingdom have consented to co-operate with us. But, more than this, the Church of France is doing the same, and we have reason to believe that, so far as is possible in the circumstances, the Church in Belgium will do likewise. The Church of the great Russian Empire has been informed of our intention, and we may thankfully count upon sympathy in that direction. In neutral countries, too, and especially in America, there will be many to join in our prayers. We trust that throughout our Empire there will be a mighty voice of prayer raised to our Heavenly Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace."

The Archbishops, between them, might at least be accurate. The Church of France is not joining in the Day of Prayer, for the reason that there is no Church of France in existence. The Church in France may join in, but that is all. All the clergy with all the Allies will willingly join in prayer for the success of the allied forces, because they are fighting a common enemy, and are anxious for his destruction. And it is worth noting that this co-operation between Christians only becomes possible on the basis of hatred for someone else. So much for the value of the Christian doctrine of love.

The *Church Times* is hoping that the War will open up a brighter future for the Church in France. It says that Frenchmen have often treated the Church as an alien enemy, but the suspicion of the French workmen will be set at rest on observing the conduct of the priests during the War. Well, it is just possible that some people will form a better idea of the clergy as men than they did before. But the *Church Times* is very much mistaken if it imagines that the War will make any difference to the general policy of the Church in France once the War is over, or that those who opposed the Church before will embrace it in the future. Opposition to the Church in France, like opposition to the Church elsewhere, was based upon the perception of the truth that its strength threatened the wellbeing of society. It was not the expression of a mood, but the outcome of a deep and sincere conviction. Naturally, so long as the War lasts, and so long as national security and independence is threatened, internal quarrels are dropped, and amongst these the fight against the control of the secular State by clerical influences. But with the coming of peace the old social divisions and clash of opinions will reappear, and for our part we should be sorry were it otherwise.

The last sentence may be open to misapprehension, and a word of explanation is advisable. Very much has been said from the pulpit—as though it were something to be pleased at—that this War has had the beneficial effect of suspending all social and political quarrels; that threatened strikes, etc., have not materialised; that everything has been forgotten in the desire to defeat a common enemy. Quite so; and we agree as to the necessity for this; but we do not agree as to its being a move in the right direction. However poor many of our political and social quarrels are, society develops by the contest of opposing ideals and opinions. There is simply no other method by means of which progress may be achieved. And to suspend this kind of warfare is not a good thing, but a bad thing; it means, not progress, but stagnation or retrogression. It is the suspension of warfare on a higher scale in favor of warfare on a lower scale. And the pulpits, in praising this as one of the beneficent consequences of the War, are showing themselves to be, as usual, the enemies of sane and orderly progress.

The Church Army has received a letter concerning a late subscriber, as follows: "Mrs. Blank is dead, and would be therefore glad if the Church Army would cease sending

more appeals. She is no longer able to send monetary support, much as she would like to do so."

The sub-editors have been using their biggest type to narrate the story of a German officer's narrow escape from a concentration camp in a packing-case, in which he was boxed up for thirty-six hours, with a rug, biscuits, and cheese. What a pity there was no Yellow Press when Jonah made his memorable trip in the whale's stomach.

A French pussy saved a British officer's life by curling around his neck and preventing him being frozen to death, and a monument is to be erected to the faithful animal. In ancient days cats and other animals were the object of adoration, and a dove is the symbol of one of the members of the Christian Trinity.

We have always felt a genuine respect for the judicature of this country. While recognising the inevitable prejudices that afflict human nature—and Freethinkers have more cause to appreciate this than most other people—and allowing for blunders and errors of judgment that *will* happen, we have always felt that there is no country in the world in which an accused person stands a better chance of a fair trial than in this country. Our judges do, on the whole, *try* to be impartial, and generally are impartial. Nothing has shown this more clearly than the quashing of the verdict by the Court of Appeal against the German Consul at Newcastle. In ordinary times the decision would not have called for special comment. But just now, when feeling runs so high, and immediately after the frightful and quite unwarrantable destruction of life on the East Coast by raiding German cruisers, the decision is a remarkable one, and should be recognised as such. We are not venturing on any opinion concerning the justice of the original sentence, or of the result of the appeal. We merely cite it as proof of the integrity of the English courts, and one which England's deadliest enemies ought to appreciate at its true value. From one point of view it is something that every one may contemplate with pride. The pity is that national disputes cannot be settled by a court composed of men—drawn from all countries—of the type of these judges, instead of by the brutal and senseless form of an appeal to arms. One day, perhaps?

Father Samuel has been entertaining a big congregation in Berlin with a lecture on "Is God Neutral?" The reverend gentleman took a negative view of the question. God was certainly on the side of the Germans (especially at Yarmouth, Scarborough, and a few other such places, where the people don't fight and have nothing to fight with). After the War the Germans will be the greatest people on earth. And when will that be? Father Samuel's power of prophecy ends at that point. Which is a great pity. For a good many gentlemen of his own race—though not, apparently, of his own religion—would give him a nice price for a "correct quotation."

We have not been giving the poor Christites our attention lately, but here are three from quite recent lists. It's a long, long way to Tipperary, so we'll take the Dean of that well-sung city first. Ven. Denis Harcan, D.D., left £3,527. Not a vast fortune, is it? but Ireland is not a country in which Catholic priests can expect to be very wealthy. Great improvement is shown by the Rev. Francis Lambert Cursham, vicar of Twenditch, Derbyshire, who left £32,459; and still more by Canon William Wolfe Capas, of Hereford, who left £41,977. We pause here, lest our pen should reach the top of the Tower of Babel.

Referring to the pulpit message, "Peace and goodwill amongst men," the *Daily Mirror* says that we can only send half of it. "Peace must wait till another year." This is a smart attempt to put the Christian Humpty-Dumpty on the wall again.

What "soulful" writing there is nowadays. Alluding to the great American railway stations, the New York Central Library, and some well-known stores, Mr. Stephen Graham finds that they are "temples of a new religion," in which "Americans pray more and aspire more to God than they do in the Churches." Pray and aspire, indeed! Prey and perspire would be more correct.

In the *Sunday Chronicle* for December 20 an unnamed "Labor Leader" writes of his conversion from pacifism to militarism. There is nothing very surprising in this. Many men lose their mental balance during times such as the present, and, so far, there doesn't seem any reason to give

the Labor Leaders in any country special credit for maintaining theirs. So far as this gentleman's opinion goes, that this War, instead of ending all wars, will only tend to an increase of militarism, we agree with him. It is no more than we have said ourselves over and over again. War cannot be killed by war; of that we are quite certain. And when this conflict is brought to a close there will be a strong demand that our Navy and Army shall be kept at greater strength than hitherto, and this is only what must occur in all other countries. You cannot have universal disarmament by agreement, because nations do not trust each other sufficiently to agree upon this point. And if they did trust each other, you would hardly need agreement, as disarmament would come about almost of itself. Whoever gains or loses by the War, it is certain that militarism will gain. Amongst nations of approximately equal strength a purely defensive army is more or less of a delusion. In such cases a defensive army becomes, sooner or later, an offensive army. Of course, the offensive war is called a defensive one; that always happens. Even the German people had to be taught that their war was a defensive one; and the majority of Germans, apparently, still believe this to be the case.

But our converted "Labor Leader" is very wide of the mark when he says that the pacifists should not shrink from militarist abuse; "they should rather be thankful for the grace of moral courage that enables them to admit that they were mistaken." But were they mistaken? On the contrary, they were absolutely right in what they said. *They* never said that war could not occur. They knew that not only was war possible, but that militarists were going the right way to make it probable, and even inevitable. It was the militarists who said that the only way to secure peace was to prepare for war; and then, when war ensues, they say they were quite correct, only the preparations were not large enough. Well, but that principle, if true anywhere, must be true everywhere. It must be as true in Germany as in England. Did the German preparations for war make for peace? Why, the claim is that it was the German preparations for war that caused us to increase our military strength. And as one nation increases, others do the same—still maintaining the same relative strengths. And where is *that* process to end? Sooner or later one nation, finding itself with a huge army and navy, is bound to venture on trying conclusions with another nation. The thing is simply inevitable. The whole truth is that preparations for war mean war sooner or later. A nation does not *respect* brute strength on the part of another nation; it *fears* it—which is a very different thing. The War has fully justified all that pacifists have ever said on this head.

The only peace that comes from war is the peace that comes from the impossibility of further fighting. And the history of the world proves that this peace—or, rather, military inaction—is no guarantee against a recrudescence of war; quite the contrary. We see that kind of peace when two strongly entrenched armies face each other. Neither can advance; neither will retreat. There is a pause in the fighting, and each side uses this pause to bring up new troops, to devise fresh plans, for a more deadly attack. And that is really the kind of "peace" that war leaves behind it. The nation that is beaten plans for revenge; the nation that does the beating arms to prevent reprisals. Hatred of war and all that war means; a full perception of its inevitable folly, cruelty, wastefulness, and futility; a growth of intelligence, sympathy, and humanity; are the only forces that will ever end war. The pacifist said this before the War began. He is saying this now the War is on, and he will say it when the War is over, because all that has happened only illustrates its truth. The cannon is no better as a moral teacher than the whip.

The only "saint" that the English people cared for was "Saint John Lubbock," who was the founder of Bank Holidays, and who afterwards became Lord Avebury. His biography has just been published at the price of thirty shillings, and his most fervent admirers will have to wait until his book appears in a cheaper form.

The Incorporated Association of Headmasters holds its Annual General Meeting in the Guildhall on January 5. Amongst other resolutions is the following, which is to be moved by Mr. F. B. Malim, of Haileybury College:—

"That in the opinion of this Association instruction in the elements of military drill and the use of the rifle should form part of the education of all boys in secondary schools."

Of course, this is not the first time that suggestions of this kind have been made; but coming now, and with some probability of its being carried, it is a good illustration of the

value of the outcry against Prussian militarism. Intelligent hatred of this—and every other kind of hatred is worse than useless—would aim at protecting one's own country against militarism as much as possible. For whether we are to have Prussian militarism or any other militarism makes little real difference. The essential thing is to kill militarism everywhere, and to kill it by making it thoroughly abhorrent to people everywhere. And how is this going to be done by training people, from boyhood upward, in the very thing that we profess to dislike? Militarism in adult life is bad enough, but militarism in school life is infinitely more objectionable. School life, at least, should be kept free from this blot upon civilisation. To teach schoolboys the value and power of rational and moral ideals is to pave the way for peace. To accustom them to the rifle as the supreme arbiter of human affairs, is just as surely to pave the way for war. We hope that the other headmasters attending the meeting will be sane enough, and, in the best sense, patriotic enough, to recognise this and act upon it.

The Rector of Buckley, near Chester, has withdrawn the printing of the parish magazine from the firm that usually did the work on the ground that Dissenters were employed. A splendid thing is Christianity for inducing feelings of love and brotherhood.

Mr. Will Crooks, M.P., would sooner see every British man and woman blotted out than England defeated by Germany. He would sooner *see* them blotted out. The phrasing is expressive.

We feel sure that the Christians in this country will be glad to learn that the spiritual welfare of the German troops at the front is being well looked after. From an article in the *Daily News* we learn that the French troops captured a large consignment of little books compiled by priests and pastors for the use of German soldiers. The covers bear the inscription, "With God for the Victory," and inside there are quotations from the Old and New Testaments, forms of prayer, etc. It is also said that some of the soldiers, before going into battle, kneel down and entrust their souls and bodies to God. This is very gratifying, and we hope that British Christians will bear in mind that whatever the faults of the German troops, the majority are good Christians, and that their religious guides are as keen as our own to see that religious ministrations follow them to the field of battle.

The Christian Literature Society for India issues a special appeal for funds, pointing out that our debt to India is "immense," and that less than four millions out of three hundred and thirteen millions of the people of India are Christian. It therefore appeals for funds to send Christian literature to the people of India. We would suggest that a collection of the illustrated papers showing the Christian War in Europe would meet the case. The benighted Hindoo would be able to see how much better things are done in Christian countries.

The *Daily Mail* is a useful handmaid to the clergy. The following note was added to "A Prayer in Time of War" in a recent issue: "The War will change many things in art and life, and among them, it is to be hoped, many of our own ideas as to what is, and what is not, intellectual." "Carnage," to quote the poet's words, may be "God's daughter," but it does not straighten the tangle of the Trinity, or make the story of Jonah credible.

It is curious that so many people in this country should discover that Germany's repudiation of a treaty obligation is the result of "Materialism," or of neglecting the belief in God, etc. These good Christians should bear in mind that the repudiation of plighted words—whether written or oral—was raised to the level of a principle by only one institution in the world's history, namely, the Christian Church. "No faith with heretics" was made a principle of conduct by the Christian Church centuries before Bernhardt or Treitschke or Nietzsche were heard of. And the idea that no treaties should be made with heretics has been a common belief among Christians belonging to all Churches. When it comes to treading ordinary human obligations under foot the Christian Church generally can give every institution a long start and then make sure of an easy win.

The King of Siam, who has written a book on International Law, was formerly a member of Oxford University, and is yet another addition to the small list of royal authors. The most remarkable of these writers was the "King of Kings," whose masterpiece, the Bible, is one of the "bluest books ever written."



## To Correspondents.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1914.—Previously acknowledged, £239 17s. 6d. Received since:—H. Jessop, £5; G. F. Shoults, £1 1s.; Andrew Harvey, 10. 6d.; J. H., 5s.; F. E. Willis, 7s. 6d.; Mrs. Turnbull and Family, £1.; W. P. Adamson, £1 1s.; J. Robertson, 2s. 6d.; G. Sanders, 2s. 6d.; E. Dobson, 10s.

H. BAILEY.—The old lady's story has little point for such length.

F. E. WILLIS.—Glad you think the *Freethinker* articles on the War are "quite refreshing for their sanity and level-headedness."

T. O.—Yes, we are weathering the War-storm fairly well. You ask how we manage it? Our staff think for themselves, say what they mean, and mean what they say. Three lectures on Sunday, morning, afternoon, and evening, used to be the regular performance of special travelling lecturers. The object was to lower expenses. We did it ourselves. But it was killing work; and after a breakdown one Sunday, finding two lectures sufficient, we dropped the old practice, and the rule has been two ever since. It only wanted somebody eminent enough to break the old rule once for all.

H. JESSOP.—Very pleased to hear from you again, with substantial support as well as "every success" in our "fight for truth and liberty."

W. P. BALL.—Thanks for your cuttings.

E. B.—Your cuttings afford us great help.

We have had our attention called to the fact that the poem, "I Would Not Be an Angel," in our last issue, is wrongly signed "Wallace Celson." The poem was by our old friend Wallace Nelson, and doubtless many British Freethinkers recognised for whom the name was intended. We regret the error, but we feel sure that Mr. Nelson, like ourselves, has been called many worse names than "Celson" in the course of his life.

G. BEDBOROUGH.—We thank you for the dainty little booklet and good wishes. Many a larger work has said less, and said even that, less well.

G. YATES.—The present is not a very merry Christmas, all things considered; and yet there is no reason why it should not be made as merry as possible. Joy and sorrow are individual matters, and there is no good done by pretence, or by trying to enforce gloom where it is not felt.

A. F. THORN.—Will see to the matter after Christmas.

AVON DALE.—Glad to have your good wishes. It is pleasant to know one is read with so much appreciation.

MRS. TURNBULL AND FAMILY.—We always remember you with Glasgow.

W. P. ADAMSON.—Fairly well, but the work is more taxing than it was—as, indeed, is only to be expected.

A. WYCHEBLEY.—Rather late; afraid we cannot find room.

A. CHAPMAN.—Canon Green gets greener than ever. As long as we believe in God (Green's "God") the War is cheap. We don't exactly see how. But Green does, so it's all right.

G. BETTS.—Your open letter to Mr. Blatchford might do good in his paper; we can't see what good it could do in ours.

E. B.—Both statements may be true. The *Referee* is a very different paper now. Let us have the paper regularly, if you will; but the "cuttings" plan saves us trouble.

J. DISCOLL.—Christmas verses are not much of a treat to our readers, unless they are specially meritorious.

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

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

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

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

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

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## Bertram Dobell.

I AM not able to write at length this week on my old friend, Bertram Dobell, whose death took place recently, the funeral occurring at Golder's Green.

Obituary notices appeared in several newspapers, but I want to say something special about him, particularly with regard to old days and old interests. My contribution will, at least, be interesting to old friends.

G. W. FOOTE.

## Sugar Plums.

Our next issue of the *Freethinker* will be a New Year's number, as well as the beginning of a new volume. There will be special articles by the regular contributors, and this should form a favorable time for the introduction of the paper to new readers. No paper stands more firmly in the affection of its readers than does the *Freethinker* in entering the thirty-fifth year of its existence, but its influence for good might be much greater than it is were it not for the trade and other obstacles to a larger circulation. Our strongest ally has always been personal canvass on the part of our readers, and we look forward to this source of help in 1915 as in previous years. The bond between *Freethinker* writers and readers is not that of the ordinary newspaper and its *clientele*. It is that of fellow-workers in a common cause.

We trust that all members of the Secular Society, Ltd., have received the Annual Report and Balance Sheet, together with Proxy Form, to be used at the Annual Meeting on December 29, at 7 o'clock. Those who have not received due notice should acquaint the Secretary of the fact without delay. All Proxy Forms for voting must be returned to the office at least two clear days before the meeting, duly stamped and witnessed. It is, however, to be hoped that all London members, at least, will be present in person, and we hope to see a sprinkling of provincial members as well. The place of meeting is the Society's Registered Offices, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

We shall not have many more opportunities of calling the attention of our readers to the London Freethinkers' Annual Dinner on January 12. Known Freethinkers will have received from the General Secretary a notice pointing out that this year tickets will be only supplied on application. The Dinner will be held at Frascati's Restaurant, Oxford-street, W., which is easy of access from all parts of London. The price of the tickets are 4s. each, and there will be the usual program of vocal and instrumental music, accompanied by speeches. The Chair will be taken by the President, and the function offers a good opportunity for introducing the "Unconverted" to Freethinkers in their more peaceful mood.

Some of the London magistrates seem to need a little instruction as to what are their powers over those who prefer affirmation to the oath. The following is reported as having taken place at Tottenham on December 17, in the case of a witness who declared himself an Agnostic and wished to affirm:—

"Alderman Huggett (the magistrate): What is an Agnostic?

Witness: A magistrate should know.

Don't you know?—Well.

Well?—Yes; well. I will make a declaration.

The Clerk: You cannot make a declaration until we know the grounds for your saying you are an Agnostic.

Witness: I'll make a declaration.

Alderman Huggett: Do you know why you object?

Witness said he would read part of what was on the card.

You will read the whole or none.—I believe in the Agnostic position.

I want to know what that is?—Well, get on with it.

Clerk: Don't be rude.

The witness then took the book and repeated the oath in its entirety."

In this case the witness appears to have had but a hazy notion of his rights in a court of law, and it is a pity that he allowed the magistrate and the clerk between them to "jockey" him into taking the oath. But the conduct of the magistrate was quite indefensible. He had the right to ask on what grounds a witness desires to affirm. It was not the business of the magistrate to inquire the meaning of the Agnostic position, or any other. Any witness may decline to take the oath on the ground of its being contrary to his religious belief, or because he has no religious belief. Witnesses are strongly advised to stick to one of these two grounds and to decline—respectfully—to be drawn into any controversy. It is only fair to say that difficulties concerning affirmation crop up very rarely nowadays, but they do occur, as the above case shows.

As we go to press we regret to hear of the death of our old and esteemed friend and Vice-President of the N. S. S.—Richard Johnson, of Manchester. An obituary notice will appear next week.

## The Merry Birthday of the Man of Sorrows.

"On looking out of the window this morning I noticed my neighbors were drunker than usual, and I remembered that it was the birthday of their Redeemer."

—THOMAS CARLYLE.

THE convivial features of Christmas Day have been noted frequently, to the discomfiture of theologians; for it is one of life's little ironies that the birthday of the "Prince of Peace" was fixed in December from the urgent necessity of fighting Pagan rituals. Like all human institutions, the Christian Churches and their feast days have had to contend in open warfare for survival. The festivals of Pagan Rome were numerous. The public holidays, indeed, at some epochs, were so frequent that the Emperors, especially Marcus Aurelius, found it necessary to curtail them. It was to counteract the attractions which these Pagan holidays exercised over the people that the leaders of the Christian Churches sanctioned and incorporated some of these feasts.

"God's birthday" was not kept regularly until many generations after the alleged birth of Christ. When first observed, it was held on varying dates. The precise time of Christ's birth, like that of "James de la Pluche," was "wropt in mystery"; but it was not in December. Why, then, do Christians observe Christmas Day on December 25? The answer plucks the heart out of the Christian superstition.

It was in competition with the feast of Saturnalia, one of the chief Roman festivals, that Christmas Day had its date fixed in December. The anniversaries of Saturn and his wife were held from December 17 to 20, and the Emperor Caligula added a fifth day of rejoicing. On these five festal days of old Rome the schools were closed, no punishment was inflicted, the toga was replaced by undress garment, distinctions of rank were laid aside, servants sat at table with their employers, and all classes exchanged gifts. The propensity of converts from Paganism to cling to custom proved invincible. If the apostates were to be retained in the new religion, it became necessary to incorporate the old under the mask of the new. The struggle for survival has also incorporated other features. In the far-off centuries the white-robed Druids cut the sacred mistletoe with a golden sickle, and chanted their hymns to the frosty air. These features were absorbed also, and the mistletoe and carol singing still play their minor, if amusing, parts in the celebration.

"Peace and goodwill amongst men" proclaim the pulpits everywhere, whilst the clergy are blessing the colors, and praying for the troops of the contending armies. The nations which profess to worship the "Prince of Peace" are in the grip of Mars, the god of war. From the Elbe to the Spree, from the Seine to the Neva, Europe is a shambles, ankle-deep in blood. The countrymen of Moliere are cutting the throats of the countrymen of Goethe, and the compatriots of Kossuth are disembowelling the brothers of Tolstoi. The women of Europe, "like Niobe, all tears," are mourning their dead; whole nations, professedly Christian, are engaged in wholesale killing. The death moans of tens of thousands are drowned in the Te Deums of the victors, and the flags are blessed in the name of the "Prince of Peace."

To such a pass, after so many centuries of Christianity, has the Western world come. Milton's hymn on "The Nativity of Christ" reads like the bitterest irony:—

"Nor war, or battle's sound  
Was heard the world around,  
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;  
The hooked chariot stood  
Unstained with hostile blood;  
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;  
And kings sat still with awful eye,  
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by."

It reads like a beautiful fairy tale. "Peace and goodwill" must wait till another year; and the present celebration of "God's birthday" must make

thoughtful men and women think. The Christmas festival itself, with all its hypocritical professions, is largely pretence and make-believe. It is the paradox of paradoxes that the woeful welter of tragic contest is going on in almost every corner of a world that professes to worship the "Prince of Peace" and to obey his commands of non-resistance and forgiveness. "The Merry Birthday of the Man of Sorrows" is an organised hypocrisy, a fitting celebration of an event that never happened.

MIMNERMUS.

## Christian Apologetics.

DEAN FARRAR (NO. 2).

THE orthodox Church dignitary, Dean Farrar, continuing his apologetic arguments on the genuineness of the miracles ascribed to Jesus Christ in the Gospels, reaches, on page 51, a definite and fairly radical conclusion. He says (*Witness of History to Christ*):—

"We arrive at length at this point—that the credibility of miracles is in each instance simply and solely a question of evidence, and consequently that our belief or rejection of the Christian miracles must mainly depend on the character of the Gospels in which they are recorded."

Here our reverend apologist is going a little too fast, as his words "and consequently" indicate. Many critics may be willing to admit that the credibility of miracles is "simply a question of evidence," though most Rationalists probably agree with Hume that no human testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle. Without going quite so far, however, it should at least be said that the evidence must be real and incontrovertible, and far stronger than is required for ordinary occurrences. But, up to the present, we have no such evidence for the miracles attributed to Jesus Christ. The Gospel narratives in which these wonders are recorded are not evidence that the miracles were actually performed, but only that some of the early Christians, including perhaps the writers, believed they had been wrought. And the ignorant and credulous Christians of that age believed any wonders they were told; the idea of investigation was foreign to the times, and never entered their minds. The spread of knowledge has, however, altered all that, and real evidence is looked for now.

Our Very Reverend Dean, as already stated, assumes without evidence that the Gospel stories were written by apostolic men in apostolic times, and that they are historical. Having decided, then, that the credibility of miracles was merely "a question of evidence," he next says that our belief in, or rejection of, them "must mainly depend on the character of the Gospels in which they are recorded." This deduction would be perfectly legitimate if the true "character of the Gospels" be admitted—viz., that they are all four unhistorical—but Dean Farrar makes no such admission; for in the next sentence that Very Reverend says:—

"Now into the question of the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels we need not enter, because for our present purpose it has been sufficiently admitted by the most strenuous opponents of the truths which they reveal."

This is certainly a very clever *coup*. The credibility of miracles is simply a question of evidence; that is to say, the credibility is dependent on the character of the Gospels; but the Gospels have been admitted to be genuine and authentic by "the most strenuous opponents of the truths which they reveal." Thus, not only are the Gospels shown to be credible and historical without going into the question of evidence, but Rationalists who have denied these alleged characteristics are charged with strenuously opposing "the truths" which the unhistorical Gospels reveal. This sample of apologetic reasoning is almost as smart as that which proves that a dog has three tails—which may be stated thusly: One dog has one tail more

than *no dog*; but *no dog* has two tails; therefore one dog—that is to say, a dog—(having a tail more than no dog) has three tails. Q.E.D. The Very Reverend Dean's argument is quite as fallacious as the latter.

But who are those "most strenuous opponents" of the Christian religion who have "sufficiently admitted"—whatever that may mean—"the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels"? Our clever trickster does not say; but he appends in a note two quotations, one from Strauss and the other from Renan.

The first of these (Strauss, *New Life of Jesus*) reads as follows:—

"The review of evidence with regard to the first three Gospels gives this result, that soon after the beginning of the second century, certain traces are found in existence, not indeed in their present form, but still of the presence of a considerable portion of their contents, and with every indication that the source of these contents were derived from the country which was the theatre of the events in question."

This is very far indeed from admitting the genuineness and authenticity of the canonical Gospels. If the latter were composed by the authors to whom they are ascribed, and in apostolic times, they would be in circulation soon after the middle of the first century. But Strauss only admits the existence of the matter common to the three Synoptics—that is to say, the primitive Gospel from which Matthew, Mark, and Luke took the main portion of their narratives—and this common matter as not existing until the early part of the second century. This critic does not admit the authenticity of the canonical Gospels at all; the latter he holds to be compilations made at a later date.

The quotation from Renan states that the more that scholar had reflected, the more he had been led to believe that the first three canonical texts "nous conduisent très près de l'âge du Christ, sinon par leur rédaction dernière du moins par les documents qui les composent." According to this statement, Renan was of opinion that the first three Gospels take us back to very near the time of Christ, if not by their last written form, at least by the documents of which they are composed. Here, it should be noted, it is not the canonical Gospels which he places "very near to the age of Christ," but the narratives which are common to the first three. When, however, we look at the notes and references which Renan appends as authorities for his conclusion, we find that they do not bear out his statement. We have no evidence that any Gospel narratives were in existence in the first century at all, though it is quite possible that the first primitive Gospel was composed in the last quarter of that century. Our astute and reverend apologist selected Renan because that critic had placed the composition of the Gospels at an earlier date than most other critics; but even Renan did not admit "the genuineness and authenticity" of the canonical Gospels. Hence, Dean Farrar's statement that "the most strenuous opponents" of Christianity *did* make these admissions is not in agreement with fact.

Next, our Very Reverend goes on to say:—

"But that the three earliest Gospels at any rate, in some form or other, existed before the siege of Jerusalem, and that they had before the middle of the second century acquired a sacred authority, may be regarded as a conclusion which has been wrung from the inevitable candor of reluctant adversaries."

Here our reverend apologist takes the misleading statement of Renan—"very near to the time of Christ"—as correct, while ignoring that of Strauss and other critics, "the inevitable candor" being, apparently, that of Renan, who is also supposed to have been a "reluctant adversary." But when our Very Reverend speaks of the first three Gospels as existing "in some form or other," he tacitly admits that they were derived from earlier writings. And this being the case, what becomes of their alleged "genuineness" or their "authenticity"? The Gospels ascribed to Matthew, Mark, and Luke could not be called genuine or authentic unless they were original

and independent accounts, written by Matthew, an apostle, and by Mark and Luke, the companions of apostles, in apostolic times. The writings which existed "in some form or other" were not the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

But, as a matter of fact, we have no evidence that any narratives relating to Jesus Christ, not even the matter common to the three Synoptics, were in existence before the siege of Jerusalem (A.D. 66–70). The latter event is fixed upon simply because in the first three Gospels Jesus is represented as foretelling the destruction of the holy city and the temple; for if this alleged prediction was written after the event—as it certainly was—there could then be no doubt of its being a fabrication. The only authority Dr. Farrar had for his statement was Renan's "very near to the age of Christ."

When the so-called "prediction" of the destruction of Jerusalem is examined line by line, and verse by verse, it is found to be a purely literary composition, made up from passages in the ancient Jewish Scriptures—the Old Testament and the Apocrypha—which referred to "the day of the Lord," or what was to happen "in the latter days." It was composed by Essenes or Nazarenes some time after the fall of the holy city, which event is the only historical occurrence referred to in the Gospels. The Essenes, it is scarcely necessary to say, had no foreknowledge of future events; but after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the carrying away of the Jews into slavery, some of the members of that sect believed that the end of the world was at hand, and that they were living in "the latter days." It was in this belief that they made "Jesus the Nazarene," a well-known elder of the sect, whom, some years after his death, they came to regard as a prophet, give utterance to the prediction that he was coming to judge the world "immediately after the tribulation of those days" (Matt. xxiv. 29). The great "prediction" must therefore have been composed not very long after the capture of the holy city. Some years later, a certain latitude was read into the word "immediately," which was taken to mean before the generation then living (A.D. 70) had all passed away. We thus get to the last quarter of the first century.

In the second century the grand "prediction" had to be copied with all the other sayings that had been put in the mouth of Jesus, and the words "immediately" and "generation" had to be stretched a little. There was, however, no way of getting rid of the "prophecy"; it was too well known. Later on, the "generation" was interpreted by a pious Christian teacher to mean a thousand years (2 Peter iii. 8, 9). Now both "immediately" and "generation" are ingeniously explained away.

ABRACADABRA.

## The Terrors of Superstition.—II.

(Concluded from p. 812.)

FROM the dawn of history to the present day the real religion of the uneducated natives of India has always been a belief in countless spirits of a more or less doubtful character. "Brahmanism, Buddhism, Islam, may come and go," writes Frazer, "but the belief in magic and demons remains unshaken through them all, and, if we may judge of the future from the past, it is likely to survive the rise and fall of other religions."

In dealing with the faiths of ancient India, that eminent authority, Professor Oldenberg, has emphasised the omnipresence of the spirits. All natural phenomena, living and lifeless alike, were endowed with souls. And in modern India the genuine religion of the common people remains the same. Professor Monier Williams assures us that—

"The plain fact undoubtedly is that the great majority of the inhabitants of India are, from the cradle to the burning-ground, victims of a form of mental disease which is best expressed by the term demonophobia. They are haunted and oppressed by a

perpetual dread of demons. They are firmly convinced that evil spirits of all kinds, from malignant fiends to merely mischievous imps and elves, are ever on the watch to harm, harass, and torment them; to cause plague, sickness, famine, and disaster; to impede, injure, and mar every good work."

Although benevolent beings are to be included in the Indian Pantheon, the natives fear, honor, and supplicate those of a sinister cast. With the Oraons of Bengal fear is the chief ingredient of their faith. Their pure divinities are powerless to alleviate, or are indifferent to, the sufferings of the people. But the evil gods, on the other hand, are aggressively malignant, and to them the praises and prayers of the Oraons are offered. In the neighboring country of Assam the theology of the Kasaris consists in a never-dying dread of the diabolical spirits. Of the Siyins of North-Eastern India it is said that they recognise no supreme god, nor believe in any after-life; but the world in which they dwell, unhappily,—

"is full of evil spirits who inhabit the fields, infest the houses, and haunt the jungles. These spirits must be propitiated or bribed to refrain from doing the particular harm of which each is capable, for one can destroy crops, another can make women barren, and a third cause a lizard to enter the stomach and devour the bowels."

Throughout Asia, in Tibet, Assam, Travancore, Ceylon, and Burma the malevolent spirits are in an overwhelming majority. Where Buddhism is the nominal religion, demonism is the real faith of the masses. Without the slightest exaggeration, it may be said of all the countries just mentioned that the mournful beliefs of the natives constitute the chief curse of their lives. In Siam, where the people are nominally Buddhists and place images of Buddha in their temples, they nevertheless pay more homage to spirits and fiends than to these idols. In addition to the legion of devils located in hell, the Siamese assert the existence of other bad spirits which occupy the air. To these aerial demons they trace all the misfortunes they endure. With the Thay of Indo-China almost every act of life is regulated by some religious superstition. "Spirits," affirms Bourlet, "perpetually watch him, ready to punish his negligences, and he is afraid. Fear is not only for him the beginning of wisdom, it is the whole of his wisdom."

In China the vengeful ghosts are omnipresent, and the superior gods are seldom appealed to, save to protect the people from the ill-conditioned spirits. In Corea, again, the demons are bitterly hostile to man. These baleful creatures are believed, states Mrs. Bishop, in her *Korea and Her Neighbors*,—

"to haunt every umbrageous tree, shady ravine, crystal spring, and mountain crest. On greenhill slopes, in peaceful agricultural valleys, in grassy dells, on wooded uplands, by lake and stream, by road and river, in north, south, east, and west, they abound, making malignant sport of human destinies..... This belief, and it seems to be the only one he has, keeps the Korean in a perpetual state of nervous apprehension; it surrounds him with indefinite terrors."

The religion of the wandering Koryaks exclusively relates to the infernal spirits and their damnable doings. The Koryak priest or shaman is the only person who possesses any influence with the demons, and his clerical duties appear wholly to consist in carrying on negotiations with the sinister spirits, so as to secure certain concessions to the persecuted people. The Gilyaks of Eastern Asia, who worship a multitude of gods, pay special respect to their evil divinities. There are various kinds of these peccant spirits, and they skulk everywhere, both in single spies and battalions. They are also capable of transforming themselves into the shapes of men and other animals. All are evil; the single feature which distinguishes one from another is the degree of its turpitude. Some of these spirit-gods are most accomplished robbers; others amuse themselves by afflicting the poor Gilyaks with aches and pains; while the wickedest of all inflict those mortal injuries apart from which man would never experience death.

But the relentless animosity of supernatural beings towards mankind appears to have reached its maximum of malignancy among the ancient Assyrians and Babylonians. All diseases, both of mind and body, were the manifestations of their malice. Every untoward event was the outcome of their interference in human affairs. Even the gods themselves were open to their enmity and outrage. The mighty god Marduk alone could deliver the people from the unending malevolence of these horrible fiends.

With the Egyptians of antiquity the spirits were arranged into two classes, the upright and the evil. The constant dread under which the pious Egyptian cowered from the malice of these malignant beings was considerably worsened by the circumstance that they were immortal, so that their powers for evil were never at an end. In modern Egypt, according to Lane and other authorities, the popular religion is, at bottom, mere devil-worship. The jinn, "a class of spiritual beings intermediate between angels and men," are simply omnipresent. Incredible as it may appear, the contemporary Egyptian is afraid to perform the most necessary acts of daily life until he has blessed and conciliated the unseen spirits that abound everywhere.

Even among the ancient Greeks the existence of the ghosts was very rarely doubted. It is true that the more enlightened deemed it prudent to conceal their scepticism from the multitude. But the fact remains, as Dr. Frazer reminds us, that one of the earliest, and certainly one of the greatest of the Greek philosophers, Thales, allowed the world to be inhabited with gods or ghosts. It is also true that this primitive delusion was seriously entertained by thoughtful and cultured Greeks right down to Christian times. Porphyry, for instance, unquestionably advocated a most mystical system of demonism. As Frazer somewhat sarcastically says:—

"His system of religious purification seems faithfully to reflect the creed of the savage on this subject, but a philosopher is, perhaps, the last person whom we should expect to find acting as a mirror of savagery. It is less surprising to meet with the same venerable, the same world-wide superstition in the mouth of a mediæval abbot; for we know that the belief in devils has the authority of the founder of Christianity, and is sanctioned by the teaching of the Church. No Esquimaux on the frozen shores of Labrador, no Indian in the sweltering forests of Guiana, no cowering Hindoo in the jungles of Bengal, could well have a more constant and abiding sense of the presence of malignant demons everywhere about him than had Abbot Richalm, who ruled over the Cistercian Monastery of Schönthal in the first half of the thirteenth century."\*

Nor is the above likely to create astonishment in the minds of those who are acquainted with the amazing facts recorded in Professor A. D. White's *Warfare between Science and Theology*, or Mr. Evans' *Criminal Trials and Punishments of Animals*. These two important works, to name no others, contain overwhelming evidence as to the extraordinary degree to which demonism, in its direst forms, was fostered by the Church. The evil spirit that oppressed Saul with melancholy, and the weird story of the witch of Endor in the Old Testament, alone sufficiently indicate the extent to which spiritualistic beliefs obtained among the Jews. And while there is not a single passage in the New Testament that discountenances demonism, there are many passages which support it. As a matter of fact, the rationalistic outlook upon Nature which now prevails among men of science and culture is a practically new phenomenon in the mental evolution of mankind. This modern view has been begotten by two parents—Knowledge and Freethought—and by these alone.

But to return to the Abbot Richalm, whose story is too precious to miss. In his confession of faith, to which he gave the name of Revelations, this Catholic priest has furnished posterity with an amazing account of his spiritualistic superstitions. Every ailment of the body, and every stumbling of

\* *The Golden Bough*, "The Scapegoat," pp. 104, 105.

the will, the worthy Abbot sets down to the influence of the devils, who never gave him a moment of peace. "If the Abbot tossed on his sleepless couch," summarises Dr. Frazer,—

"while the moonlight, streaming in at his window, cast the stanchions like black bars on the floor of his cell, it was not the fleas and so forth that kept him awake—oh, no! 'Vermin,' said he sagely, 'do not really bite'; they seem to bite indeed, but it is all the work of devils. If a monk snored in the dormitory, the unseemly noise proceeded not from him, but from a demon lurking in his person. Especially dangerous were the demons of intoxication. These subtle fiends commonly lodged at the taverns in the neighboring town, but on feast days they were apt to slip through the monastery gates and glide unseen among the monks seated at the refectory table.....If at such times a jolly rosy-faced brother appeared to the carnal eye and ear to grow obstreperous or maudlin, to speak thick, and to reel and stagger in his gait, be sure it was not the fiery spirit of the grape that moved the holy man; it was a spirit of quite a different order. Holding such views on the source of all bodily and mental indisposition, it was natural enough that the Abbot should prescribe remedies which are not to be found in the pharmacopœia, and which would be asked for in vain at the apothecary's. They consisted chiefly of holy water and the sign of the cross; this last he recommended particularly as a specific for fleabites."

Nor are these absurdities yet extinct in contemporary Europe. Demonism is by no means dead among our British peasantry, and it remains very much alive among the bucolic populations of the other countries of Western Europe. In the nearer East, the Roumanians of Transylvania are still sunk in the spiritualistic slough, and with them witches and goblins are held responsible for every disaster that overtakes the people. The Armenians of Asia Minor, again, although they are not Europeans, "have basked in the light of Christianity from the time when Central and Northern Europe were still plunged in heathen darkness." Nevertheless, these Christian Armenians are as devout in their demonism as the most unenlightened savage, and that this represents a real and not merely a nominal faith is evidenced by the scrupulous care with which they avoid all possible risks of incurring the active animosity of their spiritual enemies. The real religion of the vast majority of modern Armenians is not the Christianity they outwardly profess, but a far older goblin faith which flourished long before the rise of any of the leading world religions, and which gives fair promise of surviving them.

T. F. PALMER.

### The Modern Moses.

A STRIKING forecast of the Kaiser's career, written in 1891, by the famous Portuguese author, Eca de Queiroz, was reprinted in the *Times* recently. The article shows conspicuous powers of observation and description, with a few delightful touches of scepticism, such as the following amusing parallel between the Emperor William and Moses:—

"The world has never seen, since the days of Moses on Sinai, such intimacy, such an alliance between the creature and the Creator. The reign of William II. seems to be, as it were, an unexpected resurrection of the Mosaism of the Pentateuch. He is the favorite of God, he holds conferences with God in the burning bush of his Berlin Schloss, and at the instigation of God he is leading his people to the joys of Canaan. Truly he is Moses II. Like Moses, too, he never tires of proclaiming (daily and loudly so that none may ignore the fact and through ignorance contravene it) his spiritual and temporal relationship to God, which makes him infallible and therefore irresistible."

In a similar spirit of raillery, the clever critic dissects the imperial dilettante of divinity:—

"In every assembly, every banquet where William II. holds forth (and of all contemporary kings William II. is the most verbose), he always introduces in the guise, as it were, of a law, the sacerdotal assertion that God is with him, as in the days of Abraham, in order to help

and serve him in everything with the power of that formidable arm which can disperse, like particles of importunate dust, the stars and suns of ethereal space. The certainty, the habit of this alliance, grew so much upon him that he ever refers to God in terms of greater equality—as he might allude to Francis of Austria or to Humbert of Italy. Formerly he spoke of Him as the Master who is in Heaven, the Almighty who orders all things; latterly, however, while haranguing with flowing champagne his vassals of the Mark of Brandenburg, he speaks of God familiarly as 'My Old Ally!' Here we have William and God as a new limited liability company administering the universe. By degrees perhaps God will disappear from the signboard as a mere subordinate partner, who entered the business only with the capital of light, earth, and man, and who, quiescent in his infinitude, does no work, but leaves to William the management of this vast terrestrial concern; then we shall have only William and Company—William with supreme powers will direct all human undertakings; 'Company' will be the vague, condescending form with which William II. and Germany will designate Him to whom, we believe, William II. and Germany are as much or as little as the sparrow now chirping on my roof."

Senhor Eca de Queiroz cannot resist pointing the finger of scorn at such pretensions:—

"Nothing can make the fall of a man more disastrous than the proof, borne out by the crude contradiction of facts, that such a certainty was but the chimera of a mad infatuation. Then is realised the Biblical fall from the 'heights of heaven.' There was once a people that proclaimed themselves the elect of God; but it was proved that God had not elected them, nor preferred them before others, seeing that He disdainfully forsook them; they were overthrown with incomparable fury, dispersed through the world, lapidated, penned up in ghettos, their houses and tombs branded as is branded a counterfeit coin."

The critic insists with seriousness on the dangerous nature of the claim, and its probable consequences.

"At the first disaster—whether it be inflicted by his burghers or by his people in the streets of Berlin, or by allied armies on the plains of Europe—Germany will at once conclude that his much-vaunted alliance with God was the trick of a wily despot.

Then will there not be stones enough from Lorraine to Pomerania to stone this counterfeit Moses. William II. is in very truth casting against Fate those terrible 'iron dice' to which the now forgotten Bismarck once alluded.

In the course of years, this youth, ardent, pleasing, fertile in imagination, of sincere, perhaps heroic, soul, may be sitting in calm majesty in his Berlin Schloss presiding over the destinies of Europe—or he may be in the Hôtel Metropole in London sadly unpacking from his exile's handbag the battered double crown of Prussia and Germany."

Nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed since this clever criticism was penned, and the startling events of the past year have but confirmed the singular judgment of the author.

M.

A wayward youth, having quarrelled with his parents, went forth from his native village to London town. While there, and a trifle down on his luck, he came across the parson of the village he had left behind, who, after finding out the lad's circumstances, exhorted him to return to his home; and then, instancing the reception of the Prodigal Son in the parable as an inducement, he eventually prevailed upon the lad to return to his sorrowing parents. A week later the parson, having returned from town, met the youth in the village, and expressed his delight at seeing him, assuring him that he felt from the first that his father would forgive him, and that he had no doubt that on such an occasion he figuratively killed the fatted calf. "Figuratively killed the fatted calf!" ejaculated the youth. "Not much, you bet; but he well near killed the prodigal son."

An old negro was out in a field near Charleston when the earthquake came. At the first shock he was frightened almost to death, and as the earth began to shake and tremble he dropped down on his knees and prayed: "Oh, Lord! come and help dis poh nigger. Oh, Lord, come quick! come yourself! Don't sen' your son. Dis am no place for chillen!"

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