

1916

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THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXXV.—No. 18

SUNDAY, MARCH 28, 1916

PRICE TWOPENCE

Will there never be a sanctuary in every private house? Will there never be a time when every mother will be the priestess of her children and family?
—W. S. LANDOR.

A Stupid Question.

MR. MAX PEMBERTON is a novelist who enjoys a very wide popularity. In the rather better sense of the expression he is a popular novelist. According to the *Sunday Pictorial* of March 21, which publishes the article that lies before me, Mr. Pemberton "has always been an author who has kept his hand on the pulse of passing events." This is, I may presume, the condition of popularity; for I imagine that a really great writer—whether novelist or not—keeps his hand on "the pulse of permanent events," to vary so far as they illustrate these. For really great writings are concerned with permanent issues, and a great writer may find his material in any age or amid any people, with the consequence that his work will appeal to all who possess the capacity of understanding. *Hamlet* or *Lear* may be said to take note of passing events, but their author had his hand on the pulse of permanent realities. That is why *Hamlet* and *Lear* are alive to-day, and their readers care not a jot about the passing events that were utilised by Shakespeare to illustrate his theme. Consequently, the "popular" writer, whenever he deals with fundamental issues, always does so at a great risk. He cannot—at least he usually does not—forego the habit of treating things that are of passing interest only as though they were fundamental. Nor is it easy for him to write without the consciousness of having a special public in his eye, and that this public will expect him to say certain things in a certain way. That, again, is a consequence of popularity. Having created your public, and accustomed it to find you treating passing events—a court scandal, a fashion in dress, or a popular scare—as though they were of transcendental importance, you are compelled ever after to lead it from behind. You have created an impalpable Frankenstein, and are dragged along at the heels of your own creation.

The editorial eulogy above cited occurs as heading to an article entitled "Will Christianity Survive the War?" And that I call a stupid question. It is a question that no sensible person would ask, and one which no sensible person would answer, save by way of reminding the questioner of his folly. No one but a fool could ever imagine that this War will kill Christianity. Certain lessons may be drawn by Free-thinkers from the War, as from other "passing events," in order to illustrate or enforce their attack on Christianity, but that is all. The Freethinker does not think that this War will end Christianity. Why should he? War may have affected the interests of this creed or that creed; but religion? Why should it affect that? And as this is a family quarrel among Christians, whichever member of the family wins, the interests of Christianity are secure. The winner will return thanks to God for the victory, just

as either side now thank him for a successful engagement.

For my own part, I repeat what I have said before, that, far from expecting the War to kill Christianity, I am prepared to see Christianity benefit by it. If religious ideas were the products of highly civilised times, then I should feel that they *must* suffer by a prolonged war. But they are not. Religious ideas are inherited by a more civilised generation from a less civilised one. And as the period immediately following a great war has invariably been a period of retrogression—and even more certainly so for the victor than for the vanquished—I am prepared to see that Christianity will take advantage of the general reaction to strengthen its position. One can see that being done already in the attack made on criticisms of the religious position on the ground that they are of German origin, and in the shrieking of a certain order of journalists for the boycotting of everything that is German when the War is over. How great the reaction will be, or how long it will last, are other and different questions; but I feel that not less vigilance, but greater vigilance, will be needed on the part of lovers of real freedom after the War is over than was needed before it commenced.

Mr. Pemberton has the usual facile contrast of the "Gospel of Jesus Christ" with the "Gospel of Potsdam." This may be all very well for a popular novelist; but to one who does not aim at being popular, and who cares more about right than being fashionable, the contrast has no reality in fact? What is the "Gospel of Potsdam"? It is obviously the gospel of brute force. And what is the gospel that is being practised in Northern France, in East Prussia, and elsewhere? Never mind the ideals or aims of the respective belligerents. Grant that we believe in the "Gospel of Christ" (our enemy affirms his faith quite as strongly), what is the Gospel that is being practised all round? Is it anything other than the gospel of brute force? With what are we meeting German guns and German armies if not with other guns and other armies? And are we not priding ourselves that our men and our guns are outclassing the enemy?—that is, we are exerting a greater and better-directed force than they. And what sort of gospel are we preaching in the Dardanelles? If a warship that throws a ton of explosives at a range of fifteen miles is not preaching the "Gospel of Potsdam," what is it preaching?

I am not arguing that we ought not to crush the "Gospel of Potsdam"; I am not arguing that Prussian militarism is not an accursed thing, and that the earth will not be the better and sweeter for its disappearance. All this I readily grant. I am only arguing that in war we are meeting Potsdam with Potsdam; that it is a trial of engineering and chemical skill and human endurance, and so trying to put an end to this undiluted nonsense about opposing the "Gospel of Potsdam" with the "Gospel of Christ." We are meeting force with force; we are bound to do so, and we shall continue to do so until reason, and not the relative strengths of armaments, decide the relations between the "Great" Powers.

Mr. Pemberton not only believes that Christianity will survive, but he believes it will be strengthened. As already said, from one point of view, I am inclined

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to agree with him. But his data leaves me unconvinced and a little suspicious. He says:—

"Nothing impressed me more during a recent visit to the firing line than the fervent devotion of people and soldiers, and the absolute renaissance of faith both in France and Flanders. The churches are in ruins, but the people pray. In Paris you can hardly find a seat in the Madeleine or St. Roche or the great basilica of Montmartre."

Now, we have heard much of this rebirth of faith, but I must confess that it leaves me a little suspicious. For, like miracles, the renaissance of faith always takes place somewhere else. At first it was here in England, but cold facts have compelled the clergy to pipe a different tune. And if the War has not led to a "renaissance of faith" in England, what reason is there for expecting it should have that consequence in France? It seems far more probable that Mr. Pemberton, with his "hand on the pulse of passing events," went to France prepared to receive certain impressions and, naturally, got them.

A more scientifically minded man than Mr. Pemberton would have inquired as to the proportion of people who pray now and who prayed before the War commenced. He would also have been careful against assuming that because two or three of the churches of Paris are crowded, therefore, there has been a revival of religion. I have been myself in the Madeleine when to even stand was uncomfortable owing to the dense crowd. But I did not jump to the conclusion that this meant a revival. If Mr. Pemberton had gone to other than two or three prominent Parisian churches, or on special occasions, it is extremely probable that he would not have found them crowded, and might even have found them as empty as usual. In any case, other observers than Mr. Pemberton are not so impressed by the revival of religion amongst the Allied Armies. I do not know that anyone except this gentleman and an odd clergyman here and there have said anything about it. And others who have been at the Front, with scores of soldiers writing home from the Front, tell quite a different story.

Mr. Pemberton is vastly impressed by the sight of clergymen fighting in the trenches and, perhaps, administering absolution to their dying comrades. "How many a French soldier, the sweat of blood upon his face, has not heard the words from the lips of the comrade by his side? How many a one has not breathed his last message into the pitying ear of the priest who fought with him, and yet has never forgotten that he was a priest? These are great facts in the story of the world, and no mere Philistinism can alter them."

Well, but whatever the weight of these facts, they are as prominent on the German side as on ours. There, too, the German soldier dies with the name of Christ on his lips, and the priest—if there be one—gives consolation and absolution to the dying man. Piety on the one side is met with piety on the other. Potsdam lacks piety no more than it lacks cannon; and it is likely to exhaust the stock of the latter long before the former gives out. German, French, and English pietists are all telling the same tales, and they are all equally true—or equally false. And the truth is not hard for thoughtful people to discover. In the first shock of war, the slovenly religious were driven to pay more attention to their religious exercises, and hard pressed pietists seized upon this to gloat over the collapse of Freethought, as they have done many a time before. Then things began to settle down, and it was "business as usual," or poor business as usual, with the Churches. The City Temple, for example, starts with a full church for a daily intercession service, and now shelters a congregation of about a score. This is exactly what intelligent people expected would happen, and they are under no delusion about the general effect of the War on Christianity. They do not think that the War will kill Christianity. It will survive this War, as it has survived others. Religions are not killed by periods of reaction, or by overpowering outbursts of primitive passion. They are only de-

stroyed by the slow growth of civilised intelligence. Of course, if the people were all genuinely civilised and thoroughly rational, the War might kill their religion—only if they were genuinely civilised and thoroughly rational there would be no religion to kill.

C. COHEN.

The God that Failed and Fails.

In connection with the annual assembly of the Free Church Council there occurs what is called the Council Sermon, preached by some well-known and representative minister. This year, at Manchester, the appointed preacher was the Rev. T. Charles Williams, M.A., of Menai Bridge, one of the most eloquent ministers in the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Connexion. There is no need to point out that the Church of which this gentleman is so brilliant an ornament is perhaps the most strictly orthodox and Bibliolatrous in Great Britain at the present time. It is a Church literally founded upon and guided by the Word of God. Every article in its Confession of Faith is supported by numerous Scriptural references, which used to be known as proof-texts. The majority of its preachers base their arguments upon and draw their illustrations from Holy Writ. Mr. Williams is an exceedingly well-defined type of the Welsh Calvinistic man of God. He is orthodox, eloquent, and eminently loyal to the Bible. Of the truth of this statement his Council Sermon furnishes an apt example. There is presumably a verbatim report of it in the *Christian World Pulpit* for March 18. Its title, "Mercy Revealed in Judgment," is a faithful reflection of its text, "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face" (Hos. v. 14). We readily admit, at the outset, that no discourse was ever worthier of its text and context, or more characteristically in harmony with the Calvinist creed, but we hasten to add that this it is which constitutes its chief fault. We are in opposition to its teaching for exactly the same reason that we are in opposition to that of the book on which it is founded. Mr. Williams may be of opinion that "the historical value" of Old Testament stories is of very little importance; but, of however little importance they may be deemed to be, it is beyond all doubt that the reverend gentleman treats them as if they were historical events. He traces the history of Israel from Egypt to Canaan, touching upon the privations of the wilderness that lay between the two. The forty years' wanderings in the sands of the desert must have entailed an enormous amount of suffering and misery, but they were also redolent of high romance. Mr. Williams says:—

"No nation since the world was made had lived as this people had lived for forty years. They had depended for everything on the direct intervention of heaven. The food they ate and the water they drank, and their clothing, came as direct gifts from heaven day by day."

All that is found in the Bible, the only astonishing thing about it being that a twentieth century man of education regards it as history. Manna, for example, is still to be gathered in the Sinai peninsula, and it was doubtless much more plentiful in olden times.

Now, the Israelites were but a branch of the Semitic race, and at the time contemplated by the address under discussion by no means superior to the other branches. Hosea prophesied to the tribes which ceased to exist soon after his day. In 722 B.C. the Assyrians carried them into captivity, and they became lost to history. We are assured by Semitic students that the religion of Israel did not differ essentially from that of the Moabites and the Amorites. All the Canaanites were Polytheists, though nominally each tribe had its own Deity. Israel remained Polytheistic to the end, and Judah until after the Babylonian captivity. We have the authority of the late Professor Robertson Smith, as well as of many living scholars, for the statement that religiously, or theologically, neither

Israel nor Judah can honestly be said to have stood any higher at the end of the eighth century B. C. than their neighbors. Consequently, Mr. Williams's admiration on the theology of the Canaanites cannot claim the sanction of criticism.

We now come to Mr. Williams's own theology, which we declare to be as false as that of the Canaanites. He tells us that the God who speaks through the prophets "speaks in his love"; but does he? He swore that he could not give Ephraim up, or deliver Israel. He is made to exclaim passionately, "I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not man." Yet he did abandon Ephraim, and did blot out Israel's name from the list of nations. Again, Jehovah is represented as saying: "Ephraim compasseth me about with falsehood, and the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the Holy One." By the time of Isaiah, Judah also was out of heaven's favor, and Jeremiah and Ezekiel repeat Jehovah's charges against it. Yes, Judah had developed into "a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that deal corruptly." We have no time to follow the history down the few remaining centuries until God is compared to a potter with "right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor." Then, "what if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles?" Has Mr. Williams the temerity now to assert that whenever God speaks he speaks in his love, or is he audacious enough to reject the teaching of Romans ix. 19-24? Ultimately, then, according to St. Paul, it comes to this, that the overwhelming majority of the Jews, in order that God's wrath might be shown and his power made known, had been fashioned into "vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction," while only a few of them were vessels of mercy prepared beforehand unto glory! Is it St. Paul, or Mr. Williams, who misrepresents God, or are they both guilty of the same fault?

We hold that they have both fallen hopelessly into the error of speaking for a being of whom they know absolutely nothing. As a matter of fact, each has an entirely different God from that of the other. St. Paul's God is a heartless monster, as unfeeling as any potter working in unconscious clay, while Mr. Williams's Deity is a sentimental weakling, a contradiction in terms, exhibiting the blind submissiveness of the inanimate clay rather than the sovereignty of the living potter; but both are equally impossible and equally absurd. The Christian Heavenly Father, as represented by Mr. Williams, is but a mere puppet, performing a mock drama on a mimic stage, a marionette pulled hither and thither at will by the creatures of his own hands, to whom he seems to say, "I am altogether at your disposal. If you wish it, I shall enter your hearts and dwell therein in sweetness and love for ever; but if you do not approve of me, I shall not trouble you any longer, but allow you to drift by your own weight into the outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." With this conception of an impotent Divine Lover in his mind, Mr. Williams delivers himself of the following inept platitudes:—

"God never leaves a people until they have first of all left him.....God never leaves but those who have left him. Again, God will not leave even those until their redemption is hopeless.....God only leaves those who leave him; God will not leave those until their redemption is hopeless. Again, when their case is hopeless, he will not then leave them immediately: he will give them ample warning. He will tell them for a long time, 'I will go, and still he does not go. The God that was going to abandon this nation was in no hurry to do it. Such is the lingering love of God. He will not give up the abandoned in haste.'"

Such was the official message of the pulpit to the

last meeting of the National Council of the Free Churches, and a more jejune message could not be imagined. It vividly reminds one of the preaching one was familiar with in Wales fifty years ago; and if reports are reliable, it was enthusiastically welcomed at Manchester two weeks ago. Every world moves except that of the evangelical gospel. No wonder religion is steadily decaying in Wales under the crushing burden of superstition it imposes upon those who were once simple enough to shoulder it. A few weeks ago, Dr. Horton argued that the War was included in God's plan, and we agreed on the assumption that Dr. Horton's God existed; but Mr. Williams puts the case differently, thus:—

"It would be a Pagan and unscriptural idea if I were to suggest that God, in his providence, has brought about this terrible War in order to teach his fear to the country, but I do say this, the War being upon us, the schools of God are working full time; we are being gradually taught, and some things we were forgetting are coming back to our consciences."

The chief thing we were forgetting was heaven, and the things upon which our minds were being fixed were materialism, luxury, sport, and pleasure. "We are already getting out of that," Mr. Williams exclaims. Are we? How? Now mark, according to the reverend gentleman's tacit admission, not by setting our affection upon God and Christ and immortality, but by enthroning self-sacrifice where luxury used to reign; but with all due deference we beg to submit that the spirit of self-sacrifice has been awakened within us not by the call of God but by the imperious need of the country. Fighting in the trenches to-day, and lying slain under the sod, are many Atheists, who have sacrificed themselves as readily and thoroughly as the most ardent believers have done or are doing.

What we aver is not that God is now leaving Europe, but that God has never been in Europe, but only the belief in him, which, having no reality behind it, has, on the whole, done very little save harm. An impotent God, a God that fails, is infinitely worse than no God at all, and the belief in him, if at all fervent, cuts the nerve of effort and kills self-respect and self-reliance. His promises are never kept, and his threats never executed. What we want to get rid of is not God, but the belief in a God that has never interfered in human affairs, the God who is preached now as the Lord of Hosts and now as the Redeemer of the World, and what we need to acquire is faith in the potentialities of good and progress lying as yet asleep in the depths of our own nature.

J. T. LLOYD.

Borrowed Plumes.

DISRAELI, when proposing that the House of Commons should attend the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, delivered an oration on the great soldier, which excited universal admiration, until it was discovered, within a few days of its delivery, that the language was, almost word for word, identical with that of an article, attributed to M. Thiers, which had appeared nearly thirty years before on Marshal St. Cyr. The press and the public were loud in their condemnation of Disraeli, who made no answer. The *Times* wrote an article to prove that, strong though the likeness of the speech was to the original article, Disraeli had no intention to plagiarise, and summed up by saying that "it is one of the evils of a well-stored memory that a man cannot help quoting." Most of the papers declined to entertain the arguments of the *Times*, and the *Examiner* carefully summed up the situation in a witty epigram:—

"In sounding great Wellington's praise,
Dizzy's grief and his truth both appear,
For a flood of great Thiers he let fall,
Which were certainly meant for St. Cyr."

Disraeli, of course, has his champions; but illustrations of apparent plagiarism form very interesting reading. Authors of course often reproduce the

thoughts of other men. This may happen because, in some cases, the same similes, thoughts, expressions, and phrases may suggest themselves to two writers, living at different times and in different countries. Here are a few among the best known of the examples of literary thought transference. At the close of the sixteenth century Henri Estienne (1594) wrote "God measures the wind to the shorn sheep." This thought reappears in the pages of George Herbert, "To a close-shorn sheep God gives wind by measure." Later on, in the eighteenth century, Laurence Sterne, in the *Sentimental Journey*, gives this familiar idea its most artistic form, "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."

Everybody knows and quotes Gray's—

"Where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise."

But few knew that, before then, Matthew Prior had written:—

"From ignorance our comfort flows,
The only wretched are the wise."

Another quotation from Gray:—

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air"

was anticipated by Charles Churchill:—

"Nor waste their sweetness in the desert air."

One of Tennyson's most delightful lines in *Locksley Hall* can be traced back many centuries:—

"A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happy things"

was put into words in earlier days by Dante:—

"There is no greater sorrow
Than to remember the happy days
In misery."

The same idea occurs in Chaucer's *Troilus and Creseide*:—

"For of fortune's sharpe adversite
The worst kind of infortune is this,
A man that has been in prosperite
And it remembers when it passed is."

Beaumont and Fletcher put it more concisely:—

"To have been happy aids to calamity."

Tennyson makes one of his characters say:—

"I am a part of all that I have met."

Byron expresses the same thought in *Childe Harold*:—

"I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me."

Shelley, too, in his elegy on Keats sings:—

"He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely."

One of the sweetest old poets, Herrick, writes:—

"Gather ye rosebuds while ye may."

Many centuries before, the unknown writer in the *Apocrypha* had written:—

"Let us crown ourselves with
Rosebuds before they be withered."

Butler, in his *Hudibras*, says:—

"For those that fly may fight again,
Which he can never do that's slain."

This also occurs in Ray's *History of the Rebellion*:—

"He that fights and runs away
May turn and fight another day."

The same idea occurs in Erasmus and other writers, and is to be traced back to the dawn of human history.

A little-known writer, John Norris, speaks of—

"Angels' visits, short and bright."

The same simile appears in Blair's "Grave," and half a century later Campbell gave it the form, familiar to everybody:—

"Like angel visits, few and far between."

When Milton wrote in *Paradise Regained*:—

"The childhood shows the man, as morning shows the day,"

he probably inspired Wordsworth's:—

"The child is father of the man."

The universally known French saying:—

"It is the beginning of the end,"

commonly attributed to Talleyrand, has a strong likeness to the passage in Shakespeare:—

"To show our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end."

But we cannot give every bird of literature his proper feather. There is no need to excuse anybody. As was

wittily said of Broome, the poet who helped Pope with his translation of the "Odyssey":—

"Pope came off clean with Homer, but they say,
Broome went before and kindly swept the way."

Perhaps one of the best things said on the subject, was Charles Reade's witty rejoinder to a paltry accusation of plagiarism, "I get my milk from a hundred cows, but the cheese is my own."

MIMNERMUS.

Christian Apologetics.

THE REV. A. M. FAIRBAIRN (NO. 2).

CONTINUING his arguments for the historicity of the miracles ascribed to Jesus Christ in the Gospels, Principal Fairbairn says that in criticising the public life of any distinguished man we require to know, amongst other matters: (1) the race he comes of, (2) the place he is born into, (3) the family he descends from, (4) the time at which he arrives upon the scene, (5) the education he has received, and (6) the opportunity which his time offers.

In order to form a just estimate of the career of such a person, it would be well, of course, that the foregoing circumstances should be known and taken into consideration. Applying these tests to Jesus Christ, we find, according to our orthodox apologist, (1) that Jesus was a Jew, one of "a very small race, a section of the Semitic family, intensely despised by their Roman conquerors, as well as by the Greeks"; (2) that he was born and brought up in "the narrow and retrograde" province of Galilee; (3) that "Jesus was a worker born to toil," and was called "the Carpenter or the Carpenter's son"; (4) that Jesus was born "at a time of oppression and depression"; (5) that "Jesus lived, not knowing Greek, not knowing letters, never having learned"; and (6) that Jesus had no opportunity of raising himself to eminence, "his public life was brief—three years at the outside, perhaps less."

All these statements are true, according to the Gospels, except perhaps that respecting Jesus Christ "not knowing letters." In Luke iv. 16—20, Jesus is represented as reading from the Book of Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth. It is, however, quite probable that the Jews, in their synagogues, read from the Hebrew or Aramaic version of the Old Testament, and not from the Greek Septuagint: but, in any case, we must put down this narrative in the Third Gospel as unhistorical; for, in the first place, it is not found in Matthew or Mark, which Gospels were derived from the same source as Luke's; and, in the next place, there was no city in Galilee named Nazareth. Luke probably took the story from some apocryphal Gospel.

Continuing his argument, Dr. Fairbairn says:—

"And what is the result? Where didst thou get, O Jesus of Nazareth, thy dream of a Universal Father? Did you get it in Judea from the men who held that God was the God of the Jew, and of the Jew only?And thy place, what did it give thee? That glorious dream of liberty, that splendid vision of the city of God.....Did it come from his own place and family?.....Then what comes of the time? Can you discover in his speech any dreams of downtrodden humanity?.....And education? Where did he get it to make him free? Opportunity? Why it laughed at all he did. He achieved all in spite of being deprived of it. There then he stands. Will you explain him by these conditions?.....You tell me that a lie can make a man, that a myth can change a world. I tell you, you dream.....Christ lives, then, and you have to measure him not simply by what he did when in the flesh, but what he does when in the spirit.....The meaning we have read into him is divine as God is divine, full of holiness and faith and grace.....Well, then, may I now say that Jesus was himself a miracle? You cannot explain him by any natural condition."

Thus, we see Jesus, a poor penniless peasant of Jewish parents, brought up in an out-of-the-way province, amongst a people the most credulous and superstitious of any under the Roman domination.

without education and without influential friends, who, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, rose to eminence, and became the greatest and most distinguished personage the world has ever known.

But this inexplicable Jesus was even more handicapped in his career than our orthodox Principal appears to have had any idea of. In the first place, as I have more than once contended, no Roman governor would have permitted, even for a single day, anyone who had set himself up as a miracle-worker, or as a teacher of a new religion, to roam the country at large and harangue the common people with the view of making converts. Every such innovator who appeared in Palestine had his career cut short, before well begun, by "horsemen and footmen" sent against him by the procurator then in authority. One such self-styled prophet, who appeared in Samaria shortly before the time Jesus is said to have commenced his ministry, was suppressed in this way by Pilate—as were also four other pretenders by later Roman governors. In the next place, if a so-called prophet came to Judea, and preached against the established Jewish religion, denouncing the scribes and Pharisees, and setting the Jewish authorities at defiance, such an innovator would have been stoned upon the spot, without troubling the procurator to send troops against him—as in the case of Stephen (Acts vii. 57, 58), in which it is stated:—

"They cried out with a loud voice.....and rushed upon him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him."

Whether true or false, this narrative correctly describes how the Jews of the apostolic age would have acted had any nondescript preacher dared to say a word against their priests, scribes, or Pharisees, or against their religion.

Principal Fairbairn, when eulogising Jesus, says:—

"He satirises the Pharisees, he satirises the priests and men who lived within the limits of their Judaism, drawn into conformity with their own poor and wretched and miserable ideals."

Here our Principal appears to have forgotten that "the limits of their Judaism"—that is to say, the Mosaic ritual—is stated to have been given to them by their god Yahweh, and given for all time, and that every other nation in that age offered to their local deity the same kinds of animal sacrifice. With regard, however, to Jesus "satirising" the scribes and Pharisees, here is a sample:—

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, andye make him twofold more a son of Hell than yourselves.....Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.....Ye are sons of them that slew the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of Hell?" (Matt. xxiii. 15, 27, 31—33).

If the foregoing be what Dr. Fairbairn calls "satire," I could easily find for it a more appropriate name: but we have no evidence, apart from the Gospels, that the "scribes and Pharisees" were hypocrites, whited sepulchres, or sons of Hell. The Jewish historian, Josephus, may be instanced as an historical Pharisee, and he was certainly not a man of this character. The Gospel Pharisees appear to belong to a purely imaginary species of the *genus homo*.

Coming now to the grand argument advanced by Dr. Fairbairn—that Jesus, in spite of all the disadvantages under which he was born, had raised himself to the very highest position, and, by so doing, had himself become a miracle. To this I have but one remark to make: Before this argument can carry any weight, our rev. apologist has to show that the Jesus of the Gospels was an historic personage who labored under the disadvantages named, and also that Pilate, Herod the Tetrarch, and the Jewish Sanhedrim allowed him to go about the country for two or three years, orating and haranguing the common people, and followed wherever he went by

great multitudes. Until this is done his argument is not worth the paper on which it is printed. Toward the end of his book our Principal says:—

"But now, what is the evidence for his miracles? Ah, that would take me a long while to discuss, but I will just simply say this to you. Can you take the miraculous narratives out of the Gospels and leave anything behind?.....The Pharisees did not deny the wondrous things he did; they only tried to make him seem the doer of deeds at the bidding of an alien power.....The very enemies of his faith confessed the reality of his works."

Principal Fairbairn has adduced no evidence for the Gospel miracles whatever: he appears to think that assumptions, such as the foregoing, will answer the same purpose. In this he is mistaken. We have no evidence that the Pharisees or any other "enemies" of Jesus admitted that that personage had worked miracles. Does not our Principal know that the writer of the original Gospel could make the Pharisees, or any other of his *dramatis personæ*, say or do whatever he pleased? We know of no Pharisees who "did not deny" that Jesus wrought miracles: we only know that in an anecdote found in the first three Gospels (Matt. xii. 24, Mark iii. 22, Luke xi. 15) some imaginary "Pharisees" are made to say that Jesus cast out demons by the aid of Beelzebub, the prince of demons. This silly story was taken by Matthew, Mark, and Luke from a more primitive Gospel, whose writer is unknown. We are thus unable to say who was the fabricator of the original story, save that he probably belonged to the sect of the Nazarenes. It is simply ridiculous for Dr. Fairbairn to contend that Jesus must be divine because he achieved success in the face of so many and great difficulties, unless at the same time he is able to show that Jesus had really done so. For myself, I am firmly convinced that no historical Jesus ever went about preaching in Palestine at all, unless he was one of the self-styled prophets who were put to the sword as soon as they showed themselves.

Principal Fairbairn says: "You tell me that a lie can make a man, that a myth can change a world. I tell you, you dream." Here it is the Principal himself who dreams. How, may I ask, did Mohammed (A.D. 622) make a name for himself? Was it not by a lie, or a long series of lies? How, again, did Ann Lee (A.D. 1780), who claimed to be a second incarnation of Jesus Christ, make a name for herself? Was it not by much lying? And are there not some thousands of her sect—the so-called "Shakers"—in existence to this day? How, once more, did Joseph Smith (A.D. 1830), who became the founder of the "Church of the Latter-day Saints," make a name for himself? Was it not by wholesale lying? And are there not something like half a million of his followers, who believe all the nonsense in the Book of Mormon, still in existence to-day?

As regards the present-day Christian religion, the founder was not Jesus Christ, but the self-constituted apostle Paul. Moreover, the first body of Jewish Christians, who formed the Church of Jerusalem, that is to say, the Nazarenes (Acts xxiv. 5), were soon after the middle of the second century branded as "heretics" by the Gentile followers of Paul, and after the fourth century the sect was heard of no more. It was thus Paul who made a name for Jesus, not Jesus himself. Our worthy Principal is therefore wrong all along the line.

ABRACADABRA.

Voltaire once said that he hoped fleas would be self-supporting in the next world, and the clergy have been hard pressed to find a plausible reason why a benevolent duty permits these and similar parasites to afflict the human race. Mr. Arnold White, writing in the *Referee*, says that the wounded soldiers "are suffering from the unspeakable misery of being badly infested with lice." Cannot the clergy petition the Throne of Grace to mitigate this peculiar form of loving-kindness.

Acid Drops

With all the zeal of a recent convert, Mr. Bottomley pursues his crusade for a new religion—the main tenet of which appears to be the hanging of all the Germans possible and boycotting the rest. In the new *Sunday Pictorial* he pursues his crusade with a quite bewildering display of alliterative piety. It is, apparently, a case of the "Demon of Despotism" versus the "Deity of Destiny," and Mr. Bottomley is all on the side of the Deity. Mr. Bottomley assures his readers—with an eye on the more advanced section—that the "Power" before which he bows his head in "reverent homage" is no tribal deity. And then—with an eye on the less advanced section—he switches on to more talk about the War being "God's audit," etc., etc. We do not, says Mr. Bottomley, prefer any "national claim to his favor"; we cry, not "God save England," but "God defend the Right." This is charmingly modest; but as Mr. Bottomley spends three columns in assuring everybody that England is in the right, and he has before given us to understand that the Deity will be neglecting his duty if he doesn't look after us, there really doesn't appear any remarkable difference between the two cries.

We may be inviting the wrath of heaven, but for the life of us we cannot help preferring to Mr. Bottomley's pseudo-pietistic Jingoism the sentiment of a lady who had lost her husband, and whose words were quoted by Lady Selborne in a recent letter to the *Times*. The widow had lost her husband in the *Good Hope*, and she was told that she was avenged, as the German vessels had been sunk in turn. Her reply was, "That only means more sorrow elsewhere." We are degenerate enough to think that there is a temper shown here of which any nation might be proud. We raise our hat to this unnamed lady.

"I remember old John Bunyan," etc., etc., says Mr. Bottomley. Of course, anyone can call John Bunyan "Old John Bunyan"—as though he were a street-corner loafer or an aged coal-heaver—if he pleases; but we submit it is not in the best of taste—except in war-time. Still, that is not quite so bad as Mr. Bottomley quoting a yard of his own "poetry," and concluding with the line:—

"And purified our spirits in seas of human blood."

That really is the limit, both for poetry and sentiment.

The thing that puzzles us is, why does Mr. Bottomley do it? Surely it is unworthy of him, entering into competition with the ordinary evangelist. And on that game, we warn him he is bound to come off second best. We will pay him the compliment of saying that we do not think he is built for that game—certainly he is capable of better things. And surely the case for England is strong enough, and the case against Prussian militarism bad enough, for anyone to dispense with all this pulpit nonsense about "God's Audit" and the "Deity of Destiny," etc., etc. There is nothing to which the public will respond more quickly than a plain, straightforward appeal, one that is based on a common danger, appealing to common sense, and in the name of a common betterment. With men of smaller calibre than Mr. Bottomley, we might smile and pass on. But Mr. Bottomley is capable of better things, and it is a pity to see him entering into competition with peripatetic evangelists. And if the people of England can only be raised by Prussian domination, by appeals that are studded with meaningless or ridiculous phrases, then we, too, feel inclined to say, God help us!

"The day of peace is one when every man should go to Holy Communion," says Mr. Stephen Graham, the well-known journalist. We fear most of the newspaper pen-pushers will be conspicuous by their absence.

"It is the reign of the War Gods," writes a Chinese journalist, Justine Kong Sing, in the London *Evening News*. What lends irony to the remark is that one of the "Gods" is termed "The Prince of Peace."

"During the War the Salvation Army has been as active as any other," says *T.P.'s Weekly*. We should like to hear the opinion of real soldiers on this matter, for the flat-chested warriors of the Salvation Army would never get to Berlin unaided.

The *New York World* has been putting to European publicists various questions regarding the probable consequences of the War. A number have replied, and their answers

show that the cult of the prophet is still a large one. Of those we have seen, we confess to the greatest liking for the reply of the Duke of Rutland, which runs:—

"Some of the questions can only be replied to by the Almighty, and I am doubtful whether he has yet made up his mind upon many of the subjects."

Perhaps he is awaiting more decisive results before manifesting a decided opinion on the matter.

There are many things in print that might have been expressed differently, as, for instance, a review of the Salvation Army Year Book in *T.P.'s Weekly*, which stated, "This is a stirring little book that will surprise a good many of our readers." Was the editor thinking of the Suicide Bureau statistics?

A modern novelist says "the world cries out for teachers, men who have been down to hell and up to heaven." Surely the Christian world is meant.

Wonders will never cease. Delegates to the Annual Council of the Evangelical Free Churches were welcomed to Manchester by the Lord Mayor, who is a Roman Catholic. In the spacious days of Queen Mary, the Nonconformists would have been "butchered to make a Roman holiday."

Lord Mayor McCabe, the Catholic Mayor of Manchester, in welcoming the Free Church delegates recently, said Church of England dignitaries now permitted prayers for the dead. Petitions to the throne of grace must be very numerous just at present.

There have been various religious theories as to the origin of the War. One is that it is God's way of showing his displeasure with the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. Another is that it is due to our desecration of the "Sawbath." But Bishop Gore disclosed to a Birmingham audience the real inwardness of the War. "We believe," he says, "that God has a purpose, deep and far-reaching, through the War." And then he lets the cat out of the bag. "Just before this War began the nation appeared to be rent asunder. There was the imminent war of Labor against Capital. There was the women's movement ready to go all lengths. There was civil war threatening in Ireland. The call of the War struck us into unity." Of course this may be so; but it is rough on all the other countries engaged in the conflict. To preserve the unity of the British God didn't mind arranging for the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of French, Russians, Germans, and others. That was God's purpose—according to Bishop Gore. Really the pulpit increases in stupidity almost daily.

Six and seven months ago the phrase constantly on the lips of Christian leaders was, "Behold, a nation at prayer." Or, "Behold, the people are giving up their scepticism, their materialism, and their frivolity, and coming back to God." For a few weeks, it almost looked as if the exclamations were true; churches and chapels were crowded; men of God triumphantly shouted, "Rationalism is a thing of the past"; intercessory services were started all over the country, and were attended by overflowing congregations; and Christians generally rejoiced over what they believed to be "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." The country has already got out of that. Churches and chapels are rapidly emptying, and even the intercessory services no longer attract the people. When they were inaugurated at the City Temple, London, the building, which seats three thousand people, was scarcely large enough to hold the eager worshipers; but to-day the attendance averages from ten to twenty. The nation is on its knees no more, nor even the God of Battles any longer patronised. The prophecies so confidently indulged in by the men of God in August and September are being conspicuously falsified by the events.

Mr. H. G. Wells says in the *English Review*, that "a vigorous daily bath, a complete stoppage of wine, beer, spirits, and tobacco, and two hours' hockey in the afternoon—such a regimen would probably have saved the world from the vituperation of the Hebrew prophets—those models for infinite mischief." How the prophets would have cursed Mr. Wells's prescription, especially the daily bath.

If anyone ever sets to work to compile a list of "blessed" words, "instinct" should certainly find a very prominent place. It is a perfect "Godsend" to lazy thinkers, and a haven of refuge for superficial ones. It is so easy and so satisfying to say that people have an "instinct" for this

and the other—much easier than trying to puzzle out why they do this, that, or the other. In this cheap way man is provided with a lengthy catalogue of "instincts" that cover almost everything that he says, or does, or believes. We have heard it said that a certain man had an "instinct" for parliament. Absurdity could hardly go further than that. As a matter of fact, man really has very few instincts. Indeed, his superiority to other animals lies in the fact that he has a greater capacity for acquisition, which is only another way of saying that he possesses a greater degree of adaptability.

The above was suggested by an answer given by Mr. Arthur Spurgeon to a series of questions put by the *Christian Commonwealth* on the supposition of a future life. Mr. Spurgeon replies that he believes in a future life, "but with me it is a matter of instinct, not logic." Now, we hope it will not be considered offensive if we say that this answer is an illustration of what has been said above. Mr. Spurgeon believes—or believes that he believes—in immortality. He sees that every attempt to give adequate proof of the truth of this belief, or even to demonstrate its rationality, fails. Therefore, he concludes that it is not a matter of logic. So far, we agree with him. But hereupon Mr. Spurgeon concludes that as he *does* believe in a future life, and as it is not a question of logic, therefore, it is an instinct. A really careful thinker would jump to no such conclusion. He would ask himself the rather obvious question, How do I come to hold a belief which cannot be established by facts or reason? He would then discover that the assumed "instinct" is nothing more than an illustration of inherited teaching, which took its stand in the mistaken conclusions of our primitive ancestors, and which have been perpetuated, partly by ignorance and partly by the activity of vested interests.

Company officers ought to know a little theology, for they have to sort the soldiers for Church Parade. A captain was compiling a list, and a man was absent. "Does anyone know Private Buggins' religion," asked the officer. "Yes, sir," answered one of the non-commissioned, "He's a Plymouth Rock."

We quite expected that there would be a number of soldiers' lives saved by means of the Bibles given to them by their relations. The latest story comes from Shoebury, where the chaplain stated that an officer's Bible was struck by a bullet "as far as the Psalms, from which his father had taken three protecting texts." This is eminently satisfactory, and we suggest that persons giving Bibles to soldiers should select those containing concordances and plenty of maps. The volumes will be thicker, and the soldiers so much safer.

The Rev. A. J. Waldron, Vicar of St. Matthew's Church, Exinton, has been engaged in an active recruiting campaign in Ireland. Let us hope that he has been more successful in obtaining soldiers than he was, in the old days, in "slaying heathens."

It was one of life's little ironies that on the wall of an Essex village graveyard a poster should be displayed, "Wake up! Your King and Country Need You."

The Dean of Divinity at Magdalen College, Oxford, makes amazing concessions to unbelief. He admits that Jesus was not "a philosopher, propounding a system of ethics," nor "a legislator, laying down rules for the guidance of society." Furthermore, there are several and contradictory versions of the sayings of Jesus, and it must be remembered that he spoke in Aramaic but was reported in Greek, with the result that "we cannot always feel sure that we know precisely what he said, or always tell just what he originally meant." Such is the insecure foundation upon which the Christian fabric has been erected. Without an entirely new translation, even the Sermon on the Mount is practically worthless.

It is reported that "Theosophists, Jews, Atheists, Anglicans, and Quakers," work amicably together in the work of "People's Hall" that has been opened in Bow, East London, as a social centre. Why shouldn't they?—so long as religion is not introduced. For it is a curious fact that people will work together for a social or humanitarian end, while the introduction of religion drives them asunder, and sees them glaring at each other like so many deadly enemies. And yet this constant and universal experience hasn't the slightest influence on the stupid chatter about religion acting as a bond of brotherhood, etc., etc.

How the clergy do risk their lives in the great European

War! Chaplain-General White was at the Front recently at Chalkwell Park, Westcliffe-on-Sea, and officiated at divine service, which was attended by regulars, volunteers, special constables, and the public. No casualties are reported.

Readers of newspapers appear to like their religious news gilded with a touch of worldliness. This is how a popular London periodical does it: "Early summer dresses and costumes were the order of the day at the Hyde Park church parade." The paragraph was headed, "Crocus Sunday Crowds."

The War-fever must be spreading, for recently a newspaper headline read "Fight for a Graveyard." Usually, men fight pretty hard to keep out of a cemetery.

The writing of "God Punish England!" on letters and postcards from Germany is ridiculous, says the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and shows a lack of common sense. We agree; but war itself is a ridiculous business.

It seems to be quite impossible for the clergy to speak or write truthfully, lying to the glory of God being a long-established Christian virtue. For example, Professor Clow, preaching at Aberdeen the other Sunday, is reported to have said that human life "is either a struggling upwards towards God or moral decline." That is a lie, stamped as such in China, Japan, and among millions of Buddhists throughout the world, as well as among thousands upon thousands in Christendom who attach no label to their names. Neither Hebrew nor Christian Theism has ever, as such, possessed the power to elevate people morally. Professor Clow ought to learn to tell the truth when he preaches.

The heading of Mr. R. J. Campbell's sermon in the *Christian Commonwealth* for March 17 may be regarded as an apt example of his method of dealing with Scripture. The text is Luke xiv. 26, in which hatred of one's nearest and dearest relations, and even of life itself, is laid down as an essential condition of Christian discipleship, and the title, "The Hate that is Love." The absurdity of such a heading is seen the moment we begin to think about it. In Matthew x. 26, Jesus is represented as saying that "he came not to send peace, but a sword"; and if Mr. Campbell were to preach on this text, he would, if at all consistent, entitle his discourse, "The Sword that is Peace," or, "The Variance that is Harmony." The principle involved is a thoroughly pernicious one. As a matter of fact, hatred is *not* love, war is not peace, and this is a fact which no amount of sophistical reasoning can alter. The hatred recommended by Jesus divided families, broke up homes, and to show that this was what he really meant, he added, "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." A frank avowal of this would completely subvert Mr. Campbell's gospel, and so he takes the trouble to explain it away. Cowardice and sophistry have always been attributes of the pulpit.

During last year the loss of Sunday-school scholars reported by the Congregational Union of England and Wales amounted to about 10,000, a fact which causes the Council of that Union unspeakable distress, but a fact that gives rise to great rejoicing to all those over whom reason holds sway. Intellectually and ethically speaking, the Sunday-school has done more harm than any other religious institution.

From America, the land of tall buildings and tall statements, comes a story of a New York salesman who is said to have memorised the Bible after eighteen years' study. If true, it is an amazing waste of time; but we should like to test this New Yorker with some of the crack-jaw chronologies.

Millionaires are very like ordinary men, although journalists try hard to put haloes on these fortunate persons. The press has been pouring adulation on Mr. Andrew Carnegie for his cheerful and witty replies before the Commission on Industrial Relations, now sitting in America. Asked what his business was, Mr. Carnegie said, "My business is to do as much good in the world as I can. I have retired from all other business." This has a very familiar ring, for a hundred years earlier Thomas Paine told the world that to do good was his religion, and Ingersoll said the same thing many times. Yet our Merry Andrew gets the credit.

A lecture announcement at Westcliff-on-Sea stated that a minister was about to speak on "Among the Gipsies with George Borrow." We thought that Borrow had travelled farther than Gipsyland by this time.

In the last issue of the Eastwood (Essex) Parish Magazine, the Vicar, the Rev. F. B. Johnson, refers to the letters home from the Front from the soldiers, and adds: "One censor whose occupation is to read a lot of these letters was a sceptic, an Atheist. But in letters he came across so much evidence of the belief of the writers in a Savior of the soul, as distinguished from the body, that he was compelled to think. He is no longer a sceptic." What a happy circumstance that this censor did not have to edit the letters of the Indian soldiers, for in that case he might have become a Mohammedan.

The Salvation Army has held another "Self-Denial" Week, and the fairer soldiers in its ranks have collected money from the general public at railway stations, principal thoroughfares, and outside theatres, music-halls, and public-houses. It seems to us that the whole thing represents the "Self-Denial" of the British public, rather than that of the "Blood and Fire" Army.

Lunacy statistics, as contained in the last published reports of the London County Council Asylums Committee, show that the increase in the number of lunatics under the Council's care during 1913 amounted to 262. This is about half the increase of the previous year, although since 1890 the number of lunatics under the Council's charge has about doubled. Naturally, this is called an increase of insanity. Statistical gourmands, who swallow figures without digesting them, are fond of parading such returns to prove that the nation is growing progressively insane, and that, unless some drastic change is made, general insanity or annihilation looms ahead. And, they say, there are the figures! An average growth of over 500 per year in the Metropolitan area alone. Does not that prove a vitiation of stock? And how can that keep on without producing deplorable consequences?

Certainly there are the figures, and figures cannot lie—they can only mislead. And these figures do not, let us say for the moment, of necessity, prove that the stock is becoming vitiated. Consider one other item in the Asylum Committee's report. During the year, 905 patients were discharged as "recovered." What does "recovered" mean? It certainly cannot mean the destruction of the insane diathesis; and, as a matter of fact, somewhere about 30 per cent. of those discharged in one year as "recovered" are usually readmitted within the following two years. So that part of the admissions resemble the parade of a stage army. All that "recovered" means is that the patient has become sufficiently normal to assume responsibility for his own conduct and for the management of his own affairs. But some proportion of the cases discharged come well within the years of possible parentage. And we know that many of them do become parents during their periods of liberation. Some of the available figures on this head are simply staggering. Now, if we go back a period of, say, fifty years, we find that nothing like the same proportion of patients were discharged from asylums as "recovered." And this number diminishes as we work backward. Doctors did not know enough of the nature or condition of insanity to effect cures. Once a man or woman was taken to an asylum, the chances of recovery were small. People were ignorant, and the methods employed were brutal. No condemnation of these methods can be too strong, and no one desires their revival. But they did prevent the perpetuation of the stock which possessed the taint of insanity. And it is this that contains the key to the whole problem. Modern knowledge, modern methods, have destroyed the means which earlier generations ignorantly practised for the elimination of the insane. We confine the insane for a time, and then liberate them to perpetuate the taint. There is no proof whatever that the stock is affected by a progressive insanity; the only evidence given is that the insane stock, under modern conditions, is able to perpetuate itself with comparative freedom. And we too often forget that elimination in one form or another is the essential condition of progress in all directions.

"There never was a time when ladies were more scantily clad than during the past year," says a fashion paper. Heigho! This looks as if the story of Eve and the Garden of Eden was being consigned to the waste-paper basket.

Children sometimes make a sad hash of religious knowledge, and the *Daily Sketch* quoted recently a novel version of the Lord's Prayer by the young son of a well-known actress. It ran, "Forgot our debts and deliver us from heaven."

Jesus Christ is said to have been a carpenter, but there is grave danger that religious folk may regard him as a stage carpenter. According to *London Opinion*, Miss Lena Ash-

well's theatrical concert party, which has given thirty-nine entertainments before soldiers in France, has performed in Young Men's Christian Association huts, and other places.

Mr. James Douglas, writing in *London Opinion*, says "Dickens's character of Miss Gummidge is an anachronism—nearly all our Gummidges are men." Of course they are. And 50,000 of them stand in pulpits and on platforms and preach tearfully the religion of the Man of Sorrows.

The clergy are always "bounded in the nutshell" of their profession, and cannot speak without talking "shop." Speaking on the question of business as usual during war-time, the Bishop of Manchester said, "With all that love showered upon them by the men who died to defend their homes, was their reply to be, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." As his lordship's congregation was composed largely of ladies, does he suggest the formation of regiments of Amazons?

The Duke of Portland is the veriest Spartan in his stern ideals of national duty in the European crisis. He says "pleasure and sport should be accounted nothing at the present time." This is very saddening, for it leaves no room for Pleasant Sunday Afternoons or for parish tea-fights. Perhaps the Duke does not frequent either of these pleasant and sporting functions.

Mr. J. B. Black, Secretary of the Glasgow United Free Church Office Bearers' Union (Whew!) points out that in ten years the decrease of Sunday-school scholars amounts to 16,072 in the Free Church alone. If the baptisms since 1903 had continued as they were in that year, the United Free Church would have had over 30,000 more children in their Sunday-schools than is now the case. He says that the United Free Church is "slowly but surely drifting towards self-annihilation."

The churchmen of London are threatened with a serious loss during Easter. Their beloved bishop will not be with them. Bishop Ingram is going to France to conduct services in the British camps, and to "bless our fighting men." quote the *Church Times*. Now we shan't be long. We may surely expect great things after the bishop has been to the Front and solemnly blessed the men. But it seems a rather mean advantage to take of the Germans, to bring so powerful a force against them.

The present time, said the Bishop of London before a meeting of the East London Church Fund, is "the day of God." We should have thought it would only be compulsory to the deity to assume otherwise. Anyway, it seems to be having a devil of a time.

At the Free Church Conference a speaker stated that every church contains a bit of the German Emperor. We hope he was not referring to the gentleman in charge of the collections.

Journalists are poking fun at the Hun's "Hymn of Hate" which they regard as a novelty. But almost everybody has heard illiterate missionaries bawl from the platform, "Hymn number hate."

The Kaiser, who has been again referring to his "old ally, God," and "my friend, Martin Luther," has also been speaking of "our old Fritz," the latter being an allusion to Frederick the Great. It is strange that a man with so many friends in "heaven" should have so few friends on earth.

The Imperial Sunday Alliance has protested against the appearance of the new Sunday paper, the *Sunday Pictorial*. We do not think, for our own part, that the world is any better for its appearance, but the objection to its issue is, as usual, based upon quite hypocritical pretences. It is said that a rest-day for journalists ought to be preserved. But the Sunday paper must be written, printed, and published before Sunday. It is the week-day paper that often involves Sunday labor. And it is Sunday labor to which the Imperial Sunday Alliance objects. They are afraid that the issue of a paper bearing the date of Sunday. Of course, the issue of a newspaper like the one in question is purely a question of finance. So, we would observe, is advertising its issue. And we were shocked to observe that the good, the pure *Daily News* actually offered a full-page advertisement of the new paper. Such a sacrifice to Mammon is highly reprehensible. If this sort of thing goes on, we shall one day find the *Daily News* actually mentioning the *Freethinker*.

NOTICE.

The business of THE PIONEER PRESS
has been transferred to
61 FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.

To Correspondents.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1915.—Received from March 15:
Previously acknowledged, £10 3s. Received since:—O.
Kotaka, 5s.; J. Bell (Freemantle), 9s. 6d.; M. Deas,
10s. 6d.; R. Taylor, 7s. 6d.; P. and J. P., 10s. *Per Miss*
Vance: C. Deane, 5s.

N. S. S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss Vance, Secretary, acknowledges:
—J. Pendlebury, £2.

A. AYRES.—Many thanks for the trouble you have taken. We
agree with you as to the interest of your communication.

C. F. B.—You will have received by this, through the Secretary
of the N. S. S., a leaflet containing the information you
require.

G. THOMAS.—We have never been foolish enough to say, or even
think, that all believers in Christianity are dishonest or that
all disbelievers in Christianity are honest. All that we have
ever said, or intended, is that a profession of agreement with
an unpopular opinion carries with it a *prima facie* guarantee of
sincerity that a profession of agreement with a popular opinion
never can give. This principle applies to other questions
besides that of religion, and its application does not appear a
matter of great difficulty.

H. B. SNOW.—We do not hold ourselves responsible for every
opinion expressed by contributors. We are careful only to see
that those opinions are worthy of expression, and are stated in
a seemly manner.

A. B. WHEELER.—Your friend is speaking either in ignorance or
trading on yours. You would find what you require in "In
Humanity's Name," by F. Steiner, New York *Truthseeker*,
which contains a list of schools, colleges, hospitals, etc.,
founded by Freethinkers. The pamphlet could be ordered
through the Pioneer Press.

J. PARTIDGE.—We shall have much pleasure in conveying your
good wishes to Mr. Foote, which we are quite sure he will
appreciate.

M. DEAS (Lahore).—We are afraid the present is not a favorable
season for publishing. We must wait until the Christians of
Europe have ceased preaching the gospel of brotherhood
through the mouths of big guns.

A. WATMARK.—*The Human Flower* is by Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy.
We cannot tell you the publisher's name or price.

H. S.—Are you not taking these people too seriously? The
ordinary Christian preacher may be very useful to point a
moral or adorn a tale, but it is as well not to assume
that they are worth more than that. And nothing confirms
a fool in his folly more surely than accepting him at his
own valuation.

S. AYRES.—Sorry we cannot agree with you that the disestablish-
ment of the Church in Wales will "inevitably" lead to the
growth of Freethought in the principality. On principle we
are, of course, opposed to the State establishment of any
church. But it is the disestablishment of religion that is
required. And the only way to secure that, so far as we
can see, is to peg away at the work of making more Free-
thinkers.

THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LIMITED, office is at 62 Farringdon-street,
London, E.C.

THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY'S office is at 62 Farringdon-street,
London, 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
61 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

LECTURE NOTICES must reach 61 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.,
by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

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

ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Shop Manager of the
Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon-street, London, E.C., and not to
the Editor.

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

Sugar Plums.

We are very glad to say that Mr. Foote is still making
progress in the direction of a return to health, but he is not
yet sufficiently well to resume work. Still, he has been able
to get out two or three times, and the coming of better
weather—we suppose the weather *will* improve some time—
will mean a deal to so ardent a sun-worshiper as Mr. Foote.
But convalescence cannot be hurried, and, much as all
readers of the *Freethinker* would like to see his pen once
more busy in its columns, we feel sure they would not care
to purchase that pleasure at the risk of a possible setback.
"Hasten slowly" is applicable to illness if anywhere.

It will, meanwhile, facilitate matters at the office if cor-
respondents who intend their communications for Mr. Foote's
eye only, will mark their envelopes "Personal."

This number of the *Freethinker* will be the first issued
from our new premises, 61 Farringdon-street, E.C. The
removal has involved no little trouble, but it was unavoid-
able. The block of buildings of which 2 Newcastle-street
was a part had been acquired by a large and adjacent
engineering firm, and the premises were marked for destruc-
tion preparatory to rebuilding. As our lease of the premises
had expired, we had no alternative but to move. Our new
offices are, however, no more than a stone's throw from the
old ones—the other side of the road, in fact. They are in
the main street, within a few doors from Holborn Viaduct,
and from an advertising point of view represent a change
for the better.

It is unfortunate that lack of accommodation involved
separate offices for the N. S. S. and the Secular Society, Ltd.,
but these are situated next door, at No. 62, so that the
separation is not a very wide one. These Societies also
have the advantage of a better position, as they now front
the main street. We hope that correspondents will make
special note of the change of addresses, and so avoid delay
in dealing with their communications. In future all com-
munications for the Editor of the *Freethinker*, or for the
Pioneer Press, must be addressed to 61 Farringdon-street,
E.C. All communications for the N. S. S. or for the Secular
Society, Ltd., to 62 Farringdon-street, E.C.

The death of Mr. Walter Crane, the well-known artist,
lecturer, and writer, has been well noticed in the press.
We have seen quite a number of these notices, but in
none of them have we seen any note as to his opinions
on religion. Of course, had Crane been a member of the
Catholic Church, or of the Church of England, or had
he belonged to any of the odds and ends of the religious
world this would have been chronicled, and possibly there
would have been some fatuous comments as to the inspi-
ration derived from his artistic work. As Mr. Crane was
a Freethinker, nothing at all was said about it. That
is one of the ways in which the press *mis*-educates public
opinion. We reproduce in another part of this paper Mr.
Crane's own confession of his state of mind in relation to
religion.

The funeral of the late Professor Del Marmol took place on
Saturday, March 20, at Lewisham Cemetery. The proceed-
ings over the grave were of quite a non-religious character,
speeches being delivered by Madame Sorgue, Mr. Paul Camp-
bell, and Mr. W. Heaford. We regret to see that, owing
partly to the War, and partly to Professor Del Marmol's
readiness to spend himself in all sorts of advanced move-
ments, his widow and four young children are left with a
very scanty provision for their future. A Committee is being
formed to raise funds for their benefit. Those who feel that
they can help the Committee in any way are invited to com-
municate with the Secretary, Del Marmol Committee, 92
Selwyn-avenue, Higham's Park, N.E.

The *Christian Commonwealth* symposium on "If a Man
Die, Shall he Live Again?" contains one or two expres-
sions of opinion worth reproducing. Mr. W. H. Hudson,
the well-known author, writes:—

"In regard to personal immortality, I must confess myself
an entire agnostic. I know of no satisfactory evidence on
one or the other side; but the balance of probability seems
to me to point either to the extinction of individual con-
sciousness or to its absorption into the 'general whole.' I
have myself no craving for a continuation of life after death,
and can form no definite idea of it which does not at once
involve me in endless difficulties and confusion. The thought

of annihilation does not disturb me. Why should it? As Marcus Aurelius said: 'Where we are, death is not, and where death is, we are not.' On the larger question of the influence of belief or disbelief in immortality on the race, I realise the view so powerfully presented in Tennyson's 'Vastness'; but I hold with George Eliot that the thought of mortality may be as strong a moral agent as that of immortality in making the present life worth the living."

Mr. F. C. Selous, the famous traveller, writes:—

"(1) Being absolutely ignorant as to the conditions of a future life—if there really is any survival of consciousness after death—I have no strong desire to live again, only a vague feeling of curiosity. However, I do not believe that the life after death—if there is one—can last for ever without change. Nothing lasts for ever in this world or in the whole universe. Suns and stars are as little everlasting as the life of a dog or a fly. Everything changes—it may be quickly or it may be very slowly. My life may be very short relatively, but a time will come when the sun's heat being exhausted, this world will become as cold and dead as the moon is to-day. I have no confidence that I shall survive bodily death, nor until I know what my future state would be, if I did so, do I hope for a survival. The probabilities certainly seem to me to be against any such survival. (2) I disbelieve in immortality because I believe that, although man differs from the lower animals, the differences are only in degree, for man has not been specially created, but evolved in the later geological epochs—which have covered perhaps millions of years of time—from some lower form of life (mentally), some creature resembling probably the existing anthropoid apes. All life on the world to-day, from the most highly civilised races of man downwards, has been gradually evolved from protoplasm. Therefore, if man has a soul which survives after death, the anthropoid ape should have a soul, as well as the horse and the dog and the wolf, and so on downwards throughout the animal kingdom.

"Either life after death must be the common heritage of all living things, from the oyster to civilised man, or at some point in his development a soul involving a life after death must have been given to man. This would mean the direct intervention at a very late stage of the development of one of the planets in the universe, of some power, which is known to civilised man as God. But, personally, I do not believe in a deified Man God, but rather imagine that the whole universe is ruled by inexorable laws, under which the worlds form and live and die, just as on these worlds life forms and lives and dies; and once a world, or anything that has lived upon it, is dead, I think it very improbable that it will live again, retaining a full consciousness, in the case of a man or an animal, of its previous life. (3) For the reasons given above, I do not think that the individual will persist and continue indefinitely or for ever as a separate entity. (4) I can form no conception of the nature of life after death. (5) A life after death in which I do not remember my life on this earth and retain my interests in what was happening in this world would be no more immortality than a reincarnation as a lion or a crocodile. (6) The difficulties in the way of believing in the persistence of the individual are to me so great that I have long since ceased to believe. I am willing to take things as they come."

If all well known men were to speak out as openly as Mr. Selous and Mr. Hudson, the result would be an eye-opener for the religious world. The confidence of its members is based chiefly on each one feeling that he is one of a crowd, and the consciousness of a multitude on the other side would certainly have a chastening influence on the religious temper.

We have received from the Thomas Paine National Historical Association (New York) three dainty and interesting booklets dealing with the great pioneer of mental freedom. The titles of the three works are *Thomas Paine, the Great Commoner of Mankind*, by Elbert Hubbard; *Thomas Paine on War and Monarchy*, by W. M. Vander Weyde; and *Lest We Forget*, by Ella Wheeler Wilcox. Each of these pamphlets are published at the price of ten cents, and each carries an excellent portrait of Paine by way of frontispiece. The style of the pamphlets is everything that could be desired, and reflect credit upon all concerned in their production.

The Thomas Paine Association was formed some years ago in New York, and "intends that Thomas Paine shall occupy that niche in the world's Temple of Fame where he properly belongs, and to that end it bends its every endeavor." At New Rochelle the Society has acquired possession of the house built by Paine, and has converted it into a "Thomas Paine National Museum," in which may be seen relics of Paine, first editions of his works, portraits, etc., etc. An annual meeting is held to commemorate Paine, and literature is published expounding and defending his life and work. The expenses are met by membership fees, which are one dollar per year. It is pleasing to learn that the work of the Association is having a considerable influence in the direction of educating American public opinion concerning a great man whose work would otherwise be buried under mounds of religious bigotry.

Till Tea-Time.

DREAMS and desires consort rudely with facts. The ideas one cherishes as the very gold of thought seem often to relinquish their power, to become weak as a leaf on a river's breast. And yet, dark and doleful as horizon and air may be, they cannot dim the soul's light. The gloom of religion never completely extinguished the sparks of freedom in man's mind. Economic slavery never crushed to death the spirit of emancipation. Rivers and seas of oppression, storms of retrogression, and earthquakes of hopes never cast from its plinth the statue that points to the brightest star in the firmament of man's love. From the most Cimmerian darkness, through the most clamorous din, the light of liberty shone, and the voice of freedom sounded, for those who could see and hear; and the shades fled from their hearts, and their minds were washed anew in the waters that ripple from the deepest spring in the nature of humanity. Beneath the horrors they saw the thread of life; the former would pass; the latter was eternal. Their works were with it first, and through it slowly, despite every seeming defeat, to the things that darkened the fair face of man.

So my ideas ran; for, but a few hours before, I had been with Swinburne, and the verses still rang in my mind:—

"Are ye so strong, O kings, O strong men Nay,
Waste all ye will, and gather all ye may,
Yet one thing is there that ye shall not slay,
Even thought, that fire nor iron can affright,
The woundless and invisible thought that goes
Free throughout time as north or south wind blows,
Far throughout space as east or west sea flows,
And all dark things before it are made bright."

And then, as if fate were determined I should have a decent share of the things that test the power of the light within us, I became aware that I was not alone in the desert.

Standing beside the drain from which he had disembowelled himself he was gazing disinterestedly over the low hedge to the long stretch of yellow sand that girded the grey sea. He might have been a statue for all the effect the shimmering sand and white-maned waves had upon him. There was no wonder in his eyes. No sense of the loveliness of the scene moved his features from their fixity. He seemed for the moment to have become a study in immobility; only his lips moved continuously; and every now and then he expectorated noiselessly but deliberately.

Mentalism proclaimed him one of her lowermost slaves. He was tall and gaunt, with lean, clay-streaked face, thin nose, and peering eyes set within deep caverns. Clothes that disfigure the man and distinguish the work spoke loudly of the servile position he occupied in the service of society. His shoulders were rounded nearly to a haunch. His body was loose and cumbersome. His arms were long and the hands too big and red. Leaning upon his spade, he appeared the very embodiment of apathy and indifference. Nothing mattered. Why should it? Probably he would have merely grinned had someone told him man did not live by bread alone. But why did the verses keep ringing in my ears?

Oblivious of the presence of a fellow-being, he stood, carved from emotionless flesh, his eyes peering out upon the distant sand and sea, but visionlessly, as if there were no brain behind to give them one gleam of light. Rugged and coarse as his whole figure was, there was something pathetic about it. Perhaps his solitariness, perhaps his hopelessness, perhaps the utter thanklessness of his task brought pathos into the commonplace giving it a touch of interest.

Other men of like nature were being landed as heroes, were being fed and clothed in decency, were being filled with emotions that gave them a new lease of life. Rightly or wrongly, they were being pulled from apathy to vitality. For good or for evil they were being inoculated with the germs of interest.

Honors, praise, glorification, were their portion, and in these disappeared the hardships they encountered. They were being made strong; but still the verses rang in my brain, confusing me.

As I studied this apparently lifeless piece of hewn humanity, the thoughts twisted and twined themselves around "A Year's Burden of 1870," the War and its votaries, and this man. I wanted to know why these others were being infused with the breath of life while he seemed still with the coldness of death. I wanted to know the construction of the balance in which the one weighed more lightly than the others. The miner who risks death to save a comrade is as much a hero as the soldier who wins the coveted cross. The man who protects his country from a human enemy is no more worthy of respect than the man who protects his country against an unhuman enemy. In their ultimate results a gang of military economic sharps is on a level with the gang of Christian slum property owners. In social influence, disease is as much an enemy as braggart militarism; but the man who, with its own weapons and its own nature, fights the latter, is a warrior bold and daring; and the man who fights the former, is simply—a laborer. Certainly the balance was not made of the thought of which the poet spoke. And then I wanted badly to know the joys of this man, for whom, as they said, everyone was fighting.

But most of all I wanted to know where Christ was in all this seeming muddle of things. I wanted to know where the divine irradiation of his human love had reached; for it seemed not to be here. Nothing in the man or his labor suggested the refinement with which Christ is supposed to have flooded the Christian world. Nothing in his appearance suggested two thousand years of the application of Christianity as it is dished up to us to-day, nor was there the least evidence of the kindly thought that is, we are gravely and enthusiastically told, the central pillar of the temple of Christianity. Where were Christ and his beauty, his truth and love and his meekness and humility of heart, and all the rest of his tragic virtues? And his disciples, with their hot lips and febrile tongues; where were they; in the affairs of families, when men went out secretly in the night to kill and be killed at the command of strong men and kings? Christ and his disciples, such is the strange irony of fact, are on the side of strong men and kings, fighting each other as brutes in fight, their levely moralisms and beautiful teachings and grotesquely, now as always, with mad ravings and idiotic actions, as they struggle, verbally and physically, with each other because they happen to have been born in different parts of the little world.

Was Christ's wisdom but the wisdom of the desert or the mountain peak? Is his influence restricted to the four walls of Sunday-school? Are his commandments, then, so unserviceably human and so hopelessly un-supernatural and undivine and useless, that they cease to be commands immediately circumstance countermands them? Are they so thoughtless that the men who champion them must needs take up their position in the ranks of the thoughtless great men and kings? Or were these powerful men and kings, with their religious allies, really the great ones, and Swinburne the weak dreamer, painting poetry on the morning skies from a mountain peak?

Before I got farther into the maze, the laborer suddenly flung his spade into the drain with a "t' hell wi' ye," struck his hands deeply into his pockets, and larched off in the direction of the town. And I went down to the great white mother and lover of men, so beloved by the poet, and wondered like this till tea-time.

ROBERT MORELAND.

What it Means to be a Catholic.—IV.

A Lecture delivered in Chicago by
M. M. MANGASARIAN.

(Concluded from p. 189.)

LET us see: Would I, as a Catholic, be permitted to eat what I please, for example, without consulting my confessor? If my physician prescribed meat, would I be able to have the prescription filled without first securing or purchasing the parish priest's consent? But think of it, the Church professes to concern itself only in matters of religion, yet it undertakes to dictate, in an important sense, even when the question of health enters into consideration, the *menu* for every Catholic household! How did diet—meat, fish, butter, eggs—come to be religious? How does the priest come to be cook, as well as spiritual adviser? You see, then, that from the Church to the kitchen is but a step. The purpose of this priestly interference which extends to pots and pans even, is to crowd man into as narrow a sphere as possible, to curb his initiative, and to reduce him to a mere nothing. The priest is determined to leave no corner in which a man can be his own "boss." To make man absolutely dependent, dependent every hour of his life, upon the guidance and dictation of the Church, is the Catholic ideal. To be a good Catholic one must consent to become a cipher. And if the Protestant priest is less aggressive, it is not the fault of his theology, but of the sectarian divisions of Protestantism which weaken his power. It will be seen, then, that even my food, if I become a Catholic, would have to be chosen by the Church on certain days of the week. In Catholic countries where fast days are as numerous as blackberries on a bush, one can readily see to what extent the priest has pushed his influence. In Spain, the church offices are filled with people asking for permission of the religious authorities to do this, to do that, and to do the other thing. I have told you how I myself went to the Archbishop's palace in Cordova, a few years ago, when I was in Spain, and bought for cash a *bulia*, which is another word for an "indulgence," and which authorized me, among other things, to eat what I liked for a term of years. I have in my possession a copy of this Spanish *bulia*. Of course, this papal document also permits the purchaser, if he has committed a theft, and has lost the address of his victim, to divide the stolen money with the Catholic Church. In fairness, I must say, that the priest who sold me the *bulia* also explained that the document was good only in Spain. But it would also have been good in America, if America had been another Spain.

I ask again, how large a margin of freedom, if any, would I be allowed were I to join the Church of Rome? We have already seen that as a Catholic I would have to consult the priest as to what I may or may not eat on certain days of the week; let us see: If I would be permitted to go to bed and sleep without my rest being disturbed during the night by the church bell, summoning me into the presence of the priest. If I may not eat what I please, neither can I sleep through the night without the consent of the Church. Some years ago, I was spending the summer in a little village in France. I was not in good health at the time, and had gone there to give my nerves a much needed rest; but there was hardly a night when my sleep, poor as it was, was not broken by the village church bell, by its loud ding-dong, at three o'clock in the morning. In a small village, and in the dead of night, the strokes of the clapper on the iron bell are likely to wake up nearly everybody, except those who enjoy the blessing of an unusually sound constitution. Evidently, it is the intention of the Church to waken everybody at that hour; else why ring the church bell at 3 a.m., so long and so loud? What excuse is there, I ask again, for ringing a huge bell at such an unearthly hour, and at an hour when a tired world is seeking a much-needed repose? Why ring the bell at 3 a.m.? Is there any

"The Pope's All Right" is a headline in Mr. Horatio Bottomley's *John Bull*. We are glad to hear it, although Catholic journalists repeat the same thing every week in the year.

excuse for such an outrage, if that is not too stern a word? At midnight the priest wakens the whole Catholic world to remind it of its subjection to the Church. Even in bed you must be made to feel that you are not your own master. Even your sleep is a gift to you from the Church. You cannot escape the jurisdiction of the Church wherever you are and whatever you may be doing. She wakes you up with loud poundings on the drum of your ear to tell you that if you do not sit up in bed and cross yourself, or mutter an *Ave Maria*, or hurry to church for a prayer, woe be unto you! You see, the priest is night watchman, as well as a food expert.

And would I, as a Catholic, be permitted to read what I please? If I may not eat or sleep without the consent of the priest, could I go to the library or to a book store and pick out the book or the publication that interested me? The *Index Expurgatorius* contains the list of books which no Catholic shall read, and in that list are about the only books worth reading. As a Catholic, then, I would not only be debarred from selecting my own reading, but I would be doomed to read only such books as have not earned by their merit the displeasure of the priest. How much of a margin of liberty would that leave me? In what sense would I still be able to call myself a man, a free and independent agent, if I cannot eat, sleep, nor read without permission of the priest? Did you ever stop to think what it meant to be a sheep in the flock of the Church, and do you not begin to understand now why the Roman Empire, one of the glorious achievements of man, shrivelled, dwindled down, and finally wasted away? What destroyed the Roman Empire? The pinch of the priest.

Let us continue: Would I be permitted, as a Catholic, to choose a school for my children? I am the parent, it is I who must pay for their tuition. The children belong to me. If they do well, I am honored; if they do ill, I am dishonored. And yet I am not permitted to have any voice as to who shall be their tutors, or what school they shall be educated in. Can you think of any other organisation—or of any ancient autocrat, Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, Alaric, Attila—who was more exacting, or who showed their subjects less consideration—or who subjected their followers to deeper humiliations than those to which the priest subjects his parishioners?

But if a man may not read what he pleases, nor choose the school for his children, is he free to marry the woman of his choice without the ubiquitous priest "butting in"? The Catholic is bound by oath to consult the Church in the selection of a comrade and partner for life. According to the laws of the Church, if a Catholic woman marries a Protestant husband, the husband is made to sign a paper stating that he will bring up the children in the Catholic faith. This is the only condition, except the conversion of the husband to the Catholic faith, under which a priest consents to allow a Catholic woman to become the wife of a non-Catholic. A moment's reflection will convince any impartial thinker that the condition imposed dishonors the husband as well as the wife. It dishonors the husband, because it practically demands that he resign his rights as a parent. How can a Protestant or a Rationalist, for example, agree to bring up his children in a faith which he repudiates, or which he is not willing to accept as his religion, except by making a disreputable of himself—by lying to himself, by defrauding himself, or, as I said before, by robbing himself of his parental rights? To sign such a paper is to agree to sell one's children to the Church for a consideration. It means stepping aside and letting a stranger, the priest, slip into the husband's and the parent's office. If the English were to make German prisoners, or the Germans English prisoners, fight against their convictions and for their enemies, we would denounce the act as inhuman; and yet the Church practically hires a non-Catholic to rear offspring for the Catholic Church. How can the man who submits to this indignity be proud of himself, and how can the

community in which he lives be proud of him? Can a man who bows so low to the authority of an alien organisation be of any credit to the country he calls his own? The Catholic Church, by making hirelings of men and women, contributes to the deterioration of the race. That is one of the causes which explain the decay of civilisation, and the terror of the Dark Ages. The Eternal City fell into the hands of the barbarians when there were no more *men* left to defend its honor and its liberties.

But if a Catholic may not marry, nor read, nor select his school, nor eat, nor sleep without dictation from his Church, is it not also true that he cannot die without sending for a confessor, or be buried except in ground selected by the Church, or be let out of purgatory without the consent of the Door-keeper—that is to say, the Church? And if he has a secret, can he keep it to himself? Is he not compelled by his Catholic conscience to whisper it in the ears of the priest? Will you, then, please mention the things which a Catholic may do as a free and independent person, or the things for which he is accountable only to his own conscience, or the department or sphere of life in which he can safely ignore the priest? Is there the least margin of liberty allowed to a man who takes upon himself the yoke of Rome? The Catholic has a will, but what can he will? He has a mind, but what can he think? He has a conscience, but is it not pawned? What we have said of the Catholic Church is true also of the Protestant Church. As already intimated, Protestantism is too much split up to offer an effective resistance to the rights of the individual, or to make its authority as sweeping, or as all-embracing as that of the older religious organisation, but a supernatural faith, be it of one denomination or of another, is from necessity bound to sacrifice man to God and the present to the hereafter.

That I have tried to be careful and accurate in the statement presented to you this morning, you will see by the quotation I am about to read from Newman, one of the distinguished English cardinals.

"We are not allowed to grow up before choosing our religion. We as little choose our religion as we choose to be born. It is done for us without our having part in it."

The Cardinal is consistent. There is not a word in the Bible about the right of anybody to choose his own religion or government. There is no liberty where there is a Supreme Being who carries everything and everything "in the hollow of his hand." Protestantism, with its right of private judgment, is infidelity. If our private judgment is the highest tribunal, what would there be left for the Deity to do? But if, on the other hand, as the Cardinal insists, our religion is chosen for us, as also our politics, our food, our reading, our education, our husbands and wives, in what sense, or by what stretch of courtesy could we still call ourselves *men*?

Returning to the comparison between supernaturalism and science—that is to say, comparing the faith of the Middle Ages with the practice of to-day—we see that the former, by belittling this world, made man willing to let who wanted it have it. The king wanted the world, the priest wanted the world and the people were willing enough to let them have it. That explains the success of political and spiritual domination. If the people had been brought up to love life, to appreciate its opportunities, to desire happiness on earth, and to aspire to possess rights and liberties, they would not have been so willing to part with the world.

Just as a sharp dealer belittles the article he wishes to buy in order to pay little for it, king and priest both denounced the world as worthless in order that they might possess it with the least effort or expense.

Finally, Christianity made humility, poorness of spirit, the highest virtue. This also tended to dishonor the people against the aggressor. Meek, humble, ignorant, the people were in no position to defend themselves and their rights against the King or

Church. Paganism, on the other hand, by exalting greatness of mind and strength of body, encouraged self-respect and daring. People who possess these latter qualities fight harder and longer, and refuse to become slaves. Christianity, for the sake of a future paradise, encouraged man to submit to blows and not to resist evil.

But good news to you, my people, good news! The Renaissance revived the Pagan virtues—inquiry, resistance, courage, and self-respect. The Renaissance put an end to the effeminate world of the Middle Ages—a world of underlings, dwarfs, and slaves, crouching at the feet of phantoms—and made it possible for you and me to say, unafraid and unabashed—unbribable by any promise of a paradise in the clouds, and unscared by any threat of an inferno somewhere in the lower regions—to say, I, I think, I will; I love, and with that the worth of man and the worth of his world has been infinitely enhanced.

Correspondence.

THE PROGRESS OF EDUCATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

Sir.—As one who fought three elections for the late London School Board on the "Secular Education and full Public Control" program, I have, needless to say, appreciated the support given by the *Freethinker* to those fundamental principles of democratic education policy; and, as a rank-and-file propagandist in the Socialist and Trade Unionist movements I have had a unique opportunity of studying the methods of the powerful forces retarding progress in education. Those forces observe no truce, and have been, and will be, persistently at work consolidating the reaction of the clerical legislation which destroyed the School Boards.

To me, it appears that those who value intellectual liberty, should at this time take steps to secure, that in the work of reconstruction which lies before us, not only shall the question of education in general occupy the foremost position which its importance demands, but also and especially that those bedrock principles for which we have fought in the past shall be kept to the front.

Those political organisations, notably the working-class organisations, which certainly prior to the election of 1906 led us to hope that they would work for a forward educational house in order. It must be borne in mind that the force is so much the stronger by reason of the fact that the year has been held for thirteen years.

Even the organisation which claims to represent International Social Democracy in England submits with quiet acquiescence to the clerical legislation which, nine years ago, was by Socialist, Laborist, and Liberal declared at the meetings to be iniquitous. As an ex-member of the Socialist Democratic Party—my membership having been prolonged for investigatory purposes—I have felt that it would be useful to have a record of what Social Democracy in England has done for education during the past ten very critical years in the history of popular education.

Therefore, some months ago, I invited Mr. Hyndman, Lady Warwick, or both, to debate with me in public on the following proposition:—

"That the organisation which claims to represent Social Democracy in England has not, since the destruction of the School Boards, been a force for furthering education progress."

I would myself take the affirmative; Mr. Hyndman or Lady Warwick, or both, as colleagues in the leadership of the B.S.P., would naturally be prepared to take the negative. I should be grateful to any reader of the *Freethinker* who could help to secure the acceptance of this challenge.

M. BRIDGES ADAMS.

Bebel House, Working Womens' Colloge.

MR. PALMER AND PASTEUR.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

Sir.—The article in last week's issue by Mr. Palmer, in which he extols Pasteur's work, reads like a Research Defence pamphlet, albeit embellished with more literary skill. There is, however, another side to this notorious life, and it is only when we view it in all its aspects that we can

possibly see it in its true perspective. Pasteur was a favorite of fortune. Although he certainly did some enduring work, he gained far more popular notoriety than others who did more solid work, and most of his work can be shown to be in no sense original. His fame has been built mainly on credulity, superstition, and money-making. The statistics which show his treatment of rabies were "marvellously successful" are obviously fallacious. The number of deaths from hydrophobia did not decrease for many years after the treatment was established, and it is clear to any unprejudiced investigator that the reduction in the death-rate was brought about by multiplying the cases, a method which has been conspicuously adopted by latter-day "wonder-workers" in regard to other prophylactics.

Many of Pasteur's other "discoveries" rest on an equally insecure basis. The *British Medical Journal* recently commented as follows:—

"Remedies and modes of treatment, like systems of philosophy and fashions in dress, have their little day and cease to be. Back numbers [of the *Journal*] are the graveyards of dead theories."

Pasteurism will eventually find such a graveyard!

I am quite sure that if your readers will take the trouble to study Pasteur's life from all aspects, and not take prejudiced zealots' views, they will find it difficult to discern in him a real and abiding benefactor to the human race.

H. C. HEBBES.

The Religious Views of Walter Crane.

TOWARDS the end of this summer (1864) my friend Wise somewhat suddenly bade me farewell, and giving up his lodgings, left the valley. I walked with him one evening across Eyam Moor, and did not meet him again until ten years afterwards.

My intellectual development owed much to him certainly, and to him I was indebted for my first acquaintance with Emerson. I began with *The Conduct of Life*, and found the optimism of Concord very stimulating reading. It had a bracing effect on my awakening thought, and helped to clear my mind of superstitious shadows and theological bogies which at one time rather oppressed me, and even, under the influence of the impressive ritualistic services and aesthetic effects at All Saints', Margaret-street, and St. Alban's, Holborn, threatened to drive me into the arms of that section of the Church. But, with the reading of Emerson, new windows seemed to open to my mental vision, and disclosed a wider prospect. It was like getting out into fresh air and sunlight after the mysterious gloom and close atmosphere of a cavern. All Saints', however, was perhaps an advance upon the rather sleepy services at St. Pancras, our parish church, where the only vital spark about that time seemed to be the young and eloquent Mr. McClure, a curate there, whom I met as Dean of Manchester Cathedral many years afterwards. At least, there was a feeling of the movement of a revival with the ritualists which stirred one, and its very intensity brought the whole question of religious faith up for judgment in one's mind.

Aided by such books as *Phases of Faith*, by T. W. Newman, the brother of the well-known Cardinal, and rather a wide range of reading from this time onward, including the writings of J. S. Mill, Darwin, and Herbert Spencer, and, above all, the poems of Shelley, I soon decided for Free-thought.

We had formed a book club or reading fund in the family for the acquisition of books, and we also had a subscription at Mudie's, so that the supply was kept up. Some of us also attempted writing short essays on various subjects, which were read in the family circle and discussed.

Reading, too, of Auguste Comte and the Positivists may have had some effect, and I remember attending one of the London Positivist Society's meetings at a large room, I think, in Bouverie-street, where Professor Newton, who was one of the leaders, delivered an address. I think George Henry Lewes and George Eliot (Marian Evans) were present, and Professor Beesley, Dr. Bridges, and Mr. Frederic Harrison—all very energetic and able advocates of the Positivist School and in the van of political and social thought and progress. These were exciting times altogether. The stir of great movements was in the air. The discoveries and conclusions of Charles Darwin were startling the world, and scientific criticisms were revolutionising philosophic thought, but, at the same time, alarming the old theological camps and the Church, and a cloud of so-called "refutations" appeared; while, on the other hand, the Church was divided by the ritualistic movement.

—An Artist's Reminiscences; 1907.

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