

THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

VOL. XXXV.—No. 20

SUNDAY, MAY 16, 1915

PRICE TWOPENCE

The heretic is he who has an opinion.—BOSSUET.

Nature, God, and Morals.

EVERY now and again the believer in Deity finds himself face to face with what he calls the "problem of suffering" or the "problem of evil." If he were not a believer in God, the problem would not bother him; for the reason that it is the outcome of that belief. For under whatever form the question is presented, it ultimately comes to this: How can we reconcile the existence of a supreme Deity with the presence of evil in the world? And that is, obviously, the Theist's problem; it belongs to no one else. If a man does not believe in a supreme Deity, he cannot be called upon to reconcile his existence with anything. All he is concerned with is noting the facts, and interpreting them as he best can. His problem is to find a theory that will fit the facts. But if he starts with a theory, and with the inward reservation that come what may that theory must not be surrendered, his task is a very different one. He must explain the facts so that they will fit the theory. And by a judicious manipulation of the facts, that is always possible—so long as the one to whom the explanation is offered is not over-critical or too well-informed.

The problem, created by theology, is made—and kept—obscure by infirmity of speech. Our terminology is the outcome of human consciousness, and of necessity reflects human needs and feelings. If we wish to express the bald fact that atoms of matter approach each other in a certain way, we speak of "attraction"; or in dealing with larger bodies, of the pull of the sun on the earth, or of the earth on the moon. So we also speak of the moan of the sea, of the smile of sunshine, of a whispering breeze, and so on in numberless instances. There is nothing very wrong in all this; it is, indeed, a convenience to be able to express our ideas in a brief, picturesque, and vivid manner. But this language does possess the disadvantage of being set in a background of animism, and of carrying with it animistic suggestions that are often enough the cause of confusion. We personify Nature, and then, forgetting that this personification is a purely mental creation, and does not exist outside us, we treat these personifications as real and independent existences. On that confusion the whole of theology rests. Destroy it, and theology everywhere crumbles into nothingness.

In a recent issue of the *Globe* newspaper, the writer, who signs himself "Numa," deals with what he calls "Nature's Morals." The purpose of his article is, apparently, to vindicate Nature against the charge of what he calls "our cheaper philosophers" who have raved over "Nature's indifference." If asserting that Nature is indifferent—I do not know that I have ever "raved" over it—brings one under the category of "cheap philosophers," then I am afraid I come under that general classification. For I do not know that Nature is ever anything else than indifferent. Birth and death, sickness and health, the fall of a stone and the death of a genius, the elevation of an island and the birth of a monarchy—all these, and a thousand other things,

occur as facts in Nature; and if we include the human group, we have smiles and tears, good fortune and bad fortune, good actions and bad actions, with the whole sequence of human passions and desires. But still, Nature appears indifferent as to which is produced. Viewed as natural phenomena, there is the same finish given to an idiot as to a supreme genius. The idiot is not a genius; but he may be, nevertheless, a perfect idiot. As an idiot, he probably does not admit of improvement. And, given the circumstances, Nature is just as ready to produce idiots as geniuses—indeed, judging by the general population, her preference seems to run for the first rather than the second. And once they are produced, one can see no greater care on the part of Nature to preserve one rather than the other. She is equally indifferent whether either—or neither—lives or dies. The "cheap philosopher" certainly seems to have all the available evidence on his side.

When, says "Numa,"—

"we come to examine into shipwreck and disaster, we generally find that they are due to man's non-observance of laws or to a want of care. Nature is full of grace as well as law. She has her severity and her graciousness—her retribution for violated laws and rewards for obedience. That much is quite clear. If the penalty for violated laws seem to us too severe, and if the fact that innocent people suffer with the guilty puzzles and perplexes us, that is where the circle of Providence in its wider range passes into realms too distant for our vision to penetrate. Whether it be the sinking of the *Titanic*, the Chicago fire, or the Messina earthquake, when you get down to bedrock facts it is not destruction of life which is the primary object of such display of force, but the universality of those natural laws on which human welfare depends, and which Nature must observe lest the whole world perish."

A fine illustration of confusion, this, due to, or in the interests of, theology. In the one breath we learn that disaster is due to man's non-observance of laws or to want of care. In the next that they are due to natural laws "which Nature must observe lest the whole world perish." But how on earth can laws be at the same time "observed" and broken? And how can Nature be said to obey laws? Natural laws are only summarised expressions of the way in which natural forces operate. They do not rule Nature; they are Nature. And man does not break them, for the simple reason that he cannot break them. You can break a legislative enactment, because that always offers an alternative. It says, Do this or that; Steal, or Don't steal—and prescribes certain consequences in either case. But natural law is never broken, because that is only an expression of consequences. Nature never prescribes, she never corrects; she simply acts. "Numa" thinks that "an examination of Nature's observance of law will aid man's religious convictions." So it may, provided he examines Nature from the viewpoint of primitive humanity instead of from that of modern science. And, of course, if the examination chances to be unfavorable to religion, there is always at hand the anæsthetic that the subject has passed to that "circle of Providence" which is "too distant for our vision to penetrate." This ensures that an examination of Nature will strengthen religious convictions, because if the difficulties remain after examination you can always leave it to the Lord.

Shipwreck and disaster, we are told, are due to non-observance of laws or to want of care. As a matter

of fact, the major part of the larger disasters of life cannot be attributed to either cause. It was not want of care that caused the Messina earthquake—unless it was God's want of care. Or suppose it were admitted that the sinking of the *Titanic*, or even of the *Lusitania*, was due to want of care, how is Nature's "graciousness" manifested? The builders of the vessels, the owners of the vessels—to whose want of care, if to anyone's, the disasters were due—were not drowned. The people who were drowned were precisely those who took every care they could take in the circumstances, and they were, practically, the only ones who paid the extreme penalty.

It is the same with Nature's rewards for obedience. What moral discrimination is exerted here? How often does it happen that the very fineness of a man's character exposes him to disasters from which men of a coarser texture are exempt? One man quick to respond to a call for help will rush out in inclement weather and, probably, lay the foundations of a life-long disease. That is the way Nature rewards him. Another man, less responsive, more concerned for his own welfare, remains unmoved, and Nature rewards him with continued health. It is one of the commonest of experiences, and the most easily verified of generalisations, that between personal worth and any kind of reward there is but the most casual and capricious connection.

In reality it is not the Atheist who "raves" against Nature for either its indifference or its immorality. Neither term is applicable. A stone is not "indifferent" when it falls and bruises a man; the term is altogether irrelevant. We do not, if we are sensible, rave at natural forces, we only seek to understand them, and by understanding them control them. Good and bad, moral and immoral, are terms that belong to humanity, or, at most, to intelligent existence, and have no meaning and no application in any other sphere. Good and evil are veritably no more than aspects of cosmic phenomena in relation to an organism, they have no meaning apart from that organism, and their degree of "goodness" or "badness" is tested by standards created by the organism itself. I am not denying the reality of either one or the other, all I am pointing out is their meaning and their sphere of application.

But if we did believe that Nature had its own "morality," then the outlook would be indeed black. For morality in Nature means an analysis of the morality of the intelligence controlling Nature. And this means that we are in the grip of an overruling intelligence so callous to human suffering, and with standards of judgment so alien to human morality, that disease may as easily come from the consequences of a good action as from a bad one, that the innocent may suffer and the guilty escape, that children may bear the full consequences of their parent's iniquity, and that in spite of all we may do we are ultimately powerless to effect any radical alteration in the scheme of things. Of course, all these things do occur now; but we can be, at least, without the depressing feeling that we are the mere sport of a supreme power that mocks our efforts, and sits unmoved by our suffering. It remains, as Huxley said, a fight of national forces *versus* human intelligence; and terrible though our reverses may be, there is consolation in the reflection that our sufferings are not the result of intention, and inspiration in the knowledge of the many victories already won.

C. COHEN.

Theology Self-condemned.

THE Dean of Divinity at Magdalen College, Oxford, is determined, at any cost, to harmonise the War with the so-called teaching of Jesus. He has contributed three articles to the *Christian Commonwealth* with this object in view. The third is entitled, "What Jesus Taught," and endeavors to show that there is

nothing in the Four Gospels which can legitimately be interpreted as a direct condemnation of war. Curiously enough, Mr. Thompson naively admits at the outset, that the Gospels supply us with only versions of the teaching of Jesus, the natural inference from such admission being that no one can tell what that teaching really was. "It is not extant in its original form," the Dean says, "but in the shape in which it was edited for publication by two of Christ's biographers. Remembering this fact, and the liberty which editors in those days enjoyed in the matter of altering and adapting their material, we cannot assume that this report of Jesus' words is always correct." The two Gospels alluded to are those of Matthew and Luke. Now, who the author of Matthew's Gospel was cannot be ascertained, though it is a certainty that it was not written by the Apostle Matthew. In the Apostolic Church certain sayings were current which were popularly ascribed to Jesus, and of these sayings different versions were, doubtless, in circulation, from which those found in the Gospels were selected and given a permanent literary form. In any case, we may rest assured that the writers of Matthew and Luke had never heard, perhaps had never known, Jesus themselves, but were guided almost exclusively by their own theological prejudices, which were largely due, possibly, to the influence of such teachers as Paul, Peter, and John, whether their compilations were made at the close of the first century or early in the second. Most probably, indeed, the sayings which they attributed to Jesus were more their own than his. At any rate, it is impossible to discover what the teaching of Jesus really was, or that the teaching Jesus ever actually existed. Mr. Thompson, however, observes:—

"Nevertheless, these sayings, and particularly those embodied in the Sermon on the Mount, must be the starting point of an inquiry into what the Foundation of Christianity actually taught."

With the foregoing remarks in mind we now proceed to examine the so-called teaching of Jesus, its bearing, or lack of bearing, upon the War. Mr. Thompson rightly calls attention to the fact that the two different reports of the Sermon on the Mount cannot possibly be reconciled. In Luke vi. the Beatitudes are pronounced upon particular classes of society, while in Matthew v. they are pronounced upon particular types of character. As Mr. Thompson puts it, "the original 'blessings' have been differently edited in the two Gospels." Then he adds:—

"In either case, Jesus promised the kingdom of heaven—that is, the Millennium—to just that character and position in life which is commonly regarded as wretched and undesirable from a worldly point of view. The worldly man has no solution for the case of the poor and miserable; he just passes by on the other side. The Jewish Christian mind thinks that they were compensated in another life, if not in this. But Jesus saw that they need no worldly compensation, if they saw that poverty and persecution bring them a spiritual happiness and happiness unattainable in any other way."

We maintain that poverty and persecution are by no means blessings in disguise, nor are calculated to bring spiritual health and happiness. The Christian rich often imagine that the poor exist for the very purpose of enabling them to win Heaven's favor by doling out to them a few small charities. The only solution for the case of the poor and miserable must consist in the removal of poverty and misery, not in harboring the false conviction that both poverty and misery are splendid means of personal sanctification. The notion that health and happiness are unobtainable except through the instrumentality of disease and wretchedness, however tenaciously held by theologians, is a most pernicious heresy, and the sooner we renounce it the better it will be for all concerned. And yet it is on the assumption that such a noxious heresy is true, that this Oxford Dean of Divinity bases his justification of war. "The teaching," he avers, "undermines much common-sense about war," because it enables Christians to advocate war, when convenient, in the name of Jesus.

Prince of Peace. "The alternative for the Christian," he continues, "is never the simple one, Peace or War? but the much more complicated one, God or the World?" He confesses that there are other teachings of Jesus which make a Christian dislike and distrust the appeal to force—"and war is simply the social appeal to force," and then follows this statement:—

"But there are times when, in pursuing a spiritual ideal—be it liberty or justice, or what not—a Christian man or a Christian nation must either use force or fail. The kingdom of heaven must be made to suffer violence; men of violence must take it by force."

Such is Mr. Thompson's justification of war from the point of view of the Beatitudes; and we frankly admit that if the teaching of the Beatitudes is true, the justification is valid. But when we come to the passage in Matthew v. 38, and Luke vi. 29, we are face to face with a principle according to which resistance to evil and retaliation are a grievous violation of the law of Christ. Our Dean of Divinity tries to explain this passage away by asserting that it does not legislate for a society, but places an ideal for individuals. The Bishop of Oxford, likewise, declares that it is a proverb, and cannot be "taken as a rule for constant action, but only as a type of action when a particular principle is to be expressed" (*The Sermon on the Mount*, p. 88). Both the Bishop and the Divinity Dean resort to shameful sophistry in their interpretation of their Lord's words here, forgetting that Jesus himself, in this very Sermon on the Mount, treats his sayings as rules of conduct in his kingdom, conformity to which is essential to the attainment of wisdom (Matt. vii. 24-27). "Resist not evil" is certainly a command of the most practical nature, the meaning of which Jesus explains at length. Mr. Thompson affirms that the principle underlying it is "that of shaming evil out of existence rather than forcing it, which is as valuable and practical as it ever was"; but the text speaks, not of putting evil out of existence by any means whatever, but of calmly and uncomplainingly enduring it. Simply put, it comes to this: When you are struck, do not strike back; if you are wronged, dream not of vengeance; if you are cursed and despitefully used, be resigned, fall on your knees and pray; though they who treat you unjustly and cruelly are verily your enemies, yet your duty is to love them and shower kindnesses upon them as if they were your best friends. And that is how Jesus himself puts it. Mr. Thompson says that the command, "Love your enemies," does not mean, "Cherish affection for your enemies," but, "Maintain an attitude of well-wishing and helpfulness towards them." The reverend gentleman is in error, for the Greek word for love here is the word used in the phrase "God is love" in 1 John iv. 8, 16, and in most of the passages in which believers are exhorted to love one another. If "love in Matthew v. 43, and Luke vi. 27, is not the feeling of affection," then it follows that when we read, "God is love," we are to suppose that the Supreme Being's love to mankind "is not the feeling of affection." But whether the Greek term, *agapè*, signifies the feeling of affection, or an attitude of well-wishing and helpfulness, the conclusion is the same, namely, that Christians have no right to be in a state of war with the people they love, be they friends or foes. The Germans do not seek to hide the fact that they hate the British with perfect hatred, thereby proving their open disloyalty to Christ; but the British Christians profess to love the Germans for Christ's sake, and yet while loving them we kill as many of them as we possibly can. The Bishop of London goes so far as to set the teaching of his Lord and Master completely aside and to advocate the duty of wreaking our vengeance upon the Germans for their unspeakable and murderous atrocities on land and sea. If his Lordship speaks simply as a man we are convinced that he is quite right; but as a Christian and servant of the Lord he is guilty of arrogating to himself a policy which the Bible declares to be the prerogative of God alone.

Clergymen deny their Savior every time they attempt to defend war. "Thou shalt not kill" is a commandment as binding upon a State as upon an individual. Believers in God have no right to put one another to death, be the provocation what it may. They are all brethren who are called upon to love and bear with one another continually. The nations now at war are all members of the household of faith, and glory in being the redeemed of the Lord. Their profession is that they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb and can read their titles clear to mansions in the sky. The fact, however, is, that Christ is no more real to them than the man in the moon. Their religion, in all its aspects, is an infinite sham, to which they sentimentally cling in spite of all the facts which discredit it. Mr. Thompson expresses the opinion that "this War will deal a heavy blow to the idea of a State religion, if only through the exposure of the Kaiser's attitude towards God." How easy it is to throw stones at the Kaiser and make game of his religious ardor; but surely his Majesty's attitude towards God is not one whit more inconsistent and absurd than that of British Christians, who are quite as confident that God is on their side and against the Germans. How often have our preachers assured their hearers that we are bound to win because we are fighting for Christ and righteousness. The fortunes of the War hitherto have been such as to indicate most emphatically that no God of justice and love sits as king forever, that no invisible and all-conquering Christ takes the least interest in the ferocious conflict, and that there is nothing to justify the hope that right is destined to be victorious over might, or even that might shall succeed in establishing right. At the present moment there is no escape from the dread fact that right, whatever it may be, is at the mercy of mere might.

J. T. LLOYD.

A Soldier-Poet.

"But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-span life." —MILTON.

THE feelings of the many admirers of Lieutenant Rupert Brooke, the soldier-poet, who laid down his life for England at Lemnos, must be like those of the survivors of a shipwreck when, the morning after the storm, they contemplate the relics that the capricious sea has spared from the rich contents of the sunken ship. Their joy at the sight of each relic is insufficient to compensate for the sad memories it awakens of equally precious treasures that are lost. Nor is this feeling attributable merely to the fact that an early death has snatched from us a poet of rare talent. Many such might pass away without exciting these keen feelings of regret. The world would be grateful for what it had actually received from them, and would not concern itself with speculations as to how much greater might have been their achievements had more time been allowed them. But no one, in the case of Rupert Brooke, can thus banish the thought of what might have been, of the future that was denied him.

Rupert Brooke's short life was packed with experience. He assimilated culture at Rugby and Cambridge, and afterwards he travelled extensively. When the calling bugles of England sounded, he never hesitated. He took part in the expedition to Antwerp, and sailed for the Dardanelles a few weeks ago. Now he lies in Lemnos, a fitting grave for a poet, the guerdon of a brief and happy life.

There have been few names in the tale of the victims of this great European War which could be said to be well known even among their own countrymen. But Rupert Brooke was a brilliant exception, for many saw in this high-minded and gifted young man the hope of the continuance of a noble poetic tradition, and watched with fascination the opening

of what promised to be a great career. It is a very tragic irony which has closed in the War the years of earnest study before the great task for which they were to fit him had been but well begun.

This brave young poet, for whom the meteor flag of England had such a fascination, was at heart a Greek. The man for whom the passing hours had such possibilities of joy or sorrow was conscious always that they could never return. He knew of the cruel havoc of time, the wrinkles of age, the nemesis of youth and beauty. In the most exultant moments of life he was conscious of the shadow of death:—

"And has the truth brought no new hope at all,
Heart, that you're weeping yet for Paradise?
Do they still whisper, the old weary cries?
'Mid youth and song, feasting and carnival,
Through laughter, through the roses, as of old
Comes Death, on shadowy and relentless feet
Death, unappeasable by prayer or gold;
Death is the end, the end!
Proud, then, clear-eyed and laughing go to greet
Death as a friend."

Over and over again the young poet reverts to the working of this unseen vengeance on youth. Again and again we catch a hint at the secret fear which was at the core of the Greek conception of life, this Pagan antipathy to that physically repulsive for which there was no consolation. His sympathies were ever with the youth who feels in his blood the hunger of an unshaped desire and revolts against the lot which would tame it. Listen to this beautiful sonnet:—

"Breathless, we flung us on the windy hill,
Laughed in the sun, and kissed the lovely grass.
You said, 'Through glory and ecstasy we pass;
Wind, sun, and earth remain, the birds sing still,
When we are old, are old.....' 'And when we die
All's over that is ours; and life burns on
Through other lovers, other lips,' said I,
—'Heart of my heart, our heaven is now, is won!
'We are Earth's best, that learnt her lesson here.
Life is our cry. We have kept the faith!' we said;
'We shall go down with unreluctant tread
Rose-crowned into the darkness!'.....Proud we were,
And laughed, that had such brave true things to say,
—And then you suddenly cried, and turned away."

These quotations only partially illuminate the genius of the brilliant young scholar who contemplated twentieth-century England like a visitor from another planet. As a poet, Rupert Brooke can only be described as modern; yet he derived much of his inspiration from the classics of Greece and Rome. By natural right he had a mastery over his lyre, and he had all the audacity of true genius. He could turn sea-sickness into a sonnet, and he pictured, cynically, an old-world lover nagging in extreme age.

The great European War wrought a change in Rupert Brooke, and afterwards he sang with richer inspiration. In the later sonnets, dated 1914, he wrote as a soldier and a poet. Love of his country, and a just pride in the people who can rule it, became one of the strongest passions which he felt. In his own noble way, and as though he knew his own fate, he wrote a sonnet, which must remain his proper epitaph:—

"If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home."

"One paces up and down the shore yet awhile," says Thackeray, "and looks towards the unknown ocean, and thinks of the traveller whose boat sailed yesterday." The words of Thackeray were recalled when the news of Rupert Brooke's death came to our knowledge. Who would not regret the extinction of a career set in a promise so golden, in an accomplishment so rare and splendid? There he lies in Lemnos in a soldier's grave. Great-hearted, brave, tender as a child, intolerant of wrong because he was incapable of it, tolerant of human weakness, versed in many literatures, a man of genius—here was Rupert Brooke. He loved England without mis-

giving, and his country, loving him in return, crowns his grave with honor.

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

MIMNERMUS.

Missionary Converts.—IV.

(Continued from p. 299.)

"Whoever has seen much of Hindoo Christians must have perceived that the man who bears that name is very commonly nothing more than a drunken reprobate, who conceives himself at liberty to eat and drink anything he pleases, and annexes hardly any other meaning to the name of Christianity. Such sort of converts may swell the list of names and gratify the puerile pride of a missionary; but what real discreet Christian can wish to see such Christianity prevail?.....After all that has been said of the vices of the Hindoos, we believe that a Hindoo is more mild and chaste than most Europeans, and as honest and chaste.....

"If it is a duty of general benevolence to convert the Heathen, it is less a duty to convert the Hindoos than any other people, because they are already highly civilised, and because you must infallibly subject them to infamy and present degradation. The instruments employed for these purposes are calculated to bring ridicule and disgrace upon the gospel; and in the discretion of those at home, whom we consider as their patrons, we have not the smallest reliance; but, on the contrary, we are convinced they would behold the loss of our Indian Empire, not with the humility of men convinced of erroneous views and projects, but with the pride, the exultation, and the alacrity of martyrs."—SYDNEY SMITH, "Indian Missions," *Essays*, pp. 167-8-9.

"It is, of course, a truism that every one of us must think in the terms of his own experience. 'When I was a child, I thought as a child' applies also to the races who are really in the childhood stage of intellectual evolution. It ought to be self-evident, and really it is when one stops to think, that the Christianity of the cultured, club-frequenting, wealthy man of the city can never be quite the same as that of the farmer in the backwoods, for the thoughts of each and their outlook on life are colored by their associations; still it is apparently true that when the clubman writes out his check for foreign missions and the farmer drops his silver coin on the contribution plate, each seems to think that the money is going to be spent to produce in the minds of distant savages exactly the type of Christianity which the giver himself holds, or which he is in the habit of hearing from his own pulpit"—VILHELMUR STEFANSSON, *My Life with the Eskimo* (1913), p. 408.

STEFANSSON gives another instance of Sabbatarian observance which came under his notice. A Christianised Eskimo and his wife arrived one Saturday about noon at Cape Smythe. They had been travelling with another Eskimo and his wife, but these, running short of food and being too weak to continue the journey, were abandoned about forty miles away; and, although the new arrivals reached Cape Smythe at noon, they made no mention of the plight of their companions until midnight on Saturday, when the Eskimo declined to break the Sabbath by going to their relief. The white people never heard of it until the evening of Sunday, and the couple managed undoubtedly have perished; but the man managed to drag himself to a trader's house, who, hearing a noise, found him unconscious at the door. Stefansson says of this man who had thus heartlessly abandoned his travelling companions:—

"I noticed that when we sat down to meals it was he who said grace; in spiritual matters he seemed to be an authority, and the leading light of the place. As a matter of curiosity I asked him if he had been long a Christian, and he replied, 'About ten years.' He further volunteered the information that during all that time he had never eaten a meal without saying grace, and had never worked on Sunday, and had kept all the commandments of the Lord. I asked him if he had ever heard that to abandon people to starve was against the commandments of the Lord. He had never heard that particular commandment, he said; but that might be because his Christianity had come entirely from some Kotzebue Sound Eskimo. He had never had the advantage of the direct instruction of a white missionary, and no doubt he might not have heard all the commandments of which those might have knowledge who had been better educated than he. Just as a man who sits down to a meal of mountain sheep will adopt quickly a food taboo of which he is informed by anyone

who happens to be present, so this man seemed glad to learn that abandoning people to starve was against the desire of the Lord, and he would make a point of seeing that it did not happen again.*

Thus, the only way in which the Eskimo can accept the teachings of Christianity is in exactly the same way as he accepted the teaching of his shamen—that is, each new rule is to be regarded as a new taboo, the breaking of which will be followed by dire consequences.

Another great evil—one that has dogged the footsteps of Christianity from its very inception—is the introduction of intolerance and persecution where it had previously been unknown.

Stefansson relates that among his travelling party, in the summer of 1909, was an Eskimo named Ouzak, whose old and decrepit father was also of the party. "It seemed to me," says Stefansson, "that I had seldom seen an old man so badly treated," for he was compelled to make his own camp and eat his own meals separate from that of his son and family. He was continually short of tobacco and matches, although his son had more of both than he needed for his own use. "I did not understand at the time," says Stefansson, "why he should have been so treated, and thought of it only as an unusual example of unfilial conduct. In general I have seen old people among the Eskimos remarkably well treated." It was not till two years later that he learned the facts of the case from the Eskimo Ilavinirk, who explained that—

"it was because the son had just been converted to Christianity, and the missionary had told the converts not to associate with unbelievers. The old man and one old woman in the tribe were the only two who did not accept Christianity. The old man's son, Ilavinirk said, was in a great quandary, because he was fond of his father but did not dare to disobey the missionary's injunctions. He had found a sort of middle course, therefore, by compelling the old man to keep his own house and eat by himself" (p. 420).

As for the old woman, all argument failed to convert her; "she kept saying that she had seen the spirits of her own belief cure disease, avert famine, and bring a change of wind, and she had yet to see that the new religion could do any better"; and as for the revelation of a heaven for the good and a hell for the bad, "The old woman kept saying she would wait and see. She would not believe in either heaven or hell until she saw them." The son was greatly worried by this attitude of his mother, and whenever he got new arguments from the missionary, or the converts, he would always present them to his mother. One day, says Ilavinirk, a missionary preached to them in this way:—

"If any of you believe that fire will not burn you if you stick your hand into it, then you may believe also that the things I tell you are not true; but if you believe that fire would burn you, then you must believe also that what I say is true."

Stefansson says that of course no missionary ever used such an argument, but that "Extreme misunderstandings are, of course, common, due partly to the missionary's imperfect command of Eskimo and partly to the fact that his ideas are essentially strange to them." However that may be—and the argument is intrinsically no better and no worse than many other missionary arguments—it utterly failed in effect. Says Stefansson:—

"When her son presented this argument, Ilavinirk said that such was the old woman's perversity that she only laughed and ridiculed it, saying that she did not see anything convincing about that sort of reasoning. Hoping nevertheless to convince her by an actual test, her son waited until she was asleep, when he lit a match and held it under her hand, letting the flame play over her fingers. The old woman awoke screaming with pain. But so perverse was she that even this did not convince her, and so far as Ilavinirk knew she was still a heathen. Some people are that way, Ilavinirk philosophised. He supposed, however, that if the fire of a match was not hot enough to make unbelievers

change their minds, perhaps the fires of hell would be more convincing" (p. 421).

Which again proves the truth of the saying of Jesus, "I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matt. x. 35-36).

Another great evil wrought by the missionaries is their interference with the manners and customs of the natives; and this is true not only of the Eskimo, but of all other primitive tribes. As Stefansson remarks, the missionaries come—

"with crystallised notions of exactly what must be done and exactly how everyone must live and act under no matter what conditions. The fundamental precept of Christianity apparently seems to many of them to be linked with certain purely local customs of the city from which they happen to come, and they emphasise both equally. The three commandments, 'Love thy neighbor as thyself,' 'Thou shalt keep the Sabbath day holy,' and 'Thou shalt eat thy potatoes with a fork,' impress themselves with equal vividness upon the aborigines, and are likely to be considered by them to be means of grace of co-ordinate value" (p. 25).

And as the shamen, before the missionaries came, were considered to be the mouthpiece of the spirits, so, says Stefansson, "The missionary, who in the mind of the Eskimo is a new and in certain ways a superior kind of shaman, does not therefore speak as a private individual; he is in their eyes but the mouthpiece of the Lord" (p. 92).

We have seen that one of the charges made against Dr. Marsh was that he encouraged immodesty by sitting in the Eskimo houses with his coat off. The foundation for this charge arose in this way. In the extremely cold winter weather the only sensible and comfortable way of dressing, says Stefansson,—

"as everyone knows who has tried it, is to wear a fur coat next to the body, with no underwear between. This is the way the Eskimo always dressed until recently, and a man who dresses so has naturally to take his coat off as soon as he comes into their overheated dwellings. It was, until two or three years ago, the custom of both men and women to sit in the houses stripped to the waist. There was nothing immodest about it in their eyes. They did not know that the human body is essentially vile and must be hidden from sight, until they learnt that fact from white men recently. It seems it has been certain missionaries chiefly that have warned them against the custom, and they therefore consider 'You shall not take off your coat in the house' as one of the precepts of the new religion, to be broken only at the peril of one's immortal soul" (p. 433).

Dr. Marsh, who saw plainly the bad effect of the new custom upon the health of the Eskimo, explained the matter to them, says Stefansson,—

"and tried by his example to get them to go back to the sensible way which they practised until a few years ago. But with them it was not a question of modesty or the reverse; it was merely that they understood that God had commanded them not to take off their coats in the house, and they meant to keep His commandments. If Dr. Marsh did not know that there was any such commandment, that was merely a sign that he was not well informed. On the other hand, if he really knew of the commandment and chose to break it for the sake of bodily comfort, then that might be a risk which he was willing to take, but one which they did not care to run" (p. 434).

Of the disastrous results attending the introduction, by the missionaries, of other innovations, we shall deal with in our concluding article.

(To be concluded.) W. MANN.

No Cross, No Crown.

TRANSITION is the jester of religion. It is the fool of creeds. When emotion reaches the pinnacle of its power, when an expectant mind sees the beginnings of an awesome miracle, the fellow of cap and bells strolls merrily in, and pours laughing water over hot brains, burning hearts, and smouldering

* Stefansson, *My Life with the Eskimo*, pp. 418-19.

senses. Naturally enough, emotion rebels against this intruder; for sarcastic merry-making is unholy and abominable when impinged upon sacred things. The quips and cranks, even of a privileged fool, although perfectly and obviously reasonable, are the lightning flashes of the eyes of the Devil to the solemn masticator of hot-cross buns. Like most wise fools, transition suffers, often, from that poetic disease entitled "not understood."

It is an easy matter for the intelligent man to observe the relationship existing between many of the religious customs of to-day and those of yesterday. He sees more change than decay in all around; and the change often amuses him. To the religionist, however, transition is an insult. He resents it, not so much because he is proud of the super-refinement of his habits, but because transition makes them more ludicrous than he would wish his worst enemy to appear. Accustomed to view certain ceremonies with serious mind, he steels himself against the amusing traits in the adaptive changes of creeds and their parasites. Religion, in his estimation, is the operator; social forces are the things operated on; and in his bigoted ignorance he refuses to acknowledge his actual proximity to the savage whom he despises.

The sacramental service of the modern spirit-worshiper, when he sips weak wine and nibbles bread, imagining himself partaking of the life-blood and flesh of God's Son, is but the twin of the cannibalistic rite of incorporating the body of the great chief in those of his friends. The purpose is the same; only the scena is differently arranged. The savage actors were more truthful. No doubt they accomplished the practice gluttonously, but the act was more sincere. Intelligence has brought hypocrisy, and when hypocrisy, with histrionic talent, rehearses before a mirror, it behoves the jester to grin in accompaniment to his words of witty wisdom. Transition makes a good, lively figure in the tragedy of life.

If the reading of the annals of the past tends to cramp the idea of progress in the mind of the student, showing him, maybe, but a circle, or at best an ellipsoid, and sometimes making mock, in covert fashion, at grandiloquent ethnic and social dreams, the innate grimness of human affairs is considerably modified by the jester of change. Hopelessness flies before laughter, and in the seemingly limitless level there are many corrugations. An architectural design brings goblins from the darkness. A baptismal service fills a church with black and white angels. Easter ceremonies call the past from its grave. Mythological personages crowd in the train of Christ to make the earth quiver with laughter. God's acre is full of quaint devices to keep the spirits imprisoned. Ministerial ordination echoes the happenings in the holy hut. And the habits of thought need simply a change of language to hurry them to primitivism.

Religious customs, in their birth, growth, death, and resurrection, are full of significant reflections of the vagaries of transition; and when their lineage is traced back to the savage past, one discovers that the truth or falsehood of religion may be found much more certainly from primitivism than from modern spiritualism. The truth of God depends less upon the specious apologetic pleadings of divines than upon the incoherent mutterings of a semi-insane medicine-man. Intelligence sometimes means but interpretation; and often only a ray of intelligence separates the modern minister from his primitive prototype. The practices of our Christian friends are the polished bones of dead dreams. Savage ideas and rites are still venerated. Savage beliefs are still more the rule than the exception. Blow away the spirit of present-day religion, and the crudity is visible. Dust off the tinted glamor, and you see the leprosy. Abrade the exorcences, and you wonder where the difference lay.

Ignorance builds the fortifications of conservatism and digs trenches around folly. Within these embattlements people can listen to Biblical yarns,

uphold beliefs, support customs, that possess all the characteristics of the religion of barbarians. Spiritualising brutality never denudes the savage parent of its nature nor severs the child from its father. If spiritualisation can clothe obscenity with a silken robe, knowledge can destroy that garment and show the beastliness within. Transition accomplishes many refinements, but not at the expense of its own humor. How pathetically shocked many respectable Christians would be, and have been, once they realised the unholy roots from which their choicest beliefs and customs have grown! How distressed would be many of the good ladies who decorate the pews on Sunday if they knew the original meanings of the things they devoutly love! They might even begin to suspect their ministers of duplicity and indecorum!

One of the simpler and lighter examples of change hangs opposite me. It is a relic of talismen, of thumbscrews, of sacred skulls. It is a text. From commanding, religion has degenerated to appealing; from majestic dignity it has descended to grovelling; from exaltation it has lowered to humid meekness. Change has transformed the stocks into a text.

It is woven in reddy-brown worsted on a piece of perforated cardboard, and is composed half of simple English and half of equally simple hieroglyphics. Following each "No" are the symbols of a cross and a crown, the whole forming the succinct philosophic dictum: No Cross, No Crown.

Less than fifty years ago competitions were held in the Sabbath-schools for this kind of elementary religious enthusiasm; and the most successful competitor of workwomanship was honored by being installed in that Holy of Holies named the Vestry. It was the red-letter day in the eye of the vicar. She was sure of being nominated a Sabbath-school teacher, the highest position in society a woman could then occupy. This particular text must have been a loser.

As a piquant plea for toleration it is not without a certain charm. Religion, in days gone by, bullied, now it seduces. Its mannerisms, once terrible, are now furtive. Where once it boldly and brazenly domineered on all the pathways of life, it now affects through the undergrowth. Basely materialistic in its dominance once, it is now quixotically mendacious in its subservience; and with the change in the social attitude of religion has gone a weakening towards senility of all its methods of propaganda.

Peculiarly enough the fatality of texts is at the present moment being demonstrated downstairs. A row, a family squabble, is going on. There is friction between mother and daughter. Hard things are being hurled through the stormy air. The mother has forgotten herself temporarily, and forgotten, also, the spirit in which she threaded that text on the wall. The burden has become too heavy for her. The cross is too weighty for her bent shoulders. Her white hairs do not harmonise well with trouble, and Christianity is of no use to her.

At these times, religion, God, Christ, and all the fantastic promises of paradise, and peace, with their crowns and honey and harps, vanish in tears. Christians blaspheme. They should, according to their own dogmatic assertions, cast their burdens on the Lord. He asks for the job anyway. Disobeying him keeps him unemployed. Christians fail to understand their plain duties in the matter. Infidelity and contumaciousness are mixed up in the righteousness of everything and the grief some things occasion. If God and the Lord leave all affairs, then it is pure idleness to weep and wail and gnash teeth over those things erroneously appear to jar. Besides, if there is no cross, there is no crown. Christians should be the happiest people on earth; but they find more happiness in the idiosyncracies of Charles Chaplin than they do in the divine love of Jesus Christ.

Religious change has borne many strange fruits. There is one thing, however, transition seemingly cannot accomplish; for the sad heart of religion remains sad. Despite everything said to the contrary, religion cannot turn the grey to gold.

withstanding the claims of those who say religion possesses a psychological influence over certain minds to a certain limited beneficial result, I cannot believe it; for the religion, even in these cases, is religion plus innumerable secular influences, and when religion achieves such a benefit by its own exertions, we may expect to witness a miracle. Beneath all the merry moments transition affords, the soul of religion remains the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the saddest thing Humanity has carried from its cradle.

ROBERT MORELAND.

Acid Drops.

Nothing can exceed the horror and brutality of the sinking of the *Lusitania* by German submarines. There is, of course, no such thing as "civilised" warfare, but there are certain things that so-called civilised nations have agreed on, and one of these is the immunity of non-combatants from attack. We question whether any of the "Heathen" powers would have been guilty of such an act, and its occurrence is but one more proof of the utter collapse of Christianity as a genuinely civilising force. For this crime was committed by the orders of men who have the name of God continuously upon their lips, and who maintain their prestige by constant appeals to the religious feelings of their people. It is an outrage perpetrated by one Christian nation against another Christian nation. "Providence" which, if we are to believe some of our ultra-pious journalists, has interposed to save a mere wooden crucifix from destruction, could do nothing to guard hundreds of innocent women and children from a cowardly attack. The sinking of the *Lusitania* has done more than cover the German people with infamy; in the minds of thoughtful men and women it will have put one more nail—if not the last nail—in the coffin of the great Christian superstition.

We wonder what some of the clergy of this country thought of Mr. Asquith's remark in the House of Commons on May 5:—

"The maltreatment of prisoners was a form of cruelty which was not known even in the Dark Ages, and it appeared to have been left, as other fiendish devices had been left, to the great War between the Christian nations of Europe to invent."

Mr. Asquith is not quite correct about the Dark Ages. Prisoners were then often maltreated, and were sometimes left lingering for years in prison. But his observation that the worst forms of warfare have been left for a fight between Christian nations is worthy of note. If these nations had not been Christian, the warfare could not have been worse. And certainly their being Christian has not made it any better.

Sir William Robertson Nicoll's library contains from 23,000 to 25,000 volumes, and it has to be weeded. The numerous duplicates must go. It is with great reluctance, however, that the reverend knight resolves to part with any editions of great works, whether novels, poetry, or biography. But, coming to the religious literature, he makes the significant confession that "he could part more easily with most of these volumes than with any others in his library." Even a theologian, an ordained minister of the Word, admits that theological books are the least valuable in his collection.

"People are not growing more religious, and too many things are going on as usual, including non-attendance at church," said the Rev. D. Ewart James at the annual meeting of the Essex Congregational Union at Malden. We commend the remark to those parsons who assure us that the War is favorable to religion.

Religious people are very simple and very confiding. The *Daily Chronicle* has published a puff preliminary concerning Billy Sunday, the Yankee revivalist, which relates that "in 1879 people were converted in eleven weeks in his own tabernacle, as many more outside and indirectly; whilst in his career he has converted over 200,000 people." These statements are as tall as the tabernacles Billy preaches in.

Some really wonderful stories are told of Billy Sunday. According to a London paper, "half-a-dozen total strangers were converted in a tramcar by an appeal from Christians authored by his sermons." That must have been a Western American car. Tramcars in England do too much business to permit of them being turned into debating societies.

A correspondence has taken place in the columns of the *Morning Post* concerning parsons and the War. It was stated that over 1,000 clergy volunteered as chaplains during the early days of the War. Just so! But the duties of a chaplain are not so dangerous as that of the camp-follower who looks after the marmalade.

The Rev. Principal Whyte, of Edinburgh, is known throughout the Christian world as an uncompromising calumniator of the human heart. He cannot find terms strong enough to express his utter detestation of it. It is "a horrible pit," full of "miry clay." The natural heart is "unspeakably horrible," "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Dr. Whyte tells us that Robert Bruce, a popular Edinburgh preacher of the sixteenth century, was well pleased "as long as his hearers in the High Kirk had a growing knowledge and a growing feeling of the horribleness and the hatefulness of their own hearts"; and the same thing could be said of the senior minister of St. George's United Free Church. He, too, is always vilifying his own heart, being convinced, as he looks down into it, that it is "a far more horrible pit than the mouth of any earthly volcano."

Now, the curious fact is that Dr. Whyte, who thus slanders the human heart, is himself one of the sweetest-tempered, kindest-hearted, and noblest-minded men that ever lived. He depreciates himself simply because he holds the hateful doctrine of original sin, because he follows Paul rather than Nature, or because in no other way can he adequately exalt and sing the praises of the Redeemer. No one can be a Christian without being guilty of high treason against himself. Christianity robs its adherents of their self-respect, teaching them to glorify God at the expense of holding themselves in derision. It follows that a minister of the Gospel is bound to utter a vast amount of sheer nonsense, blackguarding and insulting his own nature in the name of his Divine Master.

The fate of the London *Echo* has been determined in six weeks, although it was backed by a millionaire newspaper owner, and had the editorial direction of one of the best London editors. The *Freethinker* has kept its flag flying for thirty-four years, under the direction of Mr. Foote, and has broken all records in Freetbought journalism.

Great men necessarily think great thoughts. Speaking at the London Diocesan Conference, the Bishop of London said, "If the clergy could not preach sermons for the good of the nation, they must break stones for its good." The ladies who usually embroider slippers for the clergy had better buy the hammers at once.

"Refrigerated Christianity" was the very suggestive title to an article in the *Church Times*. At first glance we thought it referred to the fact of some preachers dropping the doctrine of hell from their teaching. It reminded us of the old lady who said that Christianity without hell was a very cold religion. On reading, we found that it was only a complaint that some preachers did not teach Christianity in the right way; and that is not at all unusual.

The Bishop of London still keeps up his stupid chatter about this being "God's day." There has never, he says, "been such a day of God for a thousand years." We wonder what there is specially "divine" about the present time that makes the Bishop so enthusiastic. "Day of God," with thousands upon thousands of strong, healthy young men being either killed or crippled for life! If we were religious, we should feel more inclined to call it the day of the Devil. The Bishop says it is the day of God. It is a wonder that some of the friends of the Church—those with intelligence, we mean—don't muzzle him.

The Bishop treated his audience to a denunciation of German atrocities, and then said, "Shall such infamy remain unavenged? Never while there is a God in heaven, and a nation brave enough and devoted enough to do his will." Doubtless very effective before a religious meeting; and yet even there some may have thought, if God permitted such infamies, there can be no very safe presumption that he will avenge them afterwards. Besides, what is the use of avenging them? It will not undo what has been done. It will neither give life to the dead nor health to the sick. It will only satisfy the feelings of other people, and very often those who least merit consideration. And it is not even God who will avenge. That will be left to others. God will continue to sit up aloft, watching things.

Commenting on the work of the veteran artist, Mr. James Sant, who is ninety-five years of age, the *Times* remarks, "Is there any precedent, since Titian, for such long-lived activity among artists?" Not since Titian; but Adam was engaged in landscape gardening till near 1,000 years of age.

The clergy are always bounded in the nutshell of their profession, and the Rev. Dimsdale Young points out that "there are 80,000 Wesleyans at Front." Just so! And there are millions in other places.

A lecture is announced at Bedford College, London, on "Music: Fine Art or Public Nuisance." We wonder if the bands of the Salvation and Church Armies are included in the latter category?

At the annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society, the Secretary, the Rev. W. Y. Fullerton, referred to and "boldly tackled the various challenging questions which the War had thrust before supporters of missions." One eminently challenging question was, "Is it worth while?" This challenge the reverend gentleman, as reported in the *Christian World* for May 6, tackled thus:—

"Well, if their purpose was only to make Asia and Africa like Europe, he said frankly, 'It is not worth while.'"

Now, Europe is what Christian missions have made it, and at no period in its Christian history was it one whit better than it is to-day. To the thoughtful in Asia and Africa we can safely say, "If you accept the religion thrust upon you by the missionaries you, too, will become what Europe is at the present time." Of course, the missionaries deny this most vigorously; but their denial is confounded and put to shame by all the available facts. It is beyond all controversy that Europe is what it is after two thousand years of Christianity; and there is no reasonable ground for thinking that, after the same length of time under the same religion, Asia or Africa would be any different.

One of the speakers at the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society put a few plain truths before the audience, the moral of which we hope some of them saw, although the speaker himself seemed blind to its real significance. He said:—

"We people who believe that the Bible gives us the highest guidance for personal and national life that has ever been given, we who believe in the saving power of its teaching for individuals and nations alike, are having our faith and our belief put to a very severe test to-day. After nearly four thousand years since the law that was to guide us was given on Mount Sinai, after nearly two thousand years of the preaching and teaching of the New Testament, what do we find? We find all the Christian nations of the world engaged, in an unparalleled way, in a great struggle for mutual annihilation. If anything could shake our faith in the Bible, in its teaching, in its power to save, it would be the awful spectacle which the world presents to-day. It is not a fight between Christianity and the great heathen and pagan world beyond. It is a struggle between the professedly Christian nations, represented by the three great branches of the Church universal, the Church Catholic, the Greek, the Roman Catholic, and the Protestant Church are the ones which are represented in the struggle to-day. More than that, it is not merely a struggle between Christianity and heathenism and paganism; but the Christian nations of the world on both sides have called in the pagan and heathen nations to help them in this work of mutual annihilation."

The delicious satire of the situation is that the meeting was called to encourage the work of spreading the Bible among these same pagan and heathen nations. These may well ask themselves as to the benefits of a religion that can produce no better results than the present War. And we know that some have already asked that question, both of themselves and of others. The Chinese, for example, have long met missionary efforts with pictures of the social conditions of the Christian nations. They are now able to point to something which, if not of greater importance, will present a more picturesque appeal to the imagination of the average man.

In an emotional leading article the *Daily Mail* hailed Mr. Robert Blatchford as a seer and a prophet. He has better claims to the title than Daniel, Isaiah, or the other Biblical writers, and he is far more genial.

The Bishop of London persists in calling this war-time "a day of God," "this great day of God," little dreaming, evidently, that such language would be an insufferable insult to any deity worthy of regard. Fancy last Friday week, whereon the *Lusitania* was cruelly torpedoed and sunk, thereby imperilling the lives of two thousand people, being

gloried in as a great day of the Lord! Was it not, rather, a shameful day of the Devil, if such a wicked being existed? On this wondrous day of God, the Bishop tells us, the soldiers at the Front have suddenly turned religious, so that if we wish to know what "the religion of the manhood of this country" really is, we must visit the British battle-lines on the Continent. "What we have to do now," he adds, "is to see to it that when the War is over the soldiers do not return to a nation that has lost its faith." What unmitigated rubbish! What a wicked misreading of the signs of the times!

The curious thing is that "the religion of the manhood of this country" is to be found only outside of this country, and among men who, as long as they remained at home, displayed no particular interest in religion. At home, religion is a thing utterly unknown to the mass of the people. Indeed, the secularisation of the Sabbath would result in the complete disappearance of Christianity from our land. As reported in the *Church Times* for May 7, his lordship made the following startling statement:—

"We had to force home the truth on the mind of the nation that round about Sunday, and the Sabbath idea, there clustered all the essentials of the Christian Faith."

That is to say, with the Christian Sabbath vanishes Christianity itself. What a humiliating confession for a minister of the Gospel to make.

What simple people there are in the world! A lady missionary from China complains that it was difficult to explain to the native Christians how Christian nations could be fighting. We imagine that the Chinese in question must have been "taking a rise" out of the lady missionary. Chinese are not, after all, so simple as to be surprised at Christian nations going to war. That is nothing new in the history of the world. Indeed, if it were not for the Christian nations the burden of militarism would be an exceedingly light one. We have no doubt that intelligent Chinese are disgusted at nations that have spent so much of their energies on war and warlike preparations, arrogating to themselves the right to direct, practically, the world's civilisation, but that is a different thing to their being surprised. Surprise is only expressed in the presence of the unusual, and Christians fighting cannot surprise anyone—not even a parson.

Quite apart from the question of militarism—although it would, of course, be comparatively harmless in its absence—is the arrogant assumption that the civilised character of all parts of the world is to be treated by its conformity with our standard of what constitutes civilisation. Talking the other day with a public official of some standing, we ventured to raise a meek protest against the notion that because certain European practices were found good for us, they must, therefore, be good for people in other parts of the world with different racial and social customs and aptitudes. But he replied, "You must admit that the Eastern peoples generally do not come up to our standard of civilisation. We could only retort, 'Why should they?' And to that there was no reply. Indeed, no real reply was possible. Every people must reckon with the centuries of social tradition that lies behind them, and to expect that Eastern people can be benefited by having Western customs forced upon them is sheer stupidity. Reverse the picture, and imagine Eastern customs being forced upon us, and we realise its absurdity. And yet it is this assumption that gives the moral and religious justification for the mischievous interference in all parts of the world of the Western nations. Worst of all, it brings its nemesis in the shape of a whole crop of hatreds, jealousies, and unhealthy rivalries among the "civilising" nations themselves.

The Church Missionary Society announces a deficit of £23,667, and is advertising for special donations to meet the position. Apparently, prayer alone will not bring the cash.

"A special corps of ministers will be attached to the Citizens' Training Army in Glasgow," says a daily paper. You can always trust the clergy to avoid extreme danger.

A popular religious cry just now is, "Of all things made in Germany, its theology is the worst." We challenge Dr. Watkinson and the President of the Wesleyan Conference to tell us what German theology is. They cannot, because in Germany, as in Great Britain, there is a vast number of different and conflicting schools of theology, and prior to the War all the British schools borrowed enormously from corresponding German schools; and it must be borne in mind that the latter have not altered in the least since the War began.

NOTICE.

The business of the "FREETHINKER" and of THE PIONEER PRESS, formerly of 2 Newcastle-st., has been transferred to 61 FARRINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C.

To Correspondents.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1915.—Received from March 15: Previously acknowledged, £37 17s. 7d. Received since:—Dr. and Mrs. Laing, £2 2s.

T. H. PERKINS writes: "I have much pleasure in renewing my subscription, and to say that, after nearly thirty years regular reading of the *Freethinker*, I find its pages as fresh and informing as ever." We are sorry we cannot give any information concerning the Branch of the N. S. S. about which he inquires, but it is still in existence. We cannot say when Mr. Foote's promised book on Shakespeare will be ready. When one's time is not altogether one's own, it is rash to make promises, and still more difficult to keep them.

C. CHAMBERS.—The cutting is a curious illustration of the stupidity that passes for piety. Only in connection with religion would such rubbish pass for sense.

D. THOMAS.—We have received many complaints similar to yours. of being compelled to attend Church services in the Army. It is nothing short of a national scandal that the authorities should so systematically deny to those who enlist one of the most elementary rights of genuine free citizenship. We are keeping a record of all cases that are reported, and hope to use them, with effect, later. We are very pleased to get your appreciation of this paper, and to know that it has not alone been a help to you, but has inspired you to pass the "glad tidings" on to others. That is as it should be.

NATAL RESERVIST.—See our reply to D. Thomas. By all means let us know of any cases similar to your own with which you are acquainted.

Will any reader having duplicate early volumes of the *National Reformer* be good enough to help form a complete file for office use? Dates of years required will be forwarded on application to the Secretary N. S. S.

T. GILSON.—We believe the price of the book about which you inquire is 5s. net.

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, giving as long notice as possible.

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.

Personal.

On the night of May 9, or the morning of May 10, whichever way you like to put it, I had the unusual experience of seeing a German flying machine sailing near my bedroom window in what Shelley would call "the circumambient air." The man in the street would call it a starter, and it certainly looked an object of that description. My household was soon on the ground floor, huddled round a stove which had been kept in for "dad." So that we were all comfortably warm, whatever else might happen. Fortunately, mine was not among the houses attacked. The beastly machine was making off, and as I knew the last thing its occupants were thinking of was coming back, I was soon able to persuade my wife and the rest of the family that bed was as safe, and as comfortable, as any other place in our little establishment.

There were more of these beastly machines in other parts of the sky, and it was an "elegant" sight to see them, or rather the reflection which followed the result of their misdeeds on the horizon. This seems to have been due to the fact that the military, and that right opposite Sheerness and Chatham, had allowed a lot of mischief to be done, and bombs and other destructive instruments to be fired before they discovered that there was any such thing as an aerial fighting machine in the district. The soldiers of all kinds appear to have been awakened by some mysterious means at that point, and for all I know, our German visitors found it out and made tracks for the Fatherland.

Such are the humors of war, if one can see them in that light, but what of the tragedy. A woman killed, and several people badly wounded. The horrid relics of bombardment on and in several shops and houses, etc., and all belonging, by the way, to civilians. Such is the valor of the German flying man when his blood is at boiling point, and the vigilance of the protectors of our native soil. These things should not be forgotten; that is why I give them a little space in this "personal," which, of course, ensures their immortality.

I hate war more than ever. There is nothing to be said for it. It is ghastly, brutal, disgusting, and insane. I hope that this may be the last war, though, alas, I feel rather more certain that it will be nothing of the kind. All this I have said because I have very little else to say, and people listen to nothing else but war when there is war to write about. Also, I venture to think that my own affairs are a matter of some importance. I have not much to say, even about them. Mr. Lloyd called upon me a day or two ago for the first time since my breakdown, and said I was better than he expected to find me. Several visitors expressed the same view, and I feel myself that the improvement I have referred to before still continues, but as to my being able to attend the National Secular Society's Conference, I can say no more than I did last week. If I can come, no doubt I shall be welcome: if I cannot, no doubt I shall be forgiven.

G. W. FOOTE.

Sugar Plums.

This is practically the last opportunity we shall have of calling attention to the National Secular Society's Conference on Whit-Sunday. Both the business and public meetings will be held in the Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham-place, W. The morning and afternoon meetings commence at 10.30 and 2.30 respectively, and are confined to members of the Society and delegates from Branches. We are hoping to see a good muster of both. The hall can be easily reached from all parts of London. The nearest Tube station (Oxford Circus) is within three minutes' walk of the place of meeting.

On the back page of this issue will be found a full list of the speakers at the evening meeting. In addition to what we may call the "Old Guard," the audience will have the pleasure of listening to Mr. R. H. Rosetti, one of the younger of our London speakers; Mr. Harry Snell, a familiar and always welcome speaker at Freethought meetings; and Mr. Wallace Nelson, who has a large number of friends in England, dating from the days before he transplanted himself to Australia. Mr. Nelson is at present on a visit to this country, and the Executive seized the opportunity of utilising his services, which he is quite cheerfully giving. We are not without hope that the audience will also have the pleasure of welcoming Mr. Foote, but on that point we are unable to speak with certainty. In any case, the meeting should be a large one. Slips are being printed advertising the evening meeting, and those who are willing to assist by distributing them should apply at once to the General Secretary, 62 Farringdon-street, E.C.

On the Saturday evening preceding the Conference a reception of delegates and friends will be held at 7 o'clock at the Bay Malton Hotel, 160 Great Portland-street, W. The Secretary and several members of the Executive will be present. As previously announced, a luncheon has been

arranged at the Cafe Marguerite, Oxford-street, on Whit-Sunday at one o'clock, between the morning and afternoon sessions. The price of this is 2s. 6d., and those who desire to be present must apply beforehand, as only those luncheons ordered will be provided.

For those attending the Conference a visit to the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, is being arranged for Whit-Monday. Mr. W. Davidson has volunteered to act as guide, philosopher, and friend on this occasion. Those who know the Natural History Museum will need no pressing invitation to spend a few hours there in congenial company. For such as do not, we may say that it is amongst the finest of European collections, and the mere arrangement of the specimens offer lessons in classification, and in the significance of coloration hard to beat. If a walk through the Museum is not a liberal education, it is certainly a step towards one. Those who intend joining this party should acquaint the Secretary of the N. S. S. of their intention.

We continue to receive news from our soldiers—and sailors—at the Front, and from these we gather that the motto is "Business as usual"—even with Christian stories about dead Atheists. One seaman on board one of our battle-ships writes to inquire whether he is right in contradicting a Christian shipmate who asserted that Bradlaugh when dying asked to see Spurgeon, and that he refused to see any of his followers. There is a trifling mistake here. The story should run that Bradlaugh died calling upon Jesus to visit him. That is the orthodox tradition. And it is a big drop to substitute Spurgeon for Jesus. Otherwise, it looks as though this particular Christian was trying to prove that even at lying England had nothing to fear from Germany.

The recent great victory in the law-courts has brought much correspondence to Mr. Foote, all of which is couched in congratulatory terms. One of the most interesting is a letter written from the fighting line in France, under date of April 29, in which the writer says:—

"I have not bothered you with correspondence, but I have never forgotten you and your great work. I feel, however, that I must write a line or two to-day, although they be lines of congratulation tinged with sorrow. I have just got hold of a *John Bull*, in which I read that the Society has evidently been bequeathed the sum of £10,000. I feel in the thirtieth heaven of delight on that score, but I grieve to learn by the same article that your health is not good. I hope and desire that the fine weather now coming on will put you right, and that very quickly. I am a great admirer of Kitchener, but I admire our 'Kitchener' still more. I imagine that the former can be more easily replaced than the latter. I hope that you may live for many years more to guide, advise, and encourage the Freethought Army. My great regret has always been that I could not do more to help.....You personally deserve all the V.C.'s and other medals rolled into one for the grand and noble fight you have so fearlessly waged against 'Humbug and Untruth'.....It is sickening to see the 'pull' the Y.M.C.A. and S.A. seem to have with the British Army authorities. The Y.M.C.A. have 'huts' all over the place. The Roman Catholic Church is making well out of the War, and the churches are vastly overcrowded. In my opinion, human funk accounts for it. Funk of the bogey put up by the priests. They are all in such a funk of dying themselves, or of their husbands and sons getting shot. Holy Church still fattens."

This is not a manufactured, but a real letter from the Front.

We wonder what the Censor thought of this letter, which reached us from a Freethinker fighting at the Front?—

"In a dug-out, listening to the roar of the guns bombarding Hill 60, a 'scrap of paper' curtly announcing the Bowman Bequest result was wafted towards me. Need it be said I regard the news of greater importance to humanity than the most complete victory in this field. The cost in labor and anxiety I can guess; but I fear the cost in money is more than can be gauged. At any rate, it is a victory for freedom, and I suppose the fighters must pay."

The *English Review* follows its accustomed bent. It contains an initial poem, entitled "A Short History of Man," by Maurice Hewlett, but all the rest of the May number concerns itself with war and its adjuncts and correlates. Nothing is uninteresting, and nothing is very interesting. We fancy that Mr. Harrison will presently have to consider whether the great War, as they call it, continues to occupy all the attention that it did. The better sort of people are getting tired of the War itself; the harder sort of people are getting sick at its want of bloodiness. We must confess that the *English Review* was more readable when it was less warlike. We regard it at present as holding its own for the sake of better days.

Christian Apologetics.

MARCION THE HERESIARCH (No. 2).

IT is confidently asserted by many of the Christian "fathers" of the early Church that the heretic Marcion made use of the Gospel of Luke in the compilation of his own Gospel, and that he erased all passages in it which were at variance with the opinions he held. The Christian writer, Irenæus (A.D. 185), in his book "Against Heresies" was the first to bring this charge. He says:—

"Wherefore also Marcion and his followers have taken themselves to mutilating the Scriptures, not acknowledging some books at all; and curtailing the Gospel according to Luke and the Epistles of Paul, they assert that these alone are authentic, which they themselves have thus shortened" (Her. iii. xii. 12).

The same charge is repeated by Tertullian, Epiphanius, and others, who had doubtless read the accusation made by Irenæus. All Christian writers from the time of Irenæus assumed that the Gospel of Luke was written by a companion of Paul in the first century, and, according to this view, Marcion must, of course, have made use of this Gospel. Speaking of this matter, Tertullian says:—

"It is certain that he has erased whatever was contrary to his own opinion.....but has retained every thing consistent with his own opinion."

Yet, strange to say, Tertullian and Epiphanius both endeavor to "refute" Marcion out of his own Gospel. This these wiseacres think they do by showing that Marcion had not erased everything: "contrary to his own opinion," and had, therefore, only half done his work. Now there were living at the time of Marcion (A.D. 140—150) Polycarp at Smyrna, Papias in Hierapolis, and Justin in Rome, but not one of these Christian teachers appears to have ever seen the Gospel which Marcion is charged with mutilating. Why, then, should we assume that the Gospel of Luke was known to Marcion? Justin, who mentions this arch heretic, accused him only of converting people to his views "by the aid of demons." Had Marcion acted in the way he is charged, the fact would have been notorious: nobody seems to have heard of it until a generation after his time.

The close relationship between the Gospels of Marcion and Luke will be perceived by the fact that both Gospels contained (besides a large number of other matters) the following parables and miracles: the Two Debtors—the Good Samaritan—the Blind Fool—the Servants waiting for their Lord—the Great Supper—the Lost piece of Money—the Unjust Steward—the Rich man and Lazarus—the Unjust Judge—the Pharisee and Publican—the healing of the Infirm Woman—the healing of a Dropsical Man—and the healing of the Ten Lepers: also the story of Zaccheus (Luke xix.) and the long account of the Two disciples going to Emmaus. That neither Matthew, Mark, nor John records any of the foregoing circumstances (besides many others) and that they were contained only in Marcion's and Luke's Gospels, make it clear that one of the last-named Gospels must have been compiled from the other. The most able of the Christian apologists of the present day, the Rev. W. Sanday, undertook, some years back, to prove that Marcion *did* make up his Gospel from that of Luke—and by curtailing it later. His arguments on the subject were as follows:—

- (1). That Marcion in what he "retained" followed Luke's Gospel exactly, both as to the order and the subject-matter.
- (2). That the identity in the order between Marcion's Gospel and Luke's proves that one was undoubtedly derived from the other.
- (3). That in the 300 verses, more or less, which Marcion is said to have "omitted" there are found many distinct peculiarities of St. Luke's style, "because" "188 words specially characteristic of Luke's Gospel were omitted."

(These are, of course, in the Greek; not in the English translation.)

(4). From these "facts" Dr. Sanday draws the conclusion that Marcion compiled his Gospel from Luke's.

Before replying to the foregoing, it should be stated: first, that Marcion's peculiar opinions found no place in his Gospel; second, that we do not possess a copy of Marcion's Gospel; we have only a partial reconstruction of it made from inadequate data.

Now, Dr. Sanday's first two arguments cut both ways; they are as much against Luke as against Marcion; if the statements are correct, they merely prove that one writer took from the other. It is, however, not at all certain that the events recorded in Marcion's Gospel and Luke's were arranged in "exactly" the same order in both, as we shall see presently. I come now to Dr. Sanday's third contention—that the 800 verses, more or less, which are now in Luke's Gospel, but were not in Marcion's, contain a large number of "distinct peculiarities of Luke's style." But why should they not? The only argument I can see in this statement is the implication that all the narratives now in Luke's Gospel—both the large portion which Marcion is said to have "retained," and the smaller portion which that heretic is said to have "omitted"—are by the same hand, namely that of Luke. To this reasoning I can only reply that of course they are. But what does this admission prove? It certainly does not prove that Marcion took from Luke's Gospel. It would seem, however, that Dr. Sanday implies that if Luke took the main portion of his Gospel from that of Marcion, then the style and forms of expression of this portion would be seen to differ from Luke's own, viz., from that portion which was not in Marcion's Gospel; and since there is no such difference, he arrives at the conclusion that Marcion compiled his Gospel from Luke's.

If this be the argument, Dr. Sanday is very much mistaken: for we know that Luke was a better Greek scholar than any of the other Gospel writers (and probably better than Marcion) with a more extensive vocabulary at his command, and, if merely to satisfy himself, he rewrote in his best language all the narratives in his Gospel and in "the Acts"—no matter from what source they were taken. In proof of this fact, all the narratives common to the first three Gospels (or to two of them) were taken from Luke's primitive Gospel; but the peculiarities of Luke's style (in these narratives) are found only in Luke's Gospel—they are not found in the same narratives recorded in the Gospel of Matthew or Mark.

Again, in the Book of the Acts, which Luke compiled from crude apocryphal writings, we find a grand oration by Stephen (vii. 1-53), five or six long speeches by Peter (ii. 14-40; iii. 12-26; etc.); and seven or eight by Paul (xiii. 16-41; xxii. 1-21; xxvi. 1-29; etc.). These have all been rewritten in excellent Greek by Luke, and they all contain "distinct peculiarities of Luke's style" and "words specially characteristic" of that compiler. In other words, we have no historical speeches in the Acts which can be affirmed to have been made by Peter, Stephen, or Paul; we have only some grand orations composed for the different occasions by Luke that may have been placed in their mouths. There have been some short, crude speeches in the writings from which Luke copied; but if so, they have been transformed into almost classical Greek. It will thus be seen that the "distinct peculiarities of Luke's style" cut both ways.

We will now look at the opening chapter of Marcion's Gospel, as reconstructed, using the text of Luke:—

- Luke iii. 1. "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Jesus came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee. And he taught them on the sabbath day. And they were astonished at his teaching; for his word was with authority. And in the synagogue there was a man which had a demon,
- iv. 31. "and he cried with a loud voice, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the demon had thrown him down, he came out of him, having done him no hurt. And all were amazed, and spake together saying, What is this word, that with authority he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out? And there went forth a rumor concerning him into all the region round about.
- 16. "And he came to Nazareth, and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began to teach. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth. And he said unto them, Doubtless ye will say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done at Capernaum, do also here. But of a truth I say unto you [verses 25 and 26] there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian. And all in the synagogue were filled with wrath when they heard these things, and rose up, and cast him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon the city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way.
- 30. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.

- Luke iv. 34. and he cried with a loud voice, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the demon had thrown him down, he came out of him, having done him no hurt. And all were amazed, and spake together saying, What is this word, that with authority he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out? And there went forth a rumor concerning him into all the region round about.
- 35. "And he came to Nazareth, and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began to teach. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth. And he said unto them, Doubtless ye will say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done at Capernaum, do also here. But of a truth I say unto you [verses 25 and 26] there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian. And all in the synagogue were filled with wrath when they heard these things, and rose up, and cast him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon the city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way.
- 36. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.
- 37. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.
- 16. "And he came to Nazareth, and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began to teach. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth. And he said unto them, Doubtless ye will say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done at Capernaum, do also here. But of a truth I say unto you [verses 25 and 26] there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian. And all in the synagogue were filled with wrath when they heard these things, and rose up, and cast him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon the city was built, that they might throw him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way.
- 20. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.
- 22. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.
- 23. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.
- 25. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.
- 27. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.
- 28. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.
- 29. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.
- 30. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.
- 40. "And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on them, and healed them all," etc.

It is uncertain whether verses 25 and 26 formed part of Marcion's Gospel, or not. Now, this narrative, though it corresponds with four different paragraphs in Luke's Gospel (and in a different order) is unbroken, and quite consecutive. As will be seen, the Virgin Birth story, which we know from Justin was in existence in the time of Marcion, is rejected by the latter, as well as by the canonical Mark. Marcion, apparently, makes Jesus come straight down from heaven into Galilee. It should be noticed, also, that the story of Jesus reading from the book of Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth was not recorded in Marcion's Gospel: neither is it found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, nor John. Luke evidently took it from some apocryphal writing. Again, Marcion has omitted the preaching of John the Baptist, though it was in the old primitive Gospel—probably because he believed that the Baptist had no connection with Jesus—which shows his common sense.

I come now to the question, Had Marcion Luke's Gospel open before him when he wrote this first chapter? or did he construct it without seeing Luke's Gospel? The latter I take to be the case: for, in the first place, had Marcion taken the chapter from the Third Gospel, he would naturally (after striking out whatever he disagreed with) have copied what remained in the order given by Luke: but he has not done so; his arrangement is altogether different. This gives at least a presumption in favor of Marcion.

Next, if Marcion's chapter and Luke iv. be compared, it will be found that Marcion's is more correct than Luke's. This is shown by the words I have italicised. According to Marcion's version, Jesus first appeared at Capernaum, and there wrought a miracle which filled the people with amazement, and caused a rumor concerning him to be spread throughout the country. After this, he came to Nazareth, and in the synagogue there he said that they would doubtless expect him to do in that city what they had heard he had done in Capernaum. This is perfectly in order.

But, according to Luke's version, Jesus first appeared at Nazareth, and afterwards went on to Capernaum, where he performed the miracle already

mentioned. Yet in the synagogue at Nazareth, before he had visited Capernaum—and before he had done any mighty work there or anywhere else—he said that they will doubtless say to him, "Whatsoever we have heard done at Capernaum do also here" (Luke iv. 23). Marcion's chapter is thus seen to be the correct one. Luke, in adding other matter to Marcion's Gospel, has disarranged the paragraphs. There are several other good reasons in favor of Marcion, which I must leave through want of space. Enough, however, has been said upon the subject to make it more than probable that Luke took from Marcion.

ABRACADABRA.

The Real Conflict.

THE conflicts permanently visible in the public life of different countries of the civilised world to-day are capable of interpretation in two different, but not by any means contradictory, ways—as conflicts between the exponents of opposed social and economic interests, or between the adherents of opposed intellectual views of the world. The former interpretation of historical struggles is sufficiently valid to account for the main facts. It has been elaborated, however, with such exhaustive reiteration that it is not the intention of the present writer to dwell upon it. At the present day, the second interpretation may claim its fair share of our attention, not as explaining, but simply as illustrating, the issues of the struggle.

There are two hostile, incompatible, but each self-connected and coherent, views of life which lend the larger conflicts of to-day at once the maximum of interest and the maximum of animosity—the Conservative-Christian view, and the Revolutionary-Materialist. These terms must not be understood on conventionally political lines. Many supporters of the first-named standpoint claim to be democratic champions; and, conversely, many fundamental revolutionaries do not seem so in their politics. It is rather on the religious side that the most obvious notes of the opposition are to be found. The central phalanx, so to speak, of the conservative army consists mainly of Roman Catholics; that of the revolutionaries, of Freethinkers. A typical instance of the former is, in this country, Mr. Belloc; of the latter, across the Channel, M. Anatole France. Where you see a Catholic, Nationalist, and anti-Semite, who supports private property in land and capital, compulsory life-long marriage, and militarism, there is a fundamental conservative, who will give you as consistent a defence of that creed as can be given. Where you see a Freethinker, Internationalist, and Socialist, who detests race-prejudice and militarism, and favors a minimum of public interference in personal relations, there is a fundamental revolutionary.

It may be claimed that the present War has demonstrated that the conflict between the two standpoints here defined is unimportant, compared with grave national rivalries. In the end, however, it will be found that the former are more fundamental. In fact, the more fundamental antagonism is constantly used by the combatants on both sides to justify, legitimately or otherwise, their mutual animosity. Mr. Belloc and his friends clamor that this is a war of Christendom against "Prussian Atheism"; the clerical parties in Germany and in neutral countries, as a rule, equally wish success to the German and Austrian campaign against French Materialism and British Liberalism. Again, in all the belligerent countries, the national hatreds aroused by the War are hailed and exploited by the conservative Christian element as a means of combating the advance of revolutionary Materialism. So far, then, from the War having dissipated the forces of this more fundamental conflict, it has not even masked them. The real struggle persists through the War, and will survive it.

The difference between the two sides is rooted in differing philosophies. The conservative thinker

believes in the absolute distinction between matter and mind, body and soul, the world and God. The ruler of his universe is the vengeful despot of the Bible, who lays down certain laws to be followed by men and women created by him, and yet regards as free agents (this is the one radical inconsistency of this otherwise coherent, though repulsive, system). Obedience to these commands is rewarded by happiness in the next world, disobedience (if persisted in) by eternal misery. The whole Catholic system follows inexorably from this set of premises. The Church is the chosen organ of this supreme tyrant for the moral direction of humanity. Nations, social classes, the family, etc., are institutions ordained by him, to attack which is to court damnation. What ever tends to alter or disturb the equilibrium of society is rebellion against God. The only good life is to refrain from visions regarding the future of humanity on earth, to accept the world as we see it, and "to do our duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call us." Such notions as Secular Education, freer divorce, eugenics, and the elimination by painless means of the unfit, and the prevention of destitution, are condemned as a matter of course. Private property is instituted by God in order that the rich may save their souls by alms-giving. Marriage and the family exist, not for the happiness of the individuals concerned, but to fulfil the commands of God. The unfit and destitute must be left to continue and multiply, partly because they also have souls "which Christ died to save," partly in order that they may stimulate the virtues of charity and mercy in others. In short, the earth is to be hell by the will of God; and to try to make it heaven, however gradually, is to be damned eternally.

All this, if we overlook the initial contradiction concerning free-will, is quite coherent and connected. It hangs, it is true, upon unproved assumptions which require "faith" for their assimilation. But the conservative thinker retorts to this objection that science itself hangs upon unproved assumptions, such as the uniformity of nature, the eternity of matter, and even the existence of the external world. It is, no doubt, possible for the Freethinker to reply that his unproved assumptions are implied in commonsense itself, whereas the Catholic's are not. This dispute is likely, however, to be endless, until it is emphasized that the issue is ethical as well as metaphysical. The Freethinker who desires to "knock out" his opponent will do best to start with the fact, so obvious to the civilised mind of to-day, that the Catholic theology, though intellectually coherent in all but a nicety, is morally monstrous. The God of the Bible and the Church is not fit to be entrusted with the care of a decently conducted reformatory, let alone a universe.

Over against this view of the world—which contributes in no small degree to the perpetuation of poverty, oppression, and degradation in the civilised parts of the earth—is the view which, anticipated occasionally in the theories of ancient philosophers, is anathematised and persecuted by the Church in the days of worldly supremacy, but revived and developed in the modern world by Spinoza and the post-Kantian philosophers, is now the only coherent system pitted against that of Catholicism, viz., Monism. Monism, the modern form of Materialism, recognises in matter and mind, body and soul, only differently viewed aspects of the one fundamental power, which may be identified with the life-force or Inexplicable "will," which each one of us feels to underlie his or her own activities, bodily and mental. The life-force of the Monist does not govern the universe, but is the universe. The term "God" cannot, with its conventional connotations, be properly applied to the present, but not omniscient or omnipotent, power thus conceived. Monism or Materialism knows, at any rate, of no intelligent being higher than man, and, consequently, of no infallible authority to which the State, the family, which Catholicism considers

divine origin, vanishes into thin air. The motto of revolutionary Monism, on its negative side, must always be "Ni Dieu ni maître."

In the absence of divine authority, by what standard will institutions be judged which claim to restrict the liberty of mankind? For the person of normal instincts, but whose mind has become clear by the amount of happiness, compared with the amount of misery they cause. Faced with the authoritative demand that he or she shall support this or that institution, resist this or that innovation, the revolutionary simply asks, "Which need is the more imperative, that which this institution or innovation claims to supply, or that which it clearly overrides? If the former, I support it; if the latter, I oppose it." It is clear that one who applies such a criterion will be bitterly at issue, on a thousand points, with the believer in divine authority.

Take, for example, the question of divorce. To the Catholic this question is simplicity itself; marriage under all circumstances being a divine institution, and not to be dissolved by man. The revolutionary asks, however, "On what is this claim founded, that the State should compel two people to live together against their will?" To arguments based upon the interests of the children and other positive grounds, he will listen carefully, and form his own conclusions as to what degree of coercion of the parties is justified thereby. But on the view that under no circumstances, even with mutual consent, can marriage be dissolved, the Materialist must wage war, and implacable war.

ROBERT ARCH.

(To be concluded.)

Correspondence.

CLERICALISM AND ORGANISED LABOR: THE NEED FOR RESEARCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

The invariable association of the term "secret diplomacy" with the Foreign Office is apt to lead to a too ready acceptance of the implication that in other public departments all is open and above board. Those of us who work in the field of education politics know that this is by no means the case, and that important steps are sometimes taken of which the general public are ignorant until face to face with the established fact.

One of my cuttings gives an example which I commend as worthy of attention by students of education politics. In a letter in the *Daily News* of November 17, 1908, Mr. A. J. Mandella gives the facts of a great political victory for the London Denominational Schools, gained through an astute "secret diplomacy" by the present Archbishop of York, then Bishop of Stepney, at the L.C.C. election in 1904, when the Council became the Education Authority for London. Mr. Mandella shows how, by brilliant electioneering tactics, the Archbishop secured, in a Council returned with a nominal Progressive majority of 50, a majority of 76 (97 to 21) pledged to his policy that the L.C.C. should take over the schools of London at the earliest date passed in the statute, and twelve months before it should have been done. This was splendid for the clericals at a time when the expected General Election and the return of the Liberals to power might have saved the London School Board. The muddle and mismanagement which followed were hopeless. However, the Denominational Schools got £10,000 per week for many months before the Council was ready for any effective control; and the Progressive party was broken up, and hopelessly defeated at the next election.

These incidents have been much in my mind during the nine or ten months in which I have been working to make in London concerning the condemned Denominational Schools known to the organised workers, whose Great Committee continue to observe a significant and disquieting fact on this great political scandal; this, too, in spite of the fact that the matter concerns the well-being of 54,545 working-class children.

A London Labor Party has been formed for returning labor members to the L.C.C. Will that party stand clearly for fundamentals in democratic education politics? Only time will tell it survive its infancy, and have the strength to withstand the deadening, blighting influence of that clericalism which, as Mr. Mandella has shown, broke the power of

London Progressivism as a force for furthering education progress.

Some time ago I suggested in your columns that research might usefully be made into the question as to whether the principle of popular control of State-supported education had been furthered by the advent of organised Labor as a political force. I repeat the suggestion, and would add that, at this time of social reconstruction, Rationalists with the leisure and equipment necessary for research, might serve the cause of intellectual liberty by making careful investigation into the relation between clericalism as a political force and the organised working-class movement in England. A beginning should, I think, be made with that section of the working-class movement whose pretensions are greatest—viz., the organisation which, under the co-leadership of Mr. Hyndman and Lady Warwick, claims to represent clear-cut, class-conscious revolutionary Social Democracy.

M. BRIDGES ADAMS.

Bebel House, Working Womens' College.

In Travail: 1915.

O God of the churches and chapels!
Of kings, priests and preachers, and prayer!
This world it is sick—in sore trouble;
Say, where art thou? answer, oh where?

Red ruin and death have run riot;
The primeval brute is at large.
O God, if thou art, prove thy power,
And heal the sick earth in thy charge!

O God, whom for ages we've heard of,
From priests by the thousand and one;
Say, have they been truthful revealers
In saying "'Tis thy will is done"?

Nought happens, they say, unpermitted;
Thou reignest, and art "Lord of all."
If this be the truth they are telling,
What aileth thee now when they call?

Is it by thy will earth's a shambles,
With mangled men moaning to die
On bloody fields filled with such horror
As ne'er before blared to the sky?

When priests say "Thou rulest o'er all things,"
Must we not now think this was planned:
That thou hast decreed this foul torment
To blasting curse sea and land?

O canst thou not hear the wild wailing
Of innocence ruthlessly rent?
The shriek of the ravished and tortured,
With satyrs wild oaths madly blent?

Is it nothing to thee, war's wild welter?
Thou, with omnipotent power?
Why, why, O director of all things,
Dost thou so "direct" in this hour?

Out on wide space to the farthest,
Borne far on the wireless of faith,
Man's anguish for pity is calling;
Answer, if thou'rt more than a wraith!

Deep silence; man's groans the void swallows.
No answer; faith prostrates forlorn.
O God of the churches and chapels,
Thou'rt an object for reason to scorn!

Thou figment of blind superstition,
By ignorance, sired from fear;
While thou reason's throne still usurpeth,
How can man view destiny clear?

Thy impotence now is writ hugely:
Mankind on itself must depend;
Unaided must strive on thro' travail,
Evolving, till time makes an end.

W. J. KING.

Obituary.

It is with regret I record the death of Mr. E. Phillpot, a very old member of the Birmingham Branch, who passed away after a few days' illness on April 30. He was a consistent supporter of our Branch to the last, but he will be remembered most by those who were active in the work in the old Baskerville Hall days.—J. PARTRIDGE.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.
OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand) : 3.15, Mr. Darby; 6.15, Miss Kough.
CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brookwell Park) : 5.15, a Lecture.
KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley-road) : 7.30, E. Burke, "Providence and War."
NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Finsbury Park) : 11.15, Miss Kough, a Lecture. Parliament Hill : 3.15, A. D. Howell-Smith, "Christianity and War." Regent's Park : 3.15, L. B. Gallagher, a Lecture.
WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford, E.) : 7, R. H. Rosetti, "Christianity and the Growth of Militarism."

PROPAGANDIST LEAFLETS. New Issue, 1. *Christianity a Stupendous Failure*, J. T. Lloyd; 2. *Bible and Teetotalism*, J. M. Wheeler; 3. *Principles of Secularism*, O. Watts; 4. *Where Are Your Hospitals?* R. Ingersoll. 5. *Because the Bible Tells Me So*, W. P. Ball; 6. *Why Be Good?* by G. W. Foote. *The Parson's Creed*. Often the means of arresting attention and making new members. Price 6d. per hundred, post free 7d. Special rates for larger quantities. Samples on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—Miss E. M. VANCE, N. S. S. Secretary, 62 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.



LATEST N. S. S. BADGE.—A single Pansy flower, size as shown; artistic and neat design in enamel and silver; permanent in color; has been the means of making many pleasant introductions. Brooch or Stud fastening, 6d. Scarf-pin, 8d. Postage in Great Britain 1d. Small reduction on not less than one dozen. Exceptional value.—From Miss E. M. VANCE, General Secretary, N. S. S., 62 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

THE LATE
CHARLES BRADLAUGH, M.P.

A Statuette Bust,

Modelled by Burvill in 1881. An excellent likeness of the great Freethinker. Highly approved of by his daughter and intimate colleagues. Size, 6½ ins. by 8¾ ins. by 4½ ins.

Plaster (Ivory Finish) 3/-
Extra by post (British Isles): One Bust, 1/-; two, 1/6.

THE PIONEER PRESS 61 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.; or, Miss E. M. VANCE, Secretary, N. S. S.

All Profits to be evoted to the N. S. S. Benevolent Fund.

America's Freethought Newspaper

THE TRUTH SEEKER.

FOUNDED BY D. M. BENNETT, 1873.
CONTINUED BY E. M. MACDONALD, 1883-1908.
G. E. MACDONALD EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENT
L. K. WASHBURN

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.
Single subscription in advance
Two new subscribers
One subscription two years in advance
To all foreign countries, except Mexico, 50 cents per annum.
Subscriptions for any length of time under a year, at the rate of 25 cents per month, may be begun at any time.
Freethinkers everywhere are invited to send for specimen copies which are free.

THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY,
Publishers, Dealers in Freethought Books,
62 VESNY STREET, New York, U.S.A.

Determinism or Free Will

By C. COHEN.

Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.

A clear and able exposition of the subject
the only adequate light—the light of evolution

CONTENTS.

I. The Question Stated.—II. "Freedom" and "Will."—III. Consciousness, Deliberation, and Choice.—IV. Some Consequences of Determinism.—V. Professor James on the Dilemma of Determinism.—VI. The Nature and Implications of Responsibility.—VII. Determinism and Character.—VIII. Problem in Determinism.—IX. Environment.

PRICE ONE SHILLING NET
(POSTAGE 2d.)

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

THE SECULAR SOCIETY
(LIMITED)

Company Limited by Guarantee.

Registered Office—62 FARRINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Chairman of Board of Directors—MR. G. W. FOOE.

Secretary—MISS E. M. VANCE.

THIS Society was formed in 1898 to afford legal security to the acquisition and application of funds for Secular purposes.

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

The liability of members is limited to £1, in case the Society should ever be wound up and the assets were insufficient to cover liabilities—a most unlikely contingency.

Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings, and a subsequent yearly subscription of five shillings.

The Society has a considerable number of members, but a much larger number is desirable, and it is hoped that some will be gained amongst those who read this announcement. All who join it participate in the control of its business and the trusteeship of its resources. It is expressly provided in the Articles of Association that no member, as such, shall derive any sort of profit from the Society, either by way of dividend, bonus, or interest, or in any way whatever.

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, consisting of not less than five and not more than twelve members, one-third of whom retire (by ballot) each year,

but are capable of re-election. An Annual General Meeting of members must be held in London, to receive the Report of the new Directors, and transact any other business that may arise.

Being a duly registered body, the Secular Society, Limited, can receive donations and bequests with absolute security. Those who are in a position to do so are invited to make donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favor in their wills. On this point there need not be the slightest apprehension. It is quite impossible to set aside such bequests. The Society have no option but to pay them over in the ordinary course of administration. No objection of any kind has been made in connection with any of the wills by which the Society have already been benefited.

The Society's solicitors are Messrs. Harper and Balfour, Rood-lane, Fenchurch-street, London, E.C.

A Form of Bequest.—The following is a sufficient form of bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—"I give and bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited, the sum of £1000, free from Legacy Duty, and I direct that a receipt be obtained from two members of the Board of the said Society and the Secretary thereof shall be a good discharge to my Executors for said Legacy."

Friends of the Society who have remembered it in their wills, or who intend to do so, should formally notify the Secretary of the fact, or send a private intimation to the Chairman, who (if desired) treat it as strictly confidential. This is not necessary, but it is advisable, as wills sometimes get lost or mislaid, and their contents have to be established by competent testimony.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

President: G. W. FOOTE.

Secretary: Miss E. M. VANOM, 62 Farringdon-st., London, E.C.

Principles and Objects.

SECULARISM teaches that conduct should be based on reason and knowledge. It knows nothing of divine guidance or interference; it excludes supernatural hopes and fears; it regards happiness as man's proper aim, and utility as his moral guide.

Secularism affirms that Progress is only possible through Liberty, which is at once a right and a duty; and therefore seeks to remove every barrier to the fullest equal freedom of thought, action, and speech.

Secularism declares that theology is condemned by reason as superstitions, and by experience as mischievous, and assails it as the historic enemy of Progress.

Secularism accordingly seeks to dispel superstition; to spread education; to disestablish religion; to rationalise morality; to promote peace; to dignify labor; to extend material well-being; and to realise the self-government of the people.

Membership.

Any person is eligible as a member on signing the following declaration:—
"I desire to join the National Secular Society, and I pledge myself, if admitted as a member, to co-operate in promoting its objects."

Name.....
Address.....
Occupation.....
Dated this..... day of..... 190.....

This Declaration should be transmitted to the Secretary with a subscription.

P.S.—Beyond a minimum of Two Shillings per year, every member is left to fix his own subscription according to his means and interest in the cause

Immediate Practical Objects.

The Legitimation of Bequests to Secular or other Free-thought Societies, for the maintenance and propagation of orthodox opinions on matters of religion, on the same conditions as apply to Christian or Theistic churches or organisations.

The Abolition of the Blasphemy Laws, in order that religion may be canvassed as freely as other subjects, without fear of fine or imprisonment.

The Disestablishment and Disendowment of the State Churches in England, Scotland, and Wales.

The Abolition of all Religious Teaching and Bible Reading in Schools, or other educational establishments supported by the State.

The Opening of all endowed educational institutions to the children and youth of all classes alike.

The Abrogation of all laws interfering with the free use of Sunday for the purpose of culture and recreation; and the Sunday opening of State and Municipal Museums, Libraries, and Art Galleries.

A Reform of the Marriage Laws, especially to secure equal justice for husband and wife, and a reasonable liberty and facility of divorce.

The Equalisation of the legal status of men and women, so that all rights may be independent of sexual distinctions.

The Protection of children from all forms of violence, and from the greed of those who would make a profit out of their premature labor.

The Abolition of all hereditary distinctions and privileges, fostering a spirit antagonistic to justice and human brotherhood.

The Improvement by all just and wise means of the conditions of daily life for the masses of the people, especially in towns and cities, where insanitary and incommensurable dwellings, and the want of open spaces, cause physical weakness and disease, and the deterioration of family life.

The Promotion of the right and duty of Labor to organise itself for its moral and economical advancement, and of its claim to legal protection in such combinations.

The Substitution of the idea of Reform for that of Punishment in the treatment of criminals, so that gaols may no longer be places of brutalisation, or even of mere detention, but places of physical, intellectual, and moral elevation for those who are afflicted with anti-social tendencies.

An Extension of the moral law to animals, so as to secure them humane treatment and legal protection against cruelty.

The Promotion of Peace between nations, and the substitution of Arbitration for War in the settlement of international disputes.

FREETHOUGHT PUBLICATIONS.

LIBERTY AND NECESSITY. An argument against Free Will and in favor of Moral Causation. By David Hume. 32 pages, price 2d., postage 1d.

THE MORTALITY OF THE SOUL. By David Hume. With an Introduction by G. W. Foote. 16 pages, price 1d., postage 1/2d.

AN ESSAY ON SUICIDE. By David Hume. With an Historical and Critical Introduction by G. W. Foote. price 1d., postage 1/2d.

FROM CHRISTIAN PULPIT TO SECULAR PLATFORM. By J. T. Lloyd. A History of his Mental Development. 60 pages, price 1d., postage 1d.

THE MARTYRDOM OF HYPATIA. By M. M. Mangasarian (Chicago). 16 pages, price 1d., postage 1/2d.

THE WISDOM OF THE ANCIENTS. By Lord Bacon. A beautiful and suggestive composition. 86 pages, reduced from 1s. to 3d., postage 1d.

A REFUTATION OF DEISM. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. With an Introduction by G. W. Foote. 32 pages, price 1d., postage 1/2d.

LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. 16 pages, price 1d., postage 1/2d.

WHY AM I AN AGNOSTIC? By Col. R. G. Ingersoll. 24 pages, price 1d., postage 1/2d.

BIBLE STUDIES AND PHALMIC WORSHIP. By J. M. Wheeler. 136 pages, price 1s. 6d., postage 2d.

UTILITARIANISM. By Jeremy Bentham. An Important Work. 32 pages, price 1d., postage 1/2d.

THE MISTAKES OF MOSES. By Col. R. G. Ingersoll. Only Complete Edition. Beautifully printed on fine paper. 136 pages. Reduced to 6d., postage 2 1/2d.

THE ESSENCE OF RELIGION. By Ludwig Feuerbach. "All theology is anthropology." Büchner said that "no one has demonstrated and explained the purely human origin of the idea of God better than Ludwig Feuerbach." 78 pages, price 6d., postage 1d.

THE CODE OF NATURE. By Denis Diderot. Powerful and eloquent. 16 pages, price 1d., postage 1/2d.

BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF FREETHINKERS—Of All Ages and Nations. By Joseph Mazzini Wheeler, 355 pages, price (reduced from 7s. 6d.) 3s., postage 4d.

A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY CONCERNING HUMAN LIBERTY. By Anthony Collins. With Preface and Annotations by G. W. Foote and Biographical Introduction by J. M. Wheeler. One of the strongest defences of Determinism ever written. Cloth, 1s.; paper, 6d., post 1d.

DEFENCE OF FREETHOUGHT. By Col. R. G. Ingersoll. 64 pages, price 2d., postage 1d.

ROME OR REASON? A Reply to Cardinal Manning. By Col. R. G. Ingersoll. 48 pages, price 1d., postage 1d.

PAMPHLETS BY C. COHEN.

AN OUTLINE OF EVOLUTIONARY ETHICS. Price 6d., postage 1d.

SOCIALISM, ATHEISM, AND CHRISTIANITY. Price 1d., postage 1/2d.

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL ETHICS. Price 1d., postage 1/2d.

PAIN AND PROVIDENCE. Price 1d., postage 1/2d.

THE PIONEER PRESS,
61 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

Queen's (Minor) Hall,
LANGHAM PLACE, LONDON, W.

A PUBLIC MEETING

IN CONNECTION WITH THE

Annual Conference of the National Secular Society,

ON

Whit—Sunday Evening, May 23, 1915.

Chairman: Mr. G. W. FOOTE.

Speakers: Messrs. C. COHEN, J. T. LLOYD, A. B. MOSS, R. H. ROSETTI, HARRY SNELL, and WALLACE NELSON.

Doors Open at 6.30. Chair taken at 7. Admission Free. A few Seats may be Reserved on application to the GENERAL SECRETARY, 62 Farringdon-street, E.C., or at the Box-office on the evening of the Meeting.

THE BIBLE HANDBOOK

FOR FREETHINKERS AND ENQUIRING CHRISTIANS.

BY

G. W. FOOTE and W. P. BALL.

NEW AND CHEAPER EDITION

Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.

WELL PRINTED ON GOOD PAPER AND WELL BOUND.

In Paper Covers, SIXPENCE—Net.

(POSTAGE 1½d.)

In Cloth Covers, ONE SHILLING—Net.

(POSTAGE 2d.)

ONE OF THE MOST USEFUL BOOKS EVER PUBLISHED.

INVALUABLE TO FREETHINKERS ANSWERING CHRISTIANS

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C.