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It is a preposterous thing, that men can venture their souls where they will not venture their money; for they will take their religion upon trust; but not trust a Synod about the goodness of half-a-crown.—WILLIAM PENN.

Still More Theological Nonsense About the War.

FACTS have recently transpired, and are still occurring, which bear irrefutable witness to the essential cowardice and insincerity of Christian teachers. Readers of this journal are aware that there are two entirely different and contradictory accounts of the British retreat from Mons, namely, the official and the religious. The official report was furnished at the time by Sir John French, which was elaborated by many war correspondents. Much later the religious description appeared in a Clifton parish magazine, and was immediately copied by numerous religious newspapers, according to which a troop of angels intervened, and prevented our left wing from being annihilated by the onrushing Germans. This report came from a nameless spinster, who testified that two nameless officers had seen the angels, and had also seen them, and been thereby frightened out of whatever wits they had. We are not told what the angels did, or what they looked like; the all-important point being that, for some reason or other, they successfully acted as bugbears and turned the Germans to flight. Our object in referring to this inflated report, already so completely exposed by Mr. Cohen, is to emphasise the utter inability of those who make it to adduce a single scrap of verifiable evidence in support of its alleged truth. It is now incontrovertible that, in the first instance, it was invented by Mr. Arthur Machen, who gave it in the form of an interesting legend. Then it began to be whispered abroad that Mr. Machen's fairy tale was literally true. There was a vague rumor that "an officer," "a soldier," "a correspondent," more than stated that something very like the legend had actually taken place. By the time Dr. Horton went to preach at Manchester, early in June, the "story" was repeated by so many witnesses that if anything can be established by contemporary evidence, it is established that our men saw a company of angels and the horses of the Germans stampeded." A week later, in conversation with Mr. Machen, the reverend gentleman claimed only "an Army reader" as a witness, his "many witnesses" being so quickly reduced to one. A few days later still, writing to the *Evening News*, Dr. Horton reiterates his Manchester statement, without making the slightest reference to the interview with Mr. Machen. In one respect, at least these men of God are all alike, namely, in their refusal to supply the public with the names of their witnesses. They now say that we ought to be thoroughly ashamed of ourselves for daring to prefer an impertinent request. Are they not God's representatives on earth, and as such are they not to be trusted to speak the truth? Unfortunately, however, clergymen are much addicted to the vice of misrepresenting the views of

their opponents. For example, Dr. Horton, in his article in the *Evening News* for June 21, attributes to Huxley the saying that "the age of miracles is past," thereby conveying to ignorant readers the false impression that the great Agnostic believed that once upon a time miracles happened, though they did not happen now. As a matter of fact, Huxley did not believe that miracles were ever performed at all. He differed from Hume in that he refused to regard the miraculous as impossible, but he was in full harmony with that distinguished philosopher in declaring the evidence for it to be quite unconvincing. Dr. Horton exclaims:—

"Miracles do not happen; but the same things happen which were once called miracles, the same astonishing deliverances, the same unexpected and unexplained alteration in the accustomed order of things, the same appearances, visions, manifestations, the same sudden realisations of the forces behind Nature, of the personal agencies which are at work unseen, the same discovery that palpably across the scene of human life God passes. And these events, or phenomena, produce just the same effect as they always did. Men grasp the unseen Presence. They become aware of God, and trust him; they find that they are not left to themselves as they thought; events are not happening at random; there is a hand that controls, there is a heart that pities, there is a purpose of God to deliver. These 'miracles' are constantly happening."

Huxley, on the contrary, was convinced that "the term 'Nature' covers the totality of all that is." Consequently, he persistently objected to "cutting the Universe into two halves, one natural and one supernatural." And he had as great a logical respect to the continuity of Nature as Hume himself, as the following passage proves:—

"When repeated and minute examination never reveals a break in the chain of causes and effects, and the whole edifice of practical life is built upon our faith in its continuity, the belief that that chain has never been broken and never will be broken becomes one of the strongest and most justifiable of human convictions. And it must be admitted to be a reasonable request, if we ask those who would have us put faith in the actual occurrence of interruptions of that order, to produce evidence in favor of their view, not only equal, but superior, in weight, to that which leads us to adopt ours."

Is that trust in the continuity of Nature less firm to-day than it was in Huxley's day? Has the short period of twenty years which separates us from his death effected a total change in the scientific outlook upon life and matter? Without a moment's hesitation we answer, No. Scientists are more confirmed now than ever, if possible, in the mechanistic conception of the world, and this is fully as true of biologists and psychologists as of physicists. The present is pre-eminently the critical and scientific epoch. Dr. Horton deceives his readers, and is probably self-deceived, when he avers that this is "a new epoch of thought and experience, the epoch which is determined to recognise and use all facts, even facts of the Spirit, religious facts.....which empirical psychology has tabulated, and which rational psychology attempts to explain." When he wrote that, the reverend gentleman doubtless had in his mind the never-failing sheet-anchor of the modern theologian, William James's *Variations of Religious Experience*, but he forgets that the author of that celebrated treatise was neither a Christian nor a believer in a personal God,

and that he composed it in the interests of his own somewhat peculiar theory of the fundamental oneness of all mind. It is instructive to note that the science which deals with and tabulates religious facts is styled Abnormal Psychology, because religious facts represent abnormal mental states.

Now, is it not beyond dispute that, if supernatural interventions are possible, and do occasionally occur, as on the occasion of our retirement from Mons, the Deity brings down upon himself an all-crushing load of guilt because they are such rarities under the sun? Why did he not interpose a frightening company of angels between the Belgians and the Germans at the beginning of last August, and so prevent the unspeakable degradation and ruin of the former brave nation? Or why did he not render impossible the murder of the Crown Prince and Princess of Austria, which proved to be the match which so soon set the whole of Europe aflame? If the War is a crime against God and humanity, as some Christians affirm, then we ask in the name of justice and humanity, why did God permit it to break out and involve Christendom in a deluge of blood?

We now come to the most nauseating and revolting aspect of our subject. A young lad joined the Army at the commencement of the War, and is now in the thick of the savage struggle in Flanders. Since he joined his mother has become a widow. Writing to the Correspondence Column of Professor David Smith in the *British Weekly* for July 8, the mother says that in her loneliness she more than ever wants her boy spared to her, and that she can only pray that, if it is her Father's will, he may return safe in body, nerve, and limb. Dr. Smith tries to comfort her with the assurance that, whatever it may ordain, God's will is both wise and merciful, and that if only she understood, as she one day will, she would not have it otherwise. Then he says:—

"And face the uttermost possibilities. You have made a noble sacrifice, the sorest you could have made, in giving your son. You have laid him on God's altar, and, while you pray that even yet he may be spared, you must nerve yourself to see your dear offering consumed."

That is the most damnable philosophy ever invented by the religiously diseased human mind. Whatever happens is an expression of God's will, which is always both wise and merciful. Well, we are proud to say that we do not and have no desire to understand such heartless doctrine. It is the very worst that has ever issued from man's primal stupidity, and which all our modern enlightenment has not yet succeeded in shaming out of existence. There are already several millions of mourning mothers, sisters, sweethearts, and widows in various countries engaged in the War, and the only consolation Christianity can offer them is that their bereavement is in accordance with God's will, which is both wise and merciful. Can sane people tolerate for a moment the idea of a God who, on the one hand, could have prevented the War, but did not, or could have stopped it at any stage, but did not, and who, on the other hand, is utilising it as a means of expressing his will both in the sacrifice and the sparing of the lives of the combatants, all of whom simply obey the orders of their superiors on both sides? According to one representation, there has been as yet only one supernatural intervention which happened on behalf of the British during their retreat from Mons, while, according to another, the Divine will has been done all the way from the start, and it has been and is both wise and merciful for all concerned. To us, supernaturalism in all its forms is a vain dream that has never come true, and in practice the theologians rely upon it no more than we do, as is specially proved by Sir William Robertson Nicoll's leading article in the current issue of the *British Weekly*, an article which, written by an unbeliever, would have been both wise and consistent, but which, coming from the pen of an ardent supernaturalist, is at once foolish and blasphemous.

J. T. LLOYD.

Putting Religion on the Shelf.

A NOVEL and, on the whole, interesting suggestion has just been made by a writer in one of the leading German Christian newspapers. It is no less than a "Moratorium for Christianity." The writer of the article is a soldier, and writes from the trenches. Being there, he is able to fix the proper value upon the talk about the ennobling and purifying influence of war. It is not, he says, this kind of teaching that men want who are "fresh from the frightful hell of the trenches, where faces are distorted beyond recognition by murderous passions, where men are engaged in bloody struggle," and where the fighting is of such a character "that every feeling of religion, every act of devotion, every inclination to prayer ceases." And he declares that hundreds of thousands of men will return from the War with their opinions radically altered about current Christianity, and that this alteration will not be in its favor.

Therefore he suggests that a Moratorium for Christianity should be proclaimed. Until the War is over, Christianity should be placed on the shelf, as having no application to the present state of European affairs.

The *Daily News* calls this an "unthinkable proposition," which it certainly is not. Undesirable, it may be; although one would have thought that much might be said in its favor from the Christian point of view. Had a Moratorium been proclaimed with the outbreak of war, Christianity might not have stood higher in the estimation of non-Christians, but it would certainly not have sunk so low as is now the case. The world would have been spared the spectacle of crowds of Christian preachers on each side of the fighting line offering identical prayers to the same God, and each asking for the destruction of the other in the name of "Christ and him crucified." It would also have missed the spectacle of Christian bishops prating about a "Holy War" and "God's Day," and generally outrivalling the much-abused Bernhardt in dwelling upon the purifying effects of war on the nation as a whole, and, instead of adopting Sherman's maxim, "War is hell," preaching as though it were a kind of ante-chamber to heaven.

The suggestion may well be an undesirable one from the Churches' point of view, because it would have been an object-lesson to the world of how well it can get on without Christianity. The great point about religion is that the people must never discover how useless it is. It is like a great many other habits—we only discover that they were mere habits when we have lost them, and find that life goes on quite as well—perhaps better—in their absence. So it is with religion. We find it here in full possession when we arrive on the scene. We see it more or less closely connected with a hundred and one different institutions, and the ordinary mind finds it nearly impossible to separate in thought things which it has found together in fact. In infancy, in youth, and in maturity, religion is with us constantly, and the boldest is apt to hesitate before the proposal to throw it on one side altogether. The effect, therefore, of proclaiming a Moratorium would be to test the possibility of getting on without religion. And that would indeed be dangerous—for the Churches. For the aim of other teachers is quite different to that of other teachers. The secular instructor aims at enabling a pupil to walk alone. The religious teacher's object is to induce a state of complete and permanent dependence.

Our national insularity prevents Christians in this country from seeing that all the German writer says about the Churches in his country applies to our own also. If the German Churches have provided the Government with a complete justification for the War from a religious point of view, our own have not been backward. It is not well to forget the Daily News of London's declaring the War to be a "Holy War."

nor his description of the times as "God's Day"—such a day as has not been witnessed for a thousand years. And in invoking the name of God and Christ, and the sanction of Christianity, our own clergy have been quite as active as those of Germany. Of course, it may be argued that the opinion and feeling of the country endorses all that the clergy have said. But that, again, is equally true of Germany. And one's opinion of the clergy, in both countries, is of necessity governed by the fact that the bulk of them have acted in the same manner in the case of every other war. A State Church, wherever it exists, always plays the part of fagman to the Government, and the other Churches are never far behind it.

The German writer—so far as one can gather from the summary of his article as presented in the English press—does not attack the Church for justifying this War. That is obviously a matter of opinion, and there would be no great fault to be found with organised Christianity in this country had it merely justified the entry of this country into the War. Had they said this War was inevitable, England's taking part in it was unavoidable, and now we are in it, it is the duty of every one to lend what help he or she can to bring it to a successful issue—that would have been an intelligible, even an honest position. But in both here and in Germany organised Christianity has gone much further. It has glorified war as war. It has dwelt upon it as a school of virtue, ennobling the nature of man, purifying him, and making nations the better for having experienced it.

And that is radically, demonstrably false. War—particularly modern war—makes better neither the individual nor the nation. It degrades the one, and it impoverishes the other. The appeal to arms may be necessary, defence against aggression may be a duty, and the man who will not fight in a worthy cause may easily be a worse man than he who will. Granting all these things, it is folly to imagine that warfare benefits human nature. This the Churches might have pointed out without prejudice to the question of the right and wrong of the present war, and had they done so, they might have helped to strip militarism of some of its glamor, and so have brought universal peace nearer. They might have pointed out that men cannot be civilised by encouragement to mutual warfare; that the love of other countries is but little better than the tribalism of the primitive savage; that true civilisation only comes with peace and the acts of settled social life, and that whether war be forced upon a nation or not, it is none the less a step backward in the scale of civilisation.

It has been said that the first nation which has the moral courage to disband its army and scrap its navy will have dealt a death blow to militarism throughout the civilised world. That is a very questionable proposition, and would need courage of a much higher order than is displayed on a battlefield for its execution. But I am certain that if any nation were to adopt the suggestion of this German writer, close all the Churches, and suspend Christian teaching for a given period, it would give the death blow to religion in that country. The nation that did this could not fail to realise that all our real and vital problems lie outside the scope of theology, and that theology was powerless to aid in their solution. Hitherto, as I have said, theology has succeeded in maintaining an association with secular institutions. Let a separation take place, and the parasitic nature of theology will be patent to all.

It is not alone in the case of this War that Christianity has shown itself sterile. It is equally sterile in the case of every question of real social value. What help will it give one on the general question of social organisation? Would it be possible to extract from the whole literature of theology, from the Sermon on the Mount down to the last published report of a modern missionary society, a single sound reason in political or social economy? In these directions Christianity is as powerless to aid, as it was

powerless to stay the outbreak of war. It can preach, and preach, and—yet again—preach. And when it is done, the problems are there as imperative as ever, and perhaps farther from solution than ever, because of the confusion created by religious interference.

In strict truth our real problems and our vital interests lie quite outside the sphere of Christianity. The task before us is a social and not a religious one. It is, in a word, how to so economise our energies and so organise our resources that a decent cleanly life may be within reach of all. And that is not a question of theology at all. Our real task is to equip men and women for a flesh and blood existence on earth, not to prepare citizens for the New Jerusalem. And we can do this all the better by creating a Moratorium for Christianity in fact, if not in theory. We can see to it that our cities are clean, well planned, and well lit, without troubling over mansions in the sky, just as we can, without bothering about the being of a God, see that the work of educating and humanising men and women goes forward. We might easily make earth brighter and better, even though we remained in complete ignorance of the constitution of the heavenly kingdom.

But I have really no hope that the suggestion will be adopted, and a religious Moratorium declared. It would be too dangerous an experiment, and it is too much to expect. At all costs Christianity must keep itself well advertised if it is to live. It may be true, as this German writer says, that thousands will return from the War with their opinions about religion altered. But I am quite sure that the Churches will continue as brazen as ever to the end. In that, indeed, lies their only hope.

C. COHEN.

Grant Allen.

In Nature's Workshop, by Grant Allen. Newnes. Illustrated. 1s. net.

Flashlights on Nature, by Grant Allen. Newnes. Illustrated. 1s. net.

GRANT ALLEN'S versatility was extraordinary. There were few things he could not, and did not write about; and whatever he wrote was always pointed and suggestive. This was, in part, due to the variety of his early experiences. Before he was twenty-five he knew Canada, England, and the West Indies. He was educated in America, in Dieppe, in Birmingham, and at Oxford. He also had some experience in the Indian Statistical Department. But there is no doubt his most satisfactory work was that as a populariser of science. He fell early under the domination of the master-minds of Darwin and Spencer, and he never tired of bringing their teachings before popular readers. He was not a profound scientist, but he had a complete acquaintance with science, and he had a splendid gift of interpretation. "The St. Paul of Darwinism," someone dubbed him, and certainly his power of popularising the master's teaching was very remarkable.

His papers on biology, philology, the evolution of species, and kindred subjects were bright and readable, even at times amusing. As a rule, when a scientist tries to be funny, the result is "too deep for tears." This gift of Grant Allen's made him unpopular in scientific circles. Serious pedants professed to scorn his scientific journalism. They despised the star-gossip of Richard Proctor on similar grounds, preferring, presumably, the scholastic and unbearable simplicity of the lamented Dionysius Lardner, whose chaste volumes used to adorn booksellers' fourpenny boxes, alongside Zimmermann *On Solitude* and Hervey's *Meditations Among the Tombs*. Whether they felt that, having gained their knowledge by years of work, it was prodigality to give it away so easily, or whether the old clerical spirit had found a new stronghold in scientific circles, may be an open question. Nothing appeared to irritate some of the authors of ponderous monographs so much as having their life-work made intelligible to

the masses. But Grant Allen hoisted the engineers with their own gunpowder. He opened up a new universe to tens of thousands, with a charm all its own. Who that came fresh to the study of science could ever say an ungrateful word of the author of *Carving a Coconut*, *The Aesthetic Analysis of an Egyptian Obelisk*, *The Romance of a Wayside Weed*, *The Daisy's Pedigree*, and numerous other papers. He awoke a new interest, and, unconsciously, led the reader through a course of Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and many another disregarded writer. In entrancing chapters, Grant Allen led the outside public to understand the mysteries that, expressed in the esoteric terminology of scientific language, else had remained comparatively unknown. Now, thanks to Grant Allen, the ordinary reader has a clear idea of the labors of the great thinkers of our time; and, it may be, see more clearly the tendency of those movements than those who, with technical knowledge, dissect the old faiths whilst worshipping Mrs. Grundy.

Grant Allen was more than an amateur, but he carried his weight of learning gracefully. Though prejudiced against the classics, he produced a translation, with an anthropological introduction, of Catullus's most famous poem. From the lofty region of thought and scholarship it is a sharp curve to turn to Grant Allen the novelist. In the days of threadbare plots, when all the old devices that were as broodery to a well-spun story, were worn to skeletons of construction, it was a pleasure to find Stevenson and Rider Haggard rivalled in their romances by facts from the laboratory and problems from the philosopher's researches.

Theology has always met strange bed-fellows, and one is not surprised to find the versatile Grant Allen among the theologians. He was proud of being one of the first to apply seriously evolutionary theories to the human belief in deity. In his Preface to *The Evolution of the Idea of God*, he said, "It contains, I believe, the first extended effort that has yet been made to trace the genesis of the belief in God from its earliest origin in the mind of primitive man up to its fullest development in advanced and etherealised Christian theology." Grant Allen made an honest attempt to explain the whole matter. The whole drift of his teaching was secularistic, and all his thinking was untrammelled by any kind of religion.

He met with great opposition. Publishers feared to offend Mrs. Grundy, and would not allow him to give full expression to his ideas. Science, pure and simple, did not pay; and novel-writing, to which he was compelled to turn, had to be carried on within narrow limits. The publishers wanted "smooth tales, generally of love." The last kind of work in which he exercised his versatile pen was art criticism and guide-book writing. His papers on *The Evolution of Italian Art* are as valuable as they are interesting, and in his series of books on *Historic Cities*, he showed us what a guide-book should be.

Curiously, Grant Allen never liked fiction. Unlike Darwin, he never even read it, if he could help it. But, in spite of this, he succeeded as a novelist, and *The Woman Who Did* and *The English Barbarians* were read wherever the English language is spoken. This is one of the extraordinary things in his career. The truth is, that Grant Allen could write anything, and wrote all things well. He even attempted poetry, and proved himself a master in the ballade, though he seldom worked in that fantastic field.

No religious ceremony was permitted at his funeral. It would have been an outrage on his life and teaching if any theological invocations had been intoned over his dead body. His life was a battle against creeds and conventions. He lived free of such bonds, and he died free of them.

Below all the strife of opponents the quiet growth of appreciation, silent but real, gathers strength. For in the heart of the democracy his lessons have sunk deep, and if graduates sneer and professors frown, it is something to have helped the people to grasp the teachings of science. He called himself a humble disciple of Darwin and Herbert Spencer, but

in popularising the work of these great thinkers he made an enviable reputation, and what writer desires more?

MIMNERMUS.

Man and His Mother Earth.—III.

(Concluded from p. 445.)

PRIMITIVE hunters in inhospitable sub-arctic America and Siberia need from seventy to two hundred square miles of territory for their maintenance per capita. Rainless districts like the Kalahari Desert and similar areas afford subsistence on much the same scale. In more genial surroundings where the spoils of the chase are eked out with the proceeds of primitive tillage, as with many of the American Indians, the Dyaks of Borneo, and the natives of New Guinea, from one-half to two square miles will provide for each unit of the tribe.

Shepherd races show a population of from two to five per square mile: where they combine a little agriculture with their pastoral life, ten to fifteen to the square mile is a fair average. Rude husbandry, if united with a modicum of trade and industry, as in tropical Africa, Borneo, and elsewhere, will sustain from five to fifteen per square mile. Pioneer farming by European settlers in newly colonised states or in the home continent where the climate is unfavorable, will support from eighteen to twenty-five to the square mile.

Well cultivated land in Central Europe suffices to sustain one hundred to the square mile; in the warm countries of Southern Europe, two hundred; when some additional occupation is followed, two hundred and fifty to three hundred. But these figures are greatly increased in lowland India and China, where five hundred or more people find sustenance on one square mile of land. In large industrial areas in Europe, however, such as England, Belgium, Saxony, and the manufacturing departments of France, the density of population rises from five hundred to eight hundred per square mile.

With the aggregation of a big population on a restricted area, and with a continually extending interrelationship with the land-surface, the need arises for systematic governmental control. Disputes between members of the social group concerning the rights of property and access to internal order and protection against domestic aggression become functions of the regulative body. Steps must also be taken to defend the community against outside interference which may threaten the territory or menace the liberties of the newly-risen state. In contemporary industrial communities the state functionaries have carried these duties a step further. They control the public thoroughfares, waterways, and railway systems, and subsidise the ocean liners. All these proceedings are held to promote the exploitation of natural resources and the development of commerce. By extending the interplay between land and people they have unquestionably assisted in building up those immense urban populations which are increasingly conspicuous among all advanced manufacturing and commercial communities. But whether those nations that recklessly exhausted their mineral patrimony, while neglecting the permanent possibilities of a highly remunerative soil, are assured of a lengthy national career is, perhaps, another story.

Territorial expansion is a prime necessity with all overcrowded communities. This is the frequent sequel of the rapid multiplication of commercial resources. Colonies are needed for surplus population and for new markets alike. But the more powerful State will, if convenient, enlarge its boundaries nearer home by annexing the provinces of contiguous peoples. The histories of all States—ancient, mediæval, and modern—testify to this. All the empires have been erected on the lands of fallen foes, or founded on the territories of weak or defence-

less peoples, who never harmed or ever dreamed of harming their almost invariably remorseless conquerors.

In the sad story of human evolution, power and cunning have usually been triumphant. Morality has seldom counted in the struggles of races for supremacy. Yet there is some soul of goodness even in war. The spreading of the thirteen colonies over Northern America, south of the Great Lakes, was essential to the development of a wonderful United States civilisation. Greece carried her culture wherever she established her power. Rome bore the torch of civilisation to all her subjugated peoples. The war waged by Japan against Russia was largely dictated by motives of self-preservation.

Independent states such as Holland, Switzerland, the Scandinavian countries, and Belgium, are compelled either to place themselves in a position of defence or become resigned to the prospect of ultimate absorption by some more powerful neighbor. But let us hope that the clouds will lift, and that the United States of Europe is not a fantastic dream.

There is plainly a vast difference between self-supporting communities, or those that are practically so, and those countries that depend very largely on their purchases from foreign lands. Britain and Germany raise only a portion of the food-stuffs they consume, or the raw materials they manufacture, within their own territories. They supply their densely-packed populations from abroad by means of international exchange of commodities. The interruption or curtailment of foreign trade is soon experienced in the rise of prices even for the barest necessities of life, for which an increase in wages or ordinary salaries is usually an inadequate compensation. The British Navy in protecting our shipping and our shores has rendered more than yeoman's service. That this is appreciated by the people is proved in the circumstance that in all normal times the sailor is a far greater favorite than the landwarder throughout our sea-swept isles. And although the German Navy was most certainly aimed at England, yet a powerful marine arm was becoming more and more an imperative requirement to Germany's enormously expanding overseas trade. In fairness it may be said, while remaining completely convinced that the triumph of Prussia, either on land or sea, would spell disaster to the civilised world.

The dependence of an island or semi-continental people on naval power is no new phenomenon. In the peerless period of Pericles, Athens employed her ships not merely to safeguard her supremacy in the Aegean Sea, but to solidify her communications with the colonial cereal lands on the margin of the Black Sea.

All contemporary States strive to secure a large and increasing commerce through the instrumentality of outlying commercial stations, trade treaties, and the other devices of modern economics. Through such agencies as these the intellectual conquests of civilised races are being diffused through an ever widening area of the earth's surface. Despite serious drawbacks, the interchange of ideas, bound up with the white man's encroachments upon the habitats of poorer endowed races tend in the long run to further the cause of civilisation and progress. One may still cherish the belief that the petty and paltry racial hatreds and antagonisms will some day fade away; and that a fuller understanding of, and sympathy with, the ideas and aspirations of peoples evolved in a different habitat, together with a deepening realization of the interdependence and mutual helplessness of the entire human family will at some period, however remote, at last lead to the pacific adjustment of all social, racial, and economic enemies. International humanism may yet expand from the eager aspirations of the truly humanitarian few of the peoples of the earth.

Underlying and determining all the happenings which make up man's history is the solid land on which he treads. Every fluctuating phenomenon

is fundamentally conditioned and constrained by its geographic circumstances. In tracing the development of lower animal and plant life, the same factors confront us. Anthropology is the science of the earth's leading animal. Herder, Montesquieu, Buckle, and Ratzel, the two former, dimly, and the two latter, deliberately, emphasised the titanic part performed by geographical phenomena in shaping the paths followed by the children of men.

In a justly celebrated sonnet, George Meredith reminds us of the "memorable" lady's saying that the mind's ascent is spiral. So, too, is the State's, and the same truth holds of the social units which form the State. One has even heard, on more or less excellent authority, that the State's permanent officials are seriously encumbered with "a heavy pack," and that their seeming slothfulness and somnolence is owing to the burden of red tape they bear as they wind and bend from bad to a little better.

Hidden as the verity may be by many apparently artificial phenomena, the truth remains that the mental and material progress of mankind has been enormously influenced by its geography. Although so generally underrated, or entirely ignored, the land, from which all human activities spring, forms the chief foundation for the science of history. The spiral character of man's progress is illustrated both by the circumstance that in the conflict with an untoward environment the human race is sometimes victorious, and sometimes defeated in the struggle. Broadly considered, a people marches onward when it has turned all its advantages to the best account, while it is driven to retreat, or even to cede its territory to a more efficiently armed or better economically equipped invader. The value of a dwelling-place, either to its native inhabitants or to an alien intruder, must depend upon its strategic importance, its soil, climate, and general economic potentialities. The problem of space is ever present with an expanding people. A self-contained community, whether of continental or island habitat, is sooner or later menaced with stagnation. This was shown not only in the native races, but in the plants and lower animals of the stranded Australian continent. Japan betrayed plain signs of retarded development when the American, Perry, paid his epoch-making visit to that island empire. As Ellen Semple states:—

"The ideal basis of progress is the expansion of the world relations of a people, the extension of its field of activities and sphere of influence far beyond the limits of its own territory, by which it exchanges commodities and ideas with various countries of the world. Universal history shows us that as the geographical history of the known world has widened from gray antiquity to the present, societies and states have expanded their territorial and economic scope; that they have grown not only in the number of their square miles and in the geographical range of their international intercourse, but in national efficiency, power, and permanence, and especially in that intellectual force which feeds upon the nutritious food of wide comparisons. Every great movement which has widened the geographical outlook of a people, such as the Crusades in the Middle Ages, or the colonisation of the Americas, has applied an intellectual and economic stimulus. The expanding field of advancing history has therefore been an essential concomitant and, at the same time, a driving force in the progress of every people and of the world."

With the multiplication of the so-called artificial aids to human life, man's loudly-voiced conquests over Nature appear on the surface to find their justification. But deeper reflection should warn us that all that has really happened is that we have more completely adapted ourselves to the conditions imposed by the all-encompassing earth, air, and sea. Every task set to man, all the problems of land and water transit, the difficulties of irrigation and drainage, the domestication of animals and cultivation of plants, the power to travel through the air, to submerge his sea-going vessels of destruction, all the obstacles which have hardened man's body and sharpened his wits, have been appointed by surrounding Nature.

But the terms presented by Nature, however modified, are never eliminated. Human freedom is not

made more complete by civilised life. As a matter of fact, as man's wants multiply, his reliance on his Earth Mother constantly increases. He assumes his manumission because his requirements are spread over a wider area. No one necessary of life in a state of civilisation possesses the power it exercises in uncivilised communities. But civilised man remains bound, although his fetters cease to gall his imprisoned limbs. This truth is forcibly shown in the following passage:—

"The Delaware Indians depended upon the forests alone for fuel. A citizen of Pennsylvania, occupying the former Delaware tract, has the choice of wood, hard or soft coal, coke, petroleum, natural gas, or manufactured gas. Does this mean emancipation? By no means. For while fuel was a necessity to the Indian only for warmth and cooking, and, incidentally, for the pleasurable excitement of burning an enemy at the stake, it enters into the manufacture of almost every article that the Pennsylvanian uses in his daily life."

The population of Great Britain depends not merely on its internal trade and home-grown food-stuffs, but also avails itself of the advantages conferred by its immense fleet of twenty thousand merchant vessels which convey food supplies and manufactured articles to and fro in every part of the habitable globe. The importance of our mercantile marine and our railway systems to a vast city like London can only be realised by paying a visit to Smithfield or Covent Garden on one of their busy market mornings. Most of our bread is baked from wheat drawn from many foreign lands; our tea and coffee both come from abroad; the bulk of our meat supplies is of overseas origin; while our very water is conducted to our houses from a distant river. Nearly all the cotton which serves to sustain the great manufacturing county of Lancashire is shipped from the Southern States of America to find one of its great centres of ultimate consumption in far distant India.

All these aids to comfort and convenience, with countless others, proceed from the earth. The sum total of force and matter in the universe remains constant. Man creates nothing; he merely moulds and modifies pre-existing material. He co-operates with Nature in making three ears of corn grow where one or even none grew before, but he remains her willing or wayward child, born of her womb, suckled at her breast, and destined, when his allotted span of life is past, to return to the bosom of her from whom he sprang.

T. F. PALMER.

The Bible in War-Time.

THE Gunner chuckled softly.

"You should 'a' done like old Pint-o'-Bass did, time we was on the Aisne," he said. "Bass is one of them fag-fiends that can't live without a cigarette, and wouldn't die happy if he wasn't smokin' one. 'E breathes more smoke than 'e does air, an' 'e ought to 'ave a permanent chimney-sweep detailed to clear the soot out of 'is lungs an' breathin' toobs. But if Pint-o'-Bass does smoke more'n is good for 'im or any other respectable factory chimney, I'll admit the smoke 'asn't sooted up 'is intelleck none, an' 'e can wriggle 'is way out of a hole where a double-jointed snake 'ud stick. An' durin' The Retreat, when, 'as you knows, cigarettes in the Expeditionary Force was scarcer'n snowballs in 'Ell, ole Pint-o'-Bass managed to carry on, an' wasn't never seen without 'is fag, excep' at meal-times an' sleep-times, an' they, bein' so infrequent an' sketchy-like, them days, wasn't 'ardly worth countin'. 'Twas like this, see, that 'e managed it. You'll remember that, when we mobilised, some Lost Dogs' Ome or Society for Preventin' Christian Knowledge, or something, rushes up a issue o' pocket Testaments an' dishes out one to everybody in the Battery. Bound in a khaki cover, they was, an' comin' in remarkable 'andy as a nice sentimental sort o' keepsake, most of 'em stayed be'ind wi' sweet'earts an' wives. Them as didn't must 'ave gone into 'Base kit,' cos any'ow there wasn't one to be raked out o' the Battery later on excep' the one that Pint-o'-Bass was carryin'. Bein' pocket Testaments, they was made o' the thinnest kind o' paper, an' Bass told me the size worked out exactly right at two fags to the page. 'E started on the Creation just about the time o' Mons, an' by the time we'd got back to the Aisne 'e was near through Genesis. All the

time we was workin' up thro' France again Bass's smokes were workin' down through Exodus, an' 'e begun to worry about whether the Testament would carry 'im through the campaign. The other fellers that 'ad their tongues 'augin' out for a fag uster go'n borrow a leaf off o' Bass whenever they could raise a bit o' 'baccy, but at last Bass shut down on these loans. 'Where's your own Testament?' he'd say. 'You was served out one same as me, wasn't you? Lot o' irreligious wasters! Get a Bible give you an' can't take the trouble to carry it. You'd ha' sold them Testaments at sixpence a sack in Woolwich if there'd been buyers at that price—which there weren't. An' now you comes beggin' a page o' mine. I ain't goin' to give no more. Encouragin' thriftlessness, as the Adjutant 'ud call it; an', besides, 'ow do I know 'ow long this war's goin' to last or when I'll see a fag or a fag-paper again? I'll be smoking Deuteronomy an' Kings long afore we're over the Rhine, an' 'ebbe,' be ses, turnin' over the pages with 'is thumb an' tearin' out the Children of Israel careful by the roots, 'ebbe I'll be reduced to smokin' the inscription, "To our Dear Soldier Friend," on the fly-leaf afore I gets a chance to loot some 'baccy shop in Berlin. No,' 'e says. 'No. You go'n smoke a corner o' the *Pettit Journal*, an' good enough for you, un-provident sacrilegious blighters, you—givin' away your own good Testaments.'

"Young Soapy, o' the Centre Section, 'im that was struck off the strength at Wipers later through stoppin' a Coal-Box, tried to come the artful, an' 'ad the front to 'alt the Division padre one day an' ask 'im if 'e'd any spares o' pocket Testaments in store, makin' out 'e'd lost 'is through lendin' it to 'is Number One, who had gone 'Missin'. Soapy made out 'e couldn't 'ardly sleep in 'is bed at night—which wasn't sayin' much, seein' we mostly slep' in our seats or saddle them nights—becos 'e hadn't read a chapter o' the Testament first. An' the old sky-pilot was a little bit surprised—'e'd 'a bin more surprised if 'e knew Soapy as well as I did—becos 'e 'adn't no Testament that was supernumary to War Establishment, and so couldn't issue one to Soapy. But two days later 'e comes 'untin' for Soapy, as pleased as a dog wi' two tails, an' smilin' as glad as if 'e'd just converted the Kaiser; an' 'e lugs out a big Bible 'e'd bought in a village we'd just passed through, an' writes Soapy's name on the fly-leaf an' presents it to 'im, and tells 'im 'e'll come an' 'ave a chat any time 'e's near the Battery. The Bible was none o' your fiddlin' pocket things, but a good substantial one, wi' pitchers o' Moses in the Bulrushes an' Abraham scarifyin' 'is son, an' such like. An' the leaves was that thick that Soapy might as well 'ave smoked brown paper or the *Pettit Journal*. But that wasn't the worst of it. Soapy checked it over the first 'edge soon as the padre 'ad gone, but next day the padre rolls up and tells Soapy a Sapper 'ad picked it up and brought it to 'im—'im 'avin' signed 'is name an' rank after 'Presented by —' on the fly-leaf. An' 'o' warnin' Soapy to be more careful, and 'elps 'im stow it in 'is 'armour sack, where it took up most the room an' weighed a ton, an' left Soapy to distribute 'is bully beef an' biscuits an' 'cheese an' spare socks and cetera in all the pockets 'e 'ad. An' ever then poor Soapy wasn't finished, for every time the padre got a chance 'e'd 'op round an' 'ave a chat, as 'e called it, wi' Soapy, the chat being a cross-examination worse'n a Court-Martial on what chapter Soapy 'ad been readin', an' fagin' explanations of same. Soapy was drove at last to remain a chapter, so 'e could make out 'e savvied somethink o' it."

The Gunner tapped out his pipe on the heel of his hand and began to refill it.

"If you'll believe me," he said, "that padre got poor Soapy pinned down so he was readin' near a chapter a day—which shows the 'orrible results that can come o' a little bit o' simple deception."—*Westminster Gazette*.

Rev. Dr. Trelawney-Ross told the Canterbury House of Convocation the other day that appeals for sandbags and cigarettes were infinitely better responded to than appeals for intercessory prayer. We are pleased to hear it. The existence of so much common sense is a harbinger of good.

Poor old Mother Church has fallen on evil days. There is a caterpillar plague in the home counties, and lime-water is being used as a preventive instead of holy water. Evidently Christians are no longer as green as the caterpillars.

What a propensity pious people have for seeing what they wish to see. Here is the *Christian Life* saying, "One noticeable effect of the War has been the silencing of the carping spirit which for so long has been exercised upon the Holy Scriptures." We fear the pious editor does not buy the *Freethinker* regularly.

Acid Drops.

The German Baptist Churches have affirmed their conviction that they can assist the German cause with "a clear conscience," and that "the wonderful help of God" strengthens them in their conviction. The English Churches are precisely the same thing, with the substitution of "British" for "German." That is part of the beauty of the Christian faith. On one side of a political boundary it proves one thing; on the other side it proves the reverse. Every Christian, no matter what he believes or does, knows that God is with him. And the stupidity of the general public is such that the vast majority fail to realize that there is in this the most complete demonstration of the utter uselessness of the Christian faith.

As we suspected, the clergy are not losing an opportunity of using the Mons "miracle," despite its complete exposure. Bishop Welldon is the last one to parade the angelic vision. He admitted that it was impossible to say the story had been "proved by sufficient testimony," but failed to point out that the whole thing was a deliberate invention, and that the author of it is well known. Evidently Bishop Welldon feels that the time is not quite ripe to claim the story as one of authenticated fact, but we feel that the time is coming. And he concluded his sermon by telling his hearers that they need not of necessity believe in this "angelic visitation," but they should cherish a faith in the reality of a spiritual world. Quite so; good Christians are at liberty to disbelieve this story so long as they accept it as truthful enough to support a belief which appeals to this world for evidence.

The *Church Times* also returns to the Mons story which it says "has received widespread credence and aroused widespread interest." The writer says that the story is so definite in detail that "it is scepticism alone mad to question it," and "we are bound to believe that some strange, supernatural happening did take place." The only thing that seems to cast doubt on the story is that the angels were said to have been seen "by all the soldiers." The writer of the article thinks is unusual, because, in other instances, the angel is seen by only one or two, and the others believe it on hearsay. In the end, he says that better evidence may be forthcoming. If it is, we will believe it, if not, it may illustrate the growth of

As usual, the essential points are overlooked. We have evidence that all the soldiers saw the angels. We have only the word of one or two that they saw them. We have not even their word. All we have are the statements of a couple of clergymen that have received, and have seen, letters from one or two people describing the incident. They have been challenged to produce this evidence, and have not done so. And it is no great assumption to say they cannot do so. In the course of a couple of columns the *Church Times* writer never once refers to the humiliating fact that Mr. Arthur Machen was the first to write about the angelic vision. He wrote about it last September—not as an item of news, but, as he says, as a piece of pure invention. That blows the whole story to the air. We know it is untrue. We also know that some clergymen deliberately invented "evidence"—months ago—to support the legend. It is a sheer clerical fabrication. And the claim to possess evidence is nothing more nor less than a falsehood.

Although Providence does all things well, as the clergy are always assuring us, the plague of summer flies has aroused the wrath of Sir Frederick Treves, the world-famous surgeon, who urges that the fly-peril is a very real one, as these convey disease. The trouble is that fly-papers are as numerous as the flies bring their relatives and friends to the decorations.

What Secularists these Christians are! Here is the Young Men's Christian Association continually appealing to the public for gramophones, records, games, books, magazines, and other articles, for use in the military huts in the trenches. Presumably, Providence only deals with heavenly matters, and will supply a suppliant with a new "spirit," but not a new shirt.

A weekly newspaper informs us that Captain John Jacob of the 1st Life Guards, "must be exceedingly well pleased with himself," for his father has made him a gift of £1,400,000. We agree. Especially when we recall the fact that "God" had not where to lay his head, and was obliged to pay for thirty shillings.

Alderman Senior, one of the best-known men in Sheffield, died recently at the age of seventy-seven. In early life, the papers inform us, he started work at making nails for two-pence a day. What a chance the journalists lost by not being present when Omnipotence was nailed to two pieces of wood with three tenpenny nails.

Referring to the late Mr. Swinburne's lyrical poems, the *Westminster Gazette* praises his love of England and Italy in *Songs Before Sunrise*. They deserve the praise, but Swinburne was more than a Radical and more than a Republican. He loved Freethought, called himself a Freethinker, and what is more, called Shakespeare a Freethinker. It is astonishing how the press in England quite overlook the Freethought of one of the finest of modern English poets. Perhaps they get worn out before they reach that aspect of his genius, or, perhaps, they know better and would say so, if their proprietors would let them. For who can offend his proprietor and live?

The Archbishop of Canterbury says that England has only one chance—"a chain of prayer from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m." Very well then! He knows what he has to do, and, for our part, we like to see a man laboring in his own profession. If there are any slackers, we will undertake to get the job put through at a quarter of the Archbishop's salary. England may, therefore, consider herself saved.

An exquisite misprint in the *London County Council Gazette* refers to the National Association for the Prevention of Infant *Mortality*. The phrase might be applied to a church which teaches children that such stories as that of Jonah and the Whale are "the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

The Anti Meat-Eating crusade in the press reminds us of Cobbett's sarcastic account of an earlier effort to interfere with flesh-eating. St. Augustine, he says, complained to the Pope that the English had so great a fondness for meat that they would not observe fast-days. The Pope replied, "Keep them in church, even if they kill their oxen in the churchyards. Let them make shambles of the churches rather than let the Devil get their souls."

Scottish Members of Parliament, of an economical turn of mind, have protested against the publication of expensive Blue Books. Perhaps they remember that the Bible, one of the bluest books in the world, can be obtained for the price of a cigar.

"The man who goes about diffusing an atmosphere of depression is doing the Devil's work." This piece of wisdom comes from Canon Masterman. It is rough on the parsons who preach hell.

Dr. Campbell Morgan admits that what he calls "surface appearances" justify the belief in the total failure of the Christian religion. Of course, he asserts that Christ has triumphed in the world, "all surface appearances notwithstanding." "The victory is always with God," he positively declares. Is it, though? Dr. Morgan says: "Put our conceptions of life to-day by the side of the conceptions of life under Roman rule when Jesus was born." We obey that injunction with pleasure, though the reverend gentleman himself dare not do so. When Jesus is supposed to have been born, the emperor of Rome was Augustus, who ruled from 27 B.C. to A.D. 14. Now, even so bigoted an historian as the late Dean Merivale admits that the "Augustan Age" was always looked back upon by the Romans as "the most prosperous and the most distinguished in their annals," and that in modern times any specially virtuous epoch is called the Augustan Age of the country concerned, such as the reign of Louis XIV., the Augustan Age of France, and the reign of Anne that of England. But for the true historical perspective we must consult, not biased writers like Merivale and Fairbairn, but scientific historians like Gibbon, Emile Reich, and Dill, who only seek for truth, and who, when they find it, are neither afraid nor ashamed to utter it in its unembellished form. We would exhort Dr. Campbell Morgan to break himself from the bad habit of exalting his own religion at the expense of unjustly belittling all others, and remind him that so stern and rigid an old moralist as Tacitus saw much to admire in the state of society under Augustus.

Of course, the popular oracle of Westminster Chapel is above being guided in forming his judgments by such mean things as historical facts. He has a Scriptural thesis to defend, and he champions it without paying the least attention to its actual relation to the truth of life. On the occasion under consideration the thesis was this: "Greater is he

that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John iv. 4). The meaning is that God is greater than the Devil, and must prevail. True it is, Dr. Morgan concedes, that the forces of evil appear to have the upper hand; in the world at large they seem to be all-powerful; even at the present moment they give one the impression of being on the eve of winning the battle; but this preacher assures us that the word of the Lord abideth for ever, and is true at every moment of time. What about the facts? we anxiously inquire, and he confidently answers: "You do not know the real facts; for these you must patiently dig until you get through the thick surface-crust of appearances. I candidly admit that on the surface the Christian world is just now waging a diabolical War, but if you penetrate to its central deeps you shall find that a great peace, the sweet peace of the God of love, reigns supreme." What can you do with a man who is simpleton enough to rave like that? The mischief is that, because of his oratorical gifts, he has gained the ears of certain unthinking sections of the public, by which his every word is taken as finally authoritative.

An American ethical lecturer and ex-evangelist has become "converted" to Christianity, and has petitioned to be received back into the Presbyterian Church "under the most rigid construction of the orthodox creed." We are indebted to the *Christian World* for the information that "the man who once held great audiences hanging quite breathless on his electrifying preaching from the pulpit, found it impossible on the ethical lecture platform to get more than transient heed from occasional groups of dilettantes." It almost looks as though the writer of the above was trying to give the reason for Dr. Fay Mills's return to Christianity.

The Archbishop of Canterbury suggests that, as a counterblast to the German "Gott Strafe England," we use such an expression as "God bless our King and Country and defend the right." Curses and blessings, in these circumstances, are equally childish, but the picture of grown-up men and women walking about and solemnly ejaculating such rubbish as this would be enough to make a horse laugh. On the whole, we are constrained to expect more good from a genuine, whole-souled curse, than from pious cant of the kind recommended by the Archbishop.

Another suggestion of the Archbishop's was the enrolment of a body of women who would keep up a chain of prayer from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. This was probably intended as a reply to the North German Lutheran Churches, who recently sent a message to the Kaiser asserting that the German nation was sure of victory because it was before all else a praying nation.

In a recent volume of essays there is an amusing account of the side-paths of debate. "Once the hounds of argument are started on a false scent, it is very difficult to whip them off; they soon disappear into another country; so that a conversation that began with an inquiry whether angels are male or female may easily end in an embittered dispute on the relative values of Stilton and Cheddar cheese."

It is said to be difficult to serve both God and Mammon, but the experiment is often tried. In a recent issue of the *Wendover Parish Magazine* the following touching words appear: "We are certain of a much increased circulation, and as a consequence, the magazine will be a still better vehicle for advertising." The tone is familiar in Fleet-street, where so many gentlemen of plastic principles write for the edification of Christian readers of halfpenny papers.

In a police-court case at Bradford it was stated that two men swindled 60,000 people by means of bogus bargains in advertisements. The clergy, who have hounded millions of people with bogus relics, will not think much of this exploit.

The Bishop of London is anxious to arrange a conference between some of the clergy and the War Office in order to arrange for a better supply of chaplains. The Army, he said, is just a huge diocese without a bishop. So far as we can gather, the men seem to bear the lack of chaplains with great fortitude. It is the Bishop of London who laments their scarcity. With all his folly, he has a keen sense where his own professional interests are concerned. We suggest that if more chaplains go, they should go without demanding salaries from the military authorities.

"Woe unto you rich!" says the New Testament. Canon Fisher, of Hemel Hempstead, who recently died and left £22,000, Rev. H. Daman, of Chelsea, also left £31,000,

and Dr. Moorhouse, Bishop of Melbourne, who left £54,000, appear to have borne up under the curse with remarkable fortitude. Their Christian fortitude would have enabled them to bear double the load without complaint.

The Rev. J. H. Jowett, being the pastor of one of the richest churches in the world, enjoys the privilege of being a cosmopolitan, for the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, being so exceedingly wealthy, makes it possible for him to spend several months in each year holiday-making in Great Britain. He is here now, and has spoken and written about the War. True to his profession, he contented himself with urging his hearers and readers to betake themselves to their knees. "Prayer," he says, "is a minister of the open road, and prayer is a minister of reception. When we cease to pray the open highway is blocked and closed. The waiting supplies cannot reach us." Face to face with the grim facts, how terribly unreal the following utterance sounds:—

"The big duty daunts us; the strong enemy affrights us. We become faint and the battle goes against us. And all the time the resource which would meet our necessity is awaiting our honest call. Let us pray without ceasing. Let us keep the roads open, and our gracious God will see to the transports."

How amazingly pat it all is! If we win, it will be in answer to prayer; if we lose, it will be because we do not pray in faith. This may be superstition gone mad, but it is at least consistent.

The Wesleyan Conference is busy with the task of counting the number of Wesleyan disciples of the Prince of Peace who have joined the Army for the purpose of killing as many as they can of their brother disciples on the German side; and the Conference is proud to record the fact that of the 1,115 Wesleyan Methodist officers and 79,583 soldiers who were in the Army on March 31 last, 600 have died either in battle or from wounds. How efficiently these Christians love one another!

As editor of the *British Weekly*, Sir William Robertson Nicoll is playing the game of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in a most amusing if not tragic fashion. Some weeks he is full of faith in God and the certain triumph of right over might. *We are on the side of right*, he says, and if we ask him fervently and persistently enough God will certainly give us the victory. Sometimes, for several weeks running, his one subject is the efficacy of believing prayer, and his insistent exhortation, "Brethren, trust in God, and pray without ceasing." This was specially the case during the earlier stages of the War. But as the months passed without any definite manifestation of Divine intervention on behalf of the Allies, this reverend knight began to dwell more and more upon the necessity of our being more efficiently equipped. He almost went to the length of advocating compulsory enlistment, and he has, on several occasions, now positively declared that unless we provide an unlimited supply of munitions, we shall surely be beaten, in spite of our trust in God and our multitudinous prayers.

Sir William is an ordained minister of the Christian Gospel, and, as such, is entitled to insist upon the Christian duty of complete reliance upon the Divine assistance so repeatedly promised in the Bible to those who believe and ask for it; but he has no moral right, at the same time, to join the Lord Northcliffe group of politicians and make himself ridiculous as a champion of physical force. Let him stick to his clerical last, or let him boldly confess that his faith upon shells, shells, and ever more shells. Dr. Jekyll we may respect, but for Dr. Jekyll masquerading as Mr. Hyde we have nothing but contempt, however much he may amuse us.

Whenever the reign of peace comes on earth, says Dr. Henley Henson, it will "be justly described as the effect of Christianity." We have no doubt that Christian preachers will so describe it, but the accuracy of the description is quite another matter. In view of the present state of Christendom, we feel that the Dean of Durham deserves a really good-sized biscuit.

The religious mind moves very slowly. A daily paper says "it is significant that in the twelfth month of the War, the vocation should be seeking to determine the right attitude of the Church towards the conflict." This recalls Ingersoll's *bon-mot* that it took the Christian Church many centuries to decide whether a man could worship "God," standing by the side of his own wife rather than by the side of a gentleman he had never been introduced to.

To Correspondents.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1915.—Received from March 15 : Previously acknowledged, £98 16s. 7d. Received since :— John Grange, £2 2s. ; M. and E. G., £1 ; T. Griffiths, £1 ; H. Organ, 3s.

G. MARGOTSON.—Pleased to receive the congratulations of so old a friend of the Freethought cause as yourself.

M. MATHIAS.—MS. to hand, but we are sorry that the demand on our space prevents our making use of your communication for some weeks.

E. L.—We are not so sanguine that there will be so wonderful a change after the War. This would imply the presence of one or more commanding personalities in the social field, or a marked—almost miraculous—increase in the intelligence of the community. And we see no evidence in favor of either conclusion.

A. SMITH.—Thanks, but hardly suitable for another article on the subject at present.

G. G. (S. Africa).—We are not surprised. Foolishness is universal, and the notion of boycotting music "made in Germany," when not a single German gains anything from it, almost reaches the limit.

E. EVERTZ.—We are pleased to see so much plain speaking in your paper you are good enough to send us. It all has a good effect in broadening people's outlook on life, and anything which does that makes ultimately for Freethought.

H. HARRISON.—A sense of humor is a glorious possession, and if you can only cultivate that, it may help you to bear with a few things that appear to trouble you over-much at present. And a smile and a laugh need not stand in the way of your having a real interest in serious affairs. On the contrary, they will help you to grapple with them more effectively. It is only the superficial who think a sense of humor—and its consequences—incompatible with seriousness of purpose.

E. HARRISON.—We fancy Winwood Reade's *Martyrdom of Man* is out of print, but it should not be difficult to procure a second-hand copy. His books on Africa are rather scarce, but are of great merit. His work as an explorer has been systematically ignored owing to his Freethought opinions.

A. GIMSON.—In subscribing to the President's Honorarium Fund through Mr. Foote personally, writes: "I am more than glad to hear of the improvement to your health, and hope that your journey towards a complete recovery of strength may be unobstructed and not slow."

J. GRANGE.—Sending his annual subscription through the acting Editor, writes to Mr. Foote himself: "You must get well, for during the War we shall need your matchless pen to indicate the lessons it has to teach. Your recent 'Personals' tell me that you are getting back to health."

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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.

Communications for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 61 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

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

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

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Personal.

An American once said that the English climate was the best in the world. It was full of variety, for it was never too hot or too cold, and in the course of a year a man must be fastidious if he could not find something to complain of. During my late convalescence I have felt that to be one of the truest utterances that ever came from the lips of man. We had some rare weather about the end of June. On the 24th of that month—the month of flowers and children, and which the poets have never tired of eulogizing (the scoundrels, for they must know better!)—I was sitting writing before a respectable fire, when I was transferred in some degree to the Arctic regions. A little after the sight of a fire was extinguished, but we had no fire then except in the chimney, where I had no call to go, so I may venture to say that my readers had no cause for "sick-

ening" on account of my writing on that occasion. Since then the weather has been as varied as Francis the First of France (I think it was he) said woman was—the wicked man! I find myself in my weakness very much puzzled by the problem of what to do by way of movement and exercise. At first I started with carriage drives. Of course, I got the air, but the jolting and jumping on Essex roads were too much for me. They were too great a strain on my returning strength. Then I was recommended to try a bath-chair. A bath-chair! A thing I had always associated with invalids hanging over the grave at Brighton and Hastings. It seemed to me that it was getting near second childhood and a perambulator. I might as well pass up my number at once, and sing my *Nunc Dimittis*, but discretion and the doctor's advice made me hesitate. After all, the horse-carriages had half killed me; perhaps the poor bath-chair might be my salvation. So I tried it, and found it a very nice and agreeable form of locomotion. The attendant is an old stalwart. His herculean back is worthy of a sturdier generation, but I have abolished all his hills by going round about, and letting him take plenty of rest, which I don't dislike myself. He does not affect lemonade, ginger-beer, or other Lloyd-Georgian beverages, but he prefers some more moving drink, such as was doubtless indulged in at the historic meeting, which is called the "Last Supper." I should not be surprised if he is an old soldier. Anyhow, he has lost a son "at the Front," and I pity him for that. * * *

When I was a little boy and went to Sunday-school as well as day-school, I came across the Old Testament Apocrypha. It was not printed separately from the canonical Old Testament, but was printed with them, and there was no intimation that any of them were less or more canonical than the rest. As a matter of fact, indeed, canonical simply means authoritatively selected by the Church, and apocryphal means rejected by the Church. Now, there were some things in the Canonical Scriptures that were rather blue, and some as purple as violets without their perfume, and I knew them. Trust a boy for doing that! But imagine our delight when a new consignment of Bibles arrived, and were dealt out to us youngsters without proper examination. We revelled in them, but our delight was brief, for the mistake was found out and Old Testaments without the Apocryphal books were served out to us the next week. You can still buy the Apocrypha either by itself or with the Canonical books, but, as I do not keep a Christian bookshop, I will say with Shylock, "We will proceed no farther in this business." * * *

Now, the friend with whom I was talking the other day, asked me whether the Apocrypha was as well translated and with as many merits of style as the Old Testament, and do we owe it to the same translators? The answer to this question is Yes and No; but I have not space to enter into details here. I will confine myself to the single question. I will not fill this part of the paper with quotations, but give one passage from the book called the Wisdom of Solomon (chap. xviii., verses 14-16):—

"For while all things were in quiet silence, and that night was in the midst of her swift course, Thine Almighty word leaped down from heaven out of thy royal throne, as a fierce man of war into the midst of a land of destruction, and brought thine unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up filled all things with death."

The man who thinks that he or anyone else could beat that is—well, to put it politely—mistaken. I myself could waste tons of rhetoric upon him, but I will leave him to his own literary conscience—if he has one. For it is not every man who can write, nor every man who can read another's writing. * * *

I regret to hear of the death of Professor Beesly, one of the most distinguished of English Positivists.

He has not been before the public of late years, but he rendered a good deal of service to the working classes in the days of their outlawry. I remember him at many of Bradlaugh's constitutional meetings, where he was not ashamed to be seen and heard. This is to me the most conspicuous thing about him. In common with Herbert Spencer, Professor Tyndall, and a host of other men of light and leading, he signed the memorial against my imprisonment for "blasphemy" in 1883. It was a brave act, considering the state of English society at that time, and I beg to place my laurel-leaf upon his grave, and I rejoice that a younger Beesly follows, as may be, in his father's footsteps. * * *

Professor Beesly was present at the funeral of George Odger, one of the earliest and most remarkable working-class leaders, who received an eloquent tribute at the graveside from the Positivist professor. George Odger was a personal friend of mine, and some day or other I will say more about him. We had many a chat together, and I formed a very high opinion of his natural abilities. So, by the way, did John Stuart Mill, who sent him ten pounds towards his election fund in South London—as he also sent another ten pounds towards Charles Bradlaugh's election fund at Northampton. Three cheers for John Stuart Mill!!! What man of his eminence would dare to do such a thing to-day? * * *

With regard to my health, which a good many people seem interested in, I may say that it is still improving in a general way, but the cold and changeable weather has not been conducive to the more rapid recovery which I was expecting. There seems nothing now the matter with me except the dreadful feeling of weakness which sometimes comes over me. How long it takes for the return of one's strength after these nervous breakdowns! My step is firm; my mind is clear; and I certainly intend to visit London before General French writes his last despatch and the Kaiser has disposed of his last iron cross.

G. W. FOOTE.

The Bowman Case.

I AM just back from the Appeal Court, and have but time for a word or two on this matter before closing the present issue of the paper. The appeal against the decision of Mr. Justice Joyce came on for hearing to-day (July 18) before the Master of the Rolls and Justices Warrington and Pickford. The whole of the afternoon had been taken up by a speech from Mr. Cave, K.C., M.P., in support of the appeal, which remained unfinished at the time the court rose. The case will be resumed and, I hope, concluded to-morrow. It would be unwise to say too much when the result is so near, but I feel that I may say with confidence that the outlook is quite satisfactory. The law is proverbially uncertain, but in this case the Memorandum of Association of the Secular Society, Limited, is the rock against which all opposition seems fated to break itself.

Next week I hope to write on the subject at greater length. Meantime, as I haven't yet acquired the art of being in two places at once, and the convenience in the Law Courts for editing is only of a limited character, some letters must await reply until next week.

C. COHEN.

Despite the protests of the clergy that the War helps religion, there are little rifts within the lute. One of the recruiting posters displays a parody of a Bible text, "It is more blessed to go than be pushed." There's piety—and pushfulness!

Dr. Gore, Bishop of Oxford, says that Individualism is rampant in the Church, and he asks his colleagues to repent. His lordship will not find many Socialists among the rich episcopal followers of the poor Carpenter of Nazareth.

Science and the Bible.—VII.

(Continued from p. 444.)

"We should never get frightened at the onward march of science, seeing that we may be sure that it will only lead to the discovery of incomparably beautiful things. Let us leave vulgar natures to exclaim with Micah, when they had taken away his idols, 'Ye have taken away my gods.' . . . As for us, when the temple topples down, instead of weeping at its ruins, let us think of the temples which, more magnificent and vast, will arise in the future, until the day when the ever shattering their narrow walls, thought will only have one temple, the roof of which will be the sky. Hence science must pursue its road without minding with whom it comes in collision. Let others get out of the way. It appears to raise objections against received dogmas, not for science but the received dogmas to be on the defence, and to reply to the objections. Science should behave as if the world were free from preconceived opinions, and heed the difficulties it starts. Let the theologians come to an arrangement with one another to come to an agreement with science."—ERNEST RENAN, *The Future of Science* (pp. 87-88).

THE *Essays and Reviews* and Colenso's work on the Pentateuch had shown that the enemy had effected an entrance into the very Church itself. Some of its highest officials were infected with heresy, and others were suspected—not without reason, as we now know; and the foes of the Church were now of its own household.

The scientific enemy outside also began to abandon the humbly apologetic attitude which had hitherto characterised its efforts for greater freedom. Darwin and Spencer had appeared, and their magnificent speculations had been expounded and popularised by Huxley, Tyndall, and Clifford—that brilliant secular Trinity—to say nothing of Buchner, who preached open Atheism.

We pause here to remark that it is an amazing thing to us that Buchner's *Force and Matter*, the finest work on evolutionary Atheism ever written, should have been allowed to fall out of print for so many years—twenty-five, at least. The Secular Society has never possessed the means to publish it at a popular price, but those that have—publish the *Origin of Species*, a larger work, at sixpence, one that few working men are capable of appreciating—are apparently intimidated by the torrent of abuse which was poured out on Buchner's work, and are too eminently respectable to be connected with anything so low and vulgar as downright Atheism.

We have dealt at some length with the period covered by Huxley, Tyndall, and Clifford, and it is not necessary to go over the ground again. The claims of science were definitely declared by Professor Tyndall in his famous Belfast Address in 1871 as follows:—

"The impregnable position of science may be described in a few words. We claim, and we shall maintain from theology, the entire domain of cosmological theory. All schemes and systems which thus infringe upon the domain of science must, in so far as they do, submit to its control, and relinquish all thought of controlling it. Acting otherwise proved disastrous in the past, and it is simply fatuous to-day."†

That is, we shall wrest from theology—which is the science of God, or religion—"the entire domain of cosmological theory"; which means the science of the world or universe, the system of creation, which an attempted explanation is given in the chapters of Genesis. Thus, once for all, the clerics with their holy book, were warned off the grounds of science.

It was also in 1871 that a most important and startling discovery was made. Mr. George Smith, while studying the Assyrian tablets at the British Museum, came across some fragments of the Babylonian legends of the creation. Two years earlier the same scholar had discovered the Chaldean account of the Deluge, which, says Mr. St. Chad Boncompagni

* Articles on "Modern Materialism" in these columns dated 1912.

† J. Tyndall, "The Belfast Address," *Fragments of Science* (1876), p. 530.

of the British Museum, constituted "an epoch-making event. By the orthodox it was hailed as a most startling confirmation of the Hebrew record, and fully discounted as such." With "astonishing rapidity," says the same writer,—

"works began to appear, pointing out the astonishing confirmations of the Hebrew records which were now to be found in the Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions. The Biblical element was always predominant, and the referendum of all outside material. The Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch was enunciated as a proved fact, and therefore all the Assyrian and Babylonian material was merely of a confirmatory nature—no suggestion that it was rather of the nature of original would be entertained."

the rise of the Higher Criticism of the Bible managed all this. He proceeds:—

"Just as it is now clearly demonstrated that the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch is no longer tenable, so also is it shown that the literature of Babylon, of which that of Assyria was but a later edition, has an antiquity exceeding, by more than a thousand years, that of the Mosaic age."*

The Creation tablets came from the royal library Assurbanipal, at Nineveh, and were written about 600 years before Christ, by order of the king, and preserved in the library. These tablets are copies of the records preserved in Babylonian libraries. This statement made scholars anxious for the time when the spade of the explorer should bring to light these ancient records—

"The desire has been met, and we have now both duplicates and additional fragments from the libraries of both Borsippa and Sippara (Sepharvaim), as well as portions of a still older legend from the ancient priest-city of Kutha."†

The story of the recovery and decipherment of these ancient records is one of the most dramatic in the annals of history. There they lay, unknown and unsuspected, buried for millenniums, while empires rose and fell, to be at last resurrected by the spade of an explorer to confront the record of Genesis, to prove that, instead of it being delivered to Moses by the Jewish God, as falsely claimed by Jews and Christians, they really originated in those Babylonian legends about the vileness of which Christians have preached so long and so eloquently.

The question of the truth and inspiration of the Bible now be regarded as definitely settled for all uneducated people; and not only for the educated and uneducated, for Charles Bradlaugh and Mr. G. W. Foote enlightening great audiences of working men all over the country. The present writer gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness for enlightenment to the finest advocates any cause ever produced.

Let eleven years later (in 1885) the enlightened world was astonished and bewildered by the appearance of Mr. Gladstone—regarded by most people as the leading commoner of England—affirming his belief in the Bible as the inspired work of God, of its infallibility from a scientific point of view, and solemnly reproving Dr. Reville—in our leading review, *The Nineteenth Century*—in his most pompous and bombastic style, for classing it with other ancient legends, and regarding it as merely "a venerable monument."

Professor Huxley, who thought the time had passed for wearing the humble and apologetic attitude regarded adopted by the majority of scientists with regard to theology, immediately attacked Mr. Gladstone's defence of the Bible in the next number of the same review.

Mr. Gladstone laid it down that "the question is not here of a lofty poem, or a skilfully constructed narrative; it is whether [the facts of] natural science tally out against what we have fondly believed to be His word, and tell another tale."

According to Mr. Gladstone's interpretation of Genesis,—

"There is a grand fourfold division, set forth in an orderly succession of times as follows: On the fifth day,

1. The water-population;
 2. The air-population;
- and, on the sixth day,
3. The land-population of animals;
 4. The land-population consummated by man.

Now, this same fourfold order is understood to have been so affirmed in our time by natural science, that it may be taken as a demonstrated conclusion and established fact."

"Understood?" asked Huxley. "By whom?" For, he declares,—

"If I know anything at all about the results attained by the natural science of our time, it is 'a demonstrated conclusion and established fact' that the 'fourfold order' given by Mr. Gladstone is not that in which the evidence at our disposal tends to show that the water, air, and land-populations of the globe have made their appearance."

And as for the names of Cuvier, Sir John Herschel, and Dr. Whewell—the authorities cited by Mr. Gladstone to support his case—Huxley quietly remarks that the only relevant authority was Cuvier, but that he had been dead half a century, and that since his death "new worlds of ancient life have been discovered," and that those who had most faithfully carried on his work have done the most to overthrow the grounds for his belief in tradition; and he further remarks that if Mr. Gladstone's latest information is derived from Cuvier, "I can understand the position he has taken up; if he has ever opened a respectable modern manual of palæontology, or geology, I cannot. For the facts which demolish his whole argument are of the commonest notoriety." Professor Huxley goes on to show that no such "fourfold division" and "orderly succession" exist, and all the evidence we possess goes to prove that the population of the water, air, and land did not follow each other in the order given by Mr. Gladstone.

After minutely comparing Mr. Gladstone's interpretation of Genesis with the geological facts, Professor Huxley concludes that "Mr. Gladstone has been utterly misled in supposing that his interpretation of Genesis receives any support from natural science." But, he observes,—

"There must be some position from which the reconcilers of science and Genesis will not retreat, some central idea the maintenance of which is vital and its refutation fatal. Even if they now allow that the words 'the evening and the morning' have not the least reference to a natural day, but mean a period of any number of millions of years that may be necessary; even if they are driven to admit that the word 'creation,' which so many millions of pious Jews and Christians have held, and still hold, to mean a sudden act of the Deity, signifies a process of gradual evolution of one species from another, extending through immeasurable time; even if they are willing to grant that the asserted coincidence of the order of Nature with the 'fourfold order' ascribed to Genesis is an obvious error instead of an established truth; they are surely prepared to make a last stand upon the conception which underlies the whole, and which constitutes the essence of Mr. Gladstone's 'fourfold division, set forth in an orderly succession of times.' It is, that the animal species which compose the water-population, the air-population, and the land population respectively, originated during three distinct and successive periods of time, and only during those periods of time.

"This statement appears to me to be the interpretation of Genesis which Mr. Gladstone supports, reduced to its simplest expression. 'Period of time' is substituted for 'day'; 'originated' is substituted for 'created'; and 'any order required' for that adopted by Mr. Gladstone. It is necessary to make this proviso, for if 'day' may mean a few million years, and 'creation' may mean evolution, then it is obvious that the order (1) water-population, (2) air-population, (3) land-population, may also mean (1) water-population, (2) land-population, (3) air-population; and it would be unkind to bind down reconcilers to this detail when one has parted with so many others to oblige them.

"But even this sublimated essence of the pentateuchal doctrine (if it be such) remains as discordant with natural science as ever. It is not true that the

* W. St. Chad Boscawen, *The First of Empires* (1903), pp. 2, 3.
† W. St. Chad Boscawen, *The Bible and the Monuments* (1895), p. 29.

species composing any one of the three populations originated during any one of three successive periods of time, and not at any other of these."

Far from the geological evidence proving that there were four distinct periods of creation, or evolution, in which the water, air, and land-population appeared in succession, says Huxley, "all the evidence we possess goes to prove that they did not." The fossil remains of plant and animal life embedded in the strata of the earth prove that there has been a mixing of sea, land, and air-population, which flatly contradicts the "fourfold division." "Hundreds of thousands of animal species," says Huxley, "have come into existence and died out again throughout the æons of geological time," and—

"If the species of animals have all been separately created, then it follows that hundreds of thousands of acts of creative energy have occurred, at intervals, throughout the whole time recorded by the fossiliferous rocks; and, during the greater part of that time, the 'creation' of the members of the water, land, and air-populations must have gone on contemporaneously."*

(To be concluded.) W. MANN.

The Fourth Gospel.

NATHANAEL.

THE amount and character of the evidence which was deemed necessary to effect the conversion of an ordinary man in the time of John the Presbyter are exemplified in the first chapter of that presbyter's Gospel. According to that veracious account, John the Baptist pointed to Jesus, who was passing, and said "Behold the Lamb of God." Hearing this, one of the Baptist's disciples named Andrew, with another disciple unnamed, followed the person pointed out, and after staying with him that day, became a believer. This Andrew then went and found his brother Simon, and said to him "We have found the Messiah," and brought him to Jesus. The new Savior looked at the brother and said "Thou art Simon the son of Joanes: thou shalt be called Peter"—whereupon the second brother became a believer. On the day following, Jesus "findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me"—and Philip became a believer. This third disciple went and found Nathanael, "and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus from Nazareth." At first Nathanael was somewhat incredulous, so Philip invited him to "Come and see." The narrative then goes on:—

"Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus said unto him, Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the king of Israel. Jesus said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.....Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man" (John i. 43—51).

This is a new and original story, piously concocted by the pseudo-John himself—and it is a very silly one. Apparently, Nathanael as he drew near, heard Jesus say that he was "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile," and, accepting the statement as the simple truth, he asked "Whence knowest thou me?" To this question—how Jesus knew Nathanael's guileless disposition—that Savior replied that he had seen him, some time previously, under a fig tree—an answer which is no explanation whatever. Astonished at this display of unwisdom, the guileless one exclaimed "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God," etc., to which Jesus responded that Nathanael should see even greater evidence of his divine nature than that. But the added statement about "angels ascending and descending upon the Son of man" was untrue, as well as supremely ridiculous. Neither Nathanael,

nor any other person, ever saw that wonderful event though it was believed by the early Church to be near at hand. As regards angels "ascending and descending," the writer was probably thinking of Jacob's ladder (Gen. xxviii. 12), and applied the description to his Savior. The only importance attached to this incident is that it indicates one of the mental characteristics of the pseudo-John—the lack of common sense in making up stories relative to his Lord and Master. This fraudulent writer also tells us that Philip was a native of Bethsaida (John i. 44), that Nathanael was from Cana of Galilee (John xxi. 2), and that the disciple Thomas was "called Didymus"—matters that were unknown to the other three canonical evangelists. He also appears to have made Nathanael an apostle; for the guileless one is represented as present with the other apostles after the alleged Resurrection (John xxi. 2).

Having thus given his pseudo-Jesus four disciples, the writer next transports the five to Galilee, where we find them in the next chapter.

THE MARRIAGE FEAST AT CANA.

The writer of the Fourth Gospel commences his second chapter as follows:—

"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there: and Jesus also was bidden, and his disciples, to the marriage."

It was at this imaginary feast that Jesus is represented as performing his first miracle—the turning of water into wine—his mother and disciples being with him: but the traditional Synoptic Jesus was at this time just beginning his fasting in the wilderness of Judea, and had not yet chosen any disciples. In this story the pseudo-John says:—

"The mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have wine. And Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come."

The words in italics, employed on this occasion, are simply ridiculous. Coming from the mouth of Jesus they could refer only to his arrest or crucifixion. The expression "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" whatever may be said to be the meaning, was neither kind nor filial. The mother, according to the story, knew that wine was needed, and she represented as knowing that Jesus had the power to supply that need; for she said to the servant, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it." And Jesus did supply that need: it was for this purpose that pseudo-John made him a guest at a marriage feast. We are told that "there were six waterpots of stone set there.....containing two or three firkins apiece; these were also 'set there' in readiness for the miracle. All Jesus had to do was to tell the servants to fill them with water, and carry them in. The measure named in the Greek contained nine gallons and is correctly translated "firkin." Assuming that three of the waterpots held two firkins, and that the other three held three firkins, apiece, the six waterpots would contain 135 gallons or 540 quarts. Assuming that the guests reached the high top of the feast, fifty-four persons, the pseudo-John has provided for each guest during the remainder of the carousal a liberal allowance of ten quarts. In concluding his veracious account, the bibulous writer says: "At the beginning of his signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed on him." What a strange idea this fraudulent writer must have had of "glory."

PURGING THE TEMPLE.

Leaving Cana of Galilee, Jesus "went down to Capernaum, he and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and there they abode not many days. And the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem" (John ii. 12, 13). This brings us to the end of the first week's journey of the Jesus of the Synoptics.

Arrived at Jerusalem, the new Jesus proceeds to "purge" the temple of everything which the pseudo-John believed to be sold there. This event is placed by three Synoptics after the close of the ministry in Galilee, when Jesus entered Jerusalem riding upon

* Huxley, *Science and Hebrew Tradition*, pp. 156-7.

in a few days before his arrest and trial. The writer of the Fourth Gospel, however, evidently thought it would look better at the beginning, and accordingly. He has also attempted to make some improvement in the narrative, as may be seen by comparing the older story with the pseudo-John's new version of it:—

Mark xi. 15.—"And Jesus entered into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and them that bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold the doves."

John ii. 14—16.—"And Jesus found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: and he made a scourge of cords, and cast all out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen; and he poured out the changers' money, and overthrew their tables; and to them that sold doves, he said, Take these things hence."

The words in italics indicate the addition made to the narrative by the pseudo-John. The traffic here described, as we all know, was not carried on in the temple itself, but in the outer court where offerings were made. We also see that the inventive writer put to the Savior, who preached "Resist not evil," a defensive weapon—"a scourge of cords"—to be used where he thought necessary. Yet, as a simple matter of fact, there can be no doubt whatever that the so-called "purging of the temple" never really occurred. The writer of the original account did not mean that during the whole period in which Judea was governed by a Roman procurator (A.D. 10—66) a legion of soldiers was stationed in Jerusalem, their headquarters being the Tower of Antonia, close to the temple; also, that at the three principal feasts, when Jews and proselytes from all parts of the country came to Jerusalem, the soldiers were armed and posted on the watch in different parts of the city—the position being near the entrance to the temple—ready to put down any disturbance or even any kind of innovation. And such being the case, if any man attempted to do what Jesus is here said to have done, he would have been put to death upon the spot as an agitator or a revolutionary: his "scourge of cords" would also be evidence against him. Upon this point there can be no doubt what-

ever the writer of the Fourth Gospel no doubt believed that the "purging of the temple" was an historical event. But he knew, at the same time, that this event had happened more than a century before his time, and that nothing more was known than what was narrated in the primitive Gospel. However, in the name of the apostle John—he most, he thought, have known many details unrecorded—he felt himself at liberty to add anything which would think of which might redound to the praise and glory of the Christian Savior. We know that there were a large number of apocryphal writings—some of them forged in the names of apostles—in the writer's day, and that they were all fabricated by zealous Christians. It was in this spirit that the pseudo-John, in his zeal to add fresh converts to the Christian religion, piously excogitated the following

"The Jews said unto Jesus, What sign showest thou, seeing that thou doest these things. Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews said, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days?" (John ii. 18—21).

Here we have a sample of the low cunning and underhand ways of the writer of the Fourth Gospel. Jesus is asked to work some great miracle to show his authority for driving people out of the temple. Instead of doing so, he says that if the temple be destroyed, he would undertake to build it up again in three days. The Jews, quite naturally, took his statement literally, and showed by their reply that they did not believe his silly assertion. In this respect there is more than a mere quibble: the pseudo-Jesus has here uttered an unmitigated falsehood. The writer of the story appears to have

thought that he had absolved his Savior by saying "But he spake of the temple of his body." He has not: for his imaginary Jesus did not tell the Jews that he was *not* speaking of the temple, and he went away without giving any explanation. No straight-forward man, who had any regard for the truth, could have acted in this manner. The incident does not, of course, reflect on the Jesus of the Synoptics; it merely shows the shifty character of the writer of the Fourth Gospel. The idea of the human body being a "temple" was taken from one of the Epistles of Paul, which were all well known in the time of the pseudo-John.

ABRACADABRA.

Correspondence.

BUCHANAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In your issue dated June 27, Mr. M. Sanders inquired in which poem of Buchanan the lines quoted by Mr. Mangasarian in his article, "The Wooden God," appeared. So I transcribe, for his information, the source of the "wonderful lines."

SONGS OF EMPIRE.
Carmen Deific.
V.

If I were a God like you, and you were a man like me,
If from a throne omnipotent, I ruled all things that be,
Tidings of light and love I'd send as far as thought could fly,
And one great hymn of happiness should sound from sky to sky—
And on your brow my gentle hand should shed the saving dew,
If you were a man like me, and I were a God like you!

If I were a God like you, and you were a man like me,
And in the dark you prayed and wept, and I could hear and see,
The sorrow of your broken heart would darken all my day,
And never peace or pride were mine, till it was smiled away—
I'd clear my Heaven above your head till all was bright and blue,
If you were a man like me, and I were a God like you!

If I were a God like you, and you were a man like me, [knee;
Small need for those my might had made to bend the suppliant
I'd light no lamp in yonder Heaven to fade and disappear,
I'd break no promise to the Soul, yet keep it to the ear!
High as my heart I'd lift my child till all his dreams came true;
If you were a man like me, and I were a God like you!

E. B.

"THE ANGELIC GUARD."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I am surprised that Mr. Cohen should be incredulous concerning the angels who assisted our troops in Belgium, since there is material evidence which, properly interpreted, conclusively proves the truth of the story.

I allude to the so-called Russian soldiers who were seen by many passing through this country *en route* to the Front. These were really the angels referred to.

Mr. Cohen may ask, "But why were they not flying?"

In reply, I would refer him to the well-attested fact that a quantity of snow was shovelled out of the carriages in which these angels travelled. Now, what appeared to the unobservant to be snow, was in reality *feathers*. The angels were moulting; hence their mode of travel.

If Mr. Cohen does not accept this perfectly rational explanation, so much the worse for him hereafter.

WM. SKEATE.

A soldier's letter published in the *Star* says, pathetically, that the Germans "have lost their souls, but the religious nations like the Allies will overthrow this monster of Materialism." It would take a Bench of Bishops to decide if monsters have souls.

Here is a good war story, although it relates to the South African campaign. When the nation was expecting peace to be proclaimed, someone wired to Lord Kitchener's military secretary, "May we sing hymn 587 on Sunday?" referring to the hymn, "Peace, perfect peace." The reply came, "Better sing 269," which is "Christians, seek not yet repose."

A Ramsgate lifeboatman, who died recently, received a gold medal some years ago for rescue work in a storm lasting twenty-six hours. If poor old Captain Noah, who navigated the Ark, had been alive, he would have deserved a necklace of gold medals.

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.

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OUTDOOR.

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NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Finsbury Park): 11.15, W. Davidson, a Lecture. Parliament Hill: 3.15, L. B. Gallagher, a Lecture. Regent's Park: 3.15, W. Davidson, a Lecture.

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