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No one appears to think that intellectual cowardice is as disreputable as physical cowardice.

WILLIAM ROMAINE PATERSON.

The Wastage of War.

MUCH has been said lately about the wastage of war. Most of it is terribly true, all of it underrates rather than overrates the truth. For the waste of war is obvious. The loss of life, of money, of heroic endeavor; the destruction of homes and historic buildings; the wasting of land that should be bringing forth food. War is, indeed, wholly waste. It spends in bloodshed and destruction what has been made by industry during peace. It exploits for purposes of mutual slaughter qualities of character that have been fostered and developed by peaceful social life. It moves along lines of hatred rather than along lines of mutual esteem. It has only one good aspect, and that is a negative one. It may be inescapable. A community must defend its right to live its own life in its own way, much as one would defend one's home against the forceful intrusion of outsiders. In that respect war is justifiable; but the waste of it, and the horror of it remains all the same.

But I have in mind not the wastage of war that results in ruined buildings, dislocated trade, an inconceivable expenditure—for no one can realise what all these millions of money means, nor even the waste of human life, as such. All these aspects of wastefulness are serious enough, but there is a far more deadly waste that this War is bringing to pass.

For there is something about the present War that marks it as distinct from previous wars—certainly so far as this country is concerned. Of course, we are all aware that this War is larger than previous wars. But that would not of itself create a vital distinction. Had our Army been three times its present size, and if our population had been large enough to permit of its being raised in the ordinary way, the evil I have in mind would still have been averted. But our Army has not been raised in the usual way. The call for men has been such, the appeals to the manhood of the nation have been such, that the very large number of men who have enlisted has resulted in a phenomenon almost absent from previous wars. The quantitative difference has produced a qualitative one.

Let us bear in mind that in the British Army we have the finest body of men we have ever sent forth to war. I say that deliberately. The present British Army is not only greater in numbers, it is finer in quality than any previous army of ours has ever been. And in saying this I have in mind not merely physical fitness, but mental and moral fitness. In previous times the call of war has been mainly to the physically fit, and to those with a strong love of adventure and of a military career. It selected men of the type to which belonged the young officer cited the other day by Mr. Bottomley as having remarked that this War was a horrible war, but any war was better than no war at all. War is to this class a pastime, an adventure. One that carries its own risks, but which is none the less welcome on that account. And so long as war demands the services of men of this type

alone, it may be conducted with the minimum amount of evil to those engaged.

But the appeal of the present War has been on a different level. It has brought into the Army some of the best of the nation's brains and character. Thousands upon thousands have enlisted who hate militarism and all its works. The adventure which involves the killing of other human beings makes no appeal to them. They have no taste for military glory. One meets this type of person in khaki in the trams, or in the train, and elsewhere, and it is not difficult to discover their sentiments. They will not shrink from their duty when the time arrives, and they are not lacking in courage. Some of this type, known to me personally, have already won distinction on the field, and others lie in unnamed graves "somewhere in France." They are in the Army from a sheer sense of duty. For the first time in the history of this country war has captured, not only those who love it, or who have no objection to it, but also those who hate it. Military activity, because of the vastness of its operations, has captured a large proportion of the youthful thinkers of the nation. The very qualities that would have made them powerful forces for good in the life of the immediate future—the love of right, the keen sense of duty, the hatred of injustice, the desire to have done with the menace of the mailed fist—all these qualities have ensured their risking, and often losing, their lives in this horrible War. It is not a war of armies only; it is a war of nations, in which all that is most valuable to the nation is being sacrificed equally with that which is of a more negligible character.

Now let us consider what this represents, and its bearing on the question of human progress. In a rough-and-ready way, we talk of the *man* of the present being superior to the man of the past. In one sense, this is true; in another sense, it is radically false. As a mere individual, the man of to-day is not better than the man of, say, three thousand years ago. He is certainly not better physically, and there is no evidence that he is better mentally. If it had been possible to have preserved a thousand new-born babies of three thousand years ago, and have kept them in their extreme infancy till the year 1900, there is no reason whatever to expect that they would have shown any greater variations than the children who first saw the light in that year. There is nothing in our civilisation they could not have mastered, and they would have grown up in all respects similar to Europeans—save in respect to their purely physical heredity. It is not in virtue of any individual quality that the man of to-day is superior to the man of the past.

And yet the superiority is there. Whence comes it? Well, it lies in the simple fact of man's social heredity. Each child born into a modern society inherits all the knowledge, the stored-up experience, the literature, the inventions, that have accumulated between the present time and that of three thousand years ago. In other words, the status of an individual is determined by the social environment *plus* the capacity for acquisition. The modern man is greater much as the son of a wealthy individual is richer than the child of an agricultural laborer. Our superiority is a question of inheritance, of environmental influences.

Here, then, is the deadly fact that confronts us, and it represents the greatest waste of the War—at the side of which all other wastage shrinks into insignificance. A large number of those who are taking part in this War—the thinkers, the scientists, the men of letters, the artists, the thousands of educated *young* men filled with new ideas and fired with the notion of progress—represent an environmental influence of the most important description. Their value cannot be easily estimated, but neither can it be doubted. They represent precisely that portion of the community which makes for progress and genuine civilisation. And to whatever extent this class is weakened by the War, we shall have a weakening of the forces that make for a genuinely higher life. The tendency of war is always to eliminate the physically fit. The peculiarity of this War is that it so largely tends to eliminate the mentally fit likewise. And this means that the younger generation will grow up in an altogether poorer environment. Not merely poorer because of the financial drain that this War involves, but because we shall have sacrificed much that makes for a progressive life. Stupidity, and tyranny, and reaction will have fewer enemies to fear because of the many alert minds and courageous hearts that will be no longer with us when the War has come to an end.

I have a certain melancholy pleasure in seeing that this is at length being realised by some amongst us. I have dwelt on this aspect of the matter in these columns several times since the War commenced, and now I see that Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb have been dwelling upon the same point. They are afraid that the "servile State" is becoming a fact as an outcome of the War. There is much to justify the fear. When war is declared, many civil liberties are of necessity obliterated. War is a step backward in civilisation; it is an appeal to the brute against the man; and as we approach barbarism, we of necessity recede from civilisation. The sacrifice of some amount of freedom becomes first a duty, and later a habit. Reaction grows stronger as the individual forgoes his freedom of action, and every fresh sacrifice is made the ground for more. It is exactly what the student of social history would expect. You cannot have anything in this world without paying a price—not even war. And *this* War means not only the loss of thousand upon thousands of strong, healthy men; it means the loss of large numbers of those who represent the minds that might otherwise fashion the character of the rising generation. And the death of every such person means accession of strength to the forces of reaction.

C. COHEN.

The Sixth Sense.

THOSE of us who have hitherto believed that man is endowed with only five senses, are the victims of a vain delusion. To the five senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling, we are solemnly instructed to add another, a sixth, namely, the sense of sin. "David," says Luther, "has a sixth sense; the Psalmist has an inward and spiritual sense such as very few men have ever had." A peculiarity of this sixth sense is that it must be specially created, and that this special creation has always been confined to an extraordinarily small number of people. What the theologians declare is, that all men are sinful by nature; but that, unfortunately, only very few are aware of it. In the *British Weekly* for December 2, there appeared a remarkable discourse by the Rev-Principal Alexander Whyte, D.D., LL.D., of Edinburgh, on the seven advantages derivable from sinfulness. Expressed in ordinary language, the message of this sermon is, that Adam and Eve rendered their descendants a distinct service when they ate of the forbidden fruit and thereby fell from their first estate. Dr. Whyte tells us that "holy John Foxe, the martyrologist, was wont to testify that his sins, in a manner, had done him much more good than

his graces had done him." John Bunyan, also, "actually finds seven great advantages from the seven great abominations that are still lurking in his heart." Thus the entrance of sin and sinfulness into the world was a boon of the first magnitude. What a pity it would have been had our first parents been able to resist the temptation to disobey their Maker.

Principal Whyte entertains a shockingly bad opinion of his own heart and of the hearts of his neighbors. All who know him regard the reverend gentleman as one of the best and noblest men on earth to-day; but he condemns himself in the most violent terms at his command. His estimate of his neighbor is almost as uncomplimentary. He says:—

"There are people in this city, there are people even in this congregation, that your eyes cannot light on without your heart being that moment filled full of sin. You cannot meet certain men on the street, you cannot meet them even at the church door, you cannot pass their house or their office, or their shop, you cannot read their names in the newspapers without your sinfulness being again that moment set heart-breakingly before you. Your spiritual mind—for a spiritual mind it is—brings you to your knees before God, and concerning your neighbor, ten times a day. Yes; ten times and more. But, all the same, despair not. Much rather ten times every day bless God that it is so with you."

Here is a glorification of sin and sinfulness with a vengeance. By all means, then, let us keep our sin and sinfulness ever before us, as King David of old is said to have done. It is good for us to feel and confess that our hearts are full of envy and malice and hatred ten times every day and more.

It must be frankly conceded that, from a theological point of view, Dr. Whyte's teaching is perfectly true. The Christian Gospel is rooted in the doctrine of sin. Apart from the belief in sin it would be utterly meaningless. Consequently, the first duty of the pulpit is to create the sixth sense, and to encourage its exercise. Parents are urged in God's name to accustom their children, from the earliest age possible, to look upon themselves as lost sinners in need of a Savior. As a result of assiduous teaching in the house and the school, children take it for granted that they are sinners before they can have the least idea what sin means. The astonishing thing is, however, that while sin is spoken of as a fundamental fact in the true doctrine of man, it is yet admitted by Christian teachers that, in the absence of religious instruction, children would grow up without any sense of sin, or of accountability to a Supreme Being. Supernatural religion is a survival of the primal stupidity, and it survives only as the result of careful training prior to the advent of knowledge. The chief business of the ministers of religion, naturally, is to keep religion alive, and this they can hope to do only by getting it instilled into the minds of children before they acquire the art of thinking for themselves. Unless they are taught to believe that they are sinners while in a state of childish ignorance, they will never believe it at all. This is why the clergy dread, and so vigorously oppose, the introduction of any system of Secular Education. They know full well that their message possesses no value except in the eyes of those who have the sense of sin fairly well developed. The appeal of the Gospel is alone to sinners lost and ruined by the Fall, while to all others it is nothing but empty sound. The preacher's preliminary effort always is to *awaken* the sense of sin in his hearers. Until he has succeeded in doing this he is wholly powerless. At all revival meetings the initial aim is to convict, or rather reconvert, backsliders of sin. Until this has been accomplished, no success is possible. At present, the universal complaint is that, in spite of all religious instruction and evangelical preaching, the sense of sin is rapidly dying out both among young and old, and that, in consequence, preaching is now much harder and more hopeless work than ever it was before.

When a man really believes he is a guilty sinner in the sight of Holy God, he is marvellously humble and docile. Believing that, he can believe anything. He

can swallow the Bible whole and never feel queasy. Dr. Whyte rightly says:—

"Our sinfulness of heart has been well called 'The Grammar of the Gospel.' That is to say, the Gospel will never be read aright; it will never begin, even in the most elementary way, to be understood aright without a deep sense of sin. But, then, with a deep enough sense of sin, the deepest books in the Bible, and the deepest books outside the Bible, will all lie open in all their depths to that reader who has their right grammar revealed within himself."

Robert Burns lacked such a deep conviction of sin, with the result that many of the doctrines of the Church were foolishness unto him. "Again, any man's sinfulness enough and ever before him will make him and will keep him orthodox, positive, and uncompromising in his subscription to his Bible and to his Catechism." True enough; but it will also rob him of self-respect, self-reliance, self-control, and self-sufficiency, making him at once a hypocrite and a coward. What is the use of his being "positive and uncompromising in the Bible doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ, his Redeemer; in the Bible doctrine of the Divinity, Personality, and indwelling of the Holy Ghost, his Sanctifier; in the substitutionary and vicarious character of the Atonement," and so forth, when he has neither real knowledge of nor confidence in himself? A profound conviction of sin may make a man a highly orthodox believer, and it may help him to put on the garment of humility when he is on his knees in the imaginary presence of his God, but it also forces him to lead a double life, the one while in supposed communion with his hypothetical Heaven, and the other of an entirely different character, when in real contact daily with his fellow-beings; and the two lives continually contradict each other at almost every point. The religious life is dream-life, and is characterised by the delusion and hallucinations which always accompany dreams; but the earthly life is real life, and while it is being lived the dreams of the other life are but dim shadows.

Has Principal Whyte ever studied the origin and evolution of his sixth sense? Has he ever traced it back to the primitive sense of terror which savage man felt when he realised his utter helplessness against wild beasts, floods, and pestilences? Is he not aware that man's first Savior was the Spring, and that if Spring in any way miscarried, and was not followed by fruitful Summer, he had nothing to face but cruel death? Is the Principal ignorant of the fact that when the crops failed, primitive man attributed the failure to some pollution or unexpiated defilement in himself, simply because he had no knowledge of the laws upon which crops were dependent? Nothing is clearer than that the idea of salvation from sin owes its inception to perfectly natural phenomena which were falsely interpreted through ignorance. Is it not pre-eminently significant that all Savior-Gods are represented as having been born on the 25th of December, just at the turn of the year? On that date winter receives notice to quit, and the advent of the Savior practically assured.

Thus the sixth sense is purely artificial, and it is this that accounts for the tremendous difficulty experienced in cultivating it in the young, and in preventing it from completely disappearing in later life. If it were natural, it would share the fate of the five senses; but being unnatural, it has to be specially created by all sorts of contrivances, all of which are sometimes doomed to total collapse. There are hundreds of thousands in Christendom who are wholly untroubled by it. Not knowing God, they are free from any sense of sin and guilt in relation to him. Their indebtedness is alone to their fellow-beings. Both their virtues and their faults are exclusively social. They are but learners in the school of life, but they are learning by actually living. Their responsibility is to one another, not to a non-natural Being of whom nothing is known. Still, sin is the most valuable and essential asset of the Church, and naturally she will do her utmost to retain it as long as ever she can.

J. T. LLOYD.

The Voltaire of Persia.

"In Nature's infinite book of secrecy
A little I can read." —SHAKESPEARE.

"There is delight in singing, though none hear
Beside the singer, and there is delight
In praising, though the praiser sit alone
And see the praised far off him, far above."

—LANDOR.

"The appearance in a threepenny edition of Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam*, makes one regret the days when mischievous books were publicly burned by the common hangman." —*Daily Mail*.

FROM that dreamy East, whence come tales of houris and scented gardens, langorous dance and witching music, the Orient of luxuriance and barbaric splendor, Omar Khayyam, the Voltaire of Persia, deigned to sing to us. 'Tis eight centuries since Omar went down to the dust, but time moves with silent feet in the slow-changing East. The world of the Persia of to-day recalls the world of bygone ages. The caravan track, the dreamy, jingling bells of the laden camels moving slowly over the dusty plains, the fierce warriors armed to the teeth, the caravanserais, the manners and customs of the towns, are little changed from those of the Persia of ages long past.

Omar was born in the latter half of the eleventh century, about the time of the Norman conquest of Britain. A great scholar, he was one of the eight men who reformed the Calendar. He was the author of astronomical tables, and of a treatise on cubic roots, and another on algebra, and of sundry poems. These verses consist simply of quatrains, little epigrams of four lines apiece, arranged in alphabetical order. Their subjects are praise of love and wine and speculations on religion. That is, practically, what all Persian poetry is, as we know it in the pages of Hafiz, Sadi, or Firdausi.

This Persian scholar was a Freethinker, and the way he enforces his Rationalism is by praising wine, for he was supposed to be a Mohammedan, to whom wine was a forbidden thing. Wine, with Omar, is a type of the enjoyment of the world. This old Persian remained more or less forgotten for some centuries, maybe because of his Freethought, and his having written in Persian, never a popular language with literary men. Then his writings fell into the hands of Edward FitzGerald, a Freethinker and a genius, who has made Omar one of the greatest of poets. No translation in the world, except the subsidised translation of the Bible, has achieved such popularity.

Tennyson said that nothing else of the kind had been done "so divinely well." Yet, at first, the book made its way slowly, for FitzGerald took as great pains to forgo fame as other men do to ensue it. FitzGerald was supposed to have invented Omar, as Defoe invented Robinson Crusoe, or as the artist, Baxter, invented Ally Sloper. As a fact, the translation is finer than the original. "A planet larger than the sun which cast it," said Tennyson.

The perennial charm of this great poem, *The Rubaiyat*, is that it voices the scepticism in all thoughtful men's minds, and makes magnificent music of it. Omar is revealed as the Voltaire of Persia. There is no doubt about his Freethought. He fails to find any Providence but Destiny, and any certain world but this, which he advises us to make the best of:—

"I came like water, and like wind I go
Into this universe, and why not knowing,
Nor whence, like water willy-nilly flowing,
And out of it, as wind along the waste,
I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing,
What, without asking, hither hurried whence?
And, without asking, whither hurried hence?
Oh! many a cup of this forbidden wine
Must drown the memory of that insolence."

Omar says there is no God and no life hereafter in verse of passionate bitterness:—

"And that inverted bowl they call the sky,
Where under crawling, cooped, we live and die,
Lift not your hands to it for help, for it
As impotently rolls as you and I."

Like Lucretius, that noblest of Roman poets, Omar

introduces argument into his poetry. The Persian, noting how contradictory is the conception of Deity, says:—

"What, out of senseless Nothing to provoke
A conscious Something, to resent the yoke
Of unpermitted pleasure, under pain
Of everlasting penalties if broke!
What! from His helpless creatures be repaid
Pure gold for what he lent us, dross allayed—
Sue for a debt we never did contract,
And cannot answer—oh, the sorry trade!"

A fierce despair bursts out in the following beautiful lines:—

"Ah, Love! could you and I wish Him conspire
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire;
Would we not shatter it to bits—and then
Remould it nearer to the heart's desire."

In particular, Omar voices Secularism in his fierce attack on religion:—

"Oh, threats of Hell and hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain—this life flies.
One thing is certain, and the rest is lies.
The flower that once has blown for ever dies."

Lamentation, just as in Æschylus, or Shelley, or Herrick, is apparent in his poem:—

"Yet, ah! that spring should vanish with the rose,
That youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close;
The nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah, whence and whither flown again—who knows?"

This far Orient which Omar knew is a land of dreams to most of the world, but it was far otherwise to the poet. To him it was a stern reality, and the "King of Kings" was a live monarch, whose scimitar was no phantasm, and whose caprices were not the entertaining story of a genius. The Shah was one whose words made his subjects tremble lest the sword of the executioner should cut his throat. To Omar the—

"Shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens, green and old,

had not the charm that we find in them. The poet who rested beneath the citron shadows, who saw—

"The costly doors flung open wide,
Cold glittering through the lamplight dim,
And brodered sofas on each side,

did not enjoy the scene as we may now. Under the witchery of the poet's genius we scent, across centuries of time and thousands of miles of space, in our Western winds the aroma from those Eastern gardens. We gaze on the roses, the perfect flame of tulips, we drink the Persian wine, and wind our fingers in the tresses of the beloved. Our enjoyment is more perfect, for our steps are not dogged by "murder, with his silent, bloody feet."

Omar stood erect; he never grovelled. Couched under other forms, arrived at by other courses, directed against Mohammedanism and not the Christian superstition, the principles of this old-world scholar are the same, or almost the same, as those accepted by the Freethinkers of to-day. The attitude of Omar was rationalistic. He came forward as the champion of reason against a corrupt Church and tyrannical privileges. Omar mocked at the priests, and in his contests with priestcraft he proved himself the sublimest poet who ever swept his lyre under the Mohammedan crescent.

MIMNERMUS.

The Wily Way of the Sophist.

THE streets of Athens once resounded daily to the boisterous babble of contending sophists, each anxious to convince the crowd that his argument was sound and that the doctrine which he taught was alone right; but the inhabitants of that famous city never indulged in such a debauch of arrant sophistry as the religious press has done since the outbreak of the War. And the reason for it is obvious; the credit of Christianity is at stake. Since all the nations of Europe, with but few insignificant exceptions, are distractedly engaged in murdering each other with the ferocity of the jungle and the skilled ingenuity

of civilisation, three pertinent questions are forced upon our attention, viz.:—

1. Is the loud claim that Christianity is a moralising and humanising force only a vain boast?
2. What has become of the vaunted claim that it is a religion of "peace and goodwill"? And
3. Where is its Divine Father, infinite in power, in wisdom, and in love, who, we are bidden to believe, reckons the very hairs of our head? Where is he keeping? Why is his voice silent and his arm still? Is this colossal tragedy, with all the ineffable horrors which man's ingenuity can invent, of no concern to a being who not only has the attributes of a human father, but who is supposed to possess them magnified on an infinite scale?

These are questions which the War has brought into singular prominence. And they have acted like a bugle horn to the body of professional sophists, whose response to the call has been unanimous, prompt, and fervent.

In the present article, however, I shall confine myself to the first question only; the other two I shall leave to another occasion.

I do not wish the reader to suppose I undertake to argue with these gentlemen; I labor under no illusions on this point. To attempt to refute them by argument and convince them of error would be an act of folly. They are not amenable to reason; they do not believe in logic, nor in facts unless they are serviceable; they put their trust in "poetry," in fastian rhetoric, in angels, and in ghosts. Such an effort would be as futile as that of Sancho Panza's in trying to convince Don Quixote that the windmill and the herd of sheep were simply windmill and sheep, and not devils. No argument can silence the Don Quixote retort that the wheel and the sheep were only the cunning forms which the Devil had chosen to assume in order to deceive mankind. To argue with a Lodge or a Begbie is just as futile, and for the same reason.

I merely wish to draw attention to their wily ways; but their method is best displayed when they deal with Question Three.

The main tactic is invariable in form. It consists in diverting attention from relevant matters, and fixing it upon some fact or supposed fact more or less apparently connected with the subject. This they keep in the foreground of the discussion, while they ignore or suppress every fact that belies their contention. This tactic is the essence of sophistry. The one aim is to create the impression upon the mind of the reader or hearer that it is the only relevant fact concerned. In this way, a false conclusion is easily "established." In short, it is an attempt to prove a false *alibi*.

In respect to Question One, I shall illustrate the method by reference to a practice which has become by now quite notorious—that of ascribing or tracing all the treachery and villainy of Germany to Nietzsche. He has proved to the clergy and their lay supporters at this juncture to be a veritable god-send; he has supplied them with a suitable fulcrum for plying their magic lever; and it exemplifies in a very remarkable manner the wily way of sophistry.

Nietzsche was a fiery prophet who uttered his oracular deliverances in wild, extravagant symbolism. He borrowed his similes and images from savage Nature, but they were seldom, if ever, intended to be taken literally. Their infinite contradictions made that obvious to all but the wilfully blind. Anyone who has the least acquaintance with Nietzschean literature cannot fail to know that his teaching was more sound than substance. But to a sophist, nothing could be more useful or agreeable; just the material which his art requires. He will take this sound and magnify it into a roar; it is not his business to search for the substance in it.

Accordingly, the pulpit and its press have been acting the part of a monster megaphone, to increase the Nietzschean sound into the howl of a blast, to divert attention from the moral results of a millennium of Christian teaching. One could think, from the hubbub raised, that he was the only moralist in

Germany; that he was some superhuman being—a kind of Zarathustra—come to earth to upset the Hebrew decalogue, and replace it with the ethics of the jungle; and one could fancy, from the howl raised in the religious world, that his mission was completely successful, and that he had blasted away the very foundations of "Christian morality" and had left Germany in a state of ethical chaos. The disastrous effect implied in this apologetic imputation may be better realised if I put it in the form of a parable. Imagine a comet to visit that portion of space occupied by the solar system, and that its presence not merely perturbs the orbits of our planets, but loosens the very gravitational ties which bind the planets together, and thereby reduces an orderly system into a physical chaos.

Such was the overwhelming effect, according to these apologists, of Nietzschean teaching, upon the ethical system of Germany. He left it a moral chaos!

They do not seem to realise—or, if they do, they successfully hide the fact—that their ridiculous caricature of Nietzsche's influence is suicidal, and kills what they hysterically strive to save. Just reflect: if a mere erratic teacher of philology could so easily undermine Christianity, then its claim to have a supernatural origin is shown *ipso facto* to have no reality. Their extravagant distortion of the truth simply makes their argument farcical.

Let us now turn from this travesty of Nietzschean history, and see what they ignore, what they suppress, and what they hide.

They make no mention of the efficient, the costly, and the elaborate organisation that exists in the Fatherland, as elsewhere, for continuously instructing the people in Christian morality, including tens of thousands of sermons preached every Sunday—a teaching, by-the-by, made specially impressive by the awe which a gorgeous and a solemn ritual inspires.

No mention is made of such an important fact as that religious instruction is compulsory in all German schools, where Christian morality is impressed upon the mind at its most plastic and receptive period.

No allusion is made to the vast mass of religious literature poured forth annually from the German press, endorsing and emphasising the morality taught in the pulpit and in the school.

The fact is also ignored that their very Statute-book is founded upon the morality of the Bible, and that the very structure of society is saturated with its spirit.

No mention is made of the fact that Germany is eminently orthodox and devout, and that the Kaiser is notorious for his Christian zeal—a doughty champion of the Bible and its creed. Or, if they are obliged to refer to his religious devotion and enthusiasm, they can find no way of escape save by imputing it all to hypocrisy, with no attempt at proof. If perpetration of fiendish villainies is proof of hypocrisy, then few of the ruling clergy and high dignitaries of the Church during the greater part of its history were not the most unmitigated hypocrites the world has ever known, and yet hypocrisy is not usually imputed to them. Why, then, to the Kaiser? His record is no blacker than that of Torquemada—the zealous but infamous Christian missionary.

And, above all, hardly ever any allusion is made to the herculean and successful efforts of the great Treitschke, who taught openly for a quarter of a century the most odious and abhorrent Macchiavelianism ever preached. His was not a mere voice in the wilderness, but an august professor at their premier University, who taught under the high patronage of Church and State. Had he been an Atheist, instead of a devout and stalwart Christian, it is certain we should have heard little or nothing of Nietzsche. To suppress the solemn Gospel of Treitschke, and magnify the ravings of Nietzsche, is sophistry *in excelsis*.

Lastly, no reference is ever made to the fact that France, our great Ally, is openly Agnostic, and anti-Christian to the extent that it has divorced

the Church from the State, and secularised its schools.

Now, had Germany shared the unbelief of France; had the Kaiser been Nietzsche or Frederick the Great; had Treitschke and Bernhardt, and their school, been anti-Christians, then there would have been some presumptive evidence for their contention, or at least that it was not without some foundation in fact; but as it is, the plea is a palpable instance of the most arrant and barefaced sophistry

KERIDON.

The Evolution of Sea Power.

At a time when the British Fleet is performing so tremendous a rôle, not only in the history of England, but of the world, an outline of the leading events that have contributed towards the development of naval supremacy may not prove entirely inopportune.

Fragmentary as is our knowledge of man's early endeavors to utilise the streams and seas for purposes of fishing, bartering, and plundering, and in employing the rivers and minor oceans as channels for the invasion and conquest of adjoining peoples; yet we possess sufficient evidence to assure us that in far distant times the coast and valley-dwelling races had mastered the rudiments of the navigator's art. Nevertheless, it cannot be claimed that the wanderings on land and water of prehistoric and early historic peoples are ever likely to be as clear to us as the movements of the fierce barbarians who penetrated and ultimately overthrew the majestic Roman Empire.

There remain but shadowy traces of ancient Egyptian navigation, or of the achievements of the old seafaring races of prehistoric Greece, while the exploits of the early Chinese seamen must be left to the imagination. On Easter Island and elsewhere relics of a long extinct seafaring race remain, although all knowledge of the men themselves has departed, perhaps for ever. It is with the Phœnicians that our survey must commence, and even their personality is half-masked in mist. Of their existence we possess, however, ample evidence, and their romantic history is by no means all romance. On the Syrian shores the Phœnician's trading stations were built on spots where Nature proved niggardly both in her gifts of coastline and of harbors. The shores were treacherous and the harbors were mean. But as with succeeding maritime nations the shortcomings of Nature were compensated by the triumphs of art.

Phœnicia was a territory situated at the north of Palestine, along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Its cities grew up where the overland caravan commerce was brought to a standstill by the sea. The trading vessels of the Phœnicians carried onward the caravan commodities to previously unknown lands, and on their return voyages the ships of these navigators brought back utilities to minister to the wants and desires of the Asiatic world. As Rawlinson tells us, Phœnicia became "the negotiator between the east and the west, introducing into Greece the finished productions of Egypt and Assyria, of Babylon and Hindostan, while she conveyed to those countries Greek pottery and Greek works of art."

Fair weather and favorable winds were essential to the primitive craft of these early seamen. Man's freedom of action has ever been conditioned by the circumstances of the case in question. Winds and water currents decided the course of the vessels, both when outward and when homeward bound. The ships were therefore constrained to proceed by a circuitous course so as to benefit by the local currents which carried them to their destination or brought them safe to port. Ports easily accessible in a storm were a prime necessity. Cape Carthage is a headland in North Africa, near the lagoon of Tunis. A splendid hill was chosen upon which a commanding citadel could be erected, and Carthage arose. A

harbor in the Iberian peninsula was of supreme importance, and Cadiz was developed.

Although the progress of the commercial cities on the coasts was arrested by the exactions and enmities of the Asiatic military monarchies, the sea supremacy of the Phœnicians was first seriously menaced by the expanding Greek states. The Greeks studied the methods which had made the Phœnicians the master mariners of the world. Like their rivals, the Greeks were anxious to subject the ocean to their sway, and possess their place on the sea. They noted the courses followed by the vessels of the Phœnicians, they cultivated colonies and built harbors on the same sea-routes all along the Mediterranean, from the Black Sea to the shores of Spain. Out of this economic struggle the war galley was evolved. "History repeats itself," says one. "Oh no," objects a fastidious critic, "the historians repeat one another." Well, in any case, many past wars, and the present wholesale butchery above all, may be traced to similar strivings for the world's dominion.

With the ancients, the Viking pirates, and the mediæval sea peoples, war-vessels were compelled to fight at close quarters. The old sailing-ships were sadly handicapped in naval warfare, but vessels propelled by oars were less at the mercy of winds and waves, and possessed greater facilities for altering their course, than boats which depended on their sails. Moreover, the absence of long-range gunfire gave the rowing-ship pride of place as an instrument of war.

Right down to the sixteenth century of our era the galley remained the leading battleship. Carrying but a small crew, poorly provisioned, and incapable of coping with the raging elements, the galley was a puny instrument at best. The marvel is that with ships so feeble, the rowers who manned them were able to accomplish so much.

The power of Carthage was ultimately shattered by Rome, a land people whose wonderful civilisation owed little to their mastery of the sea. But maritime commerce was the secret of the success both of the Hansa League of the Baltic in the Middle Ages and of the glorious achievements of the Republics of the Italian peninsula. The influence and affluence of the trading towns of the Hanseatic Confederation were steadily undermined by the development and consolidation of the continental military states. The cities of the Hansa never obtained sufficient control of the ocean to enable them to withstand the encroachments of the land races.

The Italian maritime communities pursued a policy too individualistic in character. Great as became their influence, their wealth, and their fame, they lacked that unity which constitutes strength. Commercial rivalry tended at times to override every other consideration. One Italian city in periods of strife would implore and pay for the help of a common enemy when its security was threatened by a sister republic. Amalfi was destroyed by Pisa, which was destined to be in turn overthrown by Genoa, whose fate, again, was sealed by the antagonism of Venice.

The Venetian Republic was the greatest of them all. Enthroned on the waters at the head of the Adriatic Sea, her geographical situation was not the most favorable as the mistress of a sea-borne commerce. But other important advantages were hers. Venice arose in an island lagoon, and was practically invulnerable to foreign military menace. Nor could the city be starved into surrender. Moreover, she was nominally a member of the still surviving Eastern Empire, and could count on favorable trading arrangements with Byzantium. She could bargain for its aid in her need, and could plead her allegiance when exclaiming herself from obeying the behests of any potentate whose armies stood nearer to her own frontiers. Venice became the commercial centre of the world. Her fleets carried every conceivable kind of merchandise. She expanded and established her stations along the commercial routes. Venetian vessels transported Crusaders and pilgrims to their holy places, and bore

other Christians as slaves to their appointed markets. Probably, for a lengthy period the slave trade was the most lucrative branch of her business. Venice even participated, and by no means unwillingly, in the dismemberment of the Eastern Empire, to which she had previously vowed allegiance, especially when the acknowledgment brought benefits. The Republic combined commerce with conquest. The armed vessels of Venice were prepared to vindicate her power when occasion arose, or opportunity offered. Then, as in our own semi-civilised times, the power to protect one's property was the sole guarantee for its security. In those days all that could be done to prevent valuable headlands or islands from falling into the hands of a present or possible enemy, was to place them under Venetian control.

Her growing commercial greatness induced Venice to extend her conquests to the Italian peninsula. For this step there were sound economic arguments. But the trading advantages, associated with the domination of the mainland of Italy, brought embarrassing liabilities in their train. The Republic was not in a position to bring the whole of Italy under her command. Constantly menaced by antagonistic interests, the newly acquired Italian territories became a chronic drain upon her resources.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century the monarchs of France and Spain, his Holiness the Pope, and the pious Emperor banded themselves together against the Venetian State. This confederation of foes was formed at a highly critical period, for the Turks had already made serious inroads on her trade in the Levant. The Eastern invader had overrun Asia Minor, and turned to his own advantage the sanguinary quarrels among the Christians by securing an entrance into Europe. The crescent had succeeded the cross in the Eastern Empire, Constantinople had fallen, and Greece had succumbed to the arms of the infidel. A shepherd and soldier people now opposed itself to the sailor communities, and Venice was the earliest and acutest sufferer from the attack. The merchants of Venice not only found their trade threatened, but they were losing the Greek, or so-called Greek sailors who rowed their galleys. At the very moment when the menace of the Sultan's ships was daily increasing, the alliance between the Pope and the princes was made for the purpose of humbling the Pearl of the Adriatic to the dust.

Overpowered by superior force, Venice sorrowfully surrendered her mainland possessions, absolved her subjects from their allegiance, withdrew within the unassailable city, and made all preparations for putting her galleys to the greatest use. At last the Republic vanquished her enemies, her abandoned territories were recovered, and her friendship was again cultivated by enemy and neutral alike. But command of the sea alone did not furnish her with the weapons which enabled her to triumph over her foes. When sea power failed, diplomacy proved victorious. The League of Cambrai of 1508 was formed, not from noble and lofty principles, or even for political advantage, but for the mean purpose of plundering a wealthy community whose weakness lay in its widespread possessions. Venice abased herself before the Pope and utilised her shrewd diplomatic powers in order to awaken the slumbering jealousies that obtained among the allied sovereigns. Where armed resistance had proved abortive, the wiles of diplomacy were successful. Avarice and suspicion alienated the Allies, and they fell apart. Moreover, the pitiless exactions of the rulers who replaced the Republic in Italy, roused the old subjects of Venice to revolt. The government of the Venetians may have been harsh, but the misrule of the new princes became insufferable. As Mr. David Hannay remarks:—

"The rule of Venice was a rule of law. Her subjects were not given over to the outrages of libidinous men-at-arms and drunken lanzknechts, to the exactions of soldiers of fortune, to whom war was simply a form

of brigandage, which entailed considerably less danger of the gallows than common crime."*

Rebellion against this coarse, military tyranny was the consequence, and Venice recovered her losses on land, but she issued from the conflict a punier power and was ever after compelled to watch with sleepless vigilance for the slightest sign of any combination of her would-be despoilers.

Although her glories were by no means past, Venice had received an irreparable blow. Her decline dates from the conflict of the League. Other factors also were now operating to her detriment. The discovery of the Cape route to the East helped to undermine her commerce. She could still command the lion's share of the landborne trade from Persia and India. But the advent of rival marine powers was now made possible through the progress of shipbuilding, and the countries of Western Europe could trade with the East at Cairo and Aleppo in their own craft. Again, the Turkish advance sadly diminished the commerce of the overland route. The Queen of the Adriatic was slowly superseded, and other States mounted the throne which Venice had so proudly filled.

With the extension of geographical knowledge and the increased progress of the peoples, many changes were now to be witnessed. Turkish naval power was shattered at the Battle of Lepanto, in October, 1571. This sea struggle was the last great fight in which galleys played a leading part. Small progress had been made in sea vessels since ancient times, and the primitive galleys still in use were practically confined to the neighborhood of the coasts. In winter, they were helpless in the open sea. Slaves and criminals were employed to row the galleys. These miserable men were most brutally treated, and the medical science of the sixteenth century being what it was, the death-rate from disease was appalling. Yet these were the human creatures who propelled the galleys when the combined fleets of Venice and Charles V. of Spain destroyed the Sultan's navy at Lepanto, almost at the identical spot which had witnessed the overthrow of Mark Antony at Actium long centuries before. But victors and vanquished were both involved in a common ruin. The Turks never rallied on the sea, and both Spain and Italy so swiftly declined that even on the Mediterranean itself "the 'Trident of Neptune' came to be held by peoples whose homes lay far outside the Straits of Gibraltar."

T. F. PALMER.

(To be continued.)

Acid Drops.

We knew it would come sooner or later, and it has come sooner. We mean the recantation of G. W. Foote. If we trust Christian reports, all Freethought leaders have recanted shortly before their death, and G. W. Foote followed suit. At least so says the Rev. Macdonald Docker in a sermon reported in the *Halifax Daily Guardian* for November 30. Here is Mr. Docker's statement:—

"Mr. Foote was the most prominent Freethinker in this country; the former editor of the *Freethinker*, who was imprisoned for blasphemy. He publicly abandoned his occupation, and announced his belief in spiritual truth, writing 'to-day is my fifty-fifth year, and after about as strenuous a life as any man of that age has ever lived—I believe in God, and in the immortality of the soul of man.' The great world-war has done it."

There is no need for us to point out to *Freethinker* readers what a tissue of falsehoods this statement is; we merely note it here as an example of how very carefully these men of God get up their facts.

A correspondent, who lives at Halifax, promptly wrote to the *Guardian*, asking Mr. Docker for his proofs of so amazing a statement. Up to the time of writing, Mr. Docker has not condescended to reply. If we may hazard a guess, we should say that Mr. Docker has been reading Mr. Bottomley's confession of faith, and either innocently

or deliberately tacked it on to G. W. Foote. The least that a gentleman would have done when challenged would have been to publish in the same paper that reported his sermon the grounds upon which his statement was made, or apologise for having made it. Mr. Docker, apparently, prefers silence. And so we may take it that the legend has commenced. We refrain from saying more for the moment.

Presumably a message from G. W. Foote—from the next world—will soon be delivered. We are basing our expectations upon a statement made by Mr. Hewat Mackenzie to a Queen's Hall audience. He said that Voltaire, Ingersoll, Paine, and Bradlaugh had told him how surprised they were when they entered the next world to discover that their chief helper while on earth had been Jesus of Nazareth. So we say we may soon expect a message from G. W. Foote. It is distinctly interesting to think of Jesus as a kind of unknown sub-editor on the *National Reformer* and the *Freethinker*. We congratulate Mr. Mackenzie on his—imaginative powers.

If a thing is repeated often enough, it is sure to impress some people. This is well known to advertisers, and the clergy are adepts at the game. Sir J. Crichton Browne, a distinguished layman, is now repeating the famous clerical wheeze that "Germany has largely given up belief in God." He is more modest than the clergy, for they told us that all Germans were Atheists. Presumably, the soldiers' belts, inscribed "God With Us," are old army stock, left over from the ages of faith.

Apologists for the Design Argument will be interested to hear of a mushroom, nearly a foot in height, and 11 inches wide, which was found growing in a coal-cellar at East Finchley. Christian Evidence lecturers might find that mushroom of use in their lectures.

Dean Inge, popularly known as "the gloomy dean," says that thousands of people would have to confess to a life-long perusal of murder and divorce cases. Why not? There are worse things in the Bible.

The *Daily Mail* recently headed a paragraph, "The Comic Missionary." It related to the doings of a German propagandist; and all Germans are supposed to be Atheists.

A religious publishing house, advertising for fresh employees, asked for "good men." All men ought to be "good" in a Christian country.

"The dons at Oxford are an honest and unsuspecting race," says *The Times*. How true! Oxford University expelled the poet Shelley, and conferred an honorary degree on the late General Booth.

At the Croydon Brotherhood meeting, the other Sunday, one of the speakers said that Japan was looking with "wistful eyes" towards Christianity. What they needed was the assurance that "the God of the Germans was not the God of Christians." We can imagine a Japanese reading that sentence with a smile. It is so like an English Christian to talk of the Japanese as though they were poor, ignorant savages, sorely puzzled when they see Christians fighting, and puzzled about which God Germans believe in. As though the Japanese do not understand the European religious situation. And as though the sight of Christians fighting puzzles them. Why, when have they known Christian nations when they were not fighting? Japan's increased Army and Fleet are both recognitions that Christian nations will fight, given the smallest opportunity.

Something nearer the truth was said at the same meeting by a Mr. N. Kato, a converted Japanese. He said:—

"The great War has had a retarding effect on the work of Christian missionaries in Japan: the people look and see the mighty Christian nations in bloody warfare, and they say it proves the impotence of Christianity."

That, we say, is much nearer the truth. The War does prove the impotence of Christianity. And that is putting the case for Christianity at its best. At its worst, Christianity must bear its share of responsibility for the conditions that have produced the War.

Archdeacon Owen, the newly appointed Dean of Ripon, has been presented with a purse of £720. This is what the clergy describe as taking up their crosses and following the Master.

* *The Navy and Sea Power*, pp. 46, 47. Williams and Norgate. 1915.

Some time since many of the clergy were shouting about the subject of "War-babies." How intelligent was their anticipation in these matters is shown by the Registrar-General's return, which shows a marked decline in the number of illegitimate children. It would seem that the clergy are as credulous and simple-minded as the people who sit in the pews.

Mr. Harold Begbie has a peculiar acquaintance with the religious world. Writing in *Lloyd's Weekly News*, he describes a Christian lady, who has promised to give some money to a poor woman, saying "How happy I shall be in the next world thinking of this surprise." When Christians cast their bread on the waters, they usually reckon on its return well buttered.

Mr. G. Ward Price, the *Daily Chronicle* War correspondent, says that God made the Balkans a garden. The figure is an unfortunate one. Mr. Price should have remembered that God's experiments in garden-making and stocking have not been very fortunate. There was, for example, the Garden of Eden, which as a garden may have been all right, but the experiment came to grief when he placed Adam and Eve there. So with the Balkan garden. That might have been all right too; but God allowed Christians and Mohammedans to settle there. For years, as Mr. Price points out, Bulgarians slaughtered Greeks in the name of the Bulgarian Church, and Greeks murdered Bulgarians to make converts to the Patriarchate. And the Mohammedans slaughtered both in the name of the Prophet. It is the people there who spoil the garden, and the people have obviously been demoralised by their rival religious beliefs. Man can be sufficient of a brute at almost any time. Add religious fervor to his brutality, and it almost passes comprehension.

Sir James Crichton Browne, speaking at the Browning Hall, London, said the War "had been a rude shock to science and a beneficent impulse to religion." If militarists use scientific means to their ends, it is no greater reflection upon science than if a burglar used scientific means to open a safe. If, however, 21,000,000 Christians are trying to cut each others' throats, it does not say much for their brotherliness.

When a man gets religion, he usually gets cold feet, and his language becomes hectic. Mr. Bottomley is no exception to this rule, and some of his statements are positively purple. For instance, he writes that "20 000 priests of Rome have gone forth to avenge these [German] infamies." As a fact, most of the priests are non-combatants, and there are Catholic priests in the Austrian and German armies.

Mr. Horatio Bottomley is proving an *enfant terrible* to the Church. A recent article from his vigorous pen was entitled "Bishops, Beware!" and the opening sentence was, "I am very disappointed with the Bishops." His disappointment will be nothing to that experienced by the Bishops.

The men of God have often bitterly condemned science because of its doctrine of the survival of the fittest, characterising it as the quintessence of cruelty. So tender-hearted are they that they shudder with horror at the merest allusion to the law of Natural Selection. The Gospel, they maintain, is a gracious provision for doing away with all unfitness and filling the earth with people who possess all the qualities essential to triumphant survival. As a matter of fact, however, they woefully misunderstand and grossly misrepresent the very Gospel whose champions they profess to be, as was clearly shown by the Rev. E. Down, M.A., in a sermon recently preached at St. John the Divine, Kennington, the text of which fully justified its teaching: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matt. iii. 12).

The point of Mr. Down's discourse was that the present is a time of *probation*. We are in this earthly life for the purpose of proving what mettle we are. If found worthy we shall survive as wheat fit for the heavenly garner; but if not we shall be consumed with unquenchable fire. That is to say, the Gospel policy with regard to the unfit may be summed up thus: Molly-coddle them as much as possible in this world, and burn them up in the next. Wheat and chaff, sound grain and injurious tares exist in juxtaposition. Science recommends their immediate separation, while Christianity postpones both the weeding and the winnowing process till after death. The truth is that chaff cannot become wheat, or tares sound grain, no matter to

what treatment they may be subjected. Even Christianity is powerless to perform miracles of that nature.

We do not know what kind of an answer the Bishop of London and his deputation of clergymen got when they waited on God to find out what he meant by permitting the War. But we see that since then he has informed the world that all has happened because we have forgotten God. Of course, it may be so; but fancy worshipping a deity who could permit, or inaugurate, *this* War in order to remind people that he is still there! Really, if there is a God, he ought to thank the Freethinker for having so far defended him as to say he doesn't believe a word of it.

We are not at all surprised to find that some concern is being shown as to the disposition of the huge sum of money raised for charitable purposes since the War commenced. We see the total is placed as high as twenty-seven millions, and we should be surprised if this were an exaggeration. And it is tolerably certain that a considerable portion of this sum will never reach its intended destination. Quite apart from the likely abuse of funds raised in the names of responsible people, some of the newspapers are calling attention to the irresponsible, and sometimes quite untrustworthy, people who set about raising funds so soon as war was declared. *Freethinker* readers were very plainly warned of both dangers as early as September, 1914. It has taken others over a year to realise what we then foresaw must occur.

When newspapers have finished warning the public concerning the people who live on charities raised in the name of the War, it would be in the interests of national health if they would pay attention to the much larger class of bogus charities that are run in the name of religion. There are scores of these in and about London, the promoters of which are only saved from prosecution because they do give a part, but a very small part, of their plunder in charity. When Mr. Cohen was preparing his exposure of *Foreign Missions*, some years ago, he came across some of these home missionary societies that were pure impostures. He offered the facts to several London editors at the time—free, gratis, for nothing. These editors did not question the facts, and they did not deny the swindle. But they all felt that it was not profitable to attack even a swindle that was being run under the name of a religion, and graced by one or more clergymen; and one of the editors had the courage to say so.

The Rev. Dr. Dixon, of Spurgeon's Tabernacle, the base and impertinent reviler of Thomas Paine and Robert Ingersoll, is still at his old game of maligning all who differ from him in opinion. It was his delight for a period to make insolent and insulting allusions to Mr. R. J. Campbell and the New Theology. Now that Mr. Campbell has forsworn the New Theology he once so ardently supported, and returned to orthodoxy, Dr. Dixon publishes an article in the *Sword and Trowel*, entitled "The Collapse of the New Theology." Of course, Dr. Dixon shares the infallibility of most who wear the cloth, and denounces as pernicious heresy everything that is out of harmony with his own narrow and bigoted "ism"; and of course, also, he is a very typical Christian, the only pity being that he didn't live five centuries ago, when he could have burnt at the stake all Atheists and heretics. He would have been in his element then, while now he is simply an anachronism.

The Bishop of Salisbury says that only one clergyman in his diocese has defied his authority and joined the Army. All the rest submitted to his judgment. Perhaps they were pleased to do so. The Bishop goes on to say that the one who did join was a very unsatisfactory clergyman. His parish was "a source of constant anxiety." That may be so, but one would like to have the opinion of the parish on the matter. The standpoint of the average villager and that of the Bishop is often very different. And it may be that the Bishop has lost the one man in his diocese whose absence will cause the keenest regret.

Which reminds us of a story. Said one villager to another, "How do you like the new parson?" "Capitally," was the reply. "He plays a good game of football, he made 80 at cricket, he sings a good song, and has a cheerful smile and a nod for everyone. He's the very best vicar we have ever had. Why, he's been here nearly two months and hasn't mentioned a word of religion yet."

A new book bears the title, *The Devil's Motor*. Poor old Satan! We are pleased to hear that he can afford to ride about like popular Nonconformist ministers.

To Correspondents.

MR. COHEN'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—December 12, Leicester; 19, Portsmouth.

N. CALDER (Calcutta).—Your appreciation of Mr. Foote's work was well deserved. We have conveyed your sympathy to his family.

W. JENKINSON.—The Rev. Mr. Dooker has evidently got hold of Mr. Bottomley's confession of faith, and tacked it on to G. W. Foote. It is an example of the careful way in which the clergy get up their facts.

W. H. HARRUP.—We have not heard of any such provision as your name, and so could not advise. But we should think it very unlikely.

S. M. PEACOCK.—We were quite sure that the Memorial Fund would have your support, and are glad to receive your promise for £5. Will bear other matters in mind.

H. S. STENNING.—Your suggestion is a good one, and we will put it into operation, if possible. But there is the question of copyright to consider.

S. LEECH.—Certainly; the whole of the money subscribed will be handed over as a presentation to Mrs. Foote, and will be used for no other purpose whatsoever.

H. JACKSON.—Glad to learn that your friend in the trenches so greatly appreciates his weekly copy of the *Freethinker*. We shall always be pleased to hear from him on any subject that he considers of interest.

H. R.—Quite impossible to answer all your questions in this place. They would need a series of articles to answer them adequately, and to do so otherwise would only create misunderstanding. One question is, however, fully dealt with in Mr. Cohen's *Determinism or Free Will*, and several others by implication.

L. S.—Thanks for contribution to the Memorial Fund, also for your expression of confidence. So many have written in a similar vein, that we feel pleased to reflect that we are not easily disturbed. Otherwise a larger-sized hat would be necessary.

J. K.—We quite agree with you that "The Great Trunk Call" was "capitally done." And others of our readers agree with you too.

G. ALWARD.—We quite understand the appreciation of yourself and wife for Mr. Foote, and yours is a very practical way of showing it.

HUGH THOMSON.—Securing new readers is the right way to help. And we fancy most of our present readers can do something in that direction if they will.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

G. W. Foote Memorial Fund.

WITH regard to this Fund, there is little to add to what was said last week, but the little there is, is of a cheerful nature. As I anticipated, no one was surprised at such a Fund being started; the surprise would have been had it been otherwise. And so far, the response has been as satisfactory as one could have expected during a time when so many find their incomes seriously reduced, and even with those situated more fortunately there are demands upon the purse of a quite unusual character.

Nevertheless, it appears to be generally recognised that the circumstances which make the raising of this Fund necessary are of such a character that they cannot be ignored. What has been said appears to have placed Freethinkers upon their mettle; and, along with subscriptions and promises of subscriptions, I have received many encouraging letters concerning what has been proposed. All agree that, after a life of devotion to the cause of Freethought such as that displayed by our late leader, it is im-

perative that the future of his widow should be secured. I have every confidence that this will be done, and I hope I may not be considered too importunate in suggesting that all who intend to subscribe should do so as speedily as possible. There is no reason why the Fund should be open for a lengthy period, and the sooner it is closed—satisfactorily closed—the better. All cheques should be endorsed "G. W. Foote Memorial Fund," and all letters addressed to the Editor of the *Freethinker*, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

I cannot quote from all the letters received, nor at very great length from any; but room must be found for the following.

Mr. G. McCluskey writes:—

I have the highest satisfaction in enclosing my cheque for the G. W. Foote Memorial Fund. The least Freethinkers can do is to provide for the dependants of those who fight their battles for them. It is most desirable that the response should be prompt and generous, for the sake of "the best of causes" no less than for those intended to be benefited by it.

"E. B." writes:—

I think you have drawn out the appeal on behalf of Mrs. Foote with much judgment and consideration.

From Mr. W. Heaford:—

I am glad that your appeal, so promptly made, will give the numerous friends and admirers of our late Chief the opportunity of testifying their practical appreciation of his high public services, and trust the generous response that will be given will be gratifying to all who value the life-long devotion which Mr. Foote gave to great public ideals.

Mr. G. Alward writes:—

We approve most sincerely of the course you are taking to make some provision for Mrs. Foote. My wife and all our family have always had the most sincere regard for our great leader. My experience of his great ability commenced more than forty years ago.....I saw in him [then] the possibility of a great man.

Mr. T. Robertson hopes for "a short, sharp campaign," and thinks that the appeal should meet with ample and general response.

Mr. and Mrs. J. H. King write:—

Cheque enclosed towards our Chief's Memorial FundOur hearts are too full to say all we feel, but it is our great and most earnest wish that you will keep the *Freethinker* going. If you think we can in any way help, do let us know.

Appended is a list of subscriptions actually received:—

J. and H. King, £10 10s.; E. B., £3 3s.; Colonel B. L. Reilly, £1 1s.; J. Pendlebury, £5; J. Sumner, £5 5s.; J. M. Gimson, £10; G. McCluskey, £5 5s.; Captain G. B. Taylor, £2; F. Akroyd, £1 1s.; M. Glass, £2; J. and J. McGlashan, £2; J. Breeze, £2 2s.; L. Luckens, £1; Mr. and Mrs. G. Alward, £5; H. B. Dodds, 10s.; B., £1 1s.; M. McDougall, 10s.; T. C. Riglin, 2s. 6d.; Dr. Archer Martins, £5; L. S., £1; Mathematicus, £1 1s.; R. Terroni, 10s.; B. Bowlen, £2; W. Heaford, £1; A. B. Moss, £1; T. Robertson, £5; S. H. Swinny, £1 1s.; E. Adams, £2 2s.; Mrs. H. Parsons, £5 5s.; W. Dodd, £1; X. Y. Z., £5 5s.; A. G. Lye, £1; E. Parker, 5s.; R. Allen, £1; Mrs. C. Cohen, £1 1s.; J. W. Wood, 10s.; L. Brandes, £5 5s.; F. J. Gould, 10s.; Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner, £1 1s.; A. Delve, £2 2s.; R. Daniell, 5s.; G. White, £2; J. B. Palphreyman, £1; West Ealing, 2s.; T. C. Lowndes, £1; C. E. Clarke, 5s.; W. H. Harrup, 10s.; C. Martin, 1s. *Per Miss Vance*.—W. Wells, £1; T. H. Elstob, £2 2s.; H. Reeve, 5s.; Halley Stewart £5.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Sugar Plums.

There is only one thing to say about the G. W. Foote Memorial Meeting at the Queen's (Minor) Hall on Sunday last. It was a complete success from every point of view. The Hall was quite crowded, and the doors had to be closed to prevent overcrowding. All the speeches were admirable, both in form and substance. There was not a single jarring note from beginning to end of a meeting that lasted exactly two hours and a quarter. And not one of the audience, apparently, found it a moment too long.

Everyone regretted that the Rev. Stewart Headlam was unable to be present and that Mr. Herbert Burrows was also

too unwell to speak as announced. Letters from both these gentlemen were read expressing sympathy with the purpose of the meeting, as was one from Mr. Harry Snell. Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner also wrote expressing her regret at being unable to attend. This would have been read at the meeting, but it did not reach the Chairman until it was too late.

Mr. Cohen lectures to-day (Dec. 12) in the Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester. At the request of the Leicester Committee, he is taking for his subject, "G. W. Foote, Freethinker and Pioneer." Admission to the hall is quite free, and we have no doubt that it will be well filled.

To-day (Dec. 12) Mr. J. T. Lloyd lectures in the City Hall (North Saloon), Glasgow, at 12 o'clock and 6.30. Admission is free, with a silver collection. We hope to hear that Mr. Lloyd has the audience he deserves—which means that the hall will be crowded.

During the past few days we have discovered the existence of a new species of inverted highwaymen. The old formula was "Your money or your life." The new one is "Take our money or we'll have your life." It is an agreeable and surprising change. And the reason for it is this. Since we announced that there would be no *Freethinker* Sustentation Fund, at least for the present, a number of our friends have become just a little "nervy" about the future of the paper. And they have written almost threatening letters—of a most amiable kind—demanding that a Sustentation Fund be opened. We can only thank them for their solicitude, and assure them that the welfare of the *Freethinker* is as dear to us as to them, and that we are not likely to jeopardise its existence by any feelings of false pride, or because of Quixotic notions. If we find it quite impossible to carry on without a Sustentation Fund, our friends will know in good time. Whatever risk is taken will be a purely personal one, and will not be allowed to affect the welfare of the paper in any way.

Meanwhile, as we said last week, we intend seeing what can be done by hard work, economy, and an endeavor to improve our circulation. We are making arrangements for new publications, and we hope to announce particulars in a few weeks. But it is on the matter of circulation that we would like to concentrate the energies of our friends. Every new reader is a step towards making the paper self-supporting. If only a small proportion of our present readers gained a new subscriber within the next month, we should open the New Year free from care. And one method of gaining new subscribers would be for those who can to take extra copies and circulate them, or get a newsagent to display them. Those who are anxious for a Sustentation Fund could help in this way. Let us unite in this effort for six months, or a year, and it will be strange indeed if we are not able to announce that our late leader's ambition has been realised, and the *Freethinker* has earned a few shillings of real profit.

The Birmingham *Weekly Mercury* publishes a two-column report of Mr. Cohen's recent Town Hall lecture on Mr. Balfour's "Theism and Humanism." The report presents a fair summary of the lecture, and it is good to find the *Mercury* edited by a man who has the courage and fairness to publish such reports. If all editors were equally fair, the newspaper press might have some legitimate claim to be the organ of public opinion.

Our Debt of Honor to G. W. Foote.

TRIBUTE OF LONDON FREETHINKERS TO HIS MEMORY.

MEMORABLE SPEECHES.

METROPOLITAN Freethinkers gathered at the Queen's (Minor) Hall, London, on Sunday, to render their respect to the life and work of their late leader. At no time could it be more advantageous to take pause and think on the deep issues of human affairs than now, when preoccupation with a world-war threatens our freedom to dwell on large ideas, and with few men could it be better to take thought just now than with George William Foote. For it is an added laurel in the wreath of the dead leader that he was never a doctrinaire or an extremist. Intellectually, he was born to the purple, a prince among men, and he devoted himself to the people with a constant heart.

The Memorial Meeting was a representative one. Mr. Chapman Cohen presided, and was supported by the veterans Messrs. A. B. Moss and W. Heaford, and also by Mr. J. T. Lloyd. Mr. Halley Stewart, of the Secular Education League, and Mr. S. H. Swinny, President, London Positivist Society, and Mr. F. J. Gould, the well-known edu-

cationalist, also gave their tributes, and letters of apology were read from Mr. Herbert Burrows, Mr. Greenwood, M.P., Mr. Harry Snell, and the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam.

It was in no sense a propagandist gathering, as Mr. Cohen pointed out in his introductory remarks, but a tribute of respect to a great fighter, a great thinker, and a great man.

The veteran A. B. Moss, speaking from the vantage ground of forty years' friendship with the dead leader, said the world had formed a very erroneous opinion of George William Foote. He was a fine scholar, a deep thinker, a skilful logician, and a powerful orator. He took large views of men and things, and he fought for intellectual liberty, and for men of widely different opinions. Richly endowed with the poetic spirit, there was also a wealth of intellect in his writings. Secularism was his philosophy, and his constant aim was to make the world worth living in.

Mr. S. SWINNY followed with a telling speech, in which he pointed out that G. W. Foote had taken his place in the great army of martyrs, and had the curious privilege of standing at the end of a long series of persecutions. Although the Statute Book was still disgraced by the Blasphemy Laws, great changes in the law were a sure sign that the old ideas were untenable. G. W. Foote's name will remain for future ages. Among his claims for recognition were his courage and consistency. He not only claimed freedom for those who thought with him, but freedom for all mankind. Singleness of purpose characterised his life. He gave up fame, and we must never forget that abnegation, and for his devotion to great ideals. He had a firm belief in changing men's views by peaceful and permanent ways. A great hero of spiritual liberty, he should receive the gratitude of the present generation and of posterity.

Forceful eloquence characterised the tribute of Mr. J. T. LLOYD, who said that G. W. Foote had a fire within him that kindled others. As a leader, he had dignity, greatness, strength, and humor. Whether men agreed or disagreed with him, they must admire him. Above all, he possessed humor. No man was so persistently slandered, but he laughed at the accusations. He said he had been accused of every crime except murder. Though dead, he was still a force in the world, for he possessed the immortality of the great thinker and worker. Such lives as his are destined to live, and let us see that our lives are best spent for the benefit of mankind and the uplifting of life in general.

There was no need for mourning, said Mr. F. J. GOULD, but rather for rejoicing that G. W. Foote had lived. He should congratulate the world that he was the son of the race. A cheerful man, none saw him downcast. Like the Old Roman Emperor, his watchword was "Equanimity." He never said a word he did not mean, and his life-purpose was for the hygienic sanity of the human race. He bears comparison with Cromwell, who, for the sake of England, gave years of his life to war. He was a very discreet and judicious man. Never a crank, he stands in the direct line of succession with Wycliffe, Milton, Defoe, Swift, and Paine. We are proud of him as a great Englishman. He did not represent the minority of the moment, but the great majority of the ages of those men who were thinking forward.

A notable tribute was paid by Mr. HALLEY STEWART, of the Secular Education League, who had been associated for so long with the late Mr. Foote. He wished, he said, to add his tribute to a warm-hearted comrade in the cause of the sacred trinity of justice, freedom, and truth in the world. It was an irresistible impulse which brought him there. It was not only a warm-hearted letter from Mr. Cohen which had attracted him, but the personality of G. W. Foote, who needed no voice omnipotent to bring him from the tomb, whilst he was represented by the multiple voices on that platform. It was his wish to pay a humble, simple tribute to his personal, moral, intellectual, and social worth. In the work of the Secular Education League he and Mr. Foote saw eye to eye, and he never found him sectional or partial. His power was for constructive work and for the building of a lofty state. In the House of Commons he (Mr. Stewart) had served on the Religious Equality Committee, but when subsequently it was perverted into a Nonconformist Committee, he left it, and said what you cannot let me have as a citizen, I decline to have as a Free Churchman. Mr. Foote always took a broad, civic, humanitarian view, and treated all men alike, irrespective of their religious views. In his handling of the question of Secular Education, there was not the shadow of a shade of bigotry. He believed in the absolute neutrality of the State in the education of a great nation. For a privileged class always implied that it was privileged at the expense of others, and that another class was unprivileged and disadvantaged. G. W. Foote knew that in the cause of Truth and Freedom he who would find his life must lose it, and it was because of his integrity and honesty of purpose that he was there in his memory that day.

Another veteran, Mr. W. HEAFORD, who knew the dead leader forty-one years, said his recollections took him back to the Middle Ages—of thought. The England of to-day

was a freer and sweeter nation because of the life of G. W. Foote. He made a strenuous claim for the right to think freely, and he continued the work done by Bradlaugh and Holyoake. He lived a full life, and leaves a rich legacy of noble example, and the world was made brighter, better, and nobler by his example.

In a powerful speech, Mr. C. COHEN summed up the dead leader's characteristics. G. W. Foote put in forty-five years' work for Freethought. He did not live too long or die too early, but he died when one phase of his life's work was finished. He died in harness, working for Freethought. His vigorous literary style was known throughout England, and he threw epigrams about containing the result of years of study. Had he given himself to politics or literature, there are few things he might not have done; but he chose to give himself to a great and enduring work. As a young man, he set out with a love for philosophic and academic argument, which he changed to a direct, plain, hard-hitting style. The reason for the change was, he told me, that he saw Charles Bradlaugh thrown out of the House of Commons. He realised that it was then time to take the gloves off, for he knew it was no debate, but a real battle. Orthodox folk hated him because they recognised him as a deadly opponent of superstition. That they lied about him, calling him an illiterate iconoclast, was only a proof of their hatred. Foote had to face a most malignant persecution. His offence was that he attacked what he believed to be false, and he did it in as plain and straightforward a manner as Thomas Paine. His devotion to great principles has made the intellectual road easier for both Freethinkers and Christians. He is not dead whilst his ideas are so much alive. We are not mere mourners, for we are still marching and fighting for the same Cause, and our only regret is that he is no longer by our side. When the flag of triumph floats over the grand City of the Future, the name of George William Foote will be found on that city's proud roll of honor.

Thus ended a memorable tribute to that gallant figure, whose leadership has done so much for Freethought. During his life he flung himself boldly in the path of the bandit Churches which aimed at the destruction of Rationalism, with a hate more ravaging than it has professed towards any other combatant. His resistance was a courageous and an effective blow for the saving of the Army of Liberty, of which we are a part. He could have surrendered, and he could have saved himself from all but dishonor by cringing before the bigots. Sooner than do this, he preferred the ignominy of the prison-cell. Surely, we owe him more than thanks and undying honor. Let us pay what we can of inextinguishable debt, and make the party's gift to his widow and daughter a tribute as splendid as the devoted heroism we seek in some measure to recognise.

C. E. S.

Some Well-Known Freethinkers I Have Met.—I.

GEORGE STANDRING.

WITH this article I commence a fresh series and a new title. In a letter I received a short time ago, from the subject of the present article, supplying me with a few biographical notes, Mr. Standring said, "I am in no way a 'Famous Freethinker,' and if you choose so to describe me, the responsibility will rest upon you." Well, in deference to my friend's desire, I will not take the responsibility, but George Standring cannot deny that he is a "well-known Freethinker," the degree of his fame, and the value of his services to the Cause, may be safely left to subsequent generations to determine.

George Standring has been a Freethinker as long as I can remember. When I first began to attend the lectures at the Hall of Science, in 1876, W. J. Ramsey and George Standring were familiar figures there. Mr. Ramsey frequently took the chair for Charles Bradlaugh when he delivered his great orations to the most enthusiastic crowds of people that ever congregated together on Sunday evenings to hear Freethought addresses in those stirring days, and Mr. George Standring was always to be found close at hand or upstairs in the Minor Hall attending to secretarial duties.

George Standring was born in the same year as myself, viz., 1855, on October 18, and we have both served the Cause in various capacities for over forty years. What years of strenuous fighting against

bigotry and intolerance, of exciting disputations, of legal fights for the rights of free speech and a free press! When the man arises who can give a faithful description in vivid and glowing language of all the stirring events that occurred in the Freethought Movement between 1876 and 1900, he will have a history to record worthy of the most famous heroes that have ever fought the intellectual battles of mankind.

As a youth, George Standring was a Wesleyan; then he became a chorister at a church, and used to sing at what he facetiously describes as "side-show services." In 1872 he "found grace," and attended some Christian Evidence lectures at the Hall of Science, which so far from converting him, confirmed him in his unbelief. The following year, young Standring began to attend regularly Bradlaugh's lectures at the Hall of Science, from which he derived much inspiration for effort in the cause of intellectual emancipation.

In 1874 he first met Mr. G. W. Foote, and in the same year he published some letters in the *National Reformer*. The following year he had the honor of being introduced to the illustrious Charles Bradlaugh, and shortly afterwards, wrote his first article for the *National Reformer*.

In 1875 he became a member of the Executive and Corresponding Secretary of the N. S. S., and at its Conference at Manchester, read a paper on Freethought. From that time forward he was in close association with Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, and worked assiduously for them in all the great struggles in which they were engaged. Taking an active part in the parliamentary election of Bradlaugh for Northampton in 1880, he stood steadfastly by him in the great constitutional struggle which followed. George Standring did his share of the work when Mr. Bradlaugh was charged, with Messrs. Foote and Ramsey at Guildhall, for "Blasphemy," and subsequently when he stood his trial at the Court of Queen's Bench, and was acquitted. In fact, George Standring worked as an enthusiastic soldier in Bradlaugh's gallant little army until the day of his great Leader's death.

After that he became Secretary of the London Secular Federation, and with Mr. Foote and Mr. R. O. Smith he worked out the scheme of organisation, drawing up its plan of operations himself. With our late leader, G. W. Foote, and others of the "Old Guard," he worked diligently for some years until differences on party affairs led to his withdrawal from active co-operation in the work of the National Secular Society. But he did not remain inactive long. His tongue and pen were always at the service of the Cause. He helped to found the Bradlaugh Fellowship, and became its treasurer.

During his career he has been associated in friendship and active Freethought work with, among others, Charles Bradlaugh, Mrs. Annie Besant, George Jacob Holyoake, and George William Foote. He also knew James Thomson (B. V.), and was very friendly with J. M. Wheeler and Mrs. Harriet Law. For a time he worked with Charles Watts and Joseph Symes, and thought a good deal of Touzeau Parris and W. W. Collins. In short, for twenty years—1875 to 1895—he knew everything and everybody worth knowing in the Party.

Early in my career as a lecturer, I used to meet George Standring pretty frequently. Like myself, he used to do a good deal of open-air speaking. I have heard him address a large gathering of interested listeners on Clerkenwell Green and at other open-air stations. Mr. Standring was a humorous speaker; but he not only knew how to make his audience laugh, he knew also how to make them think seriously too. As a general rule, he gave his audience a considerable amount of serious food for thought as well as a lot of good-natured humor and ridicule.

As a writer, George Standring has a distinct vein of humor all his own. He has been likened to Mark Twain, but his humor is less exaggerated and distinctly British. Under the title of an "An Atheist

at Church," he wrote a series of what he called "light-hearted sketches of public worship" that were distinctly original and clever. Some of the titles will give the reader an idea of what they were about, "A Morning with the Baptists," "An Hour with the Quakers," "'Blood and Fire' at the Grecian," and "With the Children of Israel." All these were real pictures of certain phases of religious life and teachings.

As a true follower of Charles Bradlaugh, Mr. Standring was a bit of a politician—a real Democrat and a radical reformer. The *Republican Chronicle* was started by him in 1875. He wrote an excellent *People's History of the English Aristocracy*, which was very popular among the Republican section of the Radical Party thirty years ago. A few years ago he was elected member of the Shoreditch Borough Council and did some good Freethought work by attempting to secularise some of the institutions of that ancient borough; and for many years he has been one of the most active members of the Malthusian League, rendering valuable assistance to the late Dr. C. R. Drysdale, and his distinguished son, C. V. Drysdale, D.Sc., thus assisting in the work which Charles Bradlaugh did so much to popularise. In other words, George Standring remains to-day a real disciple of Charles Bradlaugh—A Freethinker, a Malthusian, and a Radical—and I trust that he will live for many years to continue in various ways his useful labors for the benefit of mankind.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

The Historical Value of the Gospels.—IV.

(Continued from p. 780.)

SO far as the Synoptic record of the "resurrection" is concerned, the only evidence that dates from the first century is thus the very bald story of the women, which, admittedly, was not told at the time of the events described, and to which hardly any importance can be attached.

We have, however, an earlier piece of evidence in Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. Paul there states (as "that which he received") that Jesus, after rising on the third day, "appeared" (1) to Peter, (2) to all the apostles, (3) to "500 brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep," (4) to James (presumably "the Lord's brother" who is mentioned elsewhere by Paul), and (5) a second time to all the apostles. Paul adds, as on a similar footing, the "appearance" to himself, which he elsewhere claims to have been the occasion on which his apostleship and his peculiar religious doctrines were revealed to him.

I have elsewhere expressed the view that this vision of Paul's was most likely real, and was the outcome of the mental overturn brought about by the religious melancholy which seems, from Romans vii., to have taken possession of him in his youth. Paul was not a good reasoner, and his capacity for weighing evidence is not to be relied upon. Too much can be made of his statement about the "appearance" to the 500. He does not say that he knew any of the 500 himself. From the evidence supplied by the Epistle to the Galatians, it appears that he knew personally only Peter, James, and John of the apostolic body, and that he was, at any rate, not on familiar terms with the mass of the Jewish disciples. At the time of the crucifixion and the "appearances," the number 500 must have comprised almost, if not quite, the whole number of the disciples of Jesus. The author of the Acts—not a good authority, it is true—estimates their numbers, in Jerusalem itself, as only 120. We may suppose, then, with some probability, that what Paul had actually been told by Peter and James (or whoever gave him this information) was that an "appearance" had taken place before the whole body of believers, and that Paul, knowing their approximate number, describes this as an "appearance" to "500 brethren at once."

It seems certain that Paul's informants were Peter and James, on the occasion of his visit to them described in Galatians i. 18-19. We cannot avoid the conclusion, then, that Peter and James actually told Paul, a few years after the crucifixion, that each of them had seen Jesus after his resurrection, that on two occasions all the apostles had seen him, and that on one occasion the whole infant Church had seen him.

There are various theories which may be advanced to explain this. One, of course, is the traditional Christian view, that these disciples were simply speaking the truth, and that the dead body of Jesus had actually come to life. We shall give presently what we consider to be the proper and sufficient reason for dismissing this. Secondly, there is the hypothesis of "visions." Thirdly, the not very satisfactory theory, that Jesus had not died on the cross (which is possible), and had appeared to his followers in a natural way (which is improbable). Fourthly, the view that the legend of the resurrection originated in a "pious fraud," either on the part of the apostles or of somebody else.

We must remember that the disciples of Jesus were not a level-headed body of men and women, but a fanatical sect, like the early Quakers or Anabaptists, who, according to the best evidence available, had broken off all their worldly ties, and joined in a communistic life, in the fervent belief that the end of the world and the kingdom of heaven were at hand. The entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and his prestige among the poorer classes, had screwed the minds of these fanatics up to a high pitch of excitement, in which they were blind to all considerations of likelihood and possibility. They were even already dividing among themselves, in anticipation, the posts of honor in the new kingdom (Mark x. 35-40). The probability is that they had actually taken arms, and had been dispersed only by force when Jesus was arrested (Mark xiv. 47-50). The execution of Jesus would not necessarily, as suggested by orthodox apologists, have had the effect of disheartening and disillusioning them—certainly not in the case of all. Peter, no doubt, saved his own life by hard lying, but there must have been more violent spirits among them, to whom the crucifixion would merely seem as the sharp hour of persecution that was to precede the triumph of the Messiah. Jesus himself had possibly prepared the minds of some of them for his violent end. That, after it happened, a number of his disciples should even more strenuously maintain his imminent return, and should support their prediction by tales of visions, which many may have excited themselves into actually seeing, is an entirely natural sequel. Even the production of the dead body of Jesus might not have sufficed to dispose of their assertions; such is the power of unreason with fanatics.

As a matter of fact, the dead body was not produced. It may even be true that the tomb was found empty by the women. To account for such a fact, we should need to know more of the personality and motives of Joseph of Arimathea than we do, as well as to have more convincing evidence than we possess that Jesus actually died on the cross, on which he only hung for eight or nine hours. Now sufferers, as a matter of fact, often lived for days on the cross. It has been pointed out that Pilate seems to have been content with the assertion of the centurion that Jesus was dead, and that the centurion is stated to have been very far from hostile to the victim (Mark xv. 39). Further, if Pilate had sentenced Jesus to death in obedience to pressure, as reported, he might not have been disposed to be very scrupulous as to the effective execution of his sentence. Moreover, Joseph of Arimathea was a rich man, and officials of the stamp of Pilate have seldom been insensible to "palm oil." It is possible, therefore, as conjectured by Huxley and others, that Jesus was removed from the cross alive. (The "blood and water" story in the Fourth Gospel is, like most of that work, a piece of fiction, in spite of the narrator's protestations of veracity.)

It is conceivable, then, though of course quite incapable of proof, that Joseph of Arimathæa, after removing Jesus alive from the cross, rehearsed a mock funeral in order to deceive the authorities, and conveyed the injured man to his house after dark and in secret. The guard at the tomb is only mentioned in "Matthew," and is a very late feature of the story. It is conceivable that Joseph may have rigged out a confederate in white to go and tell the women that Jesus was risen and gone back to Galilee, while Jesus himself may have died quietly of his wounds while in Joseph's hands. Such conduct on the Arimathæan's part would have been either a "pious fraud," or an ingenious way of making fresh trouble for the enemies of Jesus. An alternative supposition, equally possible, is that Joseph secretly sent the rescued Jesus back to Galilee, in the care of his confidential servants, and that Jesus died in Galilee while in their hands, and was privately buried there. Either hypothesis would account for the disappearance and non-production of the body. We know that in the time of the final editor of "Matthew," say A. D. 130-150, the Jews held that the body had been stolen by friends (Matt. xvii. 12-15).

It is not likely that the actual story of the "appearances" is due to actual meetings between the revived Jesus and his disciples. Apart from the objection which orthodox Christians, on the whole fairly, offer to this, that a shattered and broken man could not have been taken for a glorified Messiah, there is no doubt (from 1 Cor. xv.) that the original story had no reference to appearances of Jesus in the flesh. Paul (and probably, therefore, the Jewish disciples) did not conceive of the "risen body," either of Jesus, or mankind generally in the future, as a physical organism. The conception is of a "spiritual body"—of course, a flat contradiction in terms, but doubtless corresponding broadly to the modern spiritualistic notion of a ghost, or "materialised" spirit. The stories which ascribe to Jesus after his "resurrection" such actions as eating, breathing, and asking Thomas to feel the print of the nails, etc., are entirely of the second century.

What remains to be accounted for, then, is not belief in the revival of a dead body, but certain statements made by Peter and James to Paul, a few years after the crucifixion, relative to appearances of the "ghost," as we should call it, of Jesus. We have mentioned above that, given the mentality of the first disciples, "visions" would have been quite a natural phenomenon. Some visions, in fact, there almost must have been. People who believe that the world is about to end in a few months or years, who practise such extravagances as "speaking with tongues" (see 1 Cor. xiv. 23 as to this), and who have broken off all the normal ties of life, are surely quite capable of producing a few visions, individual and collective, among them.

But we need not exclude altogether the operation of falsehood. Suppose the visions actually seen to have been confined to a handful of the wilder spirits, but to have been accepted and believed in by the rest of the infant Church. This is a very modest hypothesis. A few years later, Paul, the dreaded persecutor, comes to see Peter and James, and says in effect: "I have come round to the belief that Jesus is the Messiah. I have been told so by himself, for I have seen him in a vision. Did you see him too?" Now, imagine Peter and James, in point of fact, never to have seen the "risen" Jesus, but simply to have accepted and acted on the assurances of the zealots in the Church. To men of the highest intellectual honesty, Paul's question would have been a sore temptation to lie. A falsehood would win over Paul once and for all; the bare truth *might*, for all Peter and James knew, send him away, disillusioned, a more bitter enemy than before. The two men are not conscientious seekers after objective truth, but poor peasants, unlettered and biased. Why not lie to the glory of God and of Jesus? To Paul's question they answer: "Why, yes, of course we saw him. All the apostles saw him. All the disciples saw him." And the thing is done. The fifteenth chapter

of the First Epistle to the Corinthians is already in embryo. For Paul, glad to have his own dreams confirmed, would not cross-examine Peter and James too keenly.

"What," we hear the indignant Christian say here, "were these men, then, martyred for a lie?" Such a question shows a crude grasp of psychology. The human mind is not a mathematical instrument, but an artist's brush. The lie of to-day is the belief of a year hence, the axiom of after life, and the dogma of old age. The power of suggestion, especially reciprocal suggestion in a coterie of fanatics, to color and even manufacture conviction, is much underrated. It is in this way that myths grow up. We have seen in the last few months, in the growth of the Mons Angels story, how misunderstanding, fraud, and bias conspire to create conviction in hundreds of minds; and this in the "educated" twentieth century.

The answer to the Christian objector, who asks by what right we pretend to frame all sorts of round-about hypotheses rather than admit the fact of the resurrection, may be stated in a few words. In any ordinary mystery, and in this supposedly extraordinary one no less, we are entitled and obliged to exhaust the possibility of natural explanations (*i.e.*, explanations which cohere with the organised whole of experience) before we fall back on a supernatural explanation (*i.e.*, one which clashes with that whole). This is our only reason for disbelieving in many Catholic, Pagan, and Mohammedan miracles. It is equally a sufficient reason for disbelieving in the resurrection.

(To be continued.) ROBERT ARCH.

"Our Father."

"Somewhere in France' to-night my boy is sleeping,
Dreaming, perchance of her who lives for him;
I trust that he is in 'our Father's' keeping,
Yet, knowing not, the fire of Faith burns dim.
I see the hand of Grief on every brow;
Laughter is dead; suspense broods darkly now.
A postman's knock may prove the blow of Fate!
And I (O God!) I hope—and weep—and wait!"

"Somewhere in France' to-night my baby slumbers,
(My 'baby' still, despite the flight of years!)
He may be spared, please God, though countless numbers
Return no more, and half a world's in tears!"
.....Meanwhile, the mother-loved lies stiff and stark,
His long last sleep o'ertaken in the dark:
God made him target for a devil's hate—
God heard the prayers of her left desolate—
God laughs—to see a mother weep.....and wait!

JOHN YOUNG.

Obituary.

It is with sincere regret that I have to record the death of Mr. Wm. Henry Spivey, at the age of sixty-four, who for over thirty years was the Secretary of the Huddersfield Branch of the N. S. S. He had been in failing health for the past six months, added to which he had lost a son, killed at the Front last July, which to him was a great trouble. I visited him frequently during his illness, which at intervals caused him most violent pains. When those pains partially subsided for a time, he was always cheerful, and talked hopefully of the future of Secularism. The death of Mr. G. W. Foote came as a great blow to him, as to all of us; but he expressed great confidence in Mr. Cohen's ability and worth. I saw deceased alive for the last time on Monday, Nov. 29, and immediately after the usual salutations he made a request that I would see to it that a Secular Service should be given over his grave. I gave the promise, and although I am in my eightieth year, with the consent of his wife and family, I fulfilled it by reading our Secular Service myself, with a few appropriate remarks. Mr. Spivey in life was an earnest worker in all progressive movements, both local and political; he took great interest in Friendly Society work, and at his death was Treasurer to a Lodge of Oddfellows. By his death his widow has lost one of the best of husbands, his children a kind and loving father, and his friends a genial and upright companion. Notwithstanding a very heavy downfall of rain, a number of Secular friends were in attendance at the graveside to pay their last tribute to our departed friend.—ROBERT TABRUM.

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.

COUNTRY.**INDOOR.**

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