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*We hear much of martyrs and confessors—of those who were slain by the sword or consumed in the fire; but we know little of that still larger number who by the mere threat of persecution have been driven into an outward abandonment of their real opinions, and who thus forced into an apostasy the heart abhors, have passed the remainder of their life in the practice of a constant and humiliating hypocrisy.—T. H. BUCKLE.*

## Views and Opinions.

### REPRISALS.

I hope that no one will accuse me of sympathy with Zeppelin raiders if I venture to raise a protest—not for the first time—against all this wild talk about reprisals. These raids are brutal, cowardly, ineffective, and essentially stupid. They are an indication of the truth that whatever militarism does, it neither evokes nor demands a high degree of intelligence. It is, of course, no new teaching that the way to de-brutalize a brute is to show that you can be more brutal than he, but one is surprised to find no less a person than Lord Rosebery joining in the cry. Air raids—even though ten times as disastrous as any that have yet appeared—will not make the British people sue for peace. And I see no reason for assuming that their effect would be any different in Europe. The promiscuous slaughter of women and children and non-combatants generally can have no other effect than that of intensifying the process of brutalization, and that goes on rapidly enough in any case without our deliberately assisting. The bombing of German babies and women does not seem a bit more desirable than the murder of women and children in this country. If it were possible to make those responsible for these raids directly answerable when the War is over, that is another policy altogether, and is the only kind of reprisal with anything to commend it.

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### THE WAR AND A FUTURE LIFE.

It is strange that it should be so, and yet as it is so, we must accept the fact for what it is. The clergy are naturally trying to make the most of the War to bolster up their peculiar interests, and they assert that the War has brought the question of a future life home to people who never previously troubled their heads about it, while the wholesale destruction of life has filled them with a new hope and a quickened belief. I seriously question the last statement, although there may be some truth about the first. And yet the War has added nothing to what we already knew. The death of a million people does not make the question greater or more important than the death of a single person. Death is always an individual matter. All the pathos and all the tragedy of death may be seen in a single case as clearly as in the case of a thousand. It is entirely a question of discernment. All that has occurred at present is a larger number of individual cases; more people are suffering at the same time, and the clergy are simply trying to make capital out of a national disaster—here as elsewhere.

1,805

### EVOLUTION AND IMMORTALITY.

One point often raised in this connection was brought up in a discussion following a recent lecture of mine. It is an argument professedly based on evolution, but which succeeds in quite misunderstanding the evolutionary position. Man, it is argued, has evolved from the lowest beginnings. He has acquired a nervous structure and an intelligence superior to any in the animal world. Is it conceivable, we are asked, that this evolution is to stop short at death, that the organism it has taken millenniums to evolve will sink into nothingness? Is it not far more rational to believe that human evolution will continue—if not in this phase of existence, then in some other? Most of my readers will be familiar with this argument—it is quite a favourite with men of the type of Sir Oliver Lodge, but it is wholly fallacious. At most evolution leaves the question of a future life where it was. This is the most that can be said on the side of the believer, although I believe that the inferences against the belief in a future life are strengthened by an understanding of evolutionary philosophy.

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### THE INDIVIDUAL OR THE MAN.

It is not difficult to detect the fallacy involved in this argument from evolution. When it is said that man has evolved from the lower animals, we are only stating a truth so long as we are dealing with the species. Man as an individual does not so evolve. Neither does man as an individual continue evolving. Individual human capacity is, so far as we can see, a strictly determinable quality. Capacity may be developed and applied, but it cannot be increased. An idiot will remain an idiot to the end of the chapter, although he may be taught to make the use of whatever capacity he possesses. But man, as an individual, does not go on evolving. This statement is true only of the race. And the evolution of the race continues despite—perhaps, because of—the death of the individual. And apart from individual egotism there is no reason why an educated flea of a religious turn of mind should not urge the same argument on behalf of its own immortality. For its structure also represents an evolution from a lower type, no less in its degree than man's. And so, too, might it make the claim that unless it were destined to go on evolving in some future life, its annihilation at death would make the story of evolution meaningless.

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### ORGANIZATION AND LIFE.

I am reminded by much of the current chatter about organization of some striking remarks by Richard Jefferies in that most remarkable of spiritual biographies, *The Story of My Heart*. He says:—

That twelve thousand years should have elapsed, and the human race—able to reason and to think, and easily capable of combination in immense armies for its own destruction—should still live from hand to mouth like cattle and sheep.....In twelve thousand written years the world has not yet built itself a House, nor filled a granary, nor organized itself for its own comfort. It is so marvellous I cannot express the wonder with which it fills me.....Why do people die of starvation, or lead a miserable existence on the verge of it? Why have millions upon millions to toil from morning to evening just to gain a mere crust of bread? Because



of the absolute lack of organization by which such labour should produce its effect, the absolute lack of distribution, the absolute lack even of the very idea that such things are possible. Nay, even to mention such things, to say that they are possible, is criminal with many. Madness could hardly go farther.

Point is given to Jefferies remarks by the fact that even now the motive to organization is of the poorest description. Nearly two thousand years of Christian rule has not taught the world the need for rational organization to some genuine social end. It is Christians who are showing the world that the only purpose which can impress them with the need for organization is the desire to slaughter other Christians. In times of "peace" the deadly warfare of social life may bring death and disease to thousands, and ruin the lives of thousands of others. But with the sound of war all Christians are ready to organize, and to let the task of killing their fellow-Christians take its place as the prime social need. And when the War is over, will Christians see then that the organization by which battles are won may be profitably applied to that social struggle for a better life which is always with us? I have my doubts. Ready to organize for destruction, Christians have always shown themselves hesitant in organizing for a more rational social life.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

### Bibliolatry and Puritanism.

WHEN Puritanism made its appearance in this country, in the days of Queen Elizabeth, it was a movement that aimed at the purification and simplification of the national life. From the very first the Puritans, as a class, were violent assailants of the established order. Their hatred of the Catholic Church was a burning passion, nor could they tolerate any practices in the Church of England which in the slightest degree savoured of the Papacy. The "platform" of Puritanism was set forth in the Millenary Petition which was presented to James I. on his accession by some eight hundred clergymen, and at one time there was every likelihood of its being carried into effect. In 1642, bishops were deprived of their seats in Parliament, and on two occasions, in 1643 and 1646, Episcopacy itself was abolished in favour of Presbyterianism. In 1645, even the Book of Common Prayer fell into disfavour, and its use was discontinued. Indeed, we may almost say that for nearly eighty years England was a Puritan country. As a matter of fact, however, the nation never really loved Puritanism, and often complained of its pettiness and tyranny. With the Restoration, this constitutional dislike burst into an all-consuming flame, "and in an instant the whole face of England was changed," as Green puts it. Most of the Puritans broke away from the Established Church, and split up into various sects, such as Independents, Brownists, Baptists, and Quakers.

It must be frankly admitted that some of the early Puritans were beautiful characters. Colonel Hutchinson, for example, who was diligent in his "examination of the Scriptures," and whose piety shone most brightly on all occasions, was said by his wife to be "as kind a father, as dear a brother, as good a master, as faithful a friend, as the world had." "He had a loving and sweet courtesy to the poorest, and would often employ many spare hours with the commonest soldiers and poorest labourers." John Milton was another Puritan, whom Green describes as "not only the highest, but the completest type of Puritanism..... In spite of the war between playwright and precisian, a Puritan youth could still in Milton's days avow his love of the stage, if Jonson's learned sock be on, or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child, warble his native woodnotes wild, and gather from the 'masques and antique pageantry' of the court-revel hints for his own *Comus* and *Arcades*." And yet even in Milton we can trace a certain narrowing of sympathy and restricting of enjoyment which

caused him to retire from intercourse with ordinary men and women. Cromwell and Bunyan regarded the enjoyment of the natural buoyancy of youth as a mortal sin, to be repented of in dust and ashes. A love of hockey and of dancing on the village green was the sin the sense of which drove the Bedford genius mad with remorse. A fanatic preached a sermon against dancing and games, which made a deep impression upon his mind; but it soon wore off, as he thus tells us:—

I shook the sermon out of my mind, and to my old custom of sports and gaming I returned with great delight. But the same day, as I was in the midst of a game of cat, and having struck it one blow from the hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a voice did suddenly dart from heaven into my soul, which said, "Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to Heaven, or have thy sins and go to Hell?" At this I was put in an exceeding maze; wherefore, leaving my cat upon the ground, I looked up to heaven; and was as if I had with the eyes of my understanding seen the Lord looking down upon me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if he did severely threaten me with some grievous punishment for those and other ungodly practices.

Poor Bunyan! The Puritans disapproved of everything that made children merry and happy. Pretty colours, jewels, and expensive clothing were forbidden. Theatres were the Devil's chapels, and actors and actresses the ministers of Satan. Hunting, maypoles, the decking of houses with evergreens at Christmas, cards, music, and artificial hair were evils to be avoided by the people of God.

Now, how are we to account for the narrowness, bigotry, and tyranny of the Puritans? The answer is that they became what they were as the inevitable outcome of their insane Bibliolatry. John Richard Green says:—

No greater moral change ever passed over a nation than passed over England during the years which parted the middle of the reign of Elizabeth from the meeting of the Long Parliament. England became the people of a book, and that book was the Bible (*Short History of the English People*, p. 460)

We know well how England fared while undergoing that great moral change, during a period of sixty years. Have we not all read of the horrible massacres in Ireland, the plots to assassinate Elizabeth, the many civil wars that occurred, the thirty years' war, and the innumerable deeds of darkness committed by godly men? The influence of the Bible upon England during that time was by no means of an elevating and ennobling character. There was a superabundance of religion in the land, but truth and righteousness were conspicuous only by their absence. Grotius said of England, "Theology rules there." That last of the great scholars of the sixteenth century, Casaubon, upon visiting our country at the invitation of King James, said, "There is a great abundance of theologians in England; all point their studies in that direction." He also discovered that both king and people were indifferent to pure letters. Whilst "the whole nation became, in fact, a Church," freedom of thought and expression gradually disappeared. When Bruno was here, in 1583-4, he succeeded in sowing the seed of Free-thought in London and Oxford, Sir Philip Sidney being one of his ardent admirers and disciples, and for some years the spirit of inquiry and free discussion prevailed; but soon after Elizabeth died, speculators like Marlowe and Raleigh became quite impossible. Under the first two of the Stuarts and during the Commonwealth, the only book read was the Bible. Even as far back as the much-imprisoned Bishop Bonner's day, six Bibles were to be found in St. Paul's, and "many well-disposed people used much to resort to the hearing thereof, especially when they could get any that had an audible voice to read to them." We are told that later the small German Bibles were diligently studied in nearly all the homes in the land, with the result that bigots and persecutors multiplied with alarming rapidity. The Presbyterians of the period were notoriously narrow-minded and intolerant. Professor Thomas Cartwright,



of Cambridge, though a great scholar, and unquestionably pious, violently attacked all who held different opinions from his own. The cross in baptism, the surplice, the giving of a ring in marriage, and all ceremonies were denounced by him as idolatrous and marks of the beast. Instead of a State-controlled Church, in which Elizabeth believed, he advocated a Church-controlled State, in which the Presbyter was to enjoy supreme authority, for his use of which he was to be responsible to God alone. Even public morals were to be under the supervision of the same official. The civil rulers had nothing to do but to carry out the decisions of the Presbyters. Presbyterianism was to be the only form of Church Government tolerated, while all other forms were to be ruthlessly suppressed:—

For heresy there was the punishment of death. Never had the doctrine of persecution been urged with such a blind and reckless ferocity. "I deny," wrote Cartwright, "that upon repentance there ought to follow any pardon of death.....Heretics ought to be put to death now. If this be bloody and extreme, I am content to be counted with the Holy Ghost" (*Ibid*, p. 469).

Cartwright was a devout student of the Bible, and a worthy successor of the Apostle Paul. All Bibliolaters are bound to be heartless bigots. If they are not, there is a flaw in their worship of the Book and of the Book's God. It will be remembered that those who differed from St. Paul were declared to be "full of all guile and all villainy, sons of the Devil, and enemies of all righteousness." We may be reminded that present-day Christians are noted for their toleration, but this is due to the fact that they are less loyal to the Book and less zealous for Christ than their forefathers were. The Puritans had the courage of their convictions, however false those convictions may have been. So had the Catholics of the Dark Ages, whose consistency we cannot but admire, while vigorously detesting their creed.

J. T. LLOYD.

### Ever a Fighter.

Speedy end to superstition, a gentle one if you can contrive it, but an end.—CARLYLE.

The animosities pass, the humanities are eternal.

—CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

The poet hath no creed; his mind is lit with Nature's intuition.—WILLIAM DOWLING.

ROBERT BUCHANAN always bulked largely upon the literary horizon of his own day. He was not only a real poet, but an accomplished dramatist, a successful novelist, and a slashing critic. Even during the most strenuous part of his career he never forgot his high aims, and he always put good work into what he did. Once, perhaps, in one of his articles, he uttered something like a cry of despair. He quoted the line from De Musset, "the dead young poet whom the man survives." This line, pregnant with meaning and sad in the extreme, would apply to so many writers who have started on their careers full of enthusiasm, but who have outlived their early ideals. But Buchanan, notwithstanding his strenuous career, was always full of enthusiasm, and he retained his youthfulness to the last.

In Browning's expressive phrase, Buchanan was "ever a fighter." Cradled in poetry, he fought his way by the pen's point to an enviable position in the world. Much of his tenacity he owed to his father, who was a follower of Robert Owen and a militant Freethinker in those dark days when it was dangerous to hold anti-religious views. In 1859, young Buchanan came to London and began that struggle with fortune in which he was ultimately victorious, although his early experiences left a lasting impress on his sensitive nature. In these years he was associated with David Gray, the gifted and unfortunate young writer to whom Buchanan was united by the bonds of a passionate affection. His early death was, to the surviving friend, as bitter a blow as the loss of Henry Hallam to Tennyson. And as Hallam's death

inspired "In Memoriam," one of the most exquisite of poems, so the death of David Gray moved Buchanan to utterances of sorrow which rank amongst his best verse.

Like most men of ability, Buchanan had a good conceit of himself. One publisher declared of him at that time, "I can't stand that young fellow. He came into my office, and he talked to me as if he were Almighty God, or Lord Byron." Years afterwards, Buchanan used to say, with a spice of malice, "Barabbas was a publisher." In his case it was pardonable. For years he worked with the scantiest recognition and the smallest reward. For a time he used journalism as a crutch. Even so it was hard to live, but his courage prevailed, and he stormed eventually the bastions of success. For years his work was adversely criticized. He scored a sweet revenge in 1873 when he published *St. Abe and His Seven Wives*, and *White Rose and Red*. Both volumes appeared without his name, and were received with roars of applause by the journalists who had hitherto dubbed the author a pretentious versifier. The books were ascribed to James Russell Lowell, which was in itself a compliment.

Young Buchanan had to fight unaided, for his shield bore the motto, "No Compromise." He was a literary Ishmael, and every man's hand was against him. This position has at least one advantage. Buchanan had to keep his sword sharp, and to strike hard. His appearance in the arena always meant real fighting. When he attacked Christianity he did not lop branches, but he attacked the roots of the tree. He threw himself against the personality of the Nazarene, and penned in *The Wandering Jew* the most tremendous poetical indictment of Christ in English literature. In the dialectical encounters which followed, Buchanan held his own bravely, and his opponents left the arena hurriedly. Always a most sensitive and humane man, his objections to Christianity were as much ethical as intellectual. He often got some very startling effects in his writings by this union of intellect and emotion. Listen to this description of "God in Piccadilly":—

Poisonous paint on us, under the gas  
Smiling like spectres, we gather bereaven,  
Leprosy's taint on us, ghost-like we pass,  
Watched by the eyes of yon pitiless heaven!  
Let the stars stare at us! God, too, may glare at us  
Out of the void where He hideth so well—  
Sisters of midnight, He damned us in making us,  
Cast us like carrion to men, then forsaking us,  
Smiles from His throne on these markets of Hell!

Some very outspoken thoughts are elaborated in a sonnet addressed to "Our Father in Heaven":—

Oh! Thou art pitiless! They call Thee Light,  
Law, Justice, Love, but Thou art pitiless.  
What thing of earth is precious in Thy sight  
But weary waiting on and soul's distress?  
When dost Thou come with glorious hands to bless  
The good man that dies cold for lack of Thee?  
When bringest Thou garlands for our happiness?  
Whom dost Thou send but Death to set us free?  
Blood runs like wine—foul spirits sit and rule—  
The weak are crushed in every street and lane—  
He who is generous becomes the fool  
Of all the world, and gives his life in vain.  
Wert Thou as good as Thou art beautiful  
Thou couldst not bear to look upon such pain.

The pious journalists pronounced the poet a blasphemer. They saw quite clearly that the underlying ethical appeal was a more dangerous weapon in his hands than any more scholastic test. Here is another frontal attack:—

Oh, what have sickly children done to share  
Thy cup of sorrows? Yet their dull, sad pain  
Makes the earth awful; on the tomb's dark stair  
Moan idiots, with no glimmer on the brain;  
No shrill priest with his hangman's cord can beat  
Thy mercy into these—ah nay, ah nay!  
The angels Thou hast sent to haunt the street  
Are hunger and distortion and decay.  
Lord! that mad'st man and sendest him foes so fleet,  
Who shall judge Thee upon Thy judgment day?

Buchanan always rated his poems more highly than his other work, voluminous though that was. Certainly his unique personality came out in his poems more vividly than in his prose. He had a keen sense of the joy of life. His passion for Nature, his love



for his fellows, was at the root of his objection to Christianity, and he has voiced his passion in most melodious language. He was one who loved to roam the world afoot under all skies, to be in the long grass, to wander through the aisles of forests, to feel the sun or rain on his face, and to glow in consciousness with Nature.

In private life Buchanan was one of the most loveable of men. Like the great Dumas, he was very hospitable, and always had his house full of friends. Mr. Henry Murray went to see him for a week-end, and stayed two years. Whenever he suggested departing, the poet would not hear of it, and so the months slipped by. During this time the two authors collaborated, and wrote a novel and a play together. Adulation is not a weakness of Mr. Murray's, but his testimony to Buchanan's character is whole-hearted. He was, he says—

the best man I have ever known, the bravest, the most honest, the most cordial, the most kindly, the wisest in counsel, the readiest in help.

Buchanan's finest work is to be found in *The City of Dream*, a beautiful poem, which received a richly deserved eulogy from Lacky, the historian, at one of the Royal Academy banquets. Some of his shorter poems are enormously popular, notably *Phil Blood's Leap* and *Fra Giacomo*. As a novelist he had a tremendous vogue, and he numbered his readers by tens of thousands. All his stories are readable, but he reached high-water mark with his *Shadow of the Sword* and *God and the Man*, two powerfully written books with a Titanic background, such as Victor Hugo loved to portray.

The life of this gifted man shows that character and genius are more than mere opinion. Here was one who was always fighting, but he had, as was said of Byron, "the imperishable excellence of strength and sincerity." Not only the world of literature, but the larger world, was sensibly the poorer for the loss of Robert Buchanan. He was buried in the loveliest month in the year, whilst the fragrance of the June roses was in the air. The lilacs were still lingering and waving their white and purple plumes, the laburnums dropping their golden chains, the may perfuming the ways, and the thrushes singing in the tree-tops. He lies there always within sound of the sea he loved so well. As the queen of months returns, our thoughts go to the grave of one of the most romantic and striking personalities of our time, who, to use the exquisite lines of Shakespeare, carved upon his tombstone, "After life's fitful fever sleeps well."

MIMNERMUS.

## Religion, Science, and the War.—VII.

(Concluded from p. 102)

Whatever we may think of the cosmic forces generally, the human part of that process does not encourage a theological interpretation. Man is working out his own destiny, and doing it ill. We see him, like some peddler plodding along a country road under his burdens, carrying through whole centuries institutions and ideas and follies that he will eventually shed. When he drops them, there is no more element of miracle or revelation in his action than when he discovers the use of steam or aluminium or of the spectro-scope. His mind expands and his ideals rise. It is a little incongruous to suppose that some infinitely wise and affectionate parent was looking on all the time and giving his assistance.—JOSEPH MCCABE, *The War and the Churches*, pp. 87-88.

Man's political capacity and magnanimity are clearly beaten by the vastness and complexity of the problems forced on him. And it is at this anxious moment that he finds, when he looks upward for a mightier mind to help him, that the heavens are empty.—G. B. SHAW, *Man and Superman* (1906), p. 185.

WE must remember that Christ never had the power to enforce his teachings by the sword, neither had his followers until the time of Constantine, in the fourth century; but there is not the slightest doubt, as we have seen, that he would have done so had he been acknowledged as the promised King and Messiah.

When Christianity obtained command of the Roman Empire, it used all the resources of the Empire to coerce heathen nations into accepting the Christian faith. It is recorded in history that nation after nation were offered the alternatives of conversion to the Christian faith or extermination.

It is recorded, among other fables, in the *Life of Constantine*, written by the wily and unscrupulous Eusebius, the friend and historian of Constantine, that just before the battle of the Milvian Bridge, in which Constantine defeated the Emperor Maxentius (A. D. 312), a luminous cross appeared in the heavens, with the inscription, *Hoc signo vinces* ("By this sign conquer"). If he had said a flaming sword appeared, it would have been more appropriate. Indeed, they are not unlike, for the Crusaders' swords were shaped like a cross, so that they might be used in worship and for slaughtering the enemy, as occasion required. Sometimes the name of Jesus was engraved on the blade. Daggers of the Middle Ages may still be seen in museums fashioned in the shape of a crucifix.

We have now traced the influence of religion on the war-spirit. Let us next examine the charges made against science in regard to war. It has been said that science is responsible for the terrible weapons of destruction used in the present War—for the high explosives, the machine-guns, the gigantic heavy artillery. It would be just as plausible to charge science with the atrocities committed by the Inquisition, because the Inquisitors availed themselves of the scientific principles involved in the manufacture of the thumbscrew, the pulley, and the rack.

High explosives are very useful in coal mining and rock blasting, their legitimate use; just as the most powerful poisons are very beneficial curative agents in certain diseases. We regard the poisoner with horror, but we are not yet civilized enough to have the same repugnance for the murderous use of guns and explosives as we have for the murderous use of poison. Nor will the change come by means of religion. The palmy days of religion, when kings and emperors trembled under the anathema of Popes, are gone, never to return. As humanity advances on the pathway of civilization, the religions wilt and fade. As Schopenhauer truly said, "Religions are like glow-worms; they require darkness to shine in." Under the white light of science, they wither and die.

Another, and more plausible, charge is that brought against the Darwinian theory of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest. This has been food and drink to the religious world. By this means they hope to finally discredit their great enemy, Darwinism.

The German General von Bernhardt, in his much-quoted book, *England as Germany's Vassal*, propounds the argument as follows: Wherever we look in nature, he writes,—

we find that war is a fundamental law of development. This great verity, which has been recognized in past ages, has been convincingly demonstrated in modern times by Charles Darwin. He proved that nature is ruled by an unceasing struggle for existence, by the right of the stronger, and that this struggle, in its apparent cruelty, brings about a selection eliminating the weak and unwholesome.

And again:—

From the first beginning of life, war has been the basis of all healthy development. Struggle is not merely the destructive, but the life-giving principle. The law of the stronger holds good everywhere. Those forms survive which are able to secure for themselves the most favourable conditions of life. The weaker succumb.

Therefore, in the struggle of State and State for supremacy, "Might is at once the supreme right, and the dispute as to what is right is to be decided by the arbitrament of war. War gives a biologically just decision, since its decisions rest on the very nature of things."

Whether General von Bernhardt will accept the defeat of Germany by the Allies as a "biologically



just decision" remains to be seen; but those who wish to see a complete refutation of Bernhardt's interpretation of Darwinism will find what they want in a little half-crown book, entitled *Evolution and the War*, by Chalmers Mitchell, a competent scientist, and secretary to the Zoological Society of London.

Mr. Chalmers Mitchell shows that this conception of the struggle for existence as a war between different species—as one nation wars upon another—is altogether fallacious. He says:—

One species is not supposed to advance in serried ranks against another, wolves against bears, eagles against vultures, firs against beeches, and so forth. The competition is internal, amongst the individuals of a species. Darwin applied the Malthusian law of population to the animal and vegetable kingdoms generally. All organisms tend to multiply at a rate that would rapidly outstrip the food supply.....A turbot, for instance, can produce as many as fifteen millions of eggs in a season, so that if all the descendants of a single pair of turbot were to survive, the whole area of the oceans would be filled with a solid mass of fishes.....too many young are produced, and there is an active competition among the young and among adults, not only for food, but for other necessary conditions of life, such as air and water, sunlight or shadow, house-room and play-ground. According to Darwin, the result of these circumstances is that on the average the individuals better adapted to secure their necessary share of these conditions of life survive longer and leave more progeny than their less fortunate relatives (pp. 23 24).

Mr. Chalmers Mitchell, after giving several illustrations from nature controverting Bernhardt's statement, concludes:—

Looking through the animal kingdom as a whole, and remembering that the vegetable kingdom is as much subject and responsive to whatsoever may be the law of organic evolution, I find no grounds for interpreting Darwin's "metaphorical phrase," the struggle for existence, in any sense that would make it a justification for war between nations. It is my business just now to refute a misconception of the struggle rather than to explain what it is. But, if the latter were my task, I could adduce from the writings of Darwin himself, and from those of later naturalists, a thousand instances taken from the animal kingdom in which success has come about by means analogous with the cultivation of all the peaceful arts, the raising of the intelligence, and the heightening of the emotions of love and pity.\*

Darwin himself hated war and the accursed military spirit. Mr. Chalmers Mitchell quotes a passage from the second edition of Darwin's *Descent of Man*, in which he points out its evils. Darwin says:—

In every country in which a large standing army is kept up, the finest young men are taken by conscription or are enlisted. They are thus exposed to early death during war, are often tempted into vice, and are prevented from marrying during the prime of life. On the other hand, the shorter and feebler men, with poor constitutions, are left at home, and consequently have a much better chance of marrying and of propagating their kind.

As Mr. Chalmers Mitchell remarks on this passage: "It is at least clear that Darwin cannot fairly be cited, as Von Bernhardt and others have taken him, as a witness for the proposition that war is the great elevating force of nations" (p. 75).

We have now outlined the attitude of religion, science, and Freethought towards war and the war-spirit. We had intended dealing with the teachings of Nietzsche, about which the clericals rave so much, but, owing to the War, we are obliged to postpone this for the time being.

W. MANN.

## The Gospel of Mark.—VI.

(Concluded from p. 109.)

THE question which next calls for notice is the first appearance of the three Synoptical Gospels, a matter

\* Chalmers Mitchell, *Evolution and the War*, p. 41.

upon which no Biblical critic has yet offered a rational explanation.

Going back to the church at Jerusalem, we may say that shortly after the year A.D. 80 copies of Matthew's Aramaic Gospel were sent to the members of the sect in Egypt, whose language was Greek. There, before many years had passed, several Greek translations had been made, and a little later the Gentile church at Alexandria had copies, some of which were passed on to the Gentile churches at Rome, Corinth, and Antioch. But the Pauline Christians, who believed Jesus to be a god, would not long be satisfied with the primitive *Matthew*. Hence, after a decade or two, several apocryphal writings written in Greek began to appear, two of them narrating a Virgin Birth, but all representing the Christian Saviour as a divine Being—the writers, of course, being Gentiles. Next, after the lapse of two or three decades, a period arrived when the Gentile Christians did not know how much or how little of the later narratives they might safely believe—all of which the Nazarene church at Jerusalem rejected. Then came a time (say, A.D. 135—150) when some presbyters or teachers of long standing in some of the churches entered upon the task of compiling new Gospels which should contain only matters which were deemed historical. Upon this subject Luke, who according to tradition was a native of Antioch, says (i 1—4):—

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been believed among us, even as they who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, delivered them unto us, it seemed good to me also.....to write to thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.

Here the words in italics show plainly that Luke was compiling a new Gospel for the reason I have stated—which evangel now contains everything that Luke, a Paulinist, believed to be true. We also see from this Preface that it was believed in Luke's time that the original narratives had been written by eye-witnesses in apostolic times—a period which is called "the beginning." We are also to understand that those to whom Luke refers as compiling new Gospels had already done so, otherwise he could have had no knowledge of the fact. Among these Gospels were: the canonical *Mark* (about A.D. 135); the Gospels of *Marcion* and *John* (about A.D. 140); the canonical *Matthew* (about A.D. 145). Luke's own Gospel might be about A.D. 150. That these dates are not later than the evidence warrants will be perceived when it is remembered that the primitive *Matthew* was in use in the time of Clement—A.D. 130—140.

The canonical *Matthew* was compiled from the primitive *Matthew* and later apocryphal writings—one of the latter being a Virgin Birth story. All the sayings of the "Sermon on the Mount" character were gathered together, carefully revised, and represented as delivered upon one occasion (Matt. v., vi., vii.). Seven parables, only two of which are recorded by Mark, were placed together, and said to have been also delivered upon one occasion (Matt. xiii.). Another parable and a representation of the Last Judgment (Matt. xxv.), apparently unknown to Mark, are given by Matthew only. It is, however, not now possible to say exactly what new matters were added to the primitive *Matthew*, nor by whom the revision was made; but the revised Gospel was known, as before, as that "according to Matthew."

The canonical *Mark* was compiled, as we have seen, from the primitive *Matthew*, the compiler adding many imaginary details to the narratives. In some cases Mark's very large additions have completely transformed the stories. In that of the *Dæmoniac of Gadara* (Matt. viii.; Mark v.) Matthew's short narrative of seven verses is drawn out by Mark into twenty verses. The same is the case in the account of Herod's birthday feast (Matt. xiv.; Mark ix.) in that of the epileptic boy (Matt. xvii.; Mark ix.) and the woman with an issue of blood (Matt. ix.; Mark v.); besides several others. Now, the four



narratives just mentioned being undoubtedly fictitious, it follows necessarily that Mark's long and detailed additions are of the same character. And these fraudulent narratives, we are told, were derived from the statements of an eye-witness—the preaching of Peter—who is thus, by implication, made to be a religious deceiver.

In one of Watts & Co.'s volumes, *History of New Testament Criticism*, I notice a quotation from Renan's *Les Evangiles* referring to the first original Gospel, from which I make the following extract:—

It is towards the year 75 that we conjecturally set the moment at which were sketched out the features of that image before which eighteen centuries have knelt..... The language used was that in which Jesus's own words were couched; that is to say, the Syro-Chaldaic, wrongly denominated Hebrew..... It was in this dialect, obscure and devoid of literary culture, that was traced the first pencil sketch of the book which has charmed so many souls. No doubt, if the Gospel had remained a Hebrew or Syriac book, its fortunes would soon have been cut short. It was in a Greek dress that the Gospel was destined to reach perfection and assume the final form in which it has gone round the world. Still, we must not forget that the Gospel was a Syrian book written in a Semitic language.

Now, as a simple matter of fact, all our reverend critics appear to have forgotten that the first and original Gospel was written in the language of Palestine (called Syro-Chaldaic, Aramaic, or Aramean), and that our three Greek Synoptics, *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke*, were derived in some way from that Gospel. When, therefore, these critics represent *Mark* as the first Greek evangel and as having no written records behind it, they intentionally disregard the prior existence of the original Aramaic Gospel. Such criticism is simply an apologetic attempt to conceal the truth. Upon this subject Dr. Carpenter says:—

The Gospel according to the Hebrews..... was believed to be closely related to our *Matthew*, though the small portions of it which have been preserved do not bear out that view.

Here it should be noted that these "small portions" were quoted by orthodox Gentile writers from the Nazarene Gospel in existence in the third and fourth centuries, and that they only cited portions which differed in some way from the same narratives in the Synoptics, and which on that account might be of interest to their readers. As an example, the following is quoted from the Gospel of the Hebrews by Jerome (in the fourth century):—

If thy brother has sinned in word, and done thee amends, seven times in a day receive him. Simon his disciple said to him, Seven times in a day? The Lord answered and said unto him, Yea, I say unto thee, until seventy times seven. For in the prophets also, after they were anointed with the Holy Spirit there was found word of sin.

*Matthew* and *Luke* have both recorded this incident; but *Mark* has omitted it. The two canonical accounts read:—

Matt. xviii 21, 22.—Then came Peter, and said to him, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? until seven times? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times, but until seventy times seven.

Luke xvii. 3 4 —If thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in a day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

Here we see that *Matthew* and *Luke* have both omitted the words italicised in the Aramaic Gospel—assuming those words to have been in the primitive *Matthew*. Next, it may be seen how completely the incident has been recast in our present *Matthew*, as well as the fact that *Luke*'s version, though it rejects the "seventy times seven," is a distinct improvement both upon *Matthew*'s version and the Aramaic.

Next, it should be borne in mind that the *raison d'être* of the society of the Nazarenes was not a belief in Jesus (who had never been regarded as more than a prophet), but that the members of the sect might live together in strict conformity with the precepts and regulations of the so-called "Sermon on the

Mount"—which "Sermon" contained all the rules of conduct of the society before, as well as after, the advent of Jesus.

The fact that this last of the prophets was represented as working miracles is in itself, as already stated, undoubted evidence of what must be called fraud. There is, moreover, no way of getting over the self-evident fact that the narratives in the Gospels cannot be called historical, and that even if all the miraculous element be eliminated, what is left is not "history." Again, one of the results of comparing the narratives common to the three Synoptics is that we cannot feel certain that either the sayings or the non-miraculous doings of the Gospel Jesus are really historical: for even in the few cases in which the three accounts are in exact verbal agreement, we know that this was due merely to the fact that all three Synoptists had adhered closely to the wording of an earlier document.

With regard to Jesus working miracles, the writers of the original document who were associated with *Matthew*, might, if taxed with dishonesty, reply in effect—that since prophets in the Hebrew scriptures were represented as performing miracles, why might not they ascribe similar works to one of their own sect? If *Elijah* raised a widow's son from the dead several hundred years before (1 Kings xvii. 22), why might not they, in later times, represent their Jesus as raising a ruler's daughter? And if, again, *Elisha* once fed a hundred men with twenty loaves (2 Kings iv. 44), why could not they make their Jesus feed five thousand men with only five loaves? Could they not, if it so pleased them, compose a religious romance sacred to the memory of one of the most respected members of their society, then long deceased? To such a question there could be but one answer—"Why, certainly"! Again, was it their fault if an officious self-appointed teacher named Paul believed their little romance to be fact, and went about preaching and proclaiming their newly made prophet to be a god? Here, again, there could be but one reply—"Certainly not"!

We find in the Gospel of *Matthew* that the chief events in the alleged public ministry of Jesus are stated to have occurred as the fulfilment of prophecy. The Christian Saviour, it is said, did this, that, or the other, in order "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying"—; whereas, as a simple matter of fact, it was these so-called "prophecies" which suggested to the original Gospel writers the events which were to happen in the imaginary ministry of Jesus.

There are several other questions, including the alleged "toning down" of portions of *Mark* by *Matthew* and *Luke*, which require further investigation. These may form the subject of a supplementary paper later on. There are also some most extraordinary statements made by Mr. Aroh which should be noticed; but as that gentleman may probably have something more to say, I will leave them for the present.

ABRACADABRA.

## Correspondence.

FROM CHRISTIANITY TO SECULARISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In the kind sketch of me done by our talented portrait painter, Arthur B. Moss, the title of my first pamphlet, published in 1883, has got misprinted. It should be *The New Pilgrim's Progress from Christianity to Secularism*.

F. J. GOULD.

The Bishop of Chelmsford has written a congratulatory letter to a Congregational minister, and a Free Church periodical refers to the matter as "broadmindedness." It took the Christian Church nearly two thousand years to reach this standard of etiquette. Formerly, ecclesiastics used to murder their rivals.



## Acid Drops.

Our readers may remember that some time ago we made a few comments on the Bishop of London saying, "Thank God for the Zeppelins!" The Secretary of the New Lansdowne Club, Mr. A. L. Cox, used the phrase in an address, so one of his audience wrote the Bishop as to its accuracy, and the reply received was to the effect that he did not invoke God's blessing on the Zeppelins. The Bishop, we observe, does not deny having used the expression, but explains that he meant we ought to thank God for being able to share the dangers faced by our soldiers. We do not share the danger; it is a new danger, and cannot help the men at the Front in the slightest degree. Thanking God when we have bombs dropped on us because our men are away fighting only makes the absurdity, if possible, greater. One would have thought that if, as the Bishop believes, we are fighting God's fight, the least he could do would be to protect the women and children who are left at home. And a sensible man would have kept silent when he found this was not being done.

The *Daily Express*, which prints some correspondence on the subject, says there is no doubt "that Mr. Cox and the *Freethinker* deliberately told a falsehood." On the Bishop's own showing, no falsehood has been told, as the substantial truth of the statement is admitted—namely, thanking God for Zeppelin's dropping bombs, and so enabling us to have a little of the danger of war. But one expects a paper such as the *Express* to support the Bishop against the *Freethinker*. We do not, of course, keep all newspaper cuttings on which paragraphs are built, but our readers may rely upon it that in every case the quotation is from a published report, and without mangling or misrepresentation. Our readers will be able to judge of the value of the *Express's* indignation when we mention that the expression "Thank God for the Zeppelins!" was actually used by the *Express* itself, and within quotation marks.

According to an announcement in a religious newspaper, "some 2 000 churches have adopted the individual communion cups, thus providing a clean cup, free from infection, for each member." The faithful appear to know one another. Presently they will chain their umbrellas to their pews before they hide their heads in prayer.

Mr. Robert Blatchford used to be a good Humanitarian. In a recent article appropriately published in a Christian newspaper, he quotes, with approval, the words "A German is no good till he's dead." We recommend to Mr. Blatchford's attention the words of Goethe, "How can I hate anything unless I am myself filled with hatred."

"A Man in Barracks" writes in *One and All*, the journal of the Adult School Movement:—

A soldier must have a "religion." He has, very early in his military career, to parade before the Quartermaster-Sergeant to receive a disc suspended on a piece of string (for the purpose of hanging round his neck), on which is inscribed C. of E., R.C., Cong., or whatever "religion" he has chosen. It often happens, of course, that he has no preference, in which case he is decorated with C. of E. If, however, he has decided views antagonistic to religion or objects to being a conscript Christian, irrespective of whether or no he agrees with Christianity, he is told he may escape church parade fairly frequently by doing "fatigue duty." In my own case I enquired whether I might be allowed to attend Friends' Meetings, but was informed that "That is not recognised by the army as a religion." I thereupon told the sergeant to put me down Congregational, if I really must be labelled. This he did, comforting me the while with the assurance that "It is better than an ordinary parade because you can easily go to sleep, as the parson only comes to draw his brass. He knows that in preaching to soldiers he is preaching to so much wood." The result of this conscript Christianity so far as I can observe has been that the few real atheists have felt confirmed in their unbelief, the indifferent men have come to regard religion with a sort of good-humoured contempt, and some of the few religiously minded men have formed a firm dislike for the religious organisations.

A Leipzig parson regards "the English, French, and Russians" as "servants of Satan." Why did the godly man stop there, and overlook the Italians? Was not "Old Nick" named after a famous Italian statesman?

Major-General Sir A. Turner says that the Kaiser "deserves no mercy from God or man," and that the Prussian monarch is "diabolus redivivus." Why does the major-general use the language of the "black army"?

A morning paper, describing a visit to the Fleet, says, "One would like to describe much more than one has seen, but that is impossible." Many persons who rushed into print concerning the Mons angels found no such difficulty.

The Rev. F. H. Gillingham, the cricketer parson, writing in a Sunday paper, says, "War is a scourge that drives out from our public life the things that have caused the Church to lower her ideals." Great Scott! Does the reverend gentleman think that, in order to uplift the morals of the Church of England, millions of men of all nationalities should murder each other?

An "Inquiring Christian" sends us a couple of queries which are really more of a reflection on his own Christianity than an attack on our position. He is convinced that the Atheistic position involves "a sense of the ultimate futility of all human effort," and asks why, if "there is no rational purpose in the universe, and no sense or meaning in our lives," why should our "uninspiring and irrational doctrine" be thrust "on people?" We must congratulate "Inquiring Christian" on having packed so much confusion in so small a space. We have no sense of the futility of human effort, because human effort is not always futile. It depends upon what you are aiming at. If the object of your action is to make others happier or wiser, then certainly effort is not futile, because it is very plain that we can achieve both these ends. And it does not matter a brass button whether our existence ends with the grave, so far as these ends are concerned, or not. We give a man a meal because he is hungry now, not because he will go on feeding for ever and ever. Neither have we anything to do with a rational purpose in the universe. It is enough if we can bring rationalism into human life. As to our doctrine being uninspiring and irrational, we do not find our doctrine either one or the other. Nor do many thousands of others. All that "Inquiring Christian" means is that they are uninspiring and irrational to him. That we can well believe. And as a cure we would recommend a more robust faith in mankind, and a closer and more careful study of the Freethought position.

Criticizing the publication of a new "life" of Christ, the Rev. A. J. Waldron says "anything is preferable to the indifference which characterizes the majority of the people." Yet the reverend gentleman's colleagues assure us constantly that religion derives benefit from the European War.

"The death is announced of Mr. Henry Burstow, the bell-ringer and singer, of Horsham, Sussex, in his ninetieth year. For sixty-seven years, says the *Sussex Daily News*, Mr. Burstow rang the bells of Horsham Parish Church. As a singer and a collector of old folk-songs he had more than local fame. He knew between 400 and 500 old songs, two of which, 'Tom Cladpole's Trip to London,' and 'Tom Cladpole's Trip to America,' have each 155 verses. Though he spent so much time in bellfries, he never entered the body of a church, being a Freethinker."—*Daily Mail*.

Rev. J. Kennedy, one of the chaplains to our Army in Flanders, tells the following story of a wounded man in hospital: "Well, Jock, what do you think of the Jack Johnsons?" he was asked. "They put the fear of God into your heart, don't they?" "Aye, Sir, they do," he answered; "but let's hope it will soon wear off."

We have read of the "sporting parson," but we had pictured him as being of a different build to the Rev. R. Rimmer, rector of Morcott, Uppingham, Rutlandshire. Mr. Rimmer pleaded the Gaming Act against an attempt of a bookmaker to recover £115 18s. due on betting transactions. It was stated, before Mr. Justice Ridley, that the clergyman had won considerable sums of money in the past, but on this claim he now entered the plea named. The Judge said it was "a dreadful thing," although to our mind pleading the Gaming Act, after indulging in profitable betting transactions, was more dreadful than the gambling itself. Presumably, the Judge had no alternative, and judgment was entered for the rector.

A good story of Gladstone is retailed in the *Christian World*. The great statesman once overheard a conversation between two soldiers on religion. During the talk, one asked the other, "Come, now, what is the Church of England?" The other replied, "It is a — large building with an organ in it."

What a large number of drapers and milliners are Christians and advertise their wares in the religious press. It is



a singular coincidence, too, that so many of them have a decided preference for apprentices who will work for next to nothing. Apparently, work, like religion, should be "without money and without price."

Mr. George Moore, the famous novelist, has written a new "life" of Christ. As Mr. Moore has been called "the English Zola," the early chapters should prove of unusual interest.

There is a large outbreak of juvenile crime in this country, and some clergymen blame the cinema exhibitions, while others the "blood and thunder" stories read by boys. A simpler explanation would be that father is away from home fighting the Germans.

What quaint ideas concerning the War are expressed by the clergy. Dr. Campbell Morgan says "we ought to be at prayer." If we took this sage advice the German armies would soon be in London.

Says the *Daily Telegraph*, in a leading article, the other day:—

We seem to see more clearly than we ever did before how much the safety and welfare of a nation depends on the respect it pays to scientific study and the encouragement it gives to scientific students. The contrast between ourselves and Germany in this matter is very remarkable, as well as wholly discreditable to ourselves. While abroad the man of science holds a distinguished position, not only on the ground of his intellectual capacity, but also on that of his practical usefulness, we have been too long content to regard him as a man of theory, a closet philosopher, not as one of the main assets of the State.

This sounds very much like a quotation from last week's *Freethinker*; but the facts are sufficiently plain and the inference sufficiently obvious to anyone capable of clear thinking.

The root of the evil, as we pointed out last week, lies in the fact that the British public has been systematically educated to depreciate the value of science. And for this, organized religion is more responsible than any other single factor. The educational machinery of this country—scholastic or other—has been dominated by religious influences. In the school, in the university, and in the press, organized religion has seen to it that its own interests should be safeguarded. And it has achieved its purpose more successfully than it has done in either France or Germany. It has converted neglect of science into almost a national characteristic. In France, when Herbert Spencer died, the Chamber of Deputies suspended its sitting for a day, as a mark of respect to a great thinker. Our Parliament did nothing, and said nothing. When a great scientist died a few years ago in France, the occasion of his funeral was converted into a day of public mourning. No such instance has ever occurred in this country. We have talked of our intellectual freedom, and it has suited religious parties here that we should so talk. It satisfied the public. And meanwhile, the hundred religious organizations united in obstructing intellectual development, in commanding the channels of enlightenment, and in cultivating the public with a sense of the comparative unimportance of scientific and philosophical culture.

The power of religion in this country has been so great, and its set policy so persistent, that it has even brought a large number of scientists to heel, and caused them to work for their own undoing. Is there any other country in Europe in which can be seen on such a scale as may be seen here, scientific men championing religion and helping to decry their own work? Books written by scientific men, and intended as an introduction to the popular study of science, will be found containing chapters "reconciling" religion and science, and dwelling upon the impotence of science in dealing with "fundamental" problems, or upon the need for handing over to religion certain traits of human consciousness. One need only instance the writings of such men as Sir Oliver Lodge and Professor Thomson as specimens of a whole class. We have one great annual scientific congress—that of the British Association. And then may be seen the sorry spectacle of an official sermon, with scientists trooping to church—like a mob of local councillors on their annual church parade—to listen to a parson telling them of their inadequacy in dealing with life as a whole. They are made to figure in a procession that irresistibly reminds one of an old Roman triumph, in which the captives marched in chains at the heels of their conquerors. It is the crowning illustration of the power of religion in this country—and a decisive proof of the necessity of breaking its power before any real and permanent reform can be accomplished.

According to the *Christian World*, a Catholic chaplain gave the soldiers absolution before a battle. We wonder if the German priests do the same before the Huns commence their "frightfulness."

Theodore Roosevelt says that "clergymen have done great damage to Christianity by their unwise backing of the ignoble pacifist movement." We might remind Theodore that it was not a clergyman who said "Blessed be ye peacemakers."

"Business methods must be converted into Christian dealings," says the Dean of Wells. When we remember the sale of faked relics and other clerical dodges, we are not anxious for the change.

"The Church is compelled to hold its own in these days against a great many lurid attractions," says the *Chicago Standard*. Yet the Church tries to keep the fires of hades burning, and no theatrical manager can beat that horror.

Judging from the December issue of the *School Paper*, issued by the Education Department, Victoria, the friends of Secular Education need to keep their eyes open and their minds busy. The paper is an official publication, issued for Grades V. and VI., and except that there are no Bible lessons therein, it seems quite a religious publication. "God" is all over it, and it ends with a purely religious hymn. Evidently there is plenty of work for Secular Educationalists in Victoria.

Following the Congregationalists, the Baptists report a decreased membership of 3,176 for 1915. In addition, there is a decrease of 13,941 Sunday-school scholars, and 1,508 teachers. Evidently we have here a further proof of the revival of religion brought about by the War. On the other side of the account, twenty new chapels have been built. This is what one might expect. In the first place, they offer posts; and, secondly, increased advertising is a common method of trying to restore a falling business.

To the Roman Catholic Church of Du Pont, Penn., U.S.A., was appointed a priest to whom the Church took exception. For some time after, rioting took place whenever the priest tried to perform his duties. At last, on January 15, arrangements were made for the celebration of Mass under the protection of the sheriff, assisted by the State police. So soon as the service commenced, the mob charged the police, and a good old religious scrimmage ensued. Result: One dead and fourteen injured, and a large number of people arrested. It reminds one of some of the early Christian gatherings.

Nowadays, when it is no longer possible to keep a paper alive, it does not—in many cases—die. It becomes incorporated with some other paper. So the *British Congregationalist*, which, in common with so many other papers, has been badly hit by the War, is to be "incorporated" with the *Christian World*. We do not know how many, but we should be inclined to say that over one hundred papers have ceased to appear since the War broke out. And where the maintenance of a paper is a purely commercial matter, there is small cause for surprise. Papers that are maintained for other reasons come under a different category. At any cost of trouble and loss, they must be kept going so long as it is possible.

What extraordinary ideas religious folk do have. A writer in a pious periodical says Christ presents to us "the spectacle of a patriotism exalted to the highest degree." Was this when Jesus cried over Jerusalem?

"On July 31, 1914, the old heaven began to pass away," says a writer in the *Christian World*. More people would be interested in the statement that hell was closing down."

The Rev. Percy Dearmer has an article in the *Guardian* entitled, "Are the Dead Alive?" Christians believe they are, and that the majority are in the red-hot-poker department.

"The War has restored the ideal of brotherhood," says the Rev. F. H. Gillingham. He must mean the brotherhood of Cain.



### To Correspondents.

MR COHEN'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—February 20, Birmingham; February 27, Leicester; March 5 Portsmouth; March 19, South Shields.

A. GILINAN.—We should like to reprint the articles you mention, but at present we are so overloaded with good copy that they must wait for awhile. As it is, we feel quite ashamed when we look at some of the articles we have had in hand and that are awaiting opportunities for publication.

J. A. REID.—Thanks for cuttings, which came safely to hand.

ENQUIRING CHRISTIAN.—See "Acid Drops."

H. ROUND.—The suggestion as to advertising the paper is a good one, and we intend to do all that can be done in that direction. But advertising must be persistent and on a considerable scale if it is to be successful. Leaflets are being sent as requested.

W. H. P.—Sorry we cannot advise you in the matter. We are never troubled about investments, although we should say that the concern you mention is quite safe for your purpose.

T. RICHARDS.—If a suitable hall can be secured, Mr. Cohen would have no objection to paying your town a lecturing visit.

C. CARDWELL.—A Freethinker is not called upon to explain how Christianity arose before he is justified in rejecting it. His concern is only to see that he has adequate reasons for rejecting the orthodox account of its origin. In all argument, bear in mind this rule: Never try and prove too much, and don't cloud the issue by discussing subsidiary and, for the time being, unimportant points.

C. F. BRIDGE.—Cuttings are always useful, and we are greatly obliged to all who are good enough to send them.

"NON-COM." (Co Down) writes to thank those who sent him parcels of *Freethinker* for distribution, and thinks that they have been satisfactorily distributed. This correspondent is leaving the Army, owing to a fractured leg, and is anxious to enter into some civilian occupation. He is forty-two years of age, and has had a wide commercial experience, is well up in book-keeping and foreign correspondence, speaks Portuguese and Spanish, and is acquainted with parts of South America. He is open for employment at home or abroad. Letters may be addressed c/o this office.

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.

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

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

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.

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. 8d.; three months 2s. 8d.

### G. W. Foote Memorial Fund.

(To take the form of a Presentation to Mrs. Foote.)

INCLUSIVE of two or three unredeemed promises the "G. W. Foote Memorial Fund" has now reached a total of nearly £100. Under the circumstances of the time this cannot be called unsatisfactory, but it is not so satisfactory as one would have wished. Above all, the hope that the response would be of so wide a character that it would rank as a national testimonial to the work of a great Freethought fighter has not yet been realized. Some subscriptions have been received from persons not directly connected, and one or two from persons who were quite out of sympathy, with the aims of the Freethought Party, although generous in recognition that the man who fights for intellectual freedom is performing a work of the highest service to the nation. Their example should certainly act as an incentive to avowed Freethinkers, and I hope may still serve that purpose.

George William Foote spent the whole of his life in, and placed his remarkable qualities of mind entirely at, the service of Freethought. Twelve months of that time he spent in a Christian prison, after a trial that marked an epoch in the history of legal persecution for Freethought. And there is little doubt that his imprisonment sowed the seeds of a

physical weakness that manifested itself with growing annoyance in the latter years of his life. For thirty-five years he edited this paper, and what that meant can only be appreciated by those who are thoroughly intimate with the work. During the whole of his life he was never appealed to in vain on behalf of any fight for intellectual freedom, and was the first to protest against an injustice when offered, even to those with whom he was in direct conflict in matters of teaching. Such an example, and such life-long devotion to an unpopular cause, deserves, and should receive, the very widest possible recognition, and the Memorial Fund—in the form of a presentation to his widow—offers the last opportunity of such a direct personal tribute being made.

When the Fund was opened a wish was expressed in many quarters that the Fund would reach at least £1,000. Personally, I was never sanguine of this. The times are the worst possible for raising money; many of those to whom we usually look to in such cases have had their incomes seriously reduced, and in all cases the calls in other directions are numerous and insistent. Still, I had hoped that the Fund would reach £500, and am hopeful that this amount will yet be realized. There should be at least a thousand subscribers to a Fund of this character, and at present less than half that number have responded. Probably the rest of this number will come along before the Fund is closed.

I hope that I shall not be considered unduly importunate if I press those who intend subscribing to do so with as little delay as possible. The subscription list has now been open since the beginning of December, and I should like to write "Finis" to it by the end of March. This gives another five weeks in which to raise the balance of the £500, and I repeat that it ought not to fall short of that amount. £500 is a round figure, and will stand as a substantial mark of a small party's appreciation of a great soldier in the Army of Freethought.

It may be repeated that a full statement as to the disposition of the Fund will be issued when the subscription list is closed, and the accounts will be audited and certified by an incorporated accountant. Cheques and postal orders should be addressed to the "Editor," *Freethinker*, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C., and may be crossed "G. W. Foote Memorial Fund," in which name a separate account has been opened at a branch of the London City and Midland Bank.

The subscriptions received since last week will be acknowledged in our next list.

C. C.

### Sugar Plums.

Two very successful meetings were held by Mr. Cohen in Liverpool on Sunday last. In the afternoon, the hall was well filled, and in the evening it was quite uncomfortably—even though agreeably—crowded. A pleasing feature of the meeting was the large number of likely looking young men present, and the keen interest with which they followed every point in the lecture. The number of old members present also showed that Liverpool was ripe for a Freethought revival, and there is every prospect of the work now being carried steadily forward. On the Saturday evening, an informal meeting of friends of the movement was held at the Clarion Café, Mr. Cohen being present. There was a very good master, and the meeting unanimously resolved to resume work with all possible vigour. Officers were elected to do this, and we expect a good list of renewals, with names of many new members, will shortly be received at the N. S. S. office.

To-day (Feb. 20) Mr. Cohen lectures at the King's Hall, Corporation Street, Birmingham, at 7 o'clock. As his subject is concerned with the War, there should be a good attendance. We are pleased to learn that there was a good audience at the Town Hall on Sunday last to listen to the debate between Mr. Williams and the Editor of the *Mercury*, on "Christianity v. Secularism." These are all the particulars we have to hand, and so cannot give more.

Editing a paper like the *Freethinker* has its amusing aspects. In addition to the ordinary queries that are



addressed to the Editor, to which we are only too pleased to reply, we have this week received letters asking for (1) a safe investment for a small sum of money; (2) advice in drawing up a will; (3) the most suitable part of London for one to live in who is suffering from rheumatism; (4) the name of an English firm that manufactures small india-rubber balloons. The last request came from Australia. These are complimentary to one's assumed information, but otherwise a decided tax on one's time.

We are sorry to say that Mr. Lloyd's health has been very unsatisfactory of late. He appears to be suffering from severe nervous strain, and his recovery is retarded by the demon of insomnia. The doctor has advised him to take as much rest as possible, and we hope that he will follow that counsel. The movement can ill spare Mr. Lloyd's pen or voice, and we feel sure that our readers will join with us in wishing him a quick return to complete health.

The subject concerning religious questions being put to recruits is always cropping up. We reprint the following Army Regulation as affording some guidance on the matter:

#### ARMY COUNCIL INSTRUCTION.

No. 179 of January, 1916.

War Office, 21st January, 1916.

##### 179. Religious denomination of a Recruit on attestation

It has recently come to the knowledge of the Army Council that in certain cases Recruiting Officers and others when filling up the attestation papers of recruits enlisting in the Regular Army on a Duration of the War engagement, or in the Territorial Force, are in the habit of asking them to state their religious denominations. It is therefore necessary to point out that on the attestation papers referred to there is no printed question as to religion, and no question on the subject should be addressed to a recruit at the time of his attestation.

In this connection attention is drawn to W. O. letters 27/Gen. No./2514 (Chaplains), of 23rd Nov., 1914, and 27/Gen. No./4279 (Chaplains), of 30th June, 1915, and all Officers and N.C.Os are reminded that whenever it may be necessary to obtain information as to a soldier's religion, as for instance for the completion of his identity disc, etc., his own statement on the point should be taken without any attempt to influence him, and should be acted on without question. 27/Gen. No./5068 (A.G. 2B).

By Command of the Army Council.

We are announcing in our advertising columns a volume of essays by the late J. M. Wheeler that is of interest to all students of the evolution of religion. There was no one better qualified to write on the esoteric side of religious belief than the author of *Bible Studies*, and he provided his readers with the essence of a lifetime of research. The essays cover such subjects as Phallic Worship among the Jews, Religion and Magic, Taboos, Blood Rites, Old Testament Marriage, the Evolution of Jahveh, etc., and may be safely recommended to all readers. Only a limited number of copies are available, and these are being offered at half the usual price.

We have received several letters in reply to "Science Student's" communication on Shelley, published in our last issue. Want of space compels us to hold these over until next week.

### An American Publisher's Memories.

It is the weakness of certain Freethinkers whose zeal is somewhat in excess of their intelligence and synthetic imagination, to attribute Freethought to every writer who happens to criticize the orthodox belief of his time, and this in spite of the fact that the criticism may be directed against the non-essential parts of a creed. For instance, I would scarcely be inclined, with Mr. J. M. Robertson, to exalt Boccaccio as a Freethinker on the strength of one story in the *Decameron*. The story of "The Three Rings" undoubtedly implies a view of Christianity which was not that of the Church. But its inclusion may not have been intentional, and there is nothing else in the collection of witty, merry, and tragic tales to indicate that he shared the rationalistic ideas of the earlier Renaissance. In later life we find him

suffering from an attack of nerves because a fanatical friar had predicted his approaching end, and proposing to sell all his books to his friend Petrarch for the only reason that learning seemed incompatible with devotion. Our own Chaucer has been treated pretty much in the same way. In all his poems there is not a trace of Freethought in anything approaching the real meaning of the word. Whatever we may now think of his coarse jibes at things which should have about them the odour of sanctity, he had no fear of being accused of heresy for poking fun at wanton and merry friars, satirizing avaricious monks, pointing to certain laxities of discipline in the Church, or laughing at false relics. To argue that he was a Freethinker because he was an amused critic of some non-essential doctrines of the Church, is to emulate the stupidity of the Puritans for whom the Wife of Bath is a sort of Protestant Madonna. It is amusing to note that some Freethinkers have no hesitation in applying the Christian principle of compulsion to Tennyson, or even to Rossetti.

I trust I shall not lay myself open to the charge of mistaken zeal in the cause of Freethought if I claim as a good Rationalist the veteran American publisher, Mr. George Haven Patnam, whose reminiscences (*Memories of a Publisher, 1865-1915*) were brought out a little while ago. Like most of us who have succeeded in getting out of the rut of orthodox belief, Mr. Patnam was brought up in a religious atmosphere. As a youth he seems to have been a Calvinist of the narrow and dogmatic Baptist type. In the Civil War, in which he served from the age of eighteen to twenty-one, he took over for some time the duties of the Army chaplain, who had been dismissed for irregularity of conduct. He tells us ingenuously, that the longer he preached the less orthodox he became. After the War, and when he had returned to civil life, he found that he could not honestly teach a Trinitarian belief. The drop from a Calvinistic creed to Freethought was broken, naturally enough, by Unitarianism, which has served as a feather bed for many a falling Christian. He soon found that even in a belief so denuded of dogma as Unitarian Theism, there was a quite perceptible shading-off to heterodoxy. O. B. Frothingham, a well-known Unitarian preacher of the time, insisted, Mr. Patnam assures us, on the substantial truth that *man makes God in his own image*. Under such rationalistic teaching it would be strange if Mr. Patnam had preserved many of his Theistic ideas. Yet there is little doubt that they are to be traced in his frequent insistence on a reverent attitude to religion, i. e., to the Christian religion; for certainly he would not resent any unsympathetic or impartial criticism of Paganism or Islamism. Now, this sympathetic or "constructive" criticism, as some people prefer to call it, is, to borrow the expression of Professor Shotwell, too often no criticism at all, but merely justification: Christianity having placed such "tremendous emphasis on truth that any independent attitude in which the creations of faith are questioned seems inherently hostile." It is obviously not out of a tender regard for people's opinions, as opinions, that Mr. Patnam calls out for reverence. His criticism of political, social, and intellectual ideals, and of the men who have created them, or who possess them, is shrewd enough, and has not the slightest trace of that reverence which he would seem to keep for orthodox religion. It is not merely outspoken. It is evident that Mr. Patnam feels what Montaigne has called the "bitter sweet touch of a malign pleasure in seeing others suffer"; a pleasure usually hidden by protestations of sorrow for the victim, but not the less present in all of us who profess and call ourselves literary critics. His story of how he let down some young politicians at Cambridge, over Chamberlain, is amusing; but it is not likely to be mistaken for reverence by the many admirers of the great man. He was asked the question:—

"What do you Americans think of Joe Chamberlain? You must know something about him. He has been on your side more than once and has married an American woman." I replied that I could not undertake to speak



for Americans as a whole, but that the group to which I belonged did not like Mr. Chamberlain. We did not trust him. He did not impress us as a gentleman, and we felt that he had married above him in securing an Endicott of Massachusetts. "Britain," I continued, "has often been ruled with stupidity [here was a growl of dissent from some of my auditors] but it has always been ruled by gentlemen, and I do not myself believe it will ever accept Chamberlain as Prime Minister."

In the same way the impression Mr. Putnam gives of Mr. Oscar Browning offering, with an air of gracious omniscience, to write a volume on any subject at all, is more malicious than reverent; and from personal knowledge of Mr. Browning, it is more than likely he was pulling the Yankee's leg. Of Moncure Conway, whose splendid life of Thomas Paine and edition of his works was issued by the Putnam firm, we hear nothing. Evidently Mr. Putnam had no great sympathy with Conway's idea of running a place of worship on Anti-Theistic lines. He has a vague notion that South Place Chapel is in the East of London. Many of his friends were University dons, with whom he seems to have got on very well. We get a brilliant sketch of the versatile and erratic scholar, York Powell, who had inherited a "great capacity for generosity and freehanded service, and a keen aversion from the fulfilment of an obligation; a promise meant a bond, and for a free-born Celt a bond was an oppression, an indignity, something to be rebelled against."

But for the general reader, Mr. Putnam's shrewd judgments of notorious or famous people will naturally have most interest. He has often travelled across the Atlantic in the company of Andrew Carnegie, that energetic little Scotsman and pugacious apostle of peace. Carnegie talked so loudly that it was impossible for any other conversation to go on within fifty feet, and he talked mainly for effect. This is how Mr. Putnam reports the millionaire:—

People who are working in this twentieth century, and whose time is at best but limited, should give their reading and their study to books that have to do with their own affairs. I do not myself believe that there is anything to be gained by taking up the old stuff, or, in fact, by anything that has been written more than fifty years back. The people of the earlier centuries did not know and would not know what is needed by folk to-day. The sympathies, interests, and, I may say, the prejudices of to-day, are so different from those of earlier years, that what the old fellows wrote is neither of use nor of interest to us.

Someone ventured to make a modest reference to the Scriptures, asking if they had not inspired all the generations since? He said:—

Not a bit; that is a mere fetish and superstition. Each generation ought to produce, and does produce, its own teachers. Each generation receives its own inspiration. There is no reason why the Divine Powers should select one century rather than another, or one group of men rather than another, as channels for the inspiration of living men. And as for the Old Testament writers, they are very much overrated. Why, Sir, there is not a prophet, neither a minor prophet, nor a major prophet whom I could introduce to Mrs. Carnegie!

The donor of village libraries then went on to abuse the Latin and Greek writers. He had looked into the classics, had given a week to them—not, of course, in the originals, but in English versions—and he had found there was nothing in them at all; that is, they neglected the main thing, which was how to make a living.

Mr. Putnam was a fellow passenger with Lord Kitchener on the *Oceanic*, from New York. His impression of the General was not entirely favourable. The expression of his features he found not only autocratic, but suggestive of a capacity for bad temper, his mental qualities narrow, uncultivated, and prejudiced.

Speaking from recent experience, he [Lord Kitchener] pointed out that the princes and "gentle" classes of India who considered war as the only possible occupation for gentlemen, found their chief grievance against British rule in the fact that it prevented fighting through-

out the Peninsula. Kitchener agreed with the Indian princes in the belief that they and their noble subjects were decaying in character under the enforced idleness of the *pax Britannica*, and he sympathized keenly with their princely grievance. I suggested to the General that during the periods in which Europe had accepted most thoroughly the domination of the soldier class and the influence of the military ideal, as, for instance, during the Thirty Years' War, there had been no satisfactory development of nobility of character. He admitted this objection as pertinent, but contended that war could be carried on with methods and with standards that would preserve it as an instrument of civilization.

Mr. Putnam, it will be noticed, is no Carlylean hero-worshipper. And when a big, popular figure is subjected to his biting Yankee criticism, its bulk is considerably reduced. As a young man, Theodore Roosevelt was a partner in the Putnam business. Every morning he turned up with some new suggestions for running the concern more profitably, his exuberance of utterance and cockiness of opinion becoming more pronounced every day. "Self-confidence," Mr. Putnam remarks, "is natural enough in a young man of a certain temperament; but as a man grows older and his responsibilities increase, he ought to keep his self-confidence under lock and key, bringing it into the open only at critical moments." Freethinkers have cause to remember a particularly foolish and arrogant reference to one of America's greatest men. Mr. Putnam, who has done much for the memory of Thomas Paine, refrains from criticizing his friend on this point.

One of the best stories in the book is told in connection with Mr. J. H. Choate, who at a later date was the American Minister at St. James'. Mr. Choate was at this time (1892) a barrister briefed to defend the editor of the *New York Evening Post*, against whom an action for libel had been brought by a Reverend Mr. Fank, a Methodist Doctor of Divinity, who had given up religion for publishing. He had been selected as a typical example of the American book-pirate, perhaps a little unjustly, because the ways of the Transatlantic publisher has always been a little peculiar. Choate in his cross-examination of the reverend gentleman, handled him with great gentleness, and even deference, and got him to admit that honours had come to him continuously and even increasingly during the two years in which the *Post* had been criticizing his methods. He could make no reply when he was asked to explain to the jury in what he had suffered from the so-called brutal attack. Said Mr. Choate:—

The plaintiff, gentlemen, is a doctor of divinity, and we have it from his own evidence that he is a much honoured doctor of divinity. I am not myself a doctor of divinity, and at the late time of life that I have reached, and in connection with what my friends are pleased to describe as my general frivolity of conduct, I may never hope to achieve that distinction. I cannot tell, therefore, just how a doctor of divinity feels; but to me, an outsider and a layman, there is something incongruous in the idea of a doctor of divinity going into business for gain, and beginning his operations by stealing the Life of his Saviour.

It had been brought out in the evidence that the Rev. Mr. Fank had appropriated Farrar's *Life of Christ*, the American rights of which had been bought and paid for by another and more scrupulous publisher.

GEORGE UNDERWOOD.

## The Dark.

THE night was as dark as the corners of Hell. Dense masses of cloud lay on the topmost twigs of the trees. The atmosphere was heavy with possibilities; and the loneliness seemed as palpable and impregnable as walls of enmity around a heart of love. Nervousness and cold would have lingered near the spirit of the bravest. The stoutest soul would have twitched at times.

Fear lurked in the dark. Gods and Devils played malignant games of hide-and-seek in its gloom.



Spirits and hobgoblins peopled its fastnesses. Terrors and horrors rushed into its enormous embrace for protection. Shelter and succour it accorded every frightfulness. Like a fiendish sympathy it gathered the parents of suffering into its arms; and like a warrior it guarded them from the harm of light. Evil was weaned with wonderful wickedness at its mighty bosom, sucking the poisonous milk of life with a gluttonous joy that made the mother of sorrow exult with gladness. Hate cleft in the warm cleft of its breast, lighting the flameless fires of passion at the heat of its heart; and death took its sightless eyes as a model to fashion a mask whose power cannot be reckoned by human brain.

No wonder men likened everything horrible and loathsome to the dark. It is the home of all ills; the abiding place of all that is treacherous, criminal, barbaric, and foolish; the citadel of the unknown. To many sensitive women the dark is, perhaps, the most terrible of all things; in its embrace can their chastity most easily be stolen. No more thorough indictment of retrogression, no more expressive term of reaction, no more comprehensibly tragic word can be flung at Time and Time's puppets than—the dark.

Thinking so, he trudged along; and as scenes from the Great European Drama recurred to his mind, and his thoughts fled about amidst many aspects always overlooked by enthusiasts; he found that the phrase *would* come to his lips, Watchman, what of to-day?

The words rang in his ears. They echoed away somewhere in the darkness through which he walked. Sometimes he could have sworn he saw them written in fire on the ever receding curtain that hung before his eyes.

Watchman, what of to-day? How it clung around his brain! How its clammy influence saturated his mind! How its doleful music bedimmed the light of his thoughts! The fire that cut the fog into the words was an optical delusion; it must have been; for as the idea fastened itself in his mind, an emotion like that experienced in a heavy Scots mist flooded him.

Watchman, what of to-day? How listless and woebegone was the call! How lifeless and miserable, how pessimistic, how soaked with sadness, and wet with the tears of weariness, was the cry! It was a wail, not a call, not a cry; a wail. Watchman, what of to-day?

There are periods in the swing of man's social life when, to the historic mind, shadows, black, grim, heavy, and terribly foreboding, gather remorselessly and inevitably over the human skies. The reflecting mind sees periods in the passing of the days when the brightness fades into murky gloom, shot only by the lightening flashes of rampant folly. Periods, these are, during which the pendulum of progress—and what else is progress, viewed historically—seems slowly swinging backward.

Through the darkness, gaunt, starved brutes crawl and creep. From the night rush uglinesses with the energy of liberated prisoners. Charging disastrously across the threshold of the ruins of freedom, pass hordes of resuscitated evils. The past seems to vomit its long buried dirt into the present; and frightfulness loses its limitations and its powers of revulsion; and the price of peace is blood, and the possession of one's soul hypocrisy. In the dark all things are dark.

But why did the question keep beating, pulse-like, in his brain? Why did it not ring merrily in his heart? He was not afraid of the dark, although it did awaken a sensitiveness never experienced in daylight; nor was he afraid that many of the fruits of freedom would wholly perish in the absence of the sunrays. Familiar with the teachings of a history unwritten in books; knowing, also, that the spirit of revolt, and its devotees, never died, and would live as long as Nature allowed humanity to live; knowing, too, that times of change always gave birth to saviours, who, if crushed into temporary death, rose again to immortality by virtue of the very contrast to popularity their counsels afforded; and

knowing that the triumph of reason had always seemed a dim dream to the greatest minds; yet, despite these things, emotion ruled. He *felt* the gloom; he felt he lived and walked and thought in the dark.

Into his ideas crowded mob thoughts, the apologies, the causes, the reasons, the needs of the moment. Glimmerings of intellectuality, brain-waves from mighty thinkers, followed, the eugenic value of military service, the socially psychological advantages derivable from international conflict, the incomparable ethic responsibilities that reacted so beneficially upon the national soul, and so forth. Yes, he had heard a lot about these; but the gloom never lifted, and the weary call of the heart of man still resounded feebly in the dark; and into his brain moved questions answerable only by the twin terms, ignorance and fear—the fear that is born in mental darkness, and the ignorance that nourishes it.

When millions of men engage in warfare to serve the same God, to protect similar kith and kin, to save similar homelands, is there light in the world of Humanity? What is wrong with these men whose interests are the same? Tired and sick of the turmoil and strife, eager to resume the whole tenor of their daily ways, millions of combatants anxious for the little lost happinesses of home, strong, powerfully strong in their masses, and yet weak as clay between the hands of a few uniformed potters; is the spirit of solidarity a myth? Millions of men who long for a cessation of hostilities, inexpressibly magnificent in a latent potency—what is wrong with them that social forces, so antagonistic to their welfare, can grip them in a vice from which seemingly there is no escape? What is wrong with them that the burden of to-day and the burdens of to-morrow must be borne with servility of mind? In their ignorance, are they afraid of the social forces that command their lives, and could so easily, with a little light, be diverted into channels of fruitful construction?

Rejoicing, is the time ripe for it? Laughter, does it not sound hollow? Joy, is it not wan? Hope and labour, are they not weary and languid? Watchman, what of to-day?

Trudging onward, his thoughts went sadly to the old refrain. Pessimism of a kind that is not unadmirable fell upon him. Hopelessness, that was not foolish because it could not be lasting, surrounded him. Disappointment, disillusionment, and despair settled over him.

Perhaps, after all, it was merely the influence of the darkness that made him, in his own truly dreamer's way, answer the old world-call, Watchman, what of the night? with a weary, It is dark.

ROBERT MORELAND.

### Orientalism in Music: A Rejoinder.

IT is unfortunate for the readers of the *Freethinker* that the review of my recent book, *The Music and Musical Instruments of the Arab*, which Mr. George Underwood contributed to the journal, should have been confined to a purely musical critique. Of course, it may be rather impertinent to suggest that books, in such a free journal as the *Freethinker*, should be reviewed in this or that way; yet it seems to me that there were sides from which the book might have been viewed, which would have been more within the purpose of the *Freethinker*. I make this remark, however, more by way of an apology to readers of this journal, for a further infliction of a purely musical discussion, than as a comment upon the ways reviews ought to be conducted. However, I do not intend to labour this purely musical side, except so far as to correct a few misstatements and misunderstandings.

Mr. Underwood thinks that I have been rather hasty in calling Ernest Newman "over the coals" on the question of the entire absence of the knowledge of harmony with the Arab, which I had insisted



upon. Now, I made my point quite clear, and quoted "chapter and verse." Mr. Newman asserted that the Arabs had "a notion of harmony," and agreed with Sir Hubert Parry that with them there existed the practice of "combining several tunes together." Mr. Newman gave Naumann as his authority, and although the former admitted that it was not harmony as we understand the term, yet Naumann explicitly referred to our connotation of the term.

Mr. Newman has since dealt with the whole question, in two very fine articles in the *New Witness*, and practically reasserts his old position, although with modifications. Mr. Underwood follows, and agrees with Mr. Newman in his contention. But I do not intend to discuss so technical a subject here. If Mr. Newman and Mr. Underwood believe that the fundamental drum-beats which accompany the Arab melody is harmony, and the embellishment of the melody (by shakes, mordants, appoggiaturas, etc.), is a primitive counterpoint, then some of us must be wrong in our grasp of the basic principles and evolution of the art.

According to Mr. Underwood, I am said to advocate the overthrow of our present harmonic system in favour of a return to these Arab modes, which have been in use by them since the tenth century. Mr. Underwood is mistaken, and he cannot place his finger upon any such passage from my pen. Neither was this the opinion of Salvador-Daniel. The latter certainly argued that our Western music could learn something from that of the Arab, and he proved as much by his own compositions.\*

Concerning the question of the much-talked-of extraordinary effects of Arab music upon its auditors, Mr. Underwood seems to think it incredible that I should believe these stories. I have not said that I believe them, but have simply recorded other people's opinions and statements. At the same time, I have listened to Arab music, and I have witnessed its "powers." Yet here, again, we are bound to pursue a purely technical discussion, if any good result is to be derived, and this cannot be squeezed into "a rejoinder." However, it is an utter fallacy to think that our Anglo-Saxon æsthetic susceptibilities are necessarily the same as those of such an alien stock as the Arab. The whole point of æsthetic values must be judged from a psychological and physiological standpoint. Finally, to judge Arab music simply from our own plane, and measure it just by our standard, is futile. As Salvador-Daniel said, it is "something apart." One of the few thinkers among modern musicians, Camille Saint-Saëns, said so wisely and so well in his *Harmonie et Mélodie*: "Ce grand art de l'Orient n'est ni supérieur ni inférieur au notre, d'un façon absolue; c'est un autre art." Will all critics of Arab music, please, "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest this: *C'est un autre art?*"

H. GEORGE FARMER.

War.

I.

Out of star mist comes the fiat,  
Through the darkness and the gloom;  
On, relentless as the whirlwind,  
Hurling men unto their doom.  
Vestiges of lower creatures,  
Hatred, greed, and passion bound,  
Urge mankind to deeds of sadness—  
Deeds of madness all around.  
Yearning, stricken, trusting mortals  
Raise petitions to the skies.  
What responds to cheer or solace  
Aching hearts and weeping eyes?  
Gaze we on a mystic fabric,  
Woven by a hand divine,  
Preconceived, essential, fitting,  
Portion of a vast design?  
Dwelleth there in mansions holy,

Power omnipotent and high,  
Able to prevent, but failing,  
Pitiless to mourner's cry?  
Can Omniscience look forward  
From some throne in realms above,  
See this bloody strand and blend it  
To accord with that of love?  
Are we but as brick or boulder  
In some universal scheme,  
Each one to its place appointed  
By an architect supreme?  
Is man thrust into existence  
Unrequesting, ruthlessly,  
Being what he must, a factor  
Needful to what is to be?  
Is existing whole causation  
Now determining ahead,  
As the present is the outcome  
Of the years whose course is sped?

II.

Whence? and why? Eternal questions,  
Whither? Where is answer known?  
Shall we ever find solutions  
To our satisfaction shown?  
In our guesses, Gods and Devils  
Have intruded, had their day;  
Counted authors of the terrors  
Which have had their part to play  
In a great unfinished drama,  
Where all tears and laughter blend,  
Moving, changing, ever onward,  
Scenes, with no apparent end.  
Peace and war, like calm and tempest,  
Each in turn assigned a place;  
Man, the hero, lauded, comely;  
Or, it may be, villain base.  
Loving concord, hating warfare,  
Nations, by our ruling force,  
March to conflict, Death or Glory,  
Unknown what may be its course.  
Each appeals to God for succour,  
Each one claims the cause of Right;  
Freedom, Honour, Preservation,  
Justify recourse to might.  
Thousands fall, more thousands suffer,  
Helpless, innocent, and weak.  
Victims. Why? Is there just reason?  
Vainly for it do we seek.  
Silence, naught but silence cometh.  
Are primæval forces blind?  
To deaf ears appeals ascending;  
Shall man therefore be resigned?

III.

What though all the Gods may vanish,  
And man has to walk alone;  
Forward still, but self-reliant,  
Trusting not to the unknown.  
With some other life as focus,  
"Where no tears nor sorrow go."  
Gazing upward, man too often  
Fails to grasp the means below.  
To avoid postmortem torture,  
Save his soul for second birth,  
Of the ills around unmindful,  
Man permits a Hell on Earth.  
Though awhile the trail of Moloch  
Smears the world with ruddy stain,  
Reason cries against the carnage,  
Shall her pleadings be in vain?  
No! a myriad voices echo.  
No! Earth's best and purest say.  
In disputes of men or nations  
Might alone shall not hold sway.  
Shell and bullet must be counted  
As the method most insane.  
Ways there are the right to settle,  
Infinitely more humane.  
Though our dreams of "loving father"  
Fade, as we from slumber wake;  
Though the way that lies before us  
Heavy seems and hard to take.  
Yet shall peaceful aspirations,  
Human will to do and dare,  
Meet fulfilment, as the harvest  
Crowneeth seedtime's promise fair.  
Signs there are portending progress;  
Better seem the days in store.  
Hope emerges. Man will triumph,  
And the days of War be o'er.

C. E. RATCLIFFE.

\* Mr. Underwood says he is not acquainted with any of these. Salvador-Daniel's *Chansons Arabes* may be obtained from Costallat et Cie., Rue et la Chaussée Antin, Paris.



**SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.**

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

**LONDON.**

**INDOOR.**

FELLOWSHIP HALL (Hornsey Road, N): 7.30, Debate, "Is the Church a Bar to Progress?" Affirmative, Mr. Palmer; negative, Mr. Baker.

**OUTDOOR.**

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Messrs. Faphin and Shaller, "The Crimes of Christianity"; 3.30, Messrs. Dales and Kells, "Aspects of the Faith"; 6.30, Messrs. Hyatt, Beale, and Saphin.

**COUNTRY.**

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (King's Hall, Corporation Street): 7, C. Cohen, "Christianity and the European War."

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