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*There is nothing more destructive than truth.*

## Views and Opinions.

### Lord Haldane and Education.

We fancy that all serious-minded persons will agree with Lord Haldane's recent appeal to the nation to face the question of education in a more scientific spirit than has hitherto obtained. That the English people have never taken this question as seriously as they ought is well known. For many years education was allowed to be almost a private venture; and when the State did at last take the matter in hand, it was done haltingly, and in a half-hearted manner. And it was significant that when the question of economy was raised in connection with the War, education was one of the first things to suffer. All over the country the expenditure on education has been cut down, and this would surely have been the last resource of a people who were alive to the fact that in the healthful competition of nations, success will lie with the one that is best trained and best educated. We are fighting to-day quite as much the German attention to education as German preparation on the field of militarism.

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### The Religious Question.

Apart from the general drift of Lord Haldane's speech, there were some remarks that were of special interest to readers of this journal. "A good deal," he said, "had been accomplished by the Education Act of 1902 and previous Acts, and we should have accomplished more had we not had the religious controversy mixed up with education. I have always felt that if we had been sufficiently keen about education, we should not have had the religious controversy.....I cannot help feeling that here there is a load of educational sin on the backs of some right reverend prelates, and also some Nonconformists." In plain English, the educational progress of the country is retarded because we have allowed the schools to be made a cockpit for warring theological sects. And this could only occur in a community which places theology first and education second. Let the nation once realize the vital importance of education, and a sharp termination will be placed to the antics of these rival religionists, whose real concern is to train clients for their respective religious organizations.

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### A Clerical Demand.

"It ought to be the right of everybody," said Lord Haldane, "to educate his child in the religion which he wishes." I do not think anybody questions that right—certainly not the Freethinker, however much he may question the advisability of impressing doctrines upon children which they cannot understand, and which may very likely be quite false. The issue arises when the religious parent demands that it is part of the duty of the State to impart that religion, and calls upon all sections of the community to pay for it. And on what

ground, political or moral, can this be justified? Not, certainly, upon the ground of its being necessary to the welfare of the child. Many thousands of children are to-day brought up without religious instruction, without being the worse for it. And in any case the multiplicity of religious opinions, their widely different teachings and character, rules out the absolute necessity for any. The demand for religious instruction to-day is not a parents' demand. They ask for it only on the inspiration of the clergy. It is not urged by the Government, which would be only too pleased to get rid of the whole difficulty by what many of its members have admitted to be the logical method of Secular Education. The demand for religious instruction is essentially clerical in origin and inspiration. The Churches feel that they must capture the children if they are to live. To leave religion to the free choice of the educated understanding is a policy they dare not adopt.

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### What is Education?

Let it be observed that religion is the one thing that cannot afford to wait. Every other subject can, and does. If we find that a child is unable to grasp a subject, we wait until such time as its powers have developed. A capacity for understanding the subject taught is taken as an essential condition of the teaching. With religion the great thing is to habituate the child to religious formulæ, forms, "atmosphere." And this, save in a very sinister sense, is not education at all. To confuse is not to instruct; to mystify is not to enlighten. The most valuable and important part of a child's education is not *what* it learns, but *how* it learns. It is the development of capacity that is important, not a mere cramming with information. Given the first, knowledge may be acquired at leisure. In its absence, all the knowledge in the world is little more than lumber. The chief value of education lies in the habits formed, the temper of mind induced, the cultivation of a habit of sane and useful criticism. Above all, it is the function of the true teacher to make the pupil independent of him. The aim of the priest is always and everywhere to keep one dependent upon him for guidance. The final criticism of religious education is that it is not education at all.

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### Religion and Civilization.

An almost complete philosophy of religion is involved in this desire of the clergy to force religious instruction upon children. To begin with, it is significant that the phenomenon is comparatively modern. So long as religious belief is a natural expression of contemporary life there is no concern shown over the religious education of children. It forms no part of the life of primitive societies, and even with mediæval Christianity the demand does not exist. The religious "atmosphere" which has now to be created by special lessons and special arrangements, was then furnished by the existing social life. There was no difficulty in keeping people religious; the real difficulty was to prevent their being so. It is a change in the character of the environment

that originates the religious education question. A line of cleavage is established between religious beliefs and contemporary life. Available knowledge no longer confirms religion; it is in flagrant opposition, and, as a consequence, all the Churches are compelled to fight for the control of childhood because in no other way can clients for church or chapel be secured. That is the plain economic aspect of the question. Every child represents a potential customer of the Church. The interest of the Churches in education, however disguised, is a fight for clients and for revenue. Cut them off from the young, and their outlook is hopeless. They simply dare not wait to submit their creeds to the unbiased, mature intelligence. It is the children or nothing.

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#### A Disguised Self-Interest.

I have put the position plainly, even brutally. And it is quite likely that the clergy in rebutting this charge would do so in all sincerity. Most people develop a considerable dexterity in disguising from themselves the operation of self-interest, and this species of self-deception is certainly not weakest with the clergy. For this motive to be openly, even generally recognized, would be fatal to its successful operation. An unselfish motive must be discovered for a selfish action, and to be successful it must act upon oneself as well as upon others. So it happens that this particular piece of self-interest is disguised under a concern for morality, for the development of character, for the creation of a healthy sense of citizenship. And all the time there is the now generally admitted fact that good character, sound morality, and a healthy sense of citizenship may be cultivated, and actually exists, apart from all religious belief whatsoever. What the child really needs is some measure of protection against the operations of misguided parental zeal on the one hand, and of an interested priesthood on the other.

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#### The Essential Issues.

Lord Haldane expressed the hope that there may exist opportunities for moral and religious training in the schools, and that the real question will be dealt with in a way that will make these things effective and real. If this foreshadows a new Governmental attempt at religious compromise, then it is foredoomed to failure. Four attempts have come to grief of recent years, and failure awaits a fifth if it be forthcoming. You cannot satisfy *all* the religious parties in the State, and even if you could, there is another party—growing in numbers, and receiving support from the best members of the religious world—which recognizes that the only just and logical and, therefore, permanent settlement must be on the lines of Secular Education. We are living in the twentieth century, not in the fourteenth, and it is time that our statesmen awakened to the fact. A larger number of people than the Government are ready for Secular Education, given a suitable lead. Most educationalists are heartily sick of seeing the development of education obstructed by this everlasting quarrel between church and chapel. The child, as I have said, represents the raw material of religion; but it also represents the raw material from which the future citizen is fashioned. The issue is, therefore, one of the direction of our future civilization. It is a question of whether we lend our energies to developing the child with reference to his usefulness in the modern civilized State; or whether we continue to allow that development to be frustrated by concessions to corporate interests which are bound to perpetuate the delusions of the past, as the sole condition of their power in the present and the future.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## Prayer and the War.

THE clergy, of all denominations, are perpetually urging upon their hearers and readers the duty of unceasing prayer during this dreadful war-time. We are solemnly assured, week by week, that prayer is miraculously efficacious, and that if Christians, at the present time, give themselves up to it with unfailing persistence and passionate earnestness, a speedy and glorious victory will be Heaven's gracious answer. For nearly two years all the Churches have been daily, almost hourly, supplicating the Throne of Grace for the triumph of our cause, with the only result, so far, that the War continues with unabated fury and ever-increasing frightfulness. Theoretically, prayer is the Church's most valuable asset, its veritable sheet-anchor in every storm that assails it. The first Biblical account of the use of prayer in a time of war is to be found in Exodus xvii. 8-16. It is a highly significant story, and if we examine it closely it will serve as a startling eye-opener. The war with Amalek, therein recorded, was God's war, for the guiding statement is as follows: "The Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." When Joshua was leading Israel in one of the battles, Moses was on the top of a hill engaged in prayer on Israel's behalf. As long as he kept on praying Israel won; but the moment he grew so fatigued that he was obliged to stop, Amalek prevailed. The efficacy of Moses' praying, however, is seriously discounted by the following record: "And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people *with the edge of the sword.*" Thus, we see, it was Joshua's sword, not Moses' prayer, that destroyed Amalek. The result was in no sense miraculous, as a genuine answer to prayer must of necessity be. Nothing short of a miracle can possibly demonstrate the efficacy of a prayer; and the Bible abounds in records of such miracles. In answer to the prayers of the saints for the imprisoned Peter, the doors of the prison were supernaturally thrown open, and he simply walked out unmolested. The history of the Christian Church is replete with stories of supernatural interpositions in answer to believing prayer. It is true that whenever such stories are looked at through the impartial eye of criticism, the evidence for the presence of a miraculous element is seen to be entirely worthless.

As a general rule, prayer-meetings have been and are significantly unpopular, the worst attended of all the meetings of the Church. Soon after the present War broke out, however, Christians flocked to the churches and chapels to engage in prayer. It was announced even in the daily papers that the nation was on its knees before God, passionately pleading with him to grant our cause a speedy victory. The men of God declared that in answer to prayer even the Divine purposes had often been set aside, or largely modified. Consequently, they added, "prayer is the greatest gift and privilege of mankind," and not to engage in it was the most heinous of sins. The Rev. Dr. Orchard went to the absurd length of asserting that "for his part, he would rather pray as the Emperor of Germany prayed than not pray at all." The spectacle of a whole nation at prayer was a profoundly pathetic one, and to many of us by no means a good omen. But Christian leaders rejoiced, and proudly exclaimed, "Behold, the War has already brought the British people back to God." Canon Rawnsley's heart overflowed with gratitude for the infinite amount of good the War had already been the means of doing us. Previously, we had neglected prayer, ignored the Bible, trodden under foot the Son of God, and done despite to the Spirit of grace; but the War

came and brought us to our senses, caused us to realize our dependence upon the Lord, our refuge and strength in every time of trouble, and drove us to our knees, in the assurance that, inasmuch as we were "defenders of the body of Christ against the gross attacks of brutish force," glorious victory would be our reward. The Bishop of London was confident that "if everyone prayed, and prayed regularly, we should receive a spiritual force which would astonish the world." His lordship highly recommended the reverent use of the following prayer: "Stretch forth thy hand, thou God of Hosts, and decide between us and our enemies; give us fortitude and courage to endure hardness as good soldiers, and crown our labours with victory; for Jesus Christ's sake." Sir William Robertson Nicoll, editor of the *British Weekly*, was an equally zealous advocate of the efficacy of believing prayer, saying, "We are to put will into our prayers. What I mean is that we should pray with all our might for a speedy victory."

All those men of God in our land, who so earnestly believed that God was on our side, and would certainly grant us a speedy victory if we duly prayed for it, were the victims of a fatal fault, the polite name of which is self-righteousness, but known in the vulgar tongue as hypocrisy. Wrapped up in their self-righteous cloak, they failed to realize that the Germans were a Christian nation like themselves, and had equal access to the Throne of Grace. Blinded by prejudice, they could only see in Germany the reign of Paganism, Materialism, and Atheism; and they said both to themselves and to God, "If Germany wins, semi-Paganism triumphs, and Christ is cast down." As a matter of fact, Germany, too, was on its knees before God, and Days of Intercession were observed there as well as here. There, too, the clergy returned fervent thanks for the revival of religion that had been occasioned by the War. It was a source of great rejoicing, there as well as here, that, "following the attractions of grace, following the voice of their pastors, and the exhortations of their God-fearing Kaiser, the people entered the churches, and found there the Saviour." There, too, as well as here, the divines, imitating the example of the politicians, declared: "We are innocent of the War. It has been forced upon us. This we can testify before God and the world." The all-important consideration is that God's patronage and help were passionately solicited by two Christian nations at war with each other. The two appeals went up to the same God, in the name of the same Redeemer, and with the view of securing complete success to each of the bitterly opposing parties. Thus, it will be seen, the Deity has been placed in a difficult and most unenviable position.

Well, what has been the outcome of all the intercessory services held in countries engaged in deadly conflict? What has been the net result of all the private and public prayers addressed to Heaven by Christian believers occupying themselves with the high art of killing one another? The Gospel Jesus says: "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive; if ye shall ask anything in my name, that will I do" (Matt. xxi. 22; John xiv. 14). Now let us face the facts, the chief of which is that prayer has had no appreciable effect whatever upon the fortunes of the War. While the twenty-four hours' prayer-meeting was being held at St. Paul's, London, the Germans raided our North-east coast and cruelly murdered several hundreds of innocent men, women, and children. The German casualties of all kinds up till the end of June, as announced in the German official lists, are 3,012,637. From the same official sources we learn that the total Prussian losses alone amount to 2,773,836. These figures are staggering enough, in all conscience. Our own

losses, too, must be enormous, and they are mounting higher and higher every day. Here are official lists for two successive days: July 14, casualties to officers, 426; in the ranks, 1,279; July 15, casualties to officers, 417; in the ranks, 1,510. Added to the German and our casualties there are Belgian, French, Russian, Austro-Hungarian, Servian, Turkish, and Bulgarian losses, the grand total of which, no doubt, amounts to many millions. The overwhelming majority of the combatants are Christian brothers, whilst all alike are firm believers in one God and Father of the race.

The question recurs, What has become of the myriads upon myriads of believing prayers with which Heaven has been bombarded ever since the War began? They have borne absolutely no apparent fruit of any kind. Dr. Horton once assured his credulous followers that the prayers of the sailors on one of our warships in the Dardanelles had proved in the highest degree efficacious. While hostile shells were being accurately aimed at their vessel, they earnestly prayed for Divine protection, with the result that every shell was supernaturally deflected, and fell harmlessly into the sea. What would any sane person think of a God who could be guilty of such monstrous partiality? Dr. Horton's story of supernatural intervention in the East was as groundless as that about the angels of Mons. There is not a single scrap of evidence that prayer has had, or is likely to have, the slightest effect upon the course of this bloody and inhuman War. A God who could stop the War could as easily have prevented it, which would have been a much more God-like action.

The inevitable conclusion, therefore, is that prayer, believed to be a dynamic force in the universe, is an egregious fiasco. Even Dean Henson has arrived at essentially the same verdict, so far as prayer and the War are concerned; and the Christian public generally is gradually veering round to the same view. Crowded intercessory services are things of the past, and the religious revival, so confidently announced as actual twenty months ago, is now relegated to an exceedingly problematical future. Churches and chapels are at present ominously emptying, while the conviction daily gathers strength that the issue of the War, like that of all other earthly affairs, shall be decided in strict conformity to natural law. Meantime, while God is being dethroned, man is slowly coming into his kingdom, and whilst the Heaven of heavens is passing, Earth is becoming more and more substantial as the cherisher of "her best endowed." And the Song of songs is—

Glory to Man in the highest, for Man is the master of things.

J. T. LOYD.

## From Pulpit to Platform.

### A Modern Pilgrim's Progress.

As if day had cloven the skies  
At dreaming midnight o'er the western wave,  
Men started, staggering with a glad surprise,  
Under the lightnings of thine unfamiliar eyes.

—Shelley, "Ode to Liberty."

OVER thirty years ago there appeared a book of poetry called *Towards Democracy*, which placed its author definitely among the forces of progress. It was a voice of a new era. Young men treasured the volume, and older men looked eagerly for other works from the same wise pen. Edward Carpenter, the author, was then in the very prime of his life. He is seventy-two years old now, and his significance in modern literature and thought is enormous. And now comes a volume of autobiography, *My Days and Dreams*,<sup>1</sup> written by the

<sup>1</sup> Allen Unwin & Co. 7s. 6d.

same Edward Carpenter, which tells in beautiful language the life-story of this very remarkable man, of noble simplicity and heroic modesty. These pages are a liberal education in every sense of the hackneyed words, and brilliantly illumine the rare and unmistakable genius who contemplates modern civilization like a visitor from another planet.

The life-pilgrimage of this great social reformer is romantic in the extreme. Born at Brighton, of middle-class parents of ample means, he was educated at Cambridge University, becoming tenth Wrangler and a Fellow of his college. The Church attracted him, and he took orders under the famous Frederic Denison Maurice, one of the founders of the Working Men's College, and one of the most broad-minded priests who ever wore a cassock, but even he could not keep Carpenter in the Church. For the young curate was reading Shelley's lyrics of liberty, and soon he was to become a disciple of Walt Whitman. In such company the young priest was bound to look beyond the Church and the moment, and scan far horizons and the unalterable stars.

Such a fine spirit as that of Edward Carpenter's was bound to rebel at being "cribb'd, cabin'd, and confin'd" within the narrow limits of a Church, which has ever regarded progress with jealous eyes. The horrors of slavery, the brutal treatment of prisoners, and other inhuman outrages, were never denounced by the clergy until laymen cried shame upon them. The bishops almost invariably voted in the House of Lords against reforms. They voted against the Bill for abolishing capital punishment for stealing property of the value of five shillings. The Roman Catholic Disabilities and the Jewish Disabilities Repeal Bills met with their determined opposition. They resisted the motion for the admission of Nonconformists to the universities, and also the right of Dissenters to bury their own dead in their own manner. Owing to the obstinacy of the bishops, the United Kingdom remained for very many years the one civilized State where marriage with a deceased wife's sister was illegal, and Englishmen and Scotsmen were long refused the same freedom as their kinsmen across the seas. What sixteen centuries of the rule of the bishops had done for the common people has been told by Joseph Arch, the first agricultural labourer who became a member of Parliament:—

First up walked the squire to the communion rails; the farmers went up next; then up went the tradesmen, the shopkeepers, the wheelwright and the blacksmith, and then, the very last of all, went the poor agricultural labourers. They walked up by themselves; nobody else knelt with them; it was as if they were unclean—and at that sight the iron entered into my heart and remained fast embedded there. I said to myself, "If that's what goes on—never for me!"

In much the same spirit of righteous indignation young Carpenter abandoned the Church, and became a University Extension Lecturer, and wrote *Towards Democracy*, in which he brought something of the spacious spirit of Walt Whitman into English literature. "If I am not level with the lowest, I am nothing," he said humbly and sincerely. Nor was it an idle boast, for he actually gave away the greater part of the fortune he had inherited from his father, and during the succeeding thirty years he was one of the people. He worked with labourers, mechanics, and other toilers, and took to open-air speaking, a trying and a thankless task for a sensitive and cultured scholar. He even tried to make a living out of his garden, and carried his own produce to market and stood behind his own stall to sell it. He made sandals, and in the intervals of a busy career he wrote books.

Carpenter's real and lasting influence is in his books, for he is a modern of the moderns, and the pioneer of many freedoms. He is so far ahead of the times that he is still outside the region of extensive popularity, and his truly amazing power of detachment from his own age is only saved from disaster by his whole-hearted faith in the future of humanity. Critics profess to regard Carpenter as a mere disciple of Whitman. That the English poet owes much to the great American goes without saying. The irregular form of the verse and the similarity of subjects form an obvious bond. The differences between the two men are very striking. Whitman was reared in a republic, and Carpenter in a monarchy. The American served with the army in a prolonged and terrible war, and the Englishman spent years as a parish curate. Whitman's psychological roots were in the United States, and Carpenter's were in Cornwall. The author of *Leaves of Grass* was a self-educated man, and the writer of *England's Ideal* was a brilliant university scholar. Whitman was no great traveller, but Carpenter, in spite of his poverty, has visited the principal countries of the world. As we contemplate these two democratic giants, we realize more clearly their moral and intellectual differences. It is a commonplace to day to belittle the men of the nineteenth century, but where are the successors of men like these, whose piercing vision sees the first glint of dawn in the blackness of night?

Of his own books Edward Carpenter says:—

They have led a curious underground life in the literary world, spreading widely as a matter of fact (they have been translated into a dozen languages), yet not on the surface. Like old moles, they have worked away unseen and unobserved, yet in such a manner as to throw up heaps here and there and in the most unlikely places, and bring back friends to me on all sides—lovely and beautiful friends for whom I cannot sufficiently thank them.

And he has many friends among the "intellectuals." The years spent in close contact with the toilers have not been spent in vain, for he has a broader outlook on humanity than any other writer of his time, with the single exception of Whitman. Humanitarian, idealist, dreamer, if you will; his brain toiled and his heart burned to leave the world better than he found it. He believes that when men and women are equally free to follow their best impulses; when idleness and vicious luxury on the one hand, and oppressive labour and the dread of starvation on the other, are alike unknown; when the standard of opinion is set by the wisest and the best among us, then Democracy will come into its kingdom.

Carpenter has travelled much, but his greatest journey has been from that time when, as a young man, he preached in a surplice, and dallied at tea-parties, until to-day when he is the austere apostle of democracy. We can but admire the high standard of his conduct, and the unselfishness of his life. At a time when commercialism is rampant, his career is an exception so rare as to be scarcely credible. In an age of compromise, Edward Carpenter has ever remained faithful to his principles; in an age of ostentation he has cared only for simplicity.

MIMNERMUS.

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There is a campaign for the promotion of Family Worship. A correspondent in Scotland points to the difficulties of morning prayers, as it is now the custom for the members of the household to come down at different times and breakfast individually; also, that many ladies do not come down till after breakfast. The Lord does not fit somehow into our modern social and economic scheme.

## Talks With Young Listeners.

### XI.—Heroes.

"HAIL, mighty hero!"

The voice was that of a stranger who came and sat down under a sacred tree, and looked at a young man of the tribe of Joseph. This youth was stooping in a hollow in the rock, which was used for pressing wine from grapes; but he was thrashing wheat in the wine-press. He did the work as if he were a thief, peeping out to see if any Midianites, or robbers from Arabia, passed that way.

"Sir," said the young fellow, Gideon. "Why speak so? I am a member of a poor family."

"You will conquer the Midianites," said the stranger.

Gideon wondered at such talk. Begging the visitor to wait, he hurried to the house, prepared a meal of bread, veal, and broth, and spread it on the rock under the tree.

Then the stranger touched the food with his staff, flames burst from the rock, the meal was consumed, and Yahweh, the Fire-god (for it was he), vanished from sight.

A blowing of horns roused the echo in many a valley among the limestone hills, and a huge multitude of tribesmen, with shield and spear, followed Gideon to the war against the bullying Midianites and Bedouins.

"You do not need so many," whispered Yahweh.

"Lessen the number."

"All who are afraid, go home!" cried Gideon.

A big crowd slunk away. Their first thoughts had been bold; their second thoughts were different.

"Come and drink at the brook," said the young general to those that remained; and he closely watched their behaviour.

Some knelt and scooped water in their hands. Three hundred went at the water like thirsty dogs, lapping and gulping. Gideon chose these three hundred.

He and one trusty comrade went one night to the enemy camp, and saw thousands of warriors asleep, and camels tethered near. Two Bedouins were chatting, and Gideon and his friend crept near, and crouched in a shadowy place and listened.

"Odd thing I dreamed just now," said one; "a little barley cake came rattling into our camp and toppled our big tent over."

"A bad omen," grunted the other. "We shall be defeated."

Gideon and his companion glided away. The young leader gave each of his men an earthenware jug, inside which a small torch was lighted, and each man had a horn. They tip-toed stealthily towards the sleeping camp. At the word of command they broke the jugs, upheld the blazing torches, blew horns, and raised a fearful yell of "Yahweh! Gideon! Yahweh! Gideon!"

The terrified Midianites began to fight one another in their confusion, and then the great host rushed away pell-mell, Gideon and the three hundred in full pursuit. Other Israelites joined in the chase, and the victory was complete.

Gideon was, of course, chosen as chieftain, or judge; and he had a large harem of wives, and seventy sons. He was anxious that the people should be able to see the God that helped them, so, with gold taken from the Midianite camp and the slain enemies, he made an image. But some of the Hebrews shook their heads at this glittering idol, and said no good would come of it, for Yahweh's order (the second of the Ten Words) had run: "Worship no images."

As a matter of fact, the Hebrew race did gradually get rid of idol-worship, and would not in any way picture

a likeness of their national God. But in the early ages, the forefathers of the Hebrew race did many barbaric things. For example, one of the judges of that time was Jephthah. As he was about to go on a campaign against the Ammonites, on the east side of Jordan River, he stupidly vowed to sacrifice to Yahweh the first living thing that came out of his house to meet him on his victorious return. The first living creature that greeted him at his door when he went back was his daughter; and the unhappy maiden was slain as a gift to the God of Storm, Fire, and War.

The next hero on our stage is Samson.

A lusty fellow he was, his jolly and beaming face framed with massive locks of curly hair; and his arms and legs were as strong as the limbs of an elephant. Never from childhood has his hair been shorn, and this waving hair was a token that he was set apart as an inspired man, moved by the spirit of Yahweh to do all sorts of daring deeds against Israel's enemies.

The worst enemies were a tribe that dwelt in cities on the sea-coast. They were the Philistines, and their god was the fish-tailed Dagon.

Samson was strolling across a vineyard one day, when a young lion leaped from among the grape-vines, and came roaring. The man sprang at the beast, clutched its mane and jaw, and simply tore the lion limb from limb, and then strolled on. A day or two later he passed that way, and found that wild bees had made a honeycomb inside the lion's carcass. He smiled at the curious scene, and then hurried to the village where, that very day, he was to be wedded to a Philistine girl. At the marriage merry-making he laughingly said:—

"You thirty fellows—guests at my wedding—I will give you thirty splendid new costumes if you will guess the meaning of my riddle. Listen: Out of the Eater came something to eat, and out of the Strong One came something sweet. You shall have seven days to guess."

His newly made wife coaxed him into telling her the secret. It meant the lion, in whose carcass sweet honey was found. And his wife revealed the secret to her Philistine friends, and they won the splendid dresses.

Samson paid for the costumes with his fists. He ran off to Ashkelon city in Philistine land, knocked down the first well-dressed men he met, and stripped off their robes. Thus he gave Philistine dresses to Philistine tricksters. It was no wonder that his new relatives took a dislike to him, and persuaded his young wife to forsake him. Thereupon, he made the Philistines suffer. He caught three hundred foxes (perhaps jackals), tied them in pairs by their tails, fastened a lighted brand to each couple, and sent the frightened creatures raging and tearing through fields of ripe corn; and Yahweh's man enjoyed the fun, and the Philistines looked with dismay on their burned harvest.

Rare sport he had when the furious Philistines made a raid on the village where the long-haired chief dwelt, and he allowed his scared friends to tie him with ropes and hand him over, like a mummy, to his foes. All of a sudden he burst the bonds, snatched up a stray bone (an ass's jaw-bone) from the ground, and, with this simple weapon, flattened out a thousand Philistines. Later on his enemies thought they had caught him at last, when he was known to be asleep in a Philistine city, and they shut the city gates and waited. Samson woke, strode out, lugged out the gate, posts and all, slung the lot over his shoulder, just as the day was breaking, and gaily marched away.

However, he was foolish enough to tell the Philistine woman, Delilah, the secret of his Yahweh-spirit. If his hair were cut, his strength would fail. She cozened him to sleep. Philistines crept into his chamber, sheared his locks, and easily bore him off as prisoner.

They blinded his eyes, and fixed chains on his hands and legs, and set him, as a wretched slave, to turn a corn-mill and grind meal. Bright days were now dark nights to him, and the jolly and hearty hero was now a pale and sorrowful drudge.

His hair grew again, and his strength returned. One day his keeper led him by the hand to the temple of Dagon, where a crowd of Philistines jeered and mocked at the fallen chief.

"Yahweh," he muttered, "this once, O Yahweh, give me power."

He leaned forward, clasping a temple-pillar in each arm. They fell with a crash, the roof gave way, and the mockers, and Samson himself, were buried in the dust and ruin.

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Our great English poet, John Milton, turned this old folk-tale of Samson in Agony into a very noble poem, called *Samson Agonistes*.

Many ancient gods and heroes had names containing some such word as "Sam," or "Sim," or "Sham," meaning the Sun. And there are flashes of a Sun-myth in this story of Samson. He was very strong; so is the sun. He had long hair; the sun has long and mighty rays. Samson slept; so sleeps the sun (or seems to!) at night. At daybreak Samson broke open the gate; and the sun at dawn breaks open the gate of gloomy night, and cheerfully travels across the sky. Samson lost his hair, and pined and drooped; and the winter sun loses its glory, and loses heat and strength. Samson revived; and the sun in spring-time appears to revive, or live again, and has his revenge on his foes—the snow and the frost.

The singular story of the jackals may be borrowed from an ancient idea of the rain-charm, or rain-spell. When the Arabs suffered from a dry season, they used to tie lighted brands to the tails of oxen and let them loose. It was supposed that the oxen, rushing about, would in some magic manner charm rain out of the heavens, and make the farmers glad. However, Samson's charm worked the opposite way.

F. J. GOULD.

## Correspondence.

### "SCIENTIFIC HISTORICAL MATERIALISM VERSUS METAPHYSICS."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In my letter in your issue of July 9, the first words of the last paragraph run: "Mr. Cook's fundamental mistake, I submit, is to think that metaphysics is a sort of cloak for religion. It has too often been made so; it is more essentially so than mathematics or logic."

What I intended to say was: "it is *no* more essentially so than mathematics or logic."

ROBERT ARCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I am glad Mr. Arch admits the truth and value of historical Materialism. So far, so good.

I do not wish to quarrel with his qualified use of the word "free"; but he must see, therefore, that my first criticism directed against Mr. Cohen's declaration that "the free play of ideas is the prime condition of progress" is justified.

So, too, in a relative sense is Mr. Arch's statement correct, that cause and effect act and react one on the other; yet I must point out that its insufficiency as an explanation results in a "vicious" circle. Either conditions or ideas are a primal cause. Even in Mr. Arch's meteorological illustration it is evident that his desire for a walk was a result of the weather conditions, and not the weather conditions a result of his desire for a walk.

Mr. Arch's contention and plea for metaphysics will not, I am afraid, stand much criticism; nor can he, do what he

will, sever the connection between metaphysics and superstitions.

The arguments *pro* and *contra a priori* judgments are rather too complex to be compressed in a single letter. Again, I contend that all knowledge is the result of sense-perceptions of material realities. Dare Mr. Arch assert that it is possible to think without data? Yet that is what is implied by his contention that certain forms of knowledge are inherent, and not won from experience.

There is a sensible and logical connection between the theories of evolution and a critical inquiry into the character and nature of the organs of cognition; but if one will persist in dwelling up in the cloud cuckoo-land of metaphysics, seeking fixity in transition, searching for the absolute in a universe of flux, then I am afraid that solid reason and simple science cannot appeal to the phantasy-hunter.

Let us realize, as Joseph Dietzgen in his essays on the limits of cognition points out, that the world is not a variety of intellect, but intellect a variety of the universal existence; that the intellectual kingdom is of this world, and that the world does not proceed from the mind or spirit, but *vice versa*. Metaphysicians are not satisfied with a knowledge of all the grains of sand on a sand-heap, but perforce must look behind all the grains of sand for an extra sand-heap without grains. They are not satisfied with the existence of the material phenomena of this world, nor with the truth that human cognition is but a species of the universal material phenomena; they needs must go outside of Nature, and deify some absurd contradiction which masquerades, according to Kant's obliging definition, as "God, Freedom, and Immortality." God spake, and the world came out of nothing, says the Christian. Reason was, and the world came likewise out of nothing, is the substance of the Kantian and Mr. Arch's position. What essential difference is there between the two, I ask? Both invert the universe, and both are nonsensical, and assert that the cause came from the effect, that the non-physical created the physical, that something came from nothing. Both perpetuate a reactionary dualistic conception of the universe, degrading and condemning the material factors in life, and preaching a superstition-encouraging fiction of an all-triumphant and all-powerful "pure spirit." The Christian offers the down-trodden and oppressed of the world, the working class, a God and "another world" as a solace for their sufferings; the Freethinker substitutes this God for an "idea," and offers them a course of Christianity-smashing as a pill for their ills. Neither will get off the workers' backs and unmask the real character of the workers' exploitation—the owning and controlling of the tools of economic production by the capitalist class. Hence the reason for my attack on the metaphysical Freethinker equally with the Christian.

In conclusion, I assert the superiority of the Monistic materialistic conception of the universe above all dualistic abnormalities. What Mr. Arch accuses us "one-sided" Materialists of is a thing of which we can never be guilty; denying the existence of all metaphysical and spiritual bogies (except as fantasies of the human brain), repudiating "divine" or human mastership. Standing as proletarians with a clear grasp of our position in society and in the universe, we can never defend or accept the superstitions that we realize are the bonds of our economic enslavement. In economics we are Socialists; in politics, Revolutionists; in religion, Atheists; and in philosophy, Materialists and Monists. In all things we are practical; our economics are our ideals, and our ideals a happy, unitary, communistic, economic, human society.

A. E. COOK.

### THE FREETHINKER IN THE TRENCHES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I have just received the *Freethinker* to-day, with many thanks. I wonder where that chap was who saw that white cross on May 22 sailing along towards the moon. I saw the moon myself. This has been read with the accompaniment of much laughter among a good few of my pals here. They had, most of them, just left a compulsory Church Parade, too. The remarks passed during that Parade by outsiders I will not state here, but it will be sufficient if I say that not one remark led one to think that the speaker was

in anything like a religious mood. I should like to be the recipient of one of those forms dealing with the experiences of Freethinkers, but I haven't a postcard. Will this do? With reference to praying in the barrack-room, by a N.C.O. in this week's *Freethinker*, I can only say that I, for one, can endorse that statement, and finish with saying as he does, "It isn't done here."

After our *big* Parade this morning an elderly French woman with two young French girls (from 20 to 24 years of age), passing by a few of us who had not been on parade, were pulled up for a little conversation. I asked if they had been to church this morning. They said "No; and that they were going to church, *apres la guerre*," in the same spirit as one who sees no use in going. And now for the sequel. I lent the paper to one of about a dozen to read the piece by "K" on "God." This was considered very good and above the average, and *when* I get the paper back it will not surprise me if that piece is wanting, and afterwards found in some prominent place where more can see it, as it is exactly adaptable to things that have occurred in our vicinity for the last fortnight, except for yesterday and to-day. How this War seems to show the utter nonsense of all this Christian babble! And I have come across not a few who are not afraid to state their opinions more publicly now than I should think they would at one time before the War.

May the old *Freethinker* last longer than the supposed Adam, and not rise in price through necessity, but keep successful on its way, the "only way" to me that seems acceptable.

W. M. PETTIT.

P.S.—'Tis now 5 p.m., and at 6 p.m. your demonstration at Victoria Park. I would give a week's pay to be there to listen.—W. M. P.

## Acid Drops.

We are not at all astonished to find the Committee appointed by the Home Secretary to advise on the matter of War charity funds, reporting that many grave scandals and abuses exist. We should have been surprised had it been otherwise. In one case, out of a total of £129,000, £42,000 was unaccounted for. In another, a man started a Home of Rest for Soldiers, charged the fund with the payment of the rent of the house in which he lived, and appears to have taken the *rest* himself. All sorts of people in low water appear to have found this road an easy one to travel, and it serves as an apt comment on the torrents of sentimental gush that has been let loose in connection with the War.

Perhaps, when the Government has finished with these bogus War charities, it will turn its attention to the religious side of the business. For we are quite certain that the methods practised in the one case are of exactly the same order as the methods practised in the other. There are scores of religious "charities" in this country that are run for no other purpose than to benefit the promoters. More than one has been exposed in these columns. Many a man who is a failure in the pulpit takes a large house, styles it the headquarters of a mission for something or other, and then lives out of the proceeds of the collections. And provided something, no matter how small, is really given away, the law seems powerless to touch him. The Government Committee suggest that all these begging agencies shall be registered. A better plan would be to suppress the practice of promiscuous street collecting altogether. It is a bad practice, and one of the worst features connected therewith is the number of children employed.

A Wesleyan minister, writing to the *Daily News*, urges that the boy-hero Cornwell should be buried in Westminster Abbey, which, he adds, is reserved for "kings, priests, statesmen, et cetera." The last touch is delicious, for it includes parsons and their wives.

Owing to the War, many clergymen are dispensing with the annual Sunday-school excursions, which have for long been a powerful magnet for attracting children to these in-

stitutions for making worshippers to fill the churches and chapels. The clergy are not abandoning their own holidays.

Considerable clerical commotion has taken place at Southend-on-Sea concerning the serving of teas at Chalkwell Park on Sundays. A protest meeting was held on a Sunday, and a prominent parson announced to his congregation that trams would be in readiness to convey worshippers to the meeting to protest against Sabbath-breaking.

The truthful clergy are constantly telling us that the Germans are a nation of Atheists. Prior to the War, however, they used very different language. For example, the Right Rev. Dr. Wilkinson, Bishop of North and Central Europe, said: "Germany is a religious nation. Germans, from their great Kaiser downwards, are a God-fearing people—and God has blessed and is wonderfully blessing that nation. Religious education in all the primary and secondary schools of Germany is compulsory." Yet in the twinkle of an eye all this is changed, and the clergy say that Germans are all Freethinkers. As Shakespeare says, "An ounce of civet, good apothecary."

A London daily paper complains that "Lord Haldane and his colleagues" taught England in 1914 "the doctrines of materialism." It is evident that the writer knows as little of "materialism" as he does of Nonconformist politicians.

The United Methodists have just held their Annual Conference at Rochdale, when the President availed himself of his opportunity to make a shockingly false charge against Freethinkers. According to him, they have "impoverished our moral life," "challenged the very core of Christian courage, and damaged our intellectual and religious life." As a matter of fact, the Freethought movement has considerably strengthened and enriched the moral life by providing it with a purely natural backbone, a distinctively social sanction, and an exclusively social aim. What the reverend gentleman means by "Christian courage" we do not know, for in courage, as the whole world knows it, there is absolutely nothing distinctively Christian. Christians are not, as a rule, distinguished for their courage, except when they misrepresent and abuse their opponents in their absence.

We frankly admit that the growing Scepticism of the day has greatly damaged the religious life of the country, and it is this fact that accounts for its unfair treatment by Christian leaders. And the United Methodist President lets the cat out of the bag when he says, "The Sceptical trend has wrought deeply. We have watched a decay in religious belief." The secret is out. Religious decay, according to the religious bigots, carries with it the decay of everything else worth clinging to. The parsons know that their day is past, and they imagine that, without them and their exalting influence, nothing but the utter downfall of all virtue awaits the world. Unfathomable is their vanity; but their death-knell has already sounded, and all lovers of mankind will rejoice.

The Conference, very piously, placed on record its "humble gratitude to God for the manifestations of His favour and assistance during the past year, and regarded the present trials which nations and the Churches are passing through as deepening the sense of man's need of the Gospel and of Christ's Church." Having done this, it was reported to the Conference that there had been a decrease of 894 adult members, of 722 members on trial, of 95 local preachers, of 6,333 Sunday-school scholars, and 892 Sunday-school teachers. As this is the state of affairs after a year's "deepening" of our sense of the need of the Gospel, one may be excused wondering what would have happened had there been no deepening of our religious sense?

Another soldier's life saved by carrying a book over his heart. This occurred during the recent "push" in France, and was reported in the *Daily Chronicle* of a recent date. But, alas, it was not the Bible, but Ian Hay's *Knight on*

*Wheels.* As a bullet-stopper, one book seems as good as another. Once upon a time it was the Bible only that was effective.

The Rev. R. J. Campbell has been sneering at "cheap-jack journalists." Mr. Campbell might have been more grateful, for the "cheap jacks" made his reputation—such as it is.

Mr. James Douglas, writing on the French nation in a weekly contemporary, says, "They tell me that France is a secular nation." What filmy-eyed innocence! All educated persons know that French literature, from Abelard to Anatole France, is one torrent of scepticism.

There was one point raised in connection with the trial of a Roman Catholic at the Bristol Assizes which gave rise to a point of some general interest. The charge was one of a peculiarly nauseous character—that of procuring young girls, and the solicitor for the defence said that if the judge would deal leniently with the prisoner, "he would be confined for life in the special ecclesiastical establishment maintained for that offence." We must confess that we were quite unaware the Roman Catholic Church maintained prisons of its own of that character, and if it is so, then it exercises a power which no private organization ought to be allowed to possess. How many prisoners of this kind has the Catholic Church in its power? Is the Government aware of it? And are these prisons open to any kind of inspection? These are questions we should like answered by someone who knows.

Owing to the shortage of ministers, the Primitive Methodist Conference has decided to ask for exemption from military service of all local preachers. And yet there is no other class that could be so well spared.

The following amusing misprint appeared in a provincial paper: "After being presented to the bishop, the new vicar took the customary oats."

A Sunday paper, commenting on war conditions and economies, tells of a bishop who has actually dismissed his footmen and engaged "foot-ladies." There should be "some" promenade when his lordship attends church.

The Vicar of Islington, in a sermon preached in St. Paul's, quoted with approval a lady who said that this War "is the greatest blessing befallen us for hundreds of years. I believe this War has come, and has come only just in time, to wake us all up from our selfishness, frivolity, and senseless greed and love of money. I believe it is God's merciful judgment on us." Evidently, we suffer from an overdose of the divine solicitude. It is carrying solicitude beyond a joke when, in order to do us good, God arranges for a war of the dimensions of this one. For the future, we do hope that God will just let the world go to the Devil in its own style. The consequences cannot be worse than so much of his fatherly attention.

This same vicar is a remarkable man in many respects. Thus, to those who cast doubt on miracles, he replies, "Every intervention of Providence in answer to our prayer is a miracle of grace and a re-assertion of Divine omnipotence." Why, certainly! If Providence intervenes and answers our prayers, that is a miracle. No one will dispute it. Some of us would like to know when and where Providence intervened, but the vicar is not to be caught. He is content with the statement that every time God works a miracle, a miracle occurs. And we should be the last to contradict so obvious a truth.

The Rev. E. Shillito, M.A., says that the Church need not fail as it faces the present crisis. "Because she has failed before," he adds, "she need not fail now." As a mere piece of reasoning that is perfectly correct. Past failures do not, of themselves, necessitate present and future failures; but all depends upon the cause or causes. If the causes of the past failure of the Church inhered in herself, the law of probability determines that they either must or may

continue operative in the present and the future. In any case, Mr. Shillito is entirely mistaken when he declares that "the nation depends upon the decision of the Church." The nation doesn't care a rap what the Church thinks or says on any subject whatsoever. The voice of the Church doesn't count at all in the life of the nation. She was not consulted before war was declared, nor is her advice likely to be asked for when terms of peace come to be discussed. She has been sailing under false colours from the beginning, and the nation is at last finding it out.

The tradesmen of Southend-on-Sea are up in arms against a clerically conducted crusade against Sunday trading. A circular letter has been sent to the local press, which points out that the object of the parsons is "not likely to be attained by an unjustifiable attack on the morals of the people and abuse of their municipal representatives."

*Apropos* of the Mons Angels legend and similar stories, a correspondent sends us the following excerpt from Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico* :—

A report ran through the Army that the General was slain. It soon spread through the city, to the great joy of the Mexicans, and reached the fortress, where the besieged were thrown into no less consternation. But, happily for them, it was false. He, indeed, received two severe contusions on the knee, but in other respects remained uninjured. At no time, however, had he been in such extreme danger, and this escape and that of his companions were esteemed little less than a Miracle. More than one grave historian refers the preservation of the Spaniards to the watchful care of their Patron Apostle, St. James, who, in these desperate conflicts, was beheld careering on his Milk White Steed at the head of the Christian squadrons, with his sword flashing lightning, while a lady robed in white, supposed to be the Virgin Mary, was distinctly seen by his side, throwing dust in the eyes of the infidels.

The fact is attested both by Spaniards and Mexicans; by the latter after their conversion to Christianity.

Even at that date, we may add, the story was a very ancient one.

"Large numbers of clergymen are busily advertising for somebody to take charge of their parishes during a month or more in the holiday season. And, in so doing, most grievously do they expose the utter unimportance—almost the uselessness—of their work for the Church. To attract a *locum tenens* they dilate on the comforts and beauty of rectory and vicarage, adding significantly, 'light duties.' The Rector of Milton Damerel, Brandiscorner, Devon, for instance, advertises his 'beautiful rectory' and the 'trout fishing.' Regarding his cure of souls, the welfare of his people, he observes, as attractions, 'Light Sunday duty; nothing in the week!' Is all right with the Church when its priests get into the pulpit once or twice on a Sunday and do 'nothing' in the week? Are there no souls to save on Monday, no wounded hearts to heal on Tuesday? After this example, we are not surprised to hear of a Devon vicar who turned up an hour late at each service on the first Daylight Sunday, because he had 'only heard from the Bishop two days before'!"—*John Bull*.

Ignorance of the Bible is very common amongst Christians, and even school children have very hazy ideas concerning that Oriental book. At an Essex school the visiting inspector reported that "there was one child from whom I could not get a single answer except that she knew the third commandment." So far, that school has not been destroyed by an earthquake.

The Free Churches intend to hold special services for prayer and intercession in August, and "specimen copies" of the service, including the prayers, have been prepared already, in order to "secure homogeneity." Pity the sorrows of a poor, old Deity!

An American newspaper editor gravely informs his readers that "one bacillus will in 24 hours produce 17,000,000 similar individuals." He must have been educated at the same university as the Rev. Billy Sunday.



## The National Secular Society.

IN September next the National Secular Society completes its jubilee. At the last meeting of the Society's Executive it was decided to secure the Queen's Hall for September 24 in order to celebrate the occasion. I am now writing, at the request of the Executive, in order to induce *Freethinker* readers to show their appreciation of that jubilee in a practical manner.

The life of the N. S. S. extends over a period that has witnessed a profound revolution in almost every department of thought, and in none has the change been greater than in that of religion. Fifty years ago orthodoxy still presented an apparently unbroken front to the world, evolution was an unclimatized newcomer, and heresies that have since become almost orthodoxies, were being fiercely denounced by the religious believer. There is no need for me to dwell upon this now; it is enough to say that in this intellectual revolution the National Secular Society has played a great part—a part out of all proportion to either its numbers, financial resources, or social prestige. It is no exaggeration to say that the position of Christianity in Great Britain would be to-day very different to what it is but for this fifty years strenuous propaganda by the N. S. S.

In this work the N. S. S. has been always loyally helped in its task by thousands of unattached Freethinkers—the main fact that brings me to the point of this appeal. For valuable—even indispensable—as this help has been, there can be no question that it would have been still more effective had their assistance extended to actual membership. Ten men working together will always represent a greater force than the same number working in isolation. For lack of organization energy is wasted, or it is misdirected, or it meets with comparatively small results. Isolated action can only be achieved at the cost of efficiency. I am convinced that the number of Freethinkers in this country is large enough to exercise an impressive influence if only their separate strength can be brought into combination.

To all these unattached Freethinkers I would, therefore, make an earnest appeal to consider whether the time has not arrived for associating themselves with an organization such as the N. S. S. There must be at least a couple of thousand readers of the *Freethinker* who have not joined this Society for no other reason than that of never having seriously thought about it. I now ask them to remedy that omission as quickly as possible. It is *their* cause and *our* cause for which I am pleading. It is for an organization which has an inspiring past, a hopeful present, and, if all do their share of the work, a great future.

The first President of the N. S. S. was Charles Bradlaugh, one of the greatest fighters for freedom the nineteenth century produced. His successor was G. W. Foote, a man who spent his life in, and placed his superb mental powers at, the service of one of the greatest of human causes. It has now fallen to my lot to occupy an office which has added to its inevitable difficulties that of following two such illustrious men. The office is one that brings no payment of any kind or form, nor is any desired; but its honorary character gives me a greater claim upon the support of Freethinkers throughout the country. And the payment I ask for is the only payment I desire—to be able to announce at the Queen's Hall Jubilee Meeting that there has been a real and solid accession to our membership.

The present is a difficult time for advanced movements. I believe a still more difficult time will face us at the close of the War. The Churches are mobilizing

their forces for action whenever peace shall arrive. Do not, then, let us be behind them in this. Our great need is organization. The N. S. S. is at present a mere skeleton in comparison with what it ought to be, and upon the response to this appeal must depend the nature and extent of the campaign which I hope to see soon initiated.

Other things may need saying concerning the N. S. S. For the present, it is wisest to concentrate on an increased membership. On the last page of this issue will be found a Form of Membership, together with a statement of the Principles and Objects of the Society. I hope to learn that a large number of these forms have been filled in and returned to the N. S. S. office. Those who do not wish to mutilate their paper can have separate forms on application to the General Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance. The minimum subscription for membership is two shillings per year, but please observe that it is a *minimum*. There is no maximum; members may go as high as they please.

And now let us get to work. We are all united in wishing the cause well. Let us now unite in action as well as in desire. There ought not to be a town of any size in Great Britain in which there is not a Branch of the N. S. S. at work. There would not be if all those who are with us in spirit were with us in act. There may be good reasons for *some* people not joining the Society; but I am quite sure that in the vast majority of cases the only reason is, "I have not thought about it." I am now asking them to think about it—quickly and seriously. If I could I would write each one personally. As I cannot do that I hope everyone will take this as a personal call to service.

CHAPMAN COHEN, *President National Secular Society.*

## To Correspondents.

- A. RADLEY.—If you will let us know more of the circumstances, we might advise what is best to be done.
- Y. C.—The specimens you send of Christian Evidence reasoning are quite up to the level—of Christian evidences, but we are unable to spend space on them to publish in full. They afford good material for a study in mental pathology.
- A. G. MARKS.—Christians don't explain a difficulty—they evade it.
- J. W. (Durham).—Shall appear as soon as possible.
- H. GAY.—We do not know of any separate publication that will give you the information you desire. Articles have appeared from time to time in this paper, but if we can assist you on any special point we shall be pleased to do so.
- H. BRYAN.—We shall be pleased to do what we can and at any time to assist a movement designed to secure freedom of speech. That is one of the chief objects we have in view.
- A. M.—Regret we missed your point. There is—on the face of it—a contradiction in the two paragraphs. We were misled, as regards the first one, by a newspaper paragraph. Sorry.
- Y. COLQUHOUN.—Conscientious objectors to Military Service appear to be common to nearly all classes and creeds.
- H. R. WRIGHT.—Our advice is that there is nothing illegal in the transaction. It is for the ratepayers to protest if they think it inadvisable, and see that the matter is altered to their liking.
- W. E. JARMAINE.—The story is a good one, and may be useful later.
- G. W. MAUD.—Already supplied. Thanks.
- H. RUDING.—We fancy any native of Japan will tell you that his country thinks no more of Christianity than it did before the War. Isn't it a trifle ridiculous to imagine that either the Japanese or the Chinese will think more of Christianity because Christian nations are cutting one another's throats?
- S. M.—Of course, "one is only one"; but the *example* of one may be of infinite importance to the many; and if Freethinkers wish the world to take their opinions seriously, they must commence by taking them seriously themselves.
- R. M. CRUDDEN.—Received too late for this week.
- When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communi-*

cations 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.

Friends who send us newspapers would enhance the favour 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.

Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

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

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

## Sugar Plums.

This issue of the *Freethinker*, although dated for Sunday, will be in the hands of many of its readers by Thursday. There is, therefore, just time to call attention to Mr. Cohen's visit to Gainsboro on Friday evening (July 21). The meeting will be held in the Co-operative Hall, and the chair is to be taken at 8 o'clock. We hear of a party of Freethinkers who are coming over from Lincoln, and we have no doubt there will be a rally of "saints" from other places.

The encyclopædic character of Mr. Walter Mann's articles is well-known and appreciated by all readers of the *Freethinker*. We have, therefore, the greater pleasure in calling attention to a new pamphlet by him on *The Religion of Famous Men*, just published, and which we are sure will meet with the appreciation it thoroughly deserves. It constitutes an excellent armoury for Freethinkers in their controversies with Christians, and will prove an enlightening document to Christians. The pamphlet runs to thirty-two pages, and is bound in a neat, coloured cover. Thanks to special circumstances, the price of the pamphlet is one penny, and at that price it should have a rapid sale. Our readers will find it just the thing to pass on to enquiring religious friends.

We have many other things in preparation: a new pamphlet by Mr. Lloyd, a volume of essays and a pamphlet by Mr. Cohen, a volume of essays from Voltaire's writings, and other new pamphlets and reprints, which must be more or less contingent upon the state of the paper market. But for this, most of these would be out by now. At present printing and publishing are very costly, while our first care must be to safeguard the supply of paper for the *Freethinker*. That still gives cause for grave anxiety. Paper is dearer than ever, and at all costs or sacrifices the *Freethinker* must be made secure. Other things must take their chance. Still, we are hoping to announce new publications in the near future.

The death of Professor Elie Metchnikoff at the age of 71 removes an outstanding figure in the world of science. It is not too much to say that his microbiologic researches were epoch-marking in character, and were the conditions of much recent advance in pathology. Due justice was paid to his work as a man of science by the English press, but, as was only to be expected, the fact of this great scientist being an avowed Freethinker was carefully suppressed. Metchnikoff made no secret of his opinions on religion, and a very temperate expression of them is to be found in his work, *The Nature of Man*, reviewed at some length by Mr. Cohen on its first appearance.

## RUSKIN AND GODISM.

Whatever charge of folly may justly attach to the saying, "There is no God," the folly is prouder, deeper, and less pardonable in saying, "There is no God but for me."—*John Ruskin*.

## Nietzsche and His Critics.

### VIII.

(Continued from p. 453.)

Nietzsche, a master of several languages, and, better still, with a thorough appreciation of the manners and customs of the nations that spoke them; with a keen, penetrating insight into humanity; an artist-musician; a fighter, who had borne an honourable part in one of the most strenuous campaigns of modern times; a traveller; a teacher; a lecturer who held audiences entranced by the magic of his wonderful voice; a man of letters; a man of the world; a genius; how is it possible for a moment to compare him with the Kants, the Hegels, and the Fichtes—men who bear all the traces of those whom he contemptuously designated as "moles"? And the secret of Nietzsche's grip on his reader is this: he wrote his books with his blood; he impressed the stamp of his intellect on every line of his works.—*J. M. Kennedy*, "*Nietzsche*," p. 62.

Having set himself as an ideal Life itself, and Life in beauty, in plenitude, in power, in exuberance of wealth: he [Nietzsche] was determined to be sincere with himself at all and every cost, to examine every ideal, however ancient its traditions, however universal its acceptance; to examine it to the bottom, to reject it if necessary, at whatever cost of friendship or of suffering to himself; to affirm and reaffirm it in the face of the whole world if necessary, without compromise. To be able to do this—to be able to attack and reject all that which mankind has hitherto, by almost universal acceptance, held sacred; to be able to sacrifice all those ideas which tradition and education have rendered personally of value; to be able to sacrifice friends that one loves and venerates on the altar of one's convictions—to do this requires courage above the ordinary: it requires heroism.—*Chatterton-Hill*, "*The Philosophy of Nietzsche*," pp. 12-13.

ALTHOUGH Nietzsche has discussed an infinity of subjects in philosophy, science, and art, yet the main points of his philosophy may be summed up under the headings of the "Superman." His criticism of conventional morality, his opposition to religion—especially in relation to the idea of God and Christianity—and his affirmation of the value of life.

It is upon the last question that he parted company with Schopenhauer's philosophy. Schopenhauer held that life was bad, that the Will to Live was a curse, and that the greatest boon a man could wish for was death. For Schopenhauer's Will to Live, Nietzsche substituted the Will to Power, which he declared to be the driving force of all organic life. "Wherever," says Nietzsche, "I found a living thing, there found I the Will to Power; and even in the will of the servant found I the will to be master. Neither necessity nor desire, but the love of power, is the demon of mankind. You may give man everything possible—health, food, shelter, enjoyment—but they are and remain unhappy and capricious, for the demon waits and waits, and must be satisfied." Therefore, says Nietzsche, "Passion for power is the earthquake which breaketh and upbreaketh all that is rotten and hollow; the rolling, rumbling, punitive demolisher of whited sepulchres; the flashing interrogative sign besides premature answers; passion for power: before whose glance man creepeth and croucheth and drudgeth, and becometh lower than the serpent and the swine, until at last great contempt crieth out of him."<sup>1</sup>

Everything, then, that increases power in man is to be desired. "What is good?" asks Nietzsche, and replies, "Everything that increases the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself, in man.

What is bad? All that proceeds from weakness. What is happiness? The feeling that power increases—that a resistance has been overcome."<sup>2</sup>

Nietzsche's attack upon Christianity arose logically out of this philosophy. What type of man are we to

<sup>1</sup> Cited by M. A. Mugge, *Friedrich Nietzsche*, pp. 46-47.

<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche, *The Antichrist* (Aph. 2), p. 242.

cultivate (asks Nietzsche) as the more valuable, the more worthy of life? And he points out that this more valuable type has often existed already (for instance, in ancient Greece and Rome), but only as a happy accident, never as willed.

In contrast to this noble type he places the Christian: "the domestic animal, the herding animal, the sickly animal man—the Christian." "Christianity," declared Nietzsche, "has taken the part of all the weak, the low, the ill-constituted; it has made an ideal out of the antagonism to the preservative instincts of strong life; it has ruined the reason even of the intellectually strongest natures, in that it taught men to regard the highest values of intellectuality as sinful, as misleading, as temptations."<sup>1</sup> Of the founder of Christianity he says: "This holy anarchist, who incited the lowest class, the outcasts and 'sinners,' the *Chandalas* within Judaism, to opposition against the ruling order—with language which, if the Gospels can be trusted, would even at the present day send a person to Siberia—was a political criminal.....He died for his guilt,—all ground is lacking for the assertion, however often it has been made, that he died for the guilt of others."<sup>2</sup> He speaks of the New Testament as "that strange and sickly world into which we are introduced by the Gospels—a world as if taken from a Russian novel in which the outcasts of society, nervous affections, and childish idiotism seem to have appointed a rendezvous."<sup>3</sup> He regrets that the Russian novelist Dostoiwsky did not live "in the neighbourhood of this most interesting decadent; I mean someone who knew just how to perceive the thrilling charm of such a mixture of the sublime, the sickly, and the childish." He roundly declares that—

one does well to put on gloves when reading the New Testament. The proximity of so much uncleanness almost compels one to do so. We should as little choose "first Christians" for companionship as Polish Jews; not that even an objection was required against them. Neither of them have a good smell. I have searched in vain in the New Testament for even a single sympathetic trait. There is nothing in it free, gracious, open-hearted, upright. Humanity has not yet made its beginning here—the instincts of cleanliness are lacking. There are only bad instincts in the New Testament; there is no courage even for these bad instincts. All in it is cowardice, all is shutting of the eyes, and self-deception. Every book becomes cleanly, when one has just read the New Testament.<sup>4</sup>

Nietzsche declares "that in the whole New Testament only a single figure appears which one is obliged to honour—Pilate, the Roman governor." The doctrine of immortality was the lever by which St. Paul shifted the centre of gravity of life; by directing the gaze of men to a future life, either of torment or bliss, he destroyed the value of this life. Says Nietzsche: "When the centre of gravity of life is placed, not in life, but in the 'other world'—in nothingness—life has in reality been deprived of its centre of gravity. The great lie of personal immortality destroys all reason, all naturalness of instinct; all that is beneficent, that is life—furthering, that pledges for the future in instincts, henceforth excites mistrust. So to live that it has no longer any significance to live, that now becomes the significance of life."<sup>5</sup>

Christianity destroyed the driving power of civilization in the ancient world. What was the use of a social sentiment, or co-operating for the future, general welfare? All such things were regarded as wiles of the Devil to

divert attention from the immortal life and ensnare souls.

They were, says Nietzsche:—

Just so many temptations, just so many deviations from the "right path." "One thing is needful." That everyone, as an "immortal soul," has equal rank with everyone else, that in the universality of beings the salvation of every individual can lay claim to eternal importance, that little hypocrites and half-crazed people dare to imagine that on their account the laws of nature are constantly broken—such an enhancement of every kind of selfishness to infinity, to impudence, cannot be branded with sufficient contempt. And yet Christianity owes its triumph to this pitiable flattery of personal vanity,—it has thereby enticed over to its side all the ill-constituted, the seditiously disposed, the ill-fortuned, the whole scum and dross of humanity. "Salvation of the soul" means, in plain words, "the world revolves around me."<sup>1</sup>

"Christianity," declared Nietzsche, "is a revolt of all that creeps on the ground against what is elevated; the gospel of the lowly makes low." He reminds the reader of the words of Paul, "the weak things of the world, the foolish things of the world, the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose." That was the formula. Decadence conquered in the frightful symbol of God on the cross. "All that suffers, all that hangs on the cross is divine. We all hang on the cross, consequently we are divine. We alone are divine. Christianity was a victory, a nobler type of character was destroyed by it,—Christianity has been the greatest misfortune hitherto of mankind."<sup>2</sup>

And as for the argument that the death of the martyrs proved the truth of their religion, Nietzsche declares that the "martyr-deaths" "have been a great misfortune in history: they have seduced. The inference of all idiots, women and mob included, to the effect that an affair for which anyone lays down his life (or which, like primitive Christianity, even produces death-dealing epidemics) is of importance,—this inference has become an unspeakable drag upon verification, upon the spirit of verification and precaution. The martyrs have hindered truth." "Woman is still prostrate on her knees before an error, because she has been told that somebody has died for it on the cross. Is the cross, then, an argument?"<sup>3</sup>

Through Christianity we lost the harvest of the ancient world. Christianity was the vampire which sucked the blood from imperial Rome; "in the night it has undone the immense achievement of the Romans, of obtaining the site for a grand civilization that would require time.....its structure was calculated to prove itself by millenniums.....That organization was steadfast enough to endure bad emperors.....But it was not steadfast enough against the corruptest kind of corruption, against the Christians. These stealthy vermin which, in darkness, obscurity, and duplicity, approached every individual, sucking out of him the seriousness for true things, the entire instinct for realities; that cowardly, feminine, and honeyed crew have gradually estranged the 'souls' from that immense edifice,—those valuable, those manly, noble natures, who felt the affairs of Rome to be their own affair, their own seriousness, their own pride. Hypocrite-sneaking, conventicle-stealthiness, gloomy concepts such as hell, sacrifice of the innocent, *unio mystica* in blood-drinking, above all, the slowly stirred-up fire of revenge, of Chandala revenge—that became master over Rome, the same kind of religion against the pre-existent form of which Epicurus had waged war.....And Epicurus would have conquered; every respectable intellect in the Roman Empire was Epicurean: then Paul appeared."<sup>4</sup> Paul, who lit a uni-

<sup>1</sup> *The Antichrist*, p. 243-4.

<sup>2</sup> *The Antichrist*, p. 280.

<sup>3</sup> *The Antichrist*, p. 284.

<sup>4</sup> *The Antichrist*, p. 314.

<sup>5</sup> *The Antichrist*, p. 305.

<sup>1</sup> *The Antichrist*, p. 306.

<sup>2</sup> *The Antichrist*, p. 326.

<sup>3</sup> *The Antichrist*, pp. 329-330.

<sup>4</sup> *The Antichrist*, pp. 344-5.

versal conflagration, who by the symbol of "God on the cross" brought to a focus all the secretly seditious, subterranean cults in the Empire. Paul, who "understood that he needed the belief in immortality in order to depreciate 'the world,' that the concept of 'hell' becomes even master of Rome,—that life is killed by the 'other world.'" As Nietzsche proceeds with his vivisection of Christianity, he gains in fire and vehemence. In our next article we shall finish his summing-up, and give his sentence—the most terrible denunciation ever delivered against any system or creed.

(To be continued.) W. MANN.

## The Marvels of Organic Nature.

EVERYWHERE in the realms of life, in all provinces of the zoological and botanical kingdoms save among the very lowest modes of being, if we except certain insects, sexual union seemed absolutely imperative to reproduction. The congress of two kinds of generative substance was apparently essential to the production of offspring. Thousands of devices were known to the naturalist whose functions consisted in securing fruitful intercourse between the opposite sexes. In addition to the reproductive organs of the higher flora and fauna, sound and colour were also extensively used to minister to the maintenance of the living world.

Immense, then, was the amazement of the reading public when, nearly twenty years ago, it received the intelligence that one of the boldest, and at the same time most conscientious of contemporary biologists, Professor Jacques Loeb, of America, had actually impelled the eggs of a relatively complex animal, the sea urchin, to reproduce their kind without the aid of the customary processes of fertilization.

The plan pursued by Professor Loeb to obtain this very remarkable result was comparatively simple. It mainly consisted in adding common salt to the water in which the eggs were placed. As he proceeded with his experiments, Loeb elaborated his methods, and he adopted the expedient of soaking his eggs for a short period in a weak acid solution before consigning them to the influence of briny water. These later inquiries showed that the acid induces the development of a membrane, which never arises in normal conditions unless the egg has been previously impregnated. And more astonishing still, the salt solution sucks out a certain percentage of water from the sea-urchin cell, and this appears to evolve remarkable chemical modifications which generate the growth of an embryo that develops up to a certain stage, just as if the egg had been subjected to the usual act of fertilization.

These novel results were sceptically regarded by several biologists; but when Loeb's experiments were repeated, his findings were completely confirmed, and subsequent studies have abundantly proved that the successful experiments with sea-urchin eggs are capable of extension to far higher forms of life. Artificial parthenogenesis can be produced by electrical and chemical means in the case of a vertebrate animal, the frog. And in the course of time these entirely unlooked-for phenomena will probably be further extended to types of life more exalted still. Not that these experimental evidences lend any countenance to ancient fables concerning virgin-born deities, whether in Palestine or elsewhere. Whether impregnated by a ghost or a white elephant—to name two instances only out of the scores accumulated by Sidney Hartland in his *Legend of Persæus*—some form of congress invariably occurred which had nothing in keeping with the achievements of modern laboratory workers.

Loeb's classical experiments with frogs were conducted in 1912. Unfertilized frog eggs hatched out and evolved into tadpoles. In one instance the organism developed further than the tadpole stage, and began to assume the appearance of the mature frog, when its career was ended by drowning.

Philosophically considered, there is little to create astonishment in these seemingly anomalous phenomena. The least evolved forms of organic substance multiply through simple division of their single-celled bodies. In fact, as high in the zoological scale as that of the social insects, the males of hive-bees are generated without sexual contact. Probably all modes of life to some extent retain the primitive characteristics with which elementary organizations are endowed, and the germ-plasm of the most elaborately organized animals must remain permanently dependent for its nutrition upon the ordinary metabolism of the cells of the body.

Nevertheless, the evolution through artificial arrangements of sea-urchins and batrachians from unimpregnated ova is a truly wonderful phenomenon. There exists not the smallest reason for supposing that these animals are ever produced in this manner in a state of Nature. The almost universal rule that each organism shall arise from two progenitors, and inherit the leading features of both parents, points most plainly to the conclusion that organisms artificially developed will fail to display all the attributes associated with animals begotten in the normal course of Nature. The male element being absent, the offspring of a single parent, and that the female, must of necessity be deficient in various qualities which the paternal parent transmits. This, of course, does not detract from the value of the experimental results, which undoubtedly point in the most unequivocal manner to the material basis of all hereditary phenomena.

In the foregoing illustrations the heredity is halved, but experiments have been devised with the fertilized ova of animals in which four descendants are brought into being where Nature develops but one. Professor Hans Driesch, who, despite his vagaries concerning neo-vitalism, is unquestionably an extremely able investigator, has secured some very interesting results from his experiments on the normally impregnated eggs of fish. During embryonic development, whether in the case of a human infant, fish, or other animal, all the cells which build up the mature organism arise from the fertilized ovum. This impregnated cell commences its development by dividing into two. The two cells split into four; these divide into eight, and so on, until the organism is complete. All the countless millions of cells which constitute the adult animal consequently arise from a single fertilized egg-cell.

Hans Driesch manipulated the egg-cell of a fish at the early embryonic period when its first duplications took place. He carefully separated four cells, and observed each of them recommence its development as an independent fish embryo. The sequel demonstrated that these four embryos ultimately evolved into four perfectly formed fish, which departed in no noticeable particular from normal fish of the same species, except that they were smaller in size. Loeb, again, bisected the sea-urchin embryo when it had reached its sixteen-cell stage, and each part developed an entire individual.

In the kingdom of man, identical twins appear to spring from a single impregnated egg-cell, although ordinary triplets or twins arise from separate human ova. In the case of identical twins, such as the two Dromios in Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, it is extremely embarrassing to be asked to distinguish one from the other. Generated from a single ovum, owing to constitutional peculiarity of the mother, or from some

physical cause, this remarkable resemblance cannot be wondered at. These peculiar twins are invariably alike in sex, and perchance may be legitimately viewed as examples of double personality. In some instances the bodies or trunks of twins are not completely separated. The celebrated Siamese twins clearly exhibited this abnormality. Yet, although they were ever coupled and inseparable, they grew to a height of over five feet, and could not only walk and run, but were also able to swim. Their strange condition has been reproduced by Loeb, who, in his experimental chamber, has restricted a sea-urchin embryo without positively bisecting it. This manipulation led to the growth of two adult sea-urchins united together by a tissue connection, while further researches demonstrated the chemical and physical agencies involved in the production of monstrosities.

From examples of divided personality we may proceed to survey instances of multiple personality. At the Biological Laboratory at Naples, Dr. Driesch, at an early period of their development, fused two embryos, and induced them to blend into one. The increased amount of organic substance led to the formation of a giant embryo. Loeb combined three starfish eggs, and secured one immense individual in place of three of average size. Probably this furnishes a hint as to the manner in which monster babies, calves, and other mammals are produced. But large size is not the equivalent of superior quality, and it is certainly suggestive that human giants, whether in fiction or fact, are not, as a rule, altogether distinguished either by great mental power or bodily strength.

Recent research into the phenomena of regeneration of lost parts is not devoid of interest. This biological regeneration has no connection with the act or state of being born again in a spiritual sense. In these scientific studies mature organisms are the subjects investigated, and, in the nature of the case, nearly all the organisms dealt with are comparatively low in the zoological scale. The humble worm and similar organisms will re-grow their heads when these have been cut off. More exalted animal forms in which the great nerve-cells have been concentrated in the cranium do not survive decapitation, as the shock associated with such treatment causes death.

But with various worm-like creatures, the head may be removed without mortal injury. Professor T. H. Morgan severed both head and tail from the body of a planarian worm. The animal's body rapidly restored both lost parts. That this regenerative power is not confined to the body is proved by an experiment of Loeb's. This biologist beheaded a sea worm, and the head developed a fresh body, and the body produced a new head. Two marine planarians now existed instead of one planarian. It appears that all the phenomena associated with the segregated embryo may be repeated with mature worms. Holmes divided a planarian into a score of pieces, and each piece grew again into a complete worm of smaller size. These tiny planarians were repeatedly subdivided, until hundreds were developed from a single worm, until the last of the race represented organisms "less than one-fifteen-hundredth of the bulk of the original individual." "Reflect," remarks Dr. Williams, in his *Miracles of Science*, "that the planarian is a creature having eyes, a nervous system, and a fair equipment of internal organs, and it will be obvious that this series of experiments resulted in an amazing multiplication of personalities."

Professors Oscar Hertwig, T. H. Morgan, and others have obtained the most extraordinary results in the region of multiple reproduction. Two heads have been developed on earthworms where one previously existed. Van Dwyne's experiments with planarian worms were

more astonishing still. He secured not merely a couple of heads, as in the case of the earthworm, but produced six heads on one animal, each head provided with the normal pair of eyes.

All these experiments proclaim the innate capacity of protoplasm to display a general response to the reproductive demand. And they also supply powerful support to the Spencerian doctrine of physiological or constitutional units. Even the phenomena of divided personality, of which the mystics make so much, discover their true explanation in terms of physical abnormality. Professor Loeb has noted that one of his double-headed productions manifests conflicting desires. The two heads subserving the organic needs of the same planarian stomach will struggle to secure a single piece of flesh food. Yet the same body receives the nourishing meat whichever mouth swallows it. Nor is this all. The two heads will occasionally pull so energetically against each other that they will tear their common body in twain.

T. F. PALMER.

(To be concluded.)

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### The Christians.

Thank God for the splendid moral tone of the British Press.

—Rev. Dimsdale T. Young.

The modern Christian believes in Dynamite and the Sign of the Cross. He says they can win the War.....A German trench is blown skyward.....The man who has done it turns away with a prayer for the departing souls.....He lays his wire of destruction all the better for singing a hymn.....He plants his powder and sends men to the beyond with a prayer for their salvation.—*Extract from article in the "Daily Mail."*

War is a peerless educator. It teaches us to set aside gentleness and kindness of heart.....Foremost among the wicked, whose power the Germans must break, the worst enemy of God, whom it is their task to destroy, is England.—*Pastor E. Kosher, of Berlin.*

"THE heathen, in his blindness,  
To wood and stone bows down";  
But we, with loving kindness,  
Upon his worship frown.  
And on thine earthly altars,  
The flowers of love we lay:  
The blood of brother Christians  
We offer thee to-day.  
Accept, we pray, our offering;  
Look down from heaven above,  
On this new revelation  
Of thine incarnate love.

(International choir of English, French, Russians,  
Italians, Germans, and Austrians.)

And in this glad communion,  
By righteous wrath made one;  
We offer our oblation  
To thee, thou Holy One.

P. A.

---

Believers have washed their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. The Lamb's blood being white, is it surprising that his worshippers should be liable to hepatic pallor?

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An account of a man's conversion in a chapel, mentioned in a provincial paper, states that at the time "he had his betting-book in his pocket." Was he going to bet on the length of the sermon?

In every great crisis the real Christians will be found, not in the Church, but outside it. They are the eternal Protestants of humanity, and must in every age be crucified for its salvation.—*Israel Zangwill.*

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