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Views and Opinions.

Christianity and Woman.

That proposed advertising boom, the National Mission of Repentance and Hope, has already produced an unexpected result. It has brought into prominence the old question of Christianity and Woman. Shall women be allowed to preach in the Churches for the duration of the Mission? That is the question which is now dividing Christians into hostile camps, and has even led to a threatened strike on the part of a number of the clergy. These say they will have no part in a Mission that permits women to preach in church. If it is granted, the nation must repent without them, and its hope will be restricted accordingly. They do not object to women doing the "donkey" work of the National Mission. They may make calls, distribute circulars, invite attendance; and, having done these and similar things, their Christian duty is to sit down and listen to Man expounding the beauties of Christianity and the freedom it has conferred upon womankind.

* * *

An Insult—By Way of Favour.

We have said, over and over again, that if one wishes to find examples of the most stupid conservatism, of the prevalence of primitive modes of thinking, and of retrogressive ideas generally, no better field for exploration offers itself than that of religion. The present discussion serves to illustrate this. Two Bishops have consented to allow women to preach during the Mission—the Bishop of London and the Bishop of Chelmsford. But in the act of granting this favour the permission is accompanied by conditions that emphasize the inferiority of women in the Christian scheme of things. Women may preach, but to women and girls only. They may not preach to men. Neither may they preach from the pulpit, the lectern, nor the chancel steps. These places are sacred to men; they must not be defiled by the presence of women. Women preachers, to women only, must be marked with the badge of their inferiority. Such is the Bishop's injunction; and, as usual, he succeeds in letting the cat out of the bag. And we should imagine that self-respecting women—even Christian ones—will decline the favour, and demand equality of treatment or nothing.

Woman and the New Testament.

Now, from the Christian point of view, the opposition to women preachers is impregnable. Lord Hugh Cecil says that such a thing should not be allowed without an inquiry into the ancient practices of the Church. And a committee organized to resist the innovation says, "We believe that to grant permission to women to preach in our churches is contrary to the teaching of the Holy Scripture, and to the mind and practice of the whole Catholic Church." This is an apt reply to Lord Hugh Cecil's suggestion, and is in strict accord with the facts. There were no women among the twelve disciples selected by Jesus. There is no permission for women preachers in the New Testament, and there are positive injunctions to the contrary. Says Paul, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." And, again, "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted them to speak.....And if they will learn anything let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." That is clear and emphatic. The New Testament does not permit them to speak to even "women only." They are to keep silence. It is a shame for them to speak in church.

* * *

The Early Church and Woman.

The practice of the early Christian Church was in thorough accord with New Testament teaching. And the more powerful the Church became, the more marked became the social degradation of woman. So far as I am aware, every historian of repute is in agreement that woman's position was far higher, socially and politically, under the Roman Empire than it was under Christian rule. And we have on record the opinion of the Reverend Principal Donaldson, who, commencing his investigations into the influence of Christianity on Woman with the customary prejudice in favour of Christianity, ended his researches with the confession that it did nothing but lower her character and restrict the range of her activity. Every shred of liberty she possessed under the later Roman law was taken from her. Public opinion—which, in the days when the Church was powerful, was religious opinion—frowned upon her taking part in public affairs. The right of a married woman to hold property—which she possessed even in the days of ancient Egypt—was taken from her. She became, in fact, a part of her husband's possessions. And as late as the sixth century a Church Council spent two days discussing whether woman was a human being, deciding by a majority vote only that she was. Evidently there was considerable doubt on the matter. * * *

A Daughter of the Devil.

I have not the space at my disposal this week in which to give the actual words of some of the greatest of Christian writers on this question, and, moreover, these will come more appropriately when considering the basic reason for the Christian attitude towards womankind. It is enough to say now that for sheer blackguardly

vituperation of woman as a sex, Christian literature is unique. There is nothing like it in any other religious literature with which I am acquainted. "Woman has the malice of a dragon and the poison of an asp," says one. "Of all wild beasts, the most dangerous is a woman," says another. "She is a daughter of the Devil and the sentinel of hell," says a third. The great Tertullian said that she ought to be ashamed of herself when she reflects upon her nature. And, at a much later date, another great Christian preacher, John Knox, in his *Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, collected many of the blackguardisms of the Christian Fathers, and with additions of his own, hurled them against all who were in favour of women taking part in public affairs. No wonder it has taken woman over fifteen centuries to regain some of the liberty she possessed before Christianity dominated the Western world.

* * *

Woman and the Pulpit.

Look at the position of to-day. In none of the principal Churches of Christendom is a woman allowed to act as a preacher. She may do the work of the Churches in other directions. She may collect, visit, help Church organization in a hundred and one different ways, but when it comes to preaching, that must be reserved for man. It is not that women could not be found to preach as well as men—it surely requires no superlative ability to reach the level of the average sermon. The objection is that she is a woman. In literature, in art, in science, she is allowed to do her best, with no other disqualification than that which Nature imposes on her. In religion there is a bar—because she is a woman. And, strangely enough, women are content to bear this badge of inferiority, for the most part, without complaint. They see nothing derogatory in it. They will even join in the stupid man-made pulpit chatter about Christianity elevating women to a position of dignity and responsibility. As though there could be either one or the other in the absence of liberty. That indeed is the supreme victory of Christianity. It not only makes slaves, it teaches the slaves to hug the fetters that bind them. It ensures that mental docility without which slavery becomes impossible. Lady Willoughby de Broke, in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, reminds the clergy that, apart from war times, the large majority of Church congregations consist of women. They do the bulk of Church, parish, and rescue work. They are being sent through all the parishes of England in connection with the National Mission, but to the Christian it is "intolerable"—to use Mr. Athelston Riley's expression—that they should be permitted to preach! Take the women out of the Churches, and they would collapse at once. It is vital to the Churches that they should remain, but it is also vital that they should wear, as a decoration of honour, that badge of inferiority with which the Christian Church has marked them.

* * *

The reason for this religious opposition to the freedom of women will form the subject of my next week's notes.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Christ and the Clergy.

A PECULIARITY of the clergy of all denominations is that they shirk all responsibility for whatever opinions and prejudices which they hold by pretending to be the spokesmen of another. It is upon "Thus saith the Lord" that they invariably fall back. To differ from them on any point is to be in opposition to the Almighty,

which, of course, is the most heinous of sins. It has not been uncommon to condemn dancing and theatre-going in the name of Heaven. The pulpit has ere now justified the worst forms of bigotry and intolerance by throwing the responsibility for them upon God. The preacher claims to be entrusted with a message which he must deliver, whether he likes it or not. He says that the word of the Lord is in his heart, as a burning fire shut up in his bones, and utter it he must or perish. We do not even remotely hint that all who make such claims are hypocrites. Doubtless, many of them conscientiously regard themselves as Heaven's ambassadors, and often give expression to great ethical truths. We are prepared to go further, and frankly admit that some of them have been veritable servants of the communities in which they laboured. But the principle which we desire to enforce is that they are all alike but self-appointed messengers of a Being concerning whom absolutely no knowledge is obtainable. They profess to be what they are not. Whether their discourses are, in themselves, true or false, they are their own alone, and for which they alone, or the sects whose officers they are, should be held responsible. Posing as the viceregents of a Supreme Being before those, most of whom place superstitious confidence in them, they escape much unfriendly criticism.

The leading article in the *British Weekly* for August 10, presumably from the pen of the editor, Sir William Robertson Nicoll, is entitled "Visiting the Churches," and presents what the writer imagines is the Lord's estimate of the Churches of to-day. It is based upon "the earliest visitation of the Churches by Christ himself—that visitation, the piercing record of which is preserved in the seven epistles in the Book of Revelation." In these seven epistles the alleged speaker is the Lord Jesus Christ, who is supposed to express his opinion of each of the seven Churches, which, undoubtedly, was the opinion entertained by the writer of the Book of Revelation. Now, the editor of the *British Weekly* declares that the same estimate applies, with substantial accuracy, to the Churches of this day. It is immaterial to us whether the estimate is true or false, our only point being that the author of the leading article in question attributes it to Jesus Christ himself. The contention is that what is of supreme importance to the Churches is not what any man thinks of them, though he may be the Pope, or the Archbishop of Canterbury, but in what estimation they are held by the risen Christ, and it is precisely that information which our contemporary undertakes to communicate to them. By what right does Sir William write in the name of the Lord? He speaks of him with the utmost familiarity, as if he knew his inmost thoughts. "The Lord appreciates," "The Lord is alive to," "Our Lord never omits to do" this or that, with some such words almost every paragraph opens, whilst a careful perusal of the whole article discloses the fact that we are dealing exclusively with what the writer thinks of the present-day Churches, though he does not wish to be held responsible for it. Now, on the assumption that there is a Living Lord, is it fair to put the responsibility for all that the leading article contains upon his shoulders? Take the following passage as an example:—

What our Lord found to censure in all the Churches of Asia is, undoubtedly, the most prevalent weakness of the Churches in our own country at this day. "Thou hast here them that hold the doctrine of Balaam." The special form this took in the first century need not concern us. It was not a speculative, but a practical doctrine. It tended to compromise the Church with the Pagan world around it, and to destroy its character as the representative of a higher and purer life for

men such as the world could not produce and did not want. This is the standing peril of Christianity.

It is the very opposite of true to say that Christianity either is or ever was "the representative of a higher and purer life for men such as the world could not produce and did not want," as every student of history is fully aware. We have it on the authority of the most competent Christian scholars that, under the Roman Empire, before Christianity was introduced, "the narrow world had become a wide world; the rent world had become a unity; the barbarian world had become Greek and Roman." One of the chief curses during Christian history has been international antagonisms and rivalries, with the result that we have had numerous international wars of the most devastating character. But, prior to the appearance of Christianity, "nationalities had been effaced, the idea of universal humanity having disengaged itself from that of nationality." If Sir William would but read such works as Reich's *History of Civilization*, Boissier's *La Religion Romaine*, Dill's *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, or even Lecky's *History of European Morals*, he would see that the world had both wanted and produced a high and pure life for men, and that myriads of people were actually living it. Was Rome, under most of the Pagan emperors, morally lower than is London in the twentieth century? Is it not true that the editor of the *British Weekly* dare not retire at night without having all his doors locked and barred? It is bad enough for an ordinary man to be so blinded by prejudice as not to be able to look facts in the face; but it must be the height of injustice to ascribe such blindness to a Living Christ.

Let it be borne in mind that by the Lord in this *British Weekly* leader is meant God in Christ, who is at once the Maker, Preserver, Governor, and Saviour of the world, and that the Church is called in the New Testament his Body. The curious thing is, however, that of the world Divinely made, preserved, governed, and saved, our religious contemporary has not a single good word to say. It is a hopelessly bad world. The Church, also, has many faults and failures to confess, multitudes of difficulties against which to contend, and innumerable foes seeking its destruction. Now, what are we to think of the God who is responsible for such a world and such a Church? The clergy wax wonderfully eloquent when telling what God thinks of the world and the Church he himself has made and purchased with his own precious blood; but it is high time some messenger of humanity began to delineate the character of him to whom we are supposed to owe the existence of both. Is not this the mission committed to the charge of the Secularists, and are they not already making determined attempts to fulfil it? Our contemporary admits that "great numbers of ministers and of churches are disheartened by the enormous power of the forces arrayed against them," and that "they have so much to contend with that is utterly beyond their strength." This is unspeakably discouraging and sad; but infinitely more heart-breaking is the following fact:—

There may be a Secularist lecture hall beside the church, or a depôt of the Rationalist forces, seducing the uneducated, or prejudicing them against the truth.

What is the message of the Secularist to his fellow-beings? Not that humanity is fallen and lost, and can only be redeemed through faith in the Crucified; not that God created a perfect universe which, alas! went astray as the result of an initial catastrophe in the Garden of Eden; but that the state of things we behold to-day is the outcome of a long and intricate process of evolution. He assures us that the world has always been slowly moving towards healthier and happier conditions, and that, on the whole, it is better to-day than

it ever was before. He is deeply convinced that this progress has been seriously retarded by the prevalence of the belief in God and by the attitude of the Church to social and political problems. Consequently, he is resolved to do all within his power to dislodge the former and to cripple the latter. And there are signs not a few that complete success shall eventually crown such labours. The Christianity by which people swore two hundred years ago no longer exists. Science has discredited more than two-thirds of its doctrines, and common sense is rising in rebellion against the few that remain. The colossal impotence of the Churches is leading people to the conviction that they have never been what they still profess to be, and that their so-called Divine Head has never had any objective existence. His ordained ministers are seen to be nothing of the sort, and even those who go to hear them pay but little heed to what they say.

J. T. LLOYD.

The "Wisdom" of Mother Church.

The Book of Common Prayer, Appointed to be read in Churches. 1916.

THIS volume is an interesting addition to the literature of the holiday season. By this time the average reader will be tired of the melancholy metaphysics of the gloomy Dean Inge and the optimistic oratory of the Bishop of London, and even the Holy Bible may pall after a second reading. The contents of the Book of Common Prayer are of a more gentle character than those of the Bible, the earlier portion of which bears too close a resemblance to the Newgate Calendar. To be fully valued, the pages of the Prayer Book should be scanned lazily at some seaside or country resort, far from the madding crowd. The wisdom of that mediæval institution, the Church of England, cannot be appreciated amid the hurry and bustle of a large town. It should be perused whilst the reader is stretched at length upon the grass or sand, soothed by the drowsy hum of insects, or the happy laughter of children at play.

This book possesses one distinct advantage, which it shares in common with *Bradshaw's Railway Guide*. It does not matter where you commence reading. Whether one starts with the Baptism of Infants, the Thirty-nine Articles, the Athanasian Creed, or the lugubrious Litany, or any other pious diversion, does not signify in the least. It has, therefore, one point of superiority over most other volumes.

The reader should be carefully warned that the anonymous author is true to very old-fashioned ideals in politics. This excuses, partially, the very deferential references to royalty, the nobility, and gentry, which are only paralleled by the servile dedication of the Bible to that padded and half-forgotten buffoon, King James the First. So extravagant, indeed, is this eulogy, that we know a child who was misled into thinking that the Almighty's front name was James. The adult reader, however, must not read this book with the wide-eyed innocence of childhood, or it will lead to his mental undoing.

In some respects the book may be regarded as a Theological Inquire Within upon Everything. Take, for example, the average Englishman's staple subject of conversation—the state of the climate. The author of this volume has included, with great acuteness, prayers for rain and for fair weather. We notice, also, other petitions against plague, famine, battle, murder, sudden death, backsliding, and, for what we know, housemaid's knee. Advice is also given upon the subject of matrimony, and much wisdom is offered to the blushing youth

of both sexes. A young man is informed, for instance, that he must not, under any circumstances, marry his grandmother. No one, except a bench of bishops, ever supposed that a young man would wish to do such a thing. But we will content ourselves, like the Irishman, by "denying the allegation and defying the alligator."

The book is by no means devoted to confetti and orange-blossoms and other pleasant subjects, for the undertakers have a few pages devoted to them, including a burial service. A few passages are disquieting, and actually lead us to suppose that not all the persons who turn up their toes in consecrated ground "better" themselves, but some go to the red-hot poker department so frequently mentioned by open-air evangelists. There is, too, a quite unexpected touch of temper in the "Commination Service." The denouncing of God's anger against worldly minded folk, who do not often trouble the pew-openers, might get on a sensitive reader's nerves. But, looked at from the proper standpoint, it should be as harmless as the rantings of a villain in a melodrama, who curses everybody on the stage, hurls maledictions at the dress circle, spits at the hard-worked orchestra, and shakes his fist at the gallery.

The splenetic humour of the Communion Service makes the chorus of "miserable sinners," which recurs throughout the Litany, positively welcome. It is such a comfort to reflect that we are all in the same boat, including the peerless patterers from the pious platforms and pulpits. The Thirty-nine Articles are as cheerless reading as a Continental railway guide, in which the trains seem to depart, but never arrive anywhere.

The Juvenile Catechism, however, raises one's hopes, and unfolds truly tremendous possibilities. Here are the ways and means for making any child a member of the Church of England, and, if under the age of eleven years, a "bud" of the Primrose League. Now that the great Conservative Party has "eaten dirt" so long, astute Tory politicians might try to force this book into the schools. Dismissing this instrument of torture, we turn to the Baptism of Infants, which will be found to be a healthy and invigorating exercise, especially with the addition of a little soap. Patients of riper years are recommended to use a scrubbing-brush.

The most valuable information in the book is given in the Communion Service, where full and complete instructions are given to the reader how to obtain a spiritual nature by the simple and pleasing process of feeding. So long as there are bakers' shops, wine merchants, and clergymen, the supply of "saints" should be practically unlimited.

Lord Beaconsfield, who was an old hand at the game, once said, with regard to flattering royal persons, that the courtier should "lay it on with a trowel." The author has taken this sage advice very literally, and his sugary compliments to the "upper ten thousand" should be of great use to prospective Conservative candidates and other Tory folk in the political arena. A few judicious quotations skilfully introduced into after-dinner speeches and addresses in public would be sure to tickle the audience.

To a superficial observer, a Prayer Book, like an Oriental praying-barrel, would appear to be out-of-date and unworkable. Our cursory examination shows how deceptive are appearances, and that one must never judge a circus by the posters on the walls. The Grecian sage confessed that his labours smelt of the lamp. In like manner does the wisdom of the Church smell of the rushlights of the second century. And this twentieth century is the age of electricity.

MIMNERMUS.

In the name of universal benevolence Christians have hated their fellow men.—*Ingersoll*.

The Present Position of Evolution.

THE Evolutionary Law is now by universal assent applied to every department of organic and inorganic Nature. The genesis and development of suns, planets, and moons; electrons, atoms, and molecules, are all surveyed from the standpoint of evolution. The geologist deals with the factors which have led to the development of the rocks which have formed the land masses of the world. The modern sociologist, historian, and anthropologist study and describe the evolution of states and peoples. We read of the evolution of aerial navigation, and may examine in detail the growth of the numerous improvements which have already given us fairly efficient lighter or heavier than air machines which, in a minor measure, emulate the flight of insects, bats, and birds. Pictorial and plastic art, architecture, literature, languages, law, manners, fashions, and even mind and morality, are all disclosing their secrets to the evolutionary investigator. The evolutionary principle, then, has been extended to every conceivable aspect of existence, and yet this changed outlook upon the processes of Nature saw its beginnings little more than fifty years ago.

True it is that the belief that the universe is not changeless, but is subject to constant transformation, was held in ancient Greece. Thales, Empedocles, Heraclitus, Aristotle, and Epicurus, among others, shared this view. Lucretius in Rome rendered immortal the teachings of Epicurus in a magnificent poem. But with the downfall of Pagan civilization and the triumph of barbarism and religion, the science and philosophy of classic times faded from the remembrance of men. This story has been told by Edward Clodd in his admirable *Pioneers of Evolution*, and by Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn in his splendid work, *From the Greeks to Darwin*. These excellent volumes should be on the book-shelves of every member of the enlightened public. They serve to correct many misunderstandings, particularly that widespread misconception that evolution arose *de novo* from the imagination of Darwin, and in a lesser degree from that of Wallace.

Among the pre-Darwinian evolutionists of modern days were the eminent Frenchmen, Buffon and Lamarck; while Charles Darwin's grandfather, Dr. Erasmus Darwin, grappled to some extent successfully with the problems presented by the living world.

The Shakespeare of philosophy, Herbert Spencer, had already applied the principle of development to life and mind and society when Darwin's masterpiece shook the world. But apart from a few great thinkers, Tyndall among them, Spencer's arguments and illustrations made small impression. It was with the appearance of the *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, in 1859, that that marvellous revolution in thought, which now embraces the entire civilized globe, was destined to begin. With their theory of selection Darwin, and in a subordinate degree Wallace, at last succeeded in converting the world of science to the new evangel. We are not at present concerned with inorganic evolution, and to the doctrine of organic development with which Darwin and his disciples dealt, this series of articles will be restricted.

Perhaps an outline of the noble conception of evolution, as applied to the universe as a whole by Spencer, may be attempted later. Suffice to say, that in his monumental *First Principles*, one of the very greatest achievements of the human mind, our great philosopher laid the enduring foundations of all that follows in the remaining nine massive volumes of his *Synthetic Philosophy*. Unfortunately, many merely read what Spencer himself described as the relatively unimportant part of *First Principles*—the opening pages which relate to the

Unknowable—while neglecting to peruse the extremely important chapters which make up the second part of the volume, which comprises by far the larger part of the work.

Evolution and Darwinism are not, and never have been, convertible terms. The conclusive evidences of organic evolution would remain if all the hypotheses concerning its workings were abandoned. So general was the belief that evolution is absolutely dependent upon the truth of selection, that when a few evolutionary scientists discarded it, as happened some twenty years ago, the orthodox immediately imagined that the death-blow had been dealt to a theory which many of them had been driven to acknowledge as probably true. With doubt and misgiving, the better instructed religionists had given assent to a principle they secretly hated. The educated clergy had accepted evolution as a sad alternative to being regarded as survivals from a dead past. That they never loved the doctrine need not be wondered at. An act of special creation lies at the root of the whole Christian theology. As in Adam all fell, so in Christ shall all be made alive. Obviously, if there was no fall, there was no need for redemption. And to accept evolution was tantamount to admitting that instead of man having fallen from an angel's estate, he had, quite to the contrary, risen from a lowlier scale of being.

In the long and bitter struggle between the progressive evolutionists and their adversaries the controversy largely turned upon the problem of the origin of man. The shrewder anti-evolutionists realized that Darwin's discovery, although advisedly confined to the plant and lower animal kingdoms in his *Origin*, was certain to be extended to man. Huxley, Haeckel, and others, were already at work in the realms of evolutionary anthropology when the great Darwin followed up the *Origin* with his famous *Descent of Man*. So, when we remember that the vast majority of men were dominated by the Hebrew mythology, and that the concern of the average citizen was centred on the proper position of humanity in the scheme of things, small surprise will be felt at the fact that even in the twentieth century the mass of the population continue to think of Darwin as the strange naturalist who asserted that mankind had descended from a monkey. That to them was, and still to a considerable extent remains, Darwin's sole title to fame or something worse.

Whatever the precise nature of the factors implicated, the claim that evolution *has* occurred is substantiated by the testimony of the most unquestionable character. The verities of evolution are as independent of any theories advanced to account for them, as the fact of gravitation lies apart from any hypothesis put forward to explain that fact. Even were we to entertain the extremely improbable supposition that the causes assigned by biologists may some day fail to account for the general phenomena of the organic world, no responsible representative of science would, for one moment, allow the necessity, or even the possibility, of returning to the unscientific and unphilosophical concept of supernatural creation.

In the interests of lucidity we will first present a few outstanding proofs of the truth of evolution, while reserving for later consideration the various theories championed by contemporary naturalists concerning the methods of evolution.

No matter where we turn, we are confronted by an army of facts which, while conveniently disposing themselves to an evolutionary explanation, are very, very hard to reconcile with the theory of special creation. The more powerful the array of evidences which readily adapt themselves to a single interpretation, the greater the warranty for the soundness of the solution proposed.

And when facts so multitudinous and so widespread fit in with a single principle, the probability of its correctness rises to the rank of a certainty. As Dr. Herbert puts it in his recent work, *First Principles of Evolution*, p. 51:—

It is just on these grounds that evolution has come to be regarded as a fundamental axiom of human knowledge, while the old-fashioned creation theory has gradually been abandoned in every field of scientific inquiry. The statement that the world has been created as it is once for all by a supernatural act, is not only contrary to the ascertained facts—for it can be proved that all things are subject to progressive change—but the creation theory, as it stands, does not even attempt to account for such facts; it simply refers them back to an inscrutable act of creation.

In submitting the case for evolution it is an advantage to adopt the scheme arranged by Romanes in his *Darwin and After Darwin*, a method that has been so successfully followed by Dr. Herbert, Dennis Hird, and other expositors. This plan is to present the subject-matter under separate headings. The Morphological or structural evidences take precedence; then follow in succession those derived from Embryology and Vestigial Organs, Classification, Palæontology, and, finally, Geographical Distribution. To these various departments we will, therefore, now proceed to address ourselves.

In terms of evolution all the more specialized members of the flora and fauna are the descendants of more generalized types. Dwelling in a mutable environment, plant and animal organisms must respond to the changes to which their habitat are exposed. By adapting themselves to their varying surroundings, those organisms which themselves vary in a manner most favourable to their modified circumstances, other things equal, live longer lives, and produce a larger number of offspring, while transmitting their transformed characteristics to their descendants. We consequently expect to discover some underlying principle that has served to link up organisms which appear to be nearly or remotely related. However dissimilar animals may superficially appear, we are entitled to anticipate that organisms closely akin, whose modifications have been determined by their response to their surroundings, will display an anatomical framework of a common character, and that the transformations set up in the various individual animals should be precisely those that render the greatest advantages in the particular habitat in which each organism is constrained to dwell. Now, among all the higher vertebrate or backboneed animals this common fundamental structure is found.

It is essential to distinguish between homologous and analogous organs. Homologous organs are organs originally identical, but which have been adapted in the course of evolution to minister to different needs. Analogous organs, on the other hand, perform the same function without possessing the same structure. For example, the wing of the butterfly or bee fulfils the same function as that of a bat or bird, but their independent origin is proved by their anatomical unlikeness.

The testimony provided by homologous organs concerning the transformation of animal organisms is supremely important. The paddle of that huge aquatic mammal, the whale, possesses the same bony structure as the hand and arm of a man; or, for that matter, the forelimbs of a dog, lion, pig, horse, monkey, or any other mammal. Moreover, the wings of the long extinct flying reptiles, and those of extant and extinct bats and birds, are all fashioned on the same principle. The skeletons exhibited at South Kensington, or the plates or figures in any standard work on evolution will force the most incredulous to acknowledge that the limbs of vertebrates, whether they be the arm, leg, paddle, or wing, are per-

fectly identical in structure, and contain, or furnish evidence of having contained, the same number of bones. There is, therefore, no rational escape from the conclusion that these modified appendages, as we now see them, result from their possessors having become adapted to different modes of life. In the case of the bird, an organ of flight has been evolved from the forelimb of its reptilian ancestor, while the whale's paddle has been transformed to meet the requirements of an animal dwelling in the deep. With all those creatures whose skeletons are constructed on a uniform plan, the modifications their anterior and posterior limbs have undergone are the outcome of the necessities ordained by their respective modes of life.

The mouth appendages of insects, organisms whose anatomy is quite unlike that of vertebrates, nevertheless furnish evidence equally cogent. The proboscis of the butterfly, the jaws of the beetle, and the tongue of the bee, are all modifications of one original structure. Comparative anatomists have demonstrated that these highly specialized organs have slowly arisen from the mouth-parts of more generalized insect forms.

In the floral domain kindred phenomena may be met with. Among the Angiosperms the several constituents of the flowers—sepals, petals, stamens, and pistils—are all, as Goethe discerned, elegantly modified leaves. Striking confirmation of this is revealed by the circumstance that the foliage is occasionally metamorphosed into flowers.

(To be continued.) T. F. PALMER.

Among the Branches.

AT a time when the public mind seems centred on the Continent, and its horrors, it is gratifying to report that the interest in our propaganda has not abated. At all the London outdoor stations meetings have been held continuously since May, and audiences even larger than those of last year have attended; whilst the Demonstrations already reported in June and July had most gratifying results. Of the usefulness of this open-air propaganda there can be no question.

There has been a brisk sale of the *Freethinker* at all meetings, and new readers have been made, whilst its old friends are loud in their praise of its new dress and style. Mr. Mann's recently published pamphlet, *The Religion of Famous Men*, is also in great demand.

London Branches have been, and are still, suffering very severely from the enforced enlistment of many of their speakers, but they have been fortunate in securing the advocacy of Messrs. Hooper and Wilde, who have rendered valued assistance.

Provincial Branches are also suffering, perhaps even more acutely, from the compulsory absence of many of their active members, but as outdoor propaganda is, unfortunately, not so general in the Provinces as in London, their difficulty is the obtaining of halls for an indoor autumn and winter campaign. The old prejudice against letting halls to Secularists was hard enough to fight, but the wholesale commandeering of every kind of building for the various branches of war-work places a fresh and more difficult obstacle to overcome.

South Shields friends, roused to fresh enthusiasm by the recent visits of Mr. Cohen, are considering an autumn session of indoor public meetings, commencing in September. Unattached members desiring to help are requested to communicate with the Branch Secretary, Mr. R. Chapman, 6 Wenlock Road, Simonside, South Shields.

The Newcastle-on-Tyne Branch is severely handicapped by inability to secure a suitable hall at present. This also applies to St. Helen's, but the latter Branch is keeping in touch with its members by means of personal visits. This is an extremely praiseworthy method which has been too much neglected in the past.

Sheffield has its "soul in arms and eager for the fray,"

and a series of weekend outdoor meetings is in contemplation as a prelude to winter indoor lectures.

A plan of work for the winter session in Birmingham is in the capable hands of Messrs. Williams and Willis, and the active Secretary of the Branch, Mr. Jas. Partridge, of 245 Shenstone Road, Rotton Park, would be glad to hear from anyone interested in the Cause locally, though not yet in actual touch with the Branch.

In the next report, details of the work in Liverpool, Manchester, and other towns may be looked for.

"Unity is strength," and an increase of membership in Provincial Branches is the quickest and most effective way of widening and consolidating the sphere of action. In any town a new Branch may be formed by seven members. If during the next few months those who are already with the Cause in spirit will make application to me for particulars, it will be possible to link up the various towns by the creation of new Branches; in this way the lie direct will be given to the assertion that a fresh impetus has been given to Christianity by the War. On the contrary, the impetus has been given to Freethought, and the poisonous gases of Christianity are wafted back upon the soldiers of the Cross. It is for each of us to keep up the supply of Freethought ammunition and the victory is ours.

E. M. VANCE, *General Secretary*.

Acid Drops.

No language is too strong in condemnation of acts such as the murder of Captain Fryatt by the German authorities, and one can well understand the temptation to reply in kind to such conduct. And we are quite in accord with the demand for the punishment of those responsible for such acts, if not before, then at the end of the War. That demand is both just and reasonable. We hope the Allies will see to this; but we confess to having doubts on the matter.

But here we have the Rev. R. J. Campbell—he of the "soulful" eyes, and little else worth bothering about—shrieking in the pages of the *Sunday Herald* for vengeance of the crudest kind. "We must exact life for life," and "for every case of rape or pillage or murder" we must exact vengeance on those Germans now in our hands. We repeat, we can understand ordinary people crying out in this way; but a minister of the Gospel! What has become of the distinct repudiation by Jesus of the law of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"? Of two things, one is certain. Either Christian teaching, when brought face to face with facts, is demonstrated to be absurd and impracticable, or, as a means of humanizing man's more brutal feelings, it is altogether useless. By all means punish the responsible parties; but to punish in the indiscriminate manner recommended by Mr. Campbell is to sink to the level of those German officials whom we denounce. And Mr. Campbell was amongst those clergymen who have dwelt upon the moralizing influence of this War. We hope he has the grace to be ashamed of that teaching, at least.

The Bishop of Birmingham says that "the country has for two years been finding her soul." There's episcopal wisdom for you! Twenty-five millions of men are trying to murder each other in order to assist in a piece of psychical research. And the great majority of the professional "soul-savers" are looking on at the spectacle.

The Rev. B. G. Bouchier, of the Hampstead Garden Suburb, says the spirit of Sabbatarianism makes "decent men hate religion, making it as it does a very killjoy." Mr. Bouchier should convert the 50,000 clergymen in this country to his views.

Rev. J. Taylor Smith, Chaplain-General to the forces writes that the soldiers still need our constant prayer and intercession on their behalf. That is the parson's view and may be taken for what it is worth. On the other hand, an "Artillery Officer" writes in the *Daily Chronicle* of August 5 that the prayer of our soldiers is "Give us

this day our daily shells," and we dare wager that if any prayers are offered, this is the more likely one. By the way, should it not run "Give *them* this day our daily shells."

Chaplain Taylor Smith's deity is a curious kind of being, anyway. He must know all about the War; he must also know the rights and the wrongs of it; and he ought to have made up his mind about it. Does Mr. Taylor Smith mean that God needs the prayers of those at home to remind him to look after the lives of those at the Front? If he does not mean this, what on earth does he mean? And fancy making the lives of the men in France or elsewhere depend upon some other people praying for them. A God worth troubling about wouldn't be bothered with being asked to do what was necessary and right, he would do it; nor trouble about a thanksgiving service afterwards. Men act on these lines. Why not gods?

Educating God is a hard task, and the result is usually not worth the labour expended on the job.

Over two hundred lives have been lost in a forest fire in Canada. This is what is called a natural calamity—in other words, an example of the *Divine* method of adjusting the balances of natural forces.

Gratitude is not a strong point with the Church of England. The Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking of women's work in the Church, says they have given "real and acceptable help in our little parishes," but he is by no means enthusiastic. Yet women form the mainstay of the congregations. Too often the male Christian is represented by his wife.

Excepting the well-paid Army Chaplains, the clergy have no desire to "smell powder." The stay-at-homes do not object to "puffs" in the newspapers.

"It is not the bounty of the Creator which determines prices, but the greed of the dealers," writes the editor of a provincial paper. Where does that editor expect to spend eternity?

The *Church Times* for August 11 devotes its leading article to a discussion of "Prayer in War-time," and the first sentence runs thus: "The War has shown that the immense majority of the English people still believe in prayer." That is an absolutely baseless assertion, and not in a single line of the article is the slightest attempt made to establish its truth. It is frankly admitted that "before the War the habit of prayer had been very largely lost in England," and it is also conceded that "when the habit of prayer has been lost, it takes a long time to recover it." Yet in the teeth of these two vastly important admissions, the first statement is the amazing one that the belief in prayer is still wellnigh universal in this country; and in the most irresponsible manner conceivable it is said that the War proves it.

How does the War show it? What have "the immense majority" of the seven millions of people in Larger London done, during the last two years, to prove that they still believe in prayer? What proportion of that huge population has been represented at War-time prayer-meetings and intercessory services? The United Free Church prayer-meeting, once held at the City Temple, had to be discontinued through lack of numerical and other support; and surely the more recent services held in the Queen's Hall, in which both Free and Anglican Churches were united, have done nothing to demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of Londoners still believe in prayer. Why, a wilder assertion was never made.

Rev. Dr. Jowett, just now on a visit to England, says he was shown recently a letter from the Front, in which the writer, in answer to the question of how religion was going at the Front, replied, "If you mean how is Wesleyanism, or Presbyterianism, or Anglicanism, or any other ism faring, the

answer is—'rotten.' But if you mean whether we are laying hold of God—then there's nothing like it." "Laying hold of God" is a very convenient phrase, and may mean anything or nothing. The clear fact is that if people look for much definite religion at the Front, they will not find it. That fact emerges every time.

In a recent leading article the *British Weekly* affirms its belief that between the Church and the world there is and ever must be a wide, almost impassable gulf. "The Church must be a society in which the level of goodness and purity is higher than it is outside, or it has no right to be." It is perfectly true, in any case, that the Church has no moral right to be. In all its history it has never accomplished anything to justify its existence as a supernatural institution. It has always indulged in high professions, but its performances, on the average, have not exceeded, in moral elevation, the average performances of the outside world. The *British Weekly* declares that in the world "there are vested interests of iniquity, like the liquor trade." Whether the liquor trade is in itself an evil or not, is a debatable point; but the fact that cannot be denied is that most of the people engaged in it are members of the Church. As a matter of fact, the world is immensely more genuine and straightforward than the Church, the self-righteous pretensions of which almost inevitably lead to hypocrisy—to the *profession* of one thing and the *practice* of the very opposite.

The Rev. Dr. David Smith says that the Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ's "successor, but not a second Saviour." Does it not stand to reason that a pope's successor is likewise a pope, or that a premier's successor becomes, by that act of succession, himself a premier? Yet the Holy Ghost succeeds Christ without assuming the office of Saviour. Of course, it doesn't make a brass farthing's difference, because there is not, and there never has been, a supernatural Saviour in this world.

Mr. J. M. Thompson does well to protest, in the *Christian Commonwealth* for August 9, however ineffectual his protest may be, against the present wicked habit, contracted by British divines generally, of depreciating and anathematizing everything German. Dr. Frank Ballard assures us that German theology has long been nondescript, Principal Griffith-Jones is equally certain that German criticism has now been finally discredited, and from almost every pulpit in the land German Christianity has been angrily denounced as the worst form of Atheism. We are thus led to "suppose that true Christianity is Anglican." "Could there be a more dangerous delusion?" pertinently asks the Professor. Then he justly adds:—

Apart from the facts that no single Church protested against this War, and that the greater part of the German and Austrian armies is of the same Church as the Italian and French, what professedly Christian country can afford to throw stones at another?

Our British divines forget that they live in glass houses, and that the stones they throw will be thrown back, and do serious damage to their own dwellings.

Some of the results of the War are truly wonderful. A paragraph in the *Yorkshire Evening Post* informs the world that a "gaitered dignitary of the Church" was actually seen wheeling a perambulator along the Thames Embankment. Wonderful! It seems almost worth while having a war to witness such a sight. One doesn't know which to marvel at most, the "gaitered dignitary" who could be so human, the public stupid enough to swallow such piffle, or the journalist idiot enough to write it.

A religious society sent a bundle of tracts to an American railway manager, for placing in the waiting-rooms, with the title, "Are you going to Hell?" He returned the goods with the message, "We cannot place the tracts, as Hell is not on our line."

A great campaign to improve the moral tone of London is about to be inaugurated by the Bishop of London's Council; and among the matters to be dealt with will be advertisement

posters, books, tea-rooms, the public parks, and cinemas. This meddling with things outside the Church is quite unnecessary, for the Police have powers in that direction. The Bishop's Council might set their own house in order, and see that church-organists, vergers, bellringers, choristers, and charwomen are paid adequate wages.

The Bishop of Salisbury, writing in the August number of the *Salisbury Diocesan Gazette*, makes the following reference to the naval battle off Jutland :—

Had it not been for an unfortunate blunder in the first announcement, every place in the country would have been singing the "Te Deum" for a great naval victory, the results of which have meant so much to the safety of our country.

Is there not an "unfortunate blunder" in the Bishop's theology? If he credits the Deity with our "victories," and desires to thank him, must he not, in fairness, debit him with our defeats, and with his failure to save Kitchener, with failure to save the *Lusitania*, with failure to save Captain Fryatt, to name only some naval matters; to say nothing of his other failures in, say, Gallipoli and Mesopotamia, and say his moral failure to save Nurse Cavell, aye, and to his failure to save every mother's son from his lordship's diocese who has been prayed for, and entreated for, and wept for—without avail?

Is it not an "unfortunate blunder" on the part of the Bishop to imagine One who careth for the sparrows, and deviseth when and when not they shall tumble, and even numbereth the hairs of our head, to be so elated over what we call a "victory," not to be disturbed by the fact that it means the death of some thousands of his creatures—for whom he careth much more than for many sparrows—British and German, and mourning and sorrow in thousands of homes. British Christians laugh at the Kaiser's God as being, as it were, the Kaiser's "giant shadow hailed divine." When the Bishop of Salisbury attributes this partizanship to the Almighty, may we not fairly say that the Bishop of Salisbury's God is very like the Bishop of Salisbury? And do we not see from these illustrations how both the Kaiser and the Bishop, and all Theistic humanity for that matter, make their gods in their own image?

A correspondent sends us a newspaper article, which we have already observed in other papers, and is obviously no more than a piece of religious advertising. It is an alleged interview with a clergyman, recently wounded, who gave up his post to join the Army. The point of the article is that we are winning because our men have something behind them which the German lacks. The assumed speaker says he could give this something a name which the Church would recognize, but he refrains. Perhaps he fears to enlighten the Germans. But he is quite certain that shells alone would never have enabled the British to advance. Only this something, which the British possess and the Germans lack, brought about the smashing of the German line.

We are winning the War because God is with us. That is the obvious inference from the article, and the general tone of it convinces us that it is a "faked" advertisement, of the same order as that used in the puffing of pills or soap. The circulation of the Mons Angels legend is one form of this advertising; the unnamed returned soldier, convinced that our men are winning because they feel God is behind them, is another form. Previously we have had the repentant Freethinker lamenting the emptiness of life without religion, or a criminal tracing his downfall to the reading of Paine's *Age of Reason*. All this is a very old policy of the Christian Churches, and, as it is still in force, it presumably still serves some purpose. For our own part, we venture to think that the religious conviction of the German is quite as strong as that of the British soldier, and the conviction of God's help on the one side is equalled—and cancelled—by the conviction of God's help on the other side. It is sheer cant on both sides. And when it comes to religious cant, the average Briton can hold his own with anyone on the face of the earth.

The religious journalists have dubbed the Bishop of London "The Bluejackets' Friend," because he preached a few sermons to the sailors of the Grand Fleet. His lordship, attired in full khaki, has been to the back of the fighting lines, and he has visited the Fleet. What will he do next? We hope it will not be a case of "All dressed up, and nowhere to go."

Baron Munchausen, who has been killed on the Western front, was a descendant of the famous Baron whose book of travels earned for him the title of "The Prince of Liars." The writers of the Bible better deserved the title.

Clapham Parish Church is sending a parcel of mouth-organs to its curate, now in France, who wants them for his services at the back of the Front. What attractions will the other Army Chaplains offer?

A Short Note.

Apologists for the Christian religion have practically given up the Book of Genesis as hopeless. We are told now that what appears to be the earliest book in the Bible was really written at a late date. At the same time the story of the Garden of Eden is admitted by the educated clergy to be a myth. There never was any Adam, except in the sense that there must have been a First Man. Or any Eve, or any wicked serpent, or any consumption by our first parents of forbidden fruit.

So far, therefore, Freethinkers may do what lawyers could rightly do in a like case, namely, claim judgment on admissions. An admission, however, as to part of a case must needs affect our opinion of the case as a whole. Christianity, be it added, is more than a creed—it is a theory. It is not merely a set of propositions which one is directed to believe. It is a collection of statements which believers should be prepared to prove and defend; and for such purposes the chief documentary evidence is contained in the Bible.

Now, this evidence turns out on examination not that of independent witnesses testifying to isolated facts, but that of witnesses who anticipate or confirm each other. Thus the Old "Testament" looks forward to the New, and the New back to the Old.

I go on to observe in particular as to the historical reality of "Adam," that St. Luke traces the genealogy of Jesus, the God-Man, from Jesus up to Seth, adding "which was the son of Adam, which was the Son of God." We must, then, to be orthodox, believe that the Founder of Christianity was the descendant of a purely legendary person.

The theologians can only get out of this difficulty in one way, and that is by saying that Christ was a descendant of "Adam" in the sense that, like everybody else, he must have been a descendant of the first man. But this explanation, however ingenious, will not avail for all the generations in the chain of persons from Jesus to Adam so carefully computed; and if such explanation be adopted, one must also explain how it is, that according to geologists, there must have been men living æons before those persons in the chain who are historical came into being. In view of the ordinary length of human life there are clearly an absurdly small number of individuals in the chain, and one is therefore driven to a still more extravagant supposition, namely, that the lives of our earlier forefathers were of prodigious duration. To such an hypothesis the sciences of anatomy and physiology lend no support. Any intelligent person can see many further absurdities for himself.

But still further; it was surely superfluous to trace the genealogy to Adam through Joseph, inasmuch as, according to the First Evangelist, Joseph was only a putative or reputed father of Jesus. And it would have shown vastly more sense and candour to have traced the genealogy through Mary.

Why do not the clergy admit that they are landed in absurdities hereon? And if, as is the case, such absurdities are quite incapable of refutation, why do they not take off their dog-collars and collaborate with all good and sensible people towards the social and economic salvation of the people?

A. J. H.

To Correspondents.

A. TURNER.—We are sorry our space is so heavily mortgaged that we are unable to find room for your contribution. We might squeeze in a letter of not more than half a column. Shall we return MSS.?

T. WIDMAN.—See "Acid Drops."

A. RADLEY.—Thanks for cuttings. Always useful.

J. SANDERS.—We remember you quite well, and regret very much the circumstances under which you write. You will see we have made use of your communication.

C. F. BRIDGE.—We do find such things very useful indeed.

E. B.—Many thanks for the regularity with which you send us cuttings.

H. J. BAYLIS.—We are very pleased that the *Freethinker* gives you, a new reader, so much pleasure. Doubtless what you say about the title contains truth, but some objection would lie against any title that might be devised. And when a paper is once established, it is always bad policy to change the title.

D. NATHAN.—Will be useful next week. Thanks.

FREETHINKERS in and around Bolton interested in Freethought propaganda, either actively or passively, are requested to communicate at once with Mr. A. E. Broome, 112 Weston Street, Great Lever, Bolton, or with the General Secretary N. S. S., at Headquarters, 62 Farringdon Street.

N. S. S. BENEVOLENT FUND.—Miss E. M. Vance, General Secretary, acknowledges:—W. Stewart, sen., 2s.; Edward Parker, 3s.

G. E. DIXON (Accra).—Letter to hand, and dealt with as desired. Sorry Mr. Foote's *Comic Sermons* are out of print. We have not lost sight of the other matters to which you refer, but the difficulties are great. It is not easy to attract men to a Movement which promises little more than hard work.

S. M.—We are obliged. Opportunity will be given in the course of a couple of months. Some time in October, we expect.

When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, giving as long notice as possible.

The Secular Society, Limited, office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

The National Secular Society's office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

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.

Many of our readers will be interested in the following letter we have received from Mr. H. Percy Ward:—

I have only just received the *Freethinker* announcing your election to the Presidency of the National Secular Society. Congratulations are due both to yourself and to the Conference, for the Society has honoured both you and itself.

That you will maintain the prestige of the position so magnificently filled by your great predecessors—Bradlaugh and Foote—no one who has followed your career will, for a moment, doubt. The *Freethinker*, under your editorship, both in form and in content, is still the brightest and brainiest journal in existence. And I feel sure that the National Secular Society, under your leadership, will be as persistent, and as thorough, and as militant, in its championship of mental freedom as it was in the days of yore.

It is just twenty years ago since I began lecturing for the Freethought Party. I recall with gratitude the encouragement and help you generously gave me when I made my first efforts in the open air. Twenty years ago! Well, I feel younger than ever, and I am fighting the good fight of Freedom here in Chicago with enthusiasm, and joy, and hope.

We are glad to learn also that Mr. Ward is still lecturing to appreciative audiences in Chicago. From some printed announcements enclosed with the above, we note that he has just held a couple of debates, one with the Rev. St. John Tucker, editor of the *Christian Socialist*, and another with Mr. J. Quatman, Counsellor at Law. This side of the water it is next to impossible to find respectable Christians who will undertake a public discussion.

We note there is an attempt to stir up feeling against the N. S. S. meetings in some of the public parks. A letter appears in a recent issue of the *Brixton Free Press*, signed "G. L. H.," calling attention to the "blasphemy" in Brockwell Park. Expressions are placed in the mouth of an unnamed speaker, which we quite believe are manufactured for the occasion, particularly as the writer of the letter urges that some means, "fair or foul," should be found for stopping the meetings. That appears to be the writer's whole purpose, and we do not doubt that "foul" means would be quite congenial. The tone of the letter proves that very clearly.

Dr. Clifford should look up his Church history. He recently quoted with approval the following, "Christianity itself was for three centuries an organization of passive resisters. It won its fight, and we shall win ours." Christianity did not win the fight by passive resistance. It won only and when it enlisted the force of the State on its side. And even then its winning took a very considerable time, and the opposition was crushed by force. Dr. Clifford will find, if he looks closer, that there is not a country in the world where Christianity is established, in which it has not been established and maintained by force. Without force Christianity would have disappeared long since.

One of our readers writes to say that he recently sent copies of this paper to four friends who, he thought, would be interested in it. Two of them have become regular subscribers, and our friend feels pleased with the result. So do we. And we hope the remaining couple will join the ranks before long.

We have two pamphlets by Mr. Cohen nearly ready, and which we hope to publish shortly. One is on *War and Civilization*, and which, as it appeals to all classes, should have a wide circulation. The other deals with the subject of *Religion and the Child*, and will be found useful for propagandist purposes.

Another pamphlet which will be issued shortly, and for which there should be a brisk demand, is by Mr. Lloyd on the subject of *Prayer*. This also will be found excellent for propagandist work. Fuller particulars will be given shortly.

This year's Pastoral Letter of the Wesleyan Methodist Church calls attention to the unsatisfactory condition of the Church owing to there being a further decrease of membership for the tenth year in succession. It also states that the War has created new arguments for unbelief. This is quite wrong. No new arguments have been created by the War; the War has only served to emphasize arguments against Christianity that were already in existence. Many people have had their eyes opened, and many more will be awakened to the facts before the War is over. But the Wesleyan Methodist message is welcome in showing the general drift of things. If Freethought does not go ahead when the War is over, it will be largely the fault of Freethinkers.

Mr. Horatio Bottomley, who used to be a very pleasant gentleman, is, since his conversion, rapidly becoming a veritable Boanerges. One of his latest ideas is the establishment of a solemn league and covenant to avenge the infamies of the Huns. Isn't it enough that our enemies are taught the Beatitudes at the point of the bayonet?

Nietzsche and His Critics.

XII.

(Concluded from p. 518.)

His [Nietzsche's] writing, so neat and coloured, so nervous and flexible, so rich in picturesque expressions and in formulæ struck with all the care of medals, forms singularly attractive reading.....the reader who has familiarized himself with the symbolic and dithyrambic style of this work, and with its language which will at first appear so unusual, will only with difficulty be able to suppress a singularly intense emotion, an almost physical emotion, in fact, comparable only to that which we experience when we hear certain musical selections. In this poetic prose we seem to feel the presence of a passionate musician; and we can easily understand that one of the masters of the young German musical school, Dr. Richard Strauss, who chose Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* as the subject of one of his best known symphonic compositions.—*Henri Lichtenberger*, "The Gospel of Superman," pp. 29-30.

The greatest event—that "God is dead," that the belief in the Christian God has become unworthy of belief—has now begun to cast its first shadows over Europe.....we philosophers and "free spirits" feel ourselves irradiated as by a new rosy dawn by the report that "the old God is dead"; our hearts overflow with gratitude, astonishment, presentiment, and expectation—at last the horizon seems once more unobstructed, granting even that it is not bright; our ships can at last start on their voyage once more in face of every danger; every risk is again permitted to the knowing one; the sea, our sea, again lies open before us; perhaps there never was such an open sea.—*Nietzsche*, "The Gay Science," § 342.

In this world, if you do not say a thing in an irritating way, you may just as well not say it at all, since nobody will trouble themselves about anything which does not trouble them.—*George Bernard Shaw*.

WITH unsparring hand Zarathustra lashes the professors of philosophy and morals. Nietzsche's satire here equals that of Swift; it is mordant and merciless. Zarathustra is advised to attend the lectures of one who could discourse well of sleep and virtue, and who was greatly honoured and rewarded for it. And thus spake the wise man:—

Respect and modesty in presence of sleep! That is the first thing and going out of the way of all who sleep badly and keep awake at night!

Ten times a day must thou conquer thyself; it causeth wholesome weariness, and is poppy to the soul.

Ten times must thou reconcile again with thyself; for self-conquest is bitterness, and badly sleep the unreconciled.

Ten truths must thou find during the day; otherwise wilt thou seek truth during the night, and thy soul will have been hungry.

Ten times must thou laugh during the day, and be cheerful; otherwise thy stomach, the father of trouble, will disturb thee in the night.

Few people know it, but one must have all the virtues in order to sleep well. Shall I bear false witness? Shall I commit adultery?

Shall I covet my neighbour's maid-servant? All that would ill accord with good sleep.

And even if one have all the virtues, there is still one thing needful: to send the virtues themselves to sleep at the right time.

That they may not quarrel with one another, the good females! And about thee, thou unhappy one!

Peace with God and thy neighbour: so desireth good sleep. And peace also with thy neighbour's devil! Otherwise it will haunt thee in the night.

Honour to the government, and obedience, and also to the crooked government; so desireth good sleep. How can I help it if power likes to walk on crooked legs?

He who leadeth his sheep to the greenest pasture shall always be for me the best shepherd. So is it accordant with good sleep.

Many honours I want not, nor great treasures; they

excite the spleen. But it is bad sleeping without a good name and a little treasure.

Thus passed the day for the virtuous; and at night, "ruminating, patient as a cow," he ponders over his ten self-conquests, his ten reconciliations, his ten truths and ten laughs; and, cradled by these forty thoughts, "Sleep tappeth on my eye, and it turneth heavy. Sleep toucheth my mouth, and it remains open."

And when Zarathustra heard this wise man speak, he laughed, and said: "A fool seemeth this wise man with his forty thoughts, but I believe he knoweth well how to sleep." "Now know I well what people sought formerly above all else when they sought teachers of virtue. Good sleep they sought for themselves, and opium-poppy virtues to promote it." They knew no higher significance of life. "Blessed are those drowsy ones, for they shall soon nod to sleep. Thus spake Zarathustra."

But those who think that Nietzsche condemned the conventional Christian morality in order to open the door to a life of easy self-indulgence, are mistaken. As Mr. Havelock Ellis justly remarks: "Nietzsche would have smiled at such a notion. Not yielding, but mastering, was the key to his personal morality. 'Every day is badly spent,' he said, 'in which a man has not once denied himself; this gymnastic is inevitable if a man will retain the joy of being his own master.' The four cardinal virtues, as Nietzsche understood morals, are sincerity, courage, generosity, and courtesy."¹

As we have seen, Nietzsche was very far from leading a life of easy self-indulgence himself, and, as the same writer further observes:—

If any young disciple came to the teacher asking, "What must I do to become wicked?" it does not appear that Nietzsche bade him to steal, bear false witness, commit adultery, or do any other of the familiar and commonly accepted wickednesses. Nietzsche preached wickedness with the same solemn exaltation that Carducci lauded Satan. What he desired was far indeed from any rehabilitation of easy vice; it was the justification of neglected and unsanctified virtues. At the same time, and while Nietzsche's immoralist is just as austere a person as the mere moralists who have haunted the world for many thousands of years, it is clear that Nietzsche wished strictly to limit the sphere of morals.²

It would be easy to go on writing about Nietzsche and his philosophy for a whole year without exhausting the subject. Besides sketching his life, we have only dealt with two of his books—the two we think most interesting to freethinkers, the *Antichrist* and *Zarathustra*—and we have by no means exhausted them; there are sixteen other volumes in the collected edition of Nietzsche's works published by T. N. Foulis. About half of these are coherent books—that is, books written upon a certain connected plan; the rest are collections of essays, lectures, fragments, and aphorisms. Of the latter there are upwards of 4,200.³

Nietzsche is the greatest master of the aphorism who ever lived. "Originally," says Mr. A. Wolf, "this form of literary expression appears to have been forced upon him by his ill-health, which made prolonged application impossible.....Another reason may be found in a certain literary conceit of Nietzsche's—it was his ambition, he confesses, 'to say in ten sentences what everyone else says in a whole book; what everyone else does not say even in a whole book.'"⁴ Reading Nietzsche has been compared to the physical effect of drinking champagne. Says one of his biographers: "A born

¹ Havelock Ellis, *Affirmations*, pp. 63.

² Havelock Ellis, *Affirmations*, pp. 75-76.

³ M. A. Mugge, *Nietzsche*, p. 9.

⁴ A. Wolf, *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, p. 25.

artist, his training as a philologist merely increased Nietzsche's power as a master of form. There are passages in his works, especially in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, which in beauty and grandeur rival the Psalms; and the fascinating charm of his style, the subtlety of his phrasing alone, will ensure Nietzsche's immortality. *Nietzsche was a poet-philosopher.*¹ Nietzsche also wrote poetry. "Reading his verses," says Henry L. Mencken, "one is forced irresistibly into the thought that they should be printed in various founts of type and in a dozen brilliant inks."² "His style," says a writer in the *Athenæum*, "is a shower of sparks, which scatter, like fireworks, all over the sky." Says another critic, "his style flashed and coruscated like a glowing flame, and had a sort of dithyrambic movement that at times recalls the swing of the Pindaric odes."³ "His literary style," says A. R. Orage, "is the greatest Germany has known for decades. He had the art of compressing passion and profundity into a sentence, into a word."⁴ Nietzsche himself declared, "I write no longer with words, but with flashes of lightning."

We cannot conclude better than by giving a selection out of the abundance of his aphorisms.

Whosoever will be free, must make himself free: freedom is no fairy's gift, to fall into any man's lap.

Remain true to earth, my brethren, with the power of your virtue.....Let it not fly away from the earthly and beat against eternal walls with its wings.

We modern men are the heirs of millenniums of conscience-vivisection and animal self-torture.

Where the tree of knowledge is, there always is paradise.

What thinking man is there who still requires the hypothesis of a God.

Dead are all the gods; now we will that Superman live.

Mistrust all in whom the impulse to punish is powerful.

Beware of all enchained intellects.

Chastity is a virtue with some, but with many almost a vice. These are continent, to be sure; but the she-dog sensuality, looketh enviously out of all that they do..... Not a few who meant to cast out their devil, went thereby into the swine themselves.

To whom chastity is difficult, it is to be dissuaded, lest it become the road to hell—to filth and lust of soul.

A man who will not become master of his irritability, his venomous and vengeful feelings, and his lust, and attempts to become master in anything else, is as stupid as the farmer who lays out his field beside a torrent without guarding against that torrent.

Since man came into existence he hath had too little joy. That alone is our original sin.

The Christian resolve to find the world evil and ugly has made the world evil and ugly.

The more emacipated from religion, the more imperious does morality become.

Not things, but opinions of imaginary things, have been the source of endless trouble to man.

Popular morality is comparable to popular medicine; there is no science in either.

If moral judgments are the judgments of health, then criminals are diseased, and should be treated as such.

At the sound of music every lover thinks, "It speaks of me; it speaks in my stead, it knows everything."

The majority of men are wanting in intellectual conscientiousness.

As a Saviour, Jesus is not a success—do you not think his disciples ought to look more saved-like?

Jesus died too early; he would have revoked his doctrine had he reached mine age. He would have

learnt how to live and to love the earth, and how to laugh besides.

"Judge not," the priests say; but they send everything to hell which stands in their way.

"Belief" makes "blessed": consequently it lies. "Belief" means not-wishing-to-know what is true.

Great intellects are sceptical.....Convictions are prisons.

One cannot open Nietzsche's books anywhere without lighting upon stimulating and inspiring thoughts. We hope our articles will send the reader to a study of Nietzsche's works for himself.

W. MANN.

Talks With Young Listeners.

XIII.—The First King.

A FEARFUL cry was heard on the hills and in the valleys of Israel. News ran from village to village that the precious box, or ark, of Yahweh had been captured in a battle by the dreadful Philistines, and was now placed as a war trophy in the house of Dagon, the Fish-God. This house was near the sea.

To the men of Israel it seemed as if the end of the world had come.

However, the Fire-God got the better of the Fish-God; for, when the priests of Dagon entered their temple one morning, they found Dagon fallen before the ark. Next morning, the Fish-God, who had been propped up again, was lying in pieces. And, as most of the folk in that place were struck down with sudden illness it was decided to get rid of the dangerous box. So the ark was sent on a cart drawn by two cows, and these animals wandered, without a driver, along the road to the borders of Israel, and came to a halt in the middle of a harvest field. The reapers flung down their sickles, slew the cows in sacrifice, and worshipped Yahweh. For many years the ark was kept in a private house.

But many of the more spirited Hebrews thought it was time to try a new plan. The Philistines were always making raids, robbing and burning; and even Yahweh had no proper house to dwell in. Israel must have a king—one captain for one nation. It was true that the good old seer and fortune-teller and rain-worker, Samuel, acted as judge; but Israel needed a strong-handed man of war.

A young man, like an athlete in strength, and a head and shoulders above most of his fellows, sought out Samuel one day.

"Sir," he said,—

"All is well, young man," broke in Samuel. "I know you are searching for your father's lost asses. They are found, and are being taken back to the farm."

Wonderful magic of Yahweh's prophet! He knew the visitor's errand before it was explained.

"But stay, young man," the old seer went on. "You are wanted. Israel needs a man. You are the man!"

"Sir," said the young man, whose name was Saul, "I am but a rustic youth, and a member of a humble family of the tribe of Benjamin."

But he really was the man for the time. The Ammonite hordes had come up with a rush upon the city of Jabesh Gilead, and laid siege to it, and threatened to blind every man in the town if it was not surrendered. Saul heard of it as he was driving oxen home from the meadows to the byre. He killed two oxen, cut them up, and sent messengers through all the country. Holding up pieces of the flesh stuck on pikes, the messengers cried:

"Men of Israel, rally to the help of Jabesh! Saul the Benjamite will cut up the oxen—in this style!—of any coward who shirks his duty."

¹ M. A. Mugge, *Nietzsche*, p. 7.

² Henry L. Mencken, *The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche*, p. 56.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁴ A. R. Orage, *Nietzsche in Outline and Aphorism*, p. 4.

Thousands rallied. Saul led them all night, and, as the sun rose, he leaped like a lion on the prey. The Ammonites were scattered, and Jabesh never forgot that it owed its salvation to Saul.

You remember the cromlech at Gilgal? That was the spot where the tribes held a grand moot, and crowned Saul, King of Israel.

Samuel was a man of ancient manners, and though he had felt obliged to follow the desire of the people, and choose a king, he was afraid the new King might forget the old God. So he made a speech to the people, and recited all that Yahweh had done for Israel ever since the days of Moses; and closed thus:

"It is harvest time, when storms never burst. But listen! I shall ask God to give a sign that, if you disobey his voice, his anger will break out. O Yahweh, answer!"

At that there was a frightful downpour of rain, and the thunder clapped in awful peals from hill to hill. The people begged Samuel to spare them, and, at his prayer, the Storm-God of Horeb stilled the roar, and as the sun shone out, the grey-bearded rain-maker said:

"Always serve Yahweh."

Saul reigned many years, and seldom had rest from wars with the Philistines. He greatly hurt Samuel's feelings by offering sacrifice himself one day, instead of waiting for the old prophet and priest to come and do it. In a blaze of wrath, Samuel declared that the throne of Israel should pass from Saul's family to another. And poor Saul had a most unhappy life, and unhappy end.

His son, Jonathan, did a very doughty deed. The Philistines had overrun the land, and cleared out all the smiths and armourers, so that the Hebrews could get no new weapons. Jonathan stole out of his father's camp, accompanied only by the slave who carried his shield and other such things, and he marched down a gorge between high rocks till he arrived at a cliff on top of which the Philistines held a fort.

The two men climbed up a narrow path such as suited wild goats more than human beings. With a warcry and uplifted sword, Jonathan, followed by his slave, leaped among the scared Philistines, slew twenty, and grimly watched the pellmell flight of the rest. King Saul and a band of warriors rushed up, and finished the pursuit.

Samuel came to Saul one day, and gave him, in Yahweh's name, a dreadful command:

"The men of Amalek waylaid our fathers on the road from Egypt, and the moment is ripe for paying back that evil act. Go now, smite Amalek, men, women, babes, sheep, camels, asses."

Saul led his warriors into the South land (near Yahweh's hill of Horeb) and slew all human creatures except one, but returned home with large herds of oxen and sheep, and with the one man spared, namely, King Agag.

Yahweh said to Samuel:

"I am sorry I allowed Saul to be king; he has not carried out my will on Amalek."

Saul met the rain-maker, and cried:

"I have obeyed God's order."

"Then," replied Samuel, in a fury, "what means this bleating of sheep and lowing of oxen? Yahweh flings you from him!"

As he turned to go, Saul seized his robe, and the garment tore.

"And since you have torn my robe," shouted Samuel, "let me tell you the kingdom shall be torn from your family!"

And the very ghastly legend proceeds to tell that the old prophet slew King Agag with his own hands—"hewed him to pieces before Yahweh."

So now a fresh king must be found, and Samuel (who might be called the King-Maker) paid a visit to the little village of Bethlehem, where once you and I saw Ruth gleaning in the harvest field, and old Dame Pleasant caressing Ruth's baby in her bosom.

A farmer of Bethlehem had eight sons, seven of whom Samuel inspected, and none was what he sought.

"Have you no other son?" he asked.

"Yes, the youngest is watching sheep in the pasture."

"Fetch him."

Ruddy, lithe, and bright was David the shepherd, and Yahweh whispered to the seer, "This is he."

Samuel produced a little flask of olive oil, and poured the oil on David's head.

It was a token of kingship.

Young David was ere long known to all Israel through his duel with the giant Goliath.

The Philistines had come up—they were always coming up! Their host had pitched camp on one side of a wady, or valley. Saul and the Hebrews held the other side. In the dry season, a brook trickled down the middle of the wady, and smooth, white pebbles lay in its bed.

Weeks passed without a battle. Each day, a huge Philistine, very tall and broad, and clad in shining bronze, and bearing an enormous iron spear, came to the front of the enemy camp, and roared defiance, challenging Saul to send a champion to engage with him in single combat. The very sight of him sent the Hebrews flying to a safe distance.

David the shepherd came along, laden with loaves, cheeses, and parched corn, as food supply for his brothers in the army; and he was just in time to see crowds of Hebrews scampering like frightened rabbits. He was astonished at their cowardice, and still more so at hearing that he who dared fight and conquer Goliath might marry the King's daughter. He boldly offered to do the thing himself. King Saul questioned him, and eyed him up and down.

"When I was shepherding," said David, simply, "I killed a lion which attacked my sheep; also a bear. Why not this bully also?"

"Take this helmet, and coat of mail, and this sword," bade Saul, "and do your best; and may Yahweh help you, good shepherd."

David put on the armour, and felt so lumbered and laden, that he doffed it all, and just went forward with his rustic sling. Picking five pebbles from the brook, he hurried up the opposite side of the wady, as Goliath, whose shield was borne by a slave, began his usual challenge.

"May all the gods curse you!" bawled the giant.

"Yahweh will give your carcase to the vultures," cried David.

So saying, he slung a pebble straight at Goliath's forehead, and the giant, with a rattle of armour, and falling like a great oak of the woods, dropped to the earth with a thud. The Hebrews darted over the brook and pursued the panic-stricken Philistines. Meanwhile, David was hacking off the giant's head with the giant's own sword.

* * * * *

While we cannot believe the myths which occur in these bits of ancient history, there are two points we may notice.

One point is the steps by which the Hebrews passed from the Rule of the Fathers, or Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) to the Rule of Judges and Yahweh-men or Seers, and then to the Rule of Kings, or Monarchy. No doubt, these were real steps in the evolution, or history, of the Jewish nation.

The other point is the jealousy and struggle between

the Priest and the King. The Priest stood for what to-day we call the Church; and the King stood for what to-day we call the State. And this conflict between Church and State has gone on for many centuries; and indeed, is not yet ended.

F. J. GOULD.

A Tribute.

[The substance of an address delivered by Mr. J. Sanders at the cremation of T. H. Drinkwater, a well-known Freethinker and public worker of Levenshulme, near Manchester.]

We are assembled to aid in the last sad office which human creatures owe as a duty to the departed, and to pay our last and highest respects to all that remains of a good man, a true friend, and a worthy citizen.

It is the inevitable law of our beginning to be that we must one day cease to exist. And this applies to all living and non-living forms whatsoever. Our coming and our going, however, are perfectly natural events, as natural as the dawn which melts into glorious day, and the twilight which vanishes into the darkness of night; as natural as any of the intermediate events between the first which brings us into the world and the last which closes our individual career.

We live our lives in the world according as we are constituted and moved by ever-varying environment, and we leave it only when our last sustaining energy fails; leaving traces, it may be indelible impressions, in the hearts and minds of men; but there need be no dread nor anxiety of any kind concerning those whom we have loved and lost—no more, in fact, than we experience in observing the drooping and actual closing eyelids of a little child as night-time approaches.

But while our feelings are as real as they are natural, still the pangs we experience in parting with our dear ones are always greatly lessened in the case of those whose lives have been long and well spent in works of acknowledged goodness; when their thoughts and energies have been directed to the general good, to the lessening of pain, the removal of error, and to the general enlightenment and betterment of mankind.

The true significance of life is to be found in its conservation; and thoughtful endeavour, worthiness of living, and true courage in adversity are among the important and necessary features of it.

No man can live unto himself and achieve lasting happiness; and the convictions which inspire us and move us in the direction of duty, and the consolations which remain with us till our last conscious moments arrive, are the strongest evidences that thought and work for others' good is the true source of common safety and happiness.

Perhaps this is the strongest and most useful lesson which we may draw from the life-work of our comrade whose loss we now mourn.

He set before us many practical examples of good living and well-doing, which must influence men for long years to come.

He endeavoured to enlighten, strengthen, and stimulate all, and listened only to the voice of Reason, more particularly when it favoured the general interests.

He was essentially a man of probity and principle; sympathetic, upright, truthful, and sincere in all he undertook. His life was perfectly clean, sober, and industrious, and he was imbued with a remarkably strong sense of duty; his idea of citizenship being that the morally strong and intellectually capable should find their chief interests and pleasure in strengthening the weak, setting right their errors, and in directing all their energies to a just and healthy goal of common hope, happiness, and safety.

He honoured the aged, he loved the little ones, and argued for justice without oppression for the rest. In his public work he was thorough, only the sound in character receiving his sanction.

He loved liberty, and suffered pains and penalties in defending what he considered his own just rights and the rights of those whom he so loved to champion—the poorest, the weakest, and most neglected of his fellows.

His speculative opinions were his own; and while, as a Freethinker, he read and understood much that was written and spoken, and acknowledged help in some respects, he claimed to rely ultimately upon his own judgment, and from this attitude he never for one moment wavered to the end.

In private life he was a faithful and considerate husband, an affectionate and indulgent father, and a true and helpful friend to all who needed his help.

He was decidedly progressive, ready to give up any idea for what he considered a better one; and he was satisfied that if the best was to grow out of men, the best must first be sown in them and their conditions.

Perhaps the strongest point in his character was his sympathy. He cared not what the cause of poverty might be, it must be alleviated at once; afterwards he would discuss the cause, the cure, and general preventative measures to any length.

The sight of suffering, hungry children hurt him worse than anything else could, and at times he made almost superhuman efforts to ease or end their troubles and make them happy.

He made many sacrifices of thought, time, means, and energy for the good of others, and reduced himself to poverty thereby; but he lived in the supreme satisfaction that he had done his duty, and this was more to him than money or money's worth.

No man ever laboured with greater sincerity than did he whose loss now fills us with sorrow; and in passing on what was once a bright and cheerful personality to commingle again in elemental form with the great Mother who gave him birth and sustained him throughout a long and useful life, we are but removing with tender and reverent feelings the mechanism which has come naturally to the end of its work.

And if at this moment we refrain from actual tears, it is not that our feelings are unready to burst open the floodgates of emotion; rather we are restrained that we may gather new strength and courage to face the tasks and duties which yet remain to us in life.

And now, as we return to our respective occupations, it may be that others will largely receive our thoughts and attention; but the great void in our lives occasioned by his absence will remain for many of the years that are yet to be; and though sorrowful, indeed, we must leave the form that was once quickened with lovable qualities to the all-creative Mother who gave him to us, grateful to have known him, grateful to have been associated for many years with so good and so true a friend.

Fewer novels will be published this autumn owing to the high price of paper. The output of fiction of the Bible Societies will remain unaffected.

An Army Chaplain advocates smoking in churches. Wine is already served there. Soon there will be little difference between cabarets and churches.

A ladies' paper recently offered a prize for the best home-made dress, and the winner produced a dress at a cost of four shillings and ninepence. If Eve had competed, she could have won with a smile and a fig-leaf.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

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FINSBURY PARK N. S. S.: 11.15, R. Miller, a Lecture.

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Messrs. Saphin and Shaller; 3.15, Messrs. Dales and Smith, "Divine Service"; 6.30, Messrs. Yates, Hyatt, and Beale.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley Road): 7, J. W. Marshall, a Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill): 3.15 and 6, E. C. Saphin, Lectures.

REGENT'S PARK N. S. S.: 3.15, Headley V. Storey, "Why am I Atheist?"

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