

FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

EDITED BY CHAPMAN COHEN · · · EDITOR · 1881-1915 · G. W. FOOTE

VOL. XXXVII.—No. 6

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11, 1917

PRICE TWOPENCE

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Views and Opinions.

The Wastage of War.

Somewhere about fifteen months ago we wrote an article with the title that stands at the head of this paragraph. It was there pointed out that the supreme wastage of this War is not the destruction of economic wealth, great as that has been; nor is it the loss of life—counting those who have fallen as so many biological units. Our supreme loss is neither economic nor biologic. It is, in a word, psychologic, and one which threatens to have a very serious effect on the general social environment. To realize this, one must bear in mind how radically our present Army differs from previous armies that have fought our battles. Then the Army was small; it was largely composed of what one may term the naturally militaristic, and it was voluntary in the full sense of the term. To-day our Army is large, colossal even; it is largely raised by compulsion—either compulsion by law or by social pressure—and it comprises the pick of the nation's manhood, physically, mentally, and morally. All the qualities that made thousands of men powerful influences for good in the life of the nation—love of right, a keen sense of duty, hatred of injustice, and a desire to have done for ever with the menace of war—have led to their risking, and often losing, their lives in this War. It is this psychologic wastage that is of supreme importance to the world, because it spells a poorer social environment for the rising generation. * * *

War and the Elimination of the Fittest.

We were reminded of this old article of ours because we noticed that Mr. W. D. Whetham, the well-known writer on Eugenics, has been dealing with the same subject, but in a manner that invites criticism. Mr. Whetham is rather more concerned with the loss of young officers than his subject warrants, since it is by no means clear that the officers represent units of greater racial value than do the privates, and of necessity the death-roll in the latter direction has been the heavier. But in the main his contention on this head is a sound one.

The deaths in this War represent a greater racial loss than has been the case in previous wars, and for the very reason that the appeal for service has led of necessity to a sacrifice of those who possessed qualities of the greatest social value. In the case of the Universities, Mr. Whetham points out, "in eighteen months some 3,000 applications were dealt with. In the rush of the first few weeks came the brightest and best of the young men; in the 'First Hundred Thousand' they went to the Front, and many of them have already fallen."

* * *

Quantity or Quality?

But having gone thus far, Mr. Whetham quite misses the significance of the phenomenon from the point of view of a scientific sociology. His remedy consists in the advocacy of an enlarged birth-rate to make good the wastage of war—ignoring the fact that it is at least an arguable proposition that increasing population is one of the factors that make for war. The State must, he says, pay an adequate price for larger families, in order to make good the wastage of war. Income tax must be so adjusted that it falls heaviest on the single man, less heavy on the man with a small family, while the man with a large family will escape altogether. But how will that solve the problem? Mere increase of population is not in itself a good. Large families are not in themselves better than small ones. Ruskin was absolutely right when he said that it was of no vital consequence whether a man had two children or four children, but it is a matter of very real consequence whether the children he does have deserve to be hanged or not. The great disaster of the War is not in the number, but in the quality, of those killed. Assuming that men and women have larger families than they would otherwise, because they may escape some measure of taxation, or earn a Government grant (which in itself would argue parentage of a not very high order), how would this make good the deterioration in the social environment consequent on the War? To ask the question is really to answer it. It would provide more people, but it is certain that there is no guarantee here that it would provide those of the quality desired. * * *

The Social Mind.

Let us look at the problem really before us. Human conduct is in the nature of a reaction to environment. There is the character of the stimuli which invites response, and there is the nature of the organism which determines the character of the reaction. That both the influence of environment and the character of the reaction to identical stimuli vary from age to age is so plain as not to require proof. A word or an action which would in the mediæval period have led to a duel, is to-day passed by with contempt, or dealt with by an appeal to the law. And yet, if one were to transport the infant son of a modern Englishman to a society in which the practice of the duel still existed, he would resort to that method of vindicating his "honour" quite as readily as did his forefathers. The difference is one that

is entirely due to a modification of the social structure. But the structure of society—certainly so far as we are concerned with it here—is entirely a question of psychology or of psychological inheritance. Each new individual is born into a network of ideas, ideals, or beliefs, which fashion conduct and determine our notions of right and wrong. All literature, all inventions, all the accumulated knowledge and experience of the race, operates to determine the conduct of the individual. Social or psychological heredity *plus* the capacity for acquisition, that is the whole problem of conduct reduced to a formula. * * *

The Price of War.

Now the peculiar and deadly wastage of this War is that it threatens a poorer and lower environmental influence for the next generation. We agree with Mr. Whetham when he says that while the death of an old general may be a disaster from a military point of view, the death of a young subaltern may be a greater disaster from a racial point of view. A large number of those engaged in war, and paying the price of war with their lives—the artists, the scientists, the men of letters, the educated young men filled with modern ideas and inspired by progressive ideals—all these represent an environmental influence of the greatest possible value. In a few years they would stand for the better and higher environment to which our young manhood would adapt itself. All wars kill off the physically fit, it is a peculiarity of this War in which nations and not merely armies are engaged, that it kills off the mentally fit likewise. When the War is over, it may well be that stupidity and reaction will have fewer enemies to fight because of the many alert minds and brave hearts that are no longer with us. And how will an increased birth-rate help us then? To encourage larger families will mean a larger population—although there may arise circumstances that will negative this—but will it secure a better and higher social environment? There is certainly no biological connection between fecundity and high organization, the connection is rather between that and low organization; and there is as little reason for assuming that by encouraging large families we shall make good the most important loss brought about by the War. * * *

The Condition of Progress.

We quite agree with Mr. Whetham that the production, maintenance, and education of children ought to be regarded as a contribution to the capital wealth of the community. But the value of these children, how far they are contributions to the process of civilization will be determined by the kind of education given, which will, in turn, be largely determined by the social environment in which they live. It is for this reason that we have protested so often against the introduction of military (not physical) training into the nation's schools. We can, if we like, turn out a generation of soldiers—Germany has shown what can be done by using the schools—in Liebknecht's phrase—as training stables for the Army. But I am quite certain that if we do so, and so far as we do, we shall secure a reaction on a lower plane to environmental stimuli. On the other hand, if we are in earnest in our desire to see the world at peace, and permanently at peace, we must see to it that thoughts of peace and ideals of peace shall predominate over thoughts and ideals of war. We must work to create an environment that shall be fatal to the very idea of war, and which shall render armed conflicts between nations as ridiculous as armed conflicts between individuals. This war, as Mr. Whetham points out, must leave us racially poorer; and, it seems to me, that the right way to regain that lost wealth is, not by way

of calling out for a larger birth-rate, but by seeing that those born enter into an environment in which desirable ideas and ideals exert a commanding influence.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

"The Heathen."

ACCORDING to the latest and best etymological authorities, including Murray's *New English Dictionary*, the term "heathen" comes from *heath*, and in primitive times, no doubt, the heathen were people who lived in the country, or on the heaths and in the woods, just as Pagans were originally villagers, peasants, rustics. Today, however, both terms carry an unpleasant, religious significance, being applied in Christendom to the non-Christian population of the world. In Biblical times, by heathen we are to understand the nations whose religion was neither Jewish, Jewish-Christian, nor Christian. In the Old Testament the heathen are tribes or nations inferior to, and looked down upon, by the Israelites, with whom the chosen people were forbidden to have any intercourse except as hewers of wood and drawers of water. Jehovah regarded them as only fit for perpetual slavery. Here lies the root out of which has grown the present-day estimate of, and attitude to, the Heathen or Pagan world:—

Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the Heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids..... and ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever (Leviticus xxv. 44, 46).

We read again and again of "the abominations of the Heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel," and "concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them."

Coming over to the New Testament, we find a considerable intensification of the same estimate and attitude. Even in the Sermon on the Mount, the disciples are solemnly warned against imitating the Heathen. The Gospel Jesus expresses his contempt for the Heathen when he says, concerning an offending brother who cannot be brought into a realization of his fault, "Let him be unto thee as an Heathen man and a publican." Everybody is familiar with Paul's dark picture of the Pagan world in the first chapter of Romans, in which God himself appears as a monster of callousness and cruelty. Here we see the Deity giving the poor Heathen over "to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, unmerciful."

Now, the effect of such teaching upon the Christian mind was to embitter it, which embitterment expressed itself in angry denunciation, and later in persecution and extermination. As soon as the Church became strong enough, it suppressed the Pagan worship by brute force, and by the same means came to dominate every department of life. After the conversion of the Western world to Christianity, the Eastern world still lay in the embrace of Heathenism, and to the converted West ultimately became an object of commiseration, which feeling embodied itself in what we know as Foreign Missions. Many millions of pounds have already been spent in the attempt to Christianize the Heathen. Missioners have gone forth in their hundreds, ostensibly constrained by the love of Christ, and their descriptions of the degraded and hopeless condition of the Christless East

are all based upon Paul's portraiture of the once Pagan West. Thus it has always been the unanimous teaching of the Christian Church that the Heathen are unspeakably corrupt in mind and manners, deplorably lost to all sense of morality and decency, and indescribably miserable.

Such is the Christian conception of the state of things in Heathendom, and such is the motive behind all Foreign Missions; and our only charge against it is that it *totally disregards the actual facts*. In the late Professor Robertson Smith's *Religion of the Semites* we learn that the religious beliefs and practices of all the Semitic tribes were exceedingly similar, and that in no respect was any one tribe much superior to the rest. Indeed, this is rendered practically certain from many admissions contained in the Old Testament itself. The Israelites were continually accused of following in the footsteps of their Heathen neighbours by their own prophets. A tolerable acquaintance with the history of pre-Christian Rome suffices to convince any fair-minded person that Paul's account of it is as much a caricature as are Juvenal's *Satires*. All the vices of Pagan Rome are to be found in Christendom to-day by those who have eyes to see them. On the other hand, it is an irrefutable fact that, taking it all in all, the ethical standard of Paganism was, and is, superior to that of Christianity, not to mention that of Judaism. Cicero was by no means a superior type of a Pagan; and yet even he cherished and expressed the following noble sentiment:—

They who say that we should love our fellow-citizens, but not foreigners, destroy the universal brotherhood of mankind, with which benevolence and justice would perish for ever.

In all its stages, Stoic philosophy abounds in sentiments of that order, and in personalities in whom they were beautifully exemplified. But we hasten to call special attention to a modern instance of Heathen "saintliness." Most of us know the story of Foreign Missions amongst the South Sea Islands. In many respects it is a terribly sad and humiliating story, with disastrous consequences, in several cases, to the natives. In Jack London's *South Sea Tales* is a story entitled "The Heathen." It introduces us to a white man, called Charley, who tells the tale, and a native of one of the islands, named Otoo (pronounced O-to-to). Charley was a pearl-buyer, and he and Otoo were together without meeting on the schooner *Petite Jeanne*, the former as cabin passenger and the latter as one of the crew, during a voyage between Rangiroa and Papeete. The *Petite Jeanne* never reached Papeete, for it encountered a terrific hurricane and literally went to pieces, and out of its ninety-one passengers and eight or ten Kanaka seamen, only two, Charley and Otoo, were saved. Now, mark, Otoo was dubbed a Heathen by all who knew him, and by most he was so-called in derision. To him the supernatural did not exist.

He knew nothing of common Christian morality. All the people on Bora Bora were Christians; but he was a Heathen, the only unbeliever on the island, a gross Materialist, who believed that when he died he was dead (pp. 137-8).

Now observe how this born Atheist conducted himself in most trying circumstances. Charley picked up with one of the wrecked vessels' hatch-covers, on which he managed to keep afloat in spite of serious difficulties. Bear in mind that Oudouse, captain of the lost schooner, was a Christian. Otoo had succeeded in getting hold of a hatch-cover, and the moment he saw Captain Oudouse swimming, but almost at his last breath, he invited him to share his cover. This is the sequel as related by Charley:—

Not twenty feet away from me, on another hatch-cover, were Captain Oudouse and the Heathen. They were

fighting for the possession of the cover—at least the Frenchman was. Paien noir (Black Pagan), I heard him scream, and, at the same time, I saw him kick the Kanaka.

Now, Captain Oudouse had lost all his clothes, except his shoes, and they were heavy brogans. It was a cruel blow, for it caught the Heathen on the mouth and the point of the chin, half stunning him. I looked for him to retaliate, but he contented himself with swimming about forlornly, a safe ten feet away. Whenever a fling of the sea threw him closer, the Frenchman, hanging on with his hands, kicked out at him with both feet. Also, at the moment of delivering each kick he called the Kanaka a black Heathen.

"For ten centimes I'd come over there and drown you, you white beast!" I yelled.

The only reason I did not go was that I felt too tired. The very thought of the effort to swim over was nauseating. So I called to the Kanaka to come to me, and proceeded to share the hatch-cover with him (pp. 129-30).

That was how the two first came together. They shared the hatch-cover between them, taking "turn and turn about, one lying flat on the cover and resting, while the other, submerged to the neck, merely held on with his hands." This went on for several days and nights until towards the last Charley was delirious most of the time.

In the end, Otoo saved my life; for I came to lying, on the beach twenty feet from the water, sheltered from the sun by a couple of cocoanut leaves. No one but Otoo could have dragged me there and stuck up the leaves for shade. He was lying beside me. I went off again; and the next time I came round, it was a cool and starry night, and Otoo was pressing a drinking cocoanut to my lips (pp. 132-3).

For seventeen years they were together, ranging the Pacific from Hawaii to Sydney Head, and from Torres Straits to the Galapagos, and blackbirding from the New Hebrides and the Line Islands over to the westward clear through the Louisiades, New Britain, New Ireland, and New Hanover. Three times they were wrecked; and they traded and salvaged wherever a dollar could be made. Otoo was always at Charley's shoulder, watching while he slept, nursing him through fever and wounds—ay, and receiving wounds in fighting for him. Twice the "gross Materialist" saved his friend's life and the second time at the sacrifice of his own.

Seventeen years we were together. He made me. I should to-day be a supercargo, a recruiter, or a memory, if it had not been for him (p. 143).

He was no fighter. He was all sweetness and gentleness, a love-creature, though he stood nearly six feet tall and was muscled like a gladiator. He was no fighter, but he was also no coward. He had the heart of a lion, and I have seen him run risks I would never dream of taking (p. 131).

There are savages, some of whom are still cannibals; but even among the lowest savages there are multitudes who need no lessons from the so-called civilized nations in the simple art of living and serving their fellow-beings. But all the Heathens are not savages, millions of them standing high up in the scale of human worth, and capable of giving valuable lessons to many of those who consider themselves infinitely their superior. And yet the Christian pulpit has the temerity to assure us that without Christ mankind is lost, and to send missionaries to convert Heathens who need no converting.

J. T. LLOYD.

Theology is a child of philosophy which is always striving to assassinate its own mother.—O. B. Nicolini.

Was Napoleon a Freethinker?

Whose game was empires, and whose stake was thrones,
Whose table earth. —Byron.

Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some
have greatness thrust upon them.—Shakespeare.

INTEREST in Napoleon Bonaparte has been heightened by the great European War. He appears to have been the last of the great soldiers who have impressed mankind, and modern warfare has not, since his time, produced a personality who sets the world alight before he is thirty years of age. Hence the War epoch through which we are passing tempts many to hark back to the remarkable being who was a great general from early manhood.

The trait that first and last most impresses us is the amazing personality of Napoleon. Even after his death this characteristic told in some inexplicable way upon those who came in contact with him. Ensign Duncan, a young English officer, who was on duty at Longwood at the time of Napoleon's death, and on two succeeding days visited the chamber of death, has recorded this impression in memorable words. Writing home to his mother, he said:—

To see a man who had caused Europe and the world at large so much trouble lying in a small room, in his military cloak and camp bed, dressed in his full uniform, was an awful sight. It struck me so I could have gazed on him for hours, have taken his hand and kissed it, but I could scarce breathe. What would not thousands of people have given to see what I have seen?

Since that day much ink has been spilt on Napoleonic history. Opportunely comes the new and cheap edition of Lord Rosebery's *Napoleon, The Last Phase* (Nelson), which is no mere recital of the last days in the life of one of the greatest of mankind, but contains a wealth of wit and wisdom that will cause readers to turn again and again to the book, which throws a flood of light upon the unique personality who changed the map of Europe. The new edition is very welcome, for it contains a new introductory chapter in Lord Rosebery's best vein, which has an added value because the author is a man of action as well as a man of letters.

The real treasures of Lord Rosebery's book are the chapters devoted to Napoleon's personal traits. Emerson regarded Napoleon as the supreme type of the man of the world, and the critical Thomas Carlyle admitted that the one article of Bonaparte's faith was "the tools to him that can handle them." Lord Rosebery's painstaking researches certainly add additional weight to this view, although Napoleon's character baffled so many men. Even his own brother was mesmerized, for, after the Emperor's death, he marvelled at the impression his dead brother had produced on men. "He was not so much a great, as a good man," he said, simply. And he was not the only man deceived by this Colossus, who bestrode Europe for a generation, and whose greatness endures beyond death.

Critics say that some of Napoleon's conquests were splendid rather than useful; but they cannot deny that the ardour of his magnetic personality set France on fire. It inflamed every soldier who dragged the cannon over the sands of Egypt, and every warrior who carried his musket among the snows of Russia. Napoleon also imparted to his marshals something of his own impetuous and adventurous career. And when victory begot victory, nothing seemed impossible, for none then foresaw the melancholy and inglorious close of the Emperor's career, so feelingly described in Lord Rosebery's book, or that still later period when a charlatan Napoleon humiliated France to the very dust.

To Freethinkers the most interesting pages will be those that deal with Napoleon's views on religion. Lord

Rosebery has some very pertinent remarks on this matter:—

We have, of course, often read anecdotes in which the Emperor is represented as pointing to the firmament and declaiming a vague theism. Newman, too, in a noble passage, has given from tradition the final judgment passed on Christianity by Napoleon at St. Helena, wherein he is reported to have compared the shadowy fame of Cæsar and Alexander with the living force of Christ, and to have summed up with, "Can he be less than divine?" But the real Napoleon talked in a very different fashion.

This is put excellently. As a fact, Napoleon preferred Mohammedanism to Christianity. He objected to the Christian religion because it would damn Plato and Socrates, and he questioned the justice of eternal punishment for finite offences. He also agreed with the Mohammedans that Christians who worshipped three deities must, necessarily, be Polytheists and Pagans. "As for me," Napoleon breaks out on one occasion, "my opinion is formed that Christ never existed." As to man, he proclaimed himself a Materialist. In all this he was a true son of the great Revolution, which has changed, and is changing, the face of the civilized world.

Like so many monarchs, Napoleon was cynical in using religion to further his schemes; but he frankly admitted the soft impeachment:—

It was by becoming a Catholic that I pacified the Vendee, and a Mussulman that I established myself in Egypt; it was by becoming Ultramontane that I won over public opinion in Italy. If I ruled a people of Jews, I would rebuild the temple of Solomon.

This patronage of religion in a ruler of a nation is understandable, for the Roman emperors did it systematically. Did not Henry of Navarre retract his Protestant views, saying that "Paris was well worth a mass"? And in quite recent days the "Holy Carpet" of the Mohammedans was saluted by British warships, and everywhere, during its journey, received with military honours at the hands of Christian soldiers. Napoleon's Catholicism was assumed to please his subjects, the majority of whom were Catholics. Yet his treatment of the Pope was brutal. In forcing the Pontiff to attend his coronation, he had no other object except that of impressing the crowd. His tolerance of the Catholic Church was not for any higher motive than that of consolidating his rule, for he was sufficiently sagacious to know that the priests would be better in harness than as open enemies. Napoleon always used religion to further his own ends, although he was himself as irreligious as Voltaire, though he had none of that passion for humanity which distinguished the great writer.

Yet Napoleon could be very human at times. Whilst walking at St. Helena with a lady, a heavily burdened peasant approached on the narrow road. "Respect the burden, madam," said the Emperor, as he stood back to let the man pass. Indeed, a mere catalogue of Napoleon's actions is more profitable than a string of epithets.

One could devote columns to so fascinating a subject, but our readers will do well to turn to Lord Rosebery's book for themselves. It is written by a master of style, who, had not his life been largely devoted to public affairs, might have made a great name in literature. Every page is worth reading and re-reading, which marks it out very definitely from the ephemeral publications of the day. And Lord Rosebery's final verdict on the last phase of Napoleon's life is well worth quoting and remembering:—

It would be well if the sombre episode of St. Helena could be blotted out of history in the interests of Great Britain and Napoleon; it is not a bright page for either; it consorts with the dignity of neither.

MIMNERMUS.

Religion and Brutality.

THE Christian apologist has been put to sore straits ever since the beginning of the War by the cold-blooded brutalities of the Huns in their conduct of the War. Such an exhibition of inhuman barbarities was considered to be impossible in the case of people who professed the Christian religion. And it must be admitted that their incredulity is fully justified if they look upon the precept which enjoins them to turn the other cheek to the smiter as an *altruistic* maxim to be strictly observed by all Christians. To such people the spectacle of a famous Christian nation indulging in all sorts of unprovoked atrocities, and apparently revelling in their infamous work, naturally suggested the very negation of Christianity. Hence, as a way of escape out of their unpleasant dilemma, they were driven to deny the Germans any sincerity of religious conviction. The Christian devotion and zeal of the German nation is simply an undeniable fact; it must, therefore, be a form of organized hypocrisy. It is "Materialism" in the guise of Christianity; a correct statement, in the sense that it is true of every Christian country. No organization in the world is more materialistic in arms and ambitions than the Christian Church.

It never occurs to these apologists to turn their attention the other way, and see if they can find a single instance of even an attempt at putting that famous injunction into practice by any section of the Church; or, again, to inquire if the maxim itself was ever intended as a precept of *altruistic* morality. They simply assume that it was enjoined to be observed for the *sake of others*, and that true Christians have always done so!

A little reflection upon the annals of history, especially ecclesiastical history, would have taught them that religion and brutality are "familiar friends"; indeed, they are so correlated that the degree of inhumanity displayed has often been regarded as a measure of religious zeal.

It may be easily shown either psychologically or from history that a Monotheistic religion tends to make morality egoistic and clannish within the religious fold, and prohibited or inverted to those outside its pale. I need hardly say that I do not refer to the Monotheism of philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, with which, unfortunately, it is persistently confounded, but to the Monotheism of a Deity with an individual or "proper" name; that is, to the Monotheism created by priests, who, not lacking in self-confidence, and seeking self-aggrandizement, promoted or elevated their tribal deity to the place of highest honour by declaring him to be the supreme God. This "priestly made" or "promoted" mono-god retains all the traits of its former self, even to its name; his care is still the tribe or its equivalent, the Church. His attributes are simply extended and magnified.

The basic presumption of this sacerdotal Monotheism, viz., that of being the one true religion, inevitably engenders in its followers a spirit of supercilious hauteur, and makes tolerance of other religions an inconsistency. Perforce it becomes aggressive and despotic; and when two religions of this order meet in arms, there ensues such a spectacle of woe as would make the gods weep were they touched with human pity. Let the reader revert in thought to the Crusades of history.

But it is not only in the case of a collision of "likes" that such a religion tends to make the exercise of ordinary morality impossible beyond its own pale. The fact is sufficiently exemplified in the history of Judaism and of Christianity.

Jahveh showed neither mercy nor justice towards people who were not Israelites. His savage commands to "put everything that breatheth to the edge of the

sword," "destroy them utterly," and the like, simply indicate the moral attitude and spirits of the Jews towards the Gentile world. The same lesson is taught by the egregious treachery of St. Bartholomew's Massacre, the wholesale murder of the Albigenses, and by the long list of villainies perpetrated by the Holy Inquisition. It reveals beyond possible cavil or doubt the fact that the moral code which "holy" Christian zeal provided for the conscience of Catholics, in the case of heretics and Protestants, was "treachery," "robbery," and "murder." These enormities were even regarded as virtues! And the same limitations of moral obligations characterized the inter-relations of all the Monotheistic fragments of the great historic Church; the same "gentle" spirit permeated all the strictly orthodox sections till modern Humanism assuaged their mutual bitterness.

The lesson, therefore, from these few historical references (which, by-the-bye, could be multiplied a thousand-fold) is that barbarous atrocities were never considered by the Church, either Jewish or Christian, to be in any way inconsistent with a zealous profession of the Faith. Indeed, as I have already said, they were often taken as a test of divine loyalty and religious zeal.

But it may be retorted that Germany is not now engaged in a religious war, and that her enemies worship the very same God. Very true. But history likewise tells us that, in order to replace the moral law by a code of rapine and murder, it is not necessary to have a religious quarrel as a pretext to awaken the religious conscience of people. A Monotheistic cult always strives to become supreme in its own state—socially as well as religiously. The one aim of its priesthood is to hold the reins of both secular and religious authorities, and to unite king and priest in one person. And the reason is obvious: it is the one condition essential to enable it to impose its "one true creed and ritual" upon all.

When, however, it cannot capture the throne, it seeks to direct and control it from behind. This alliance, whether it be explicit or implicit, has received the name of "theocracy," or god-rule. Strictly speaking, it should be called "hierocracy," or priest-rule; for it is a government by the priesthood in the name of its deity. Religious and secular interests are thus unified, though the former takes precedence in all things. A theocracy may, therefore, be compared to a bipolar ganglion; for it is stimulated to action equally by either branch, the religious or secular. Interference with the secular interests of this ecclesiastical State is as furiously resented as if you touched its creed or ritual.

Now, Germany is virtually a theocracy. That is the meaning of the divine right of kings claimed by the Kaiser. He regards himself as Jahveh's viceroy—Germany's tutular divinity. Hence, religion and politics, or Church and State, are in the Fatherland united in one compound system, having one authoritative head in the Kaiser, who is both king and high priest. The interests of religion and of the State are there one. Whatever, therefore, promotes the general welfare of this great Christian fold is good, and whatever tends to injure it is evil. The enemies of the Fatherland are foes of Jahveh, and are therefore *outlaws*, to be tortured and slain by anyone who may or can. By so doing, he does a service to Germany and Germany's God; and so they pray, "Gott strafe England." Moral obligations are due to no one that fights against the Fatherland; indeed, to no one who does not fight with her. To assume that brutality and a sincere profession of a Monotheistic religion cannot reside within the same person is to shut one's eyes wilfully to one of the most palpable lessons of Christian history.

Religion in Russia.

I.—PAGANISM.

In ancient times His Worship the Mayor of Heaven was as condescending towards the Russians in matters of religion as "He" has always been in the case of every other nation in the early days of history. Doubtless "He" deemed it wise to reserve the true revelation of "His" divine will until a later period, thinking it consistent with divine intellectual honesty to allow the Russians to live for centuries in the darkness of their pagan superstition.

No trace of Christianity, the so-called authoritative revelation of the way of salvation according to the "Will of God," is discernible in Russia for nearly nine centuries of the Christian era at least.

As the majority of Russians belong to the Slavonic family of the Aryan race, we must turn to the mythology of the Slavs for an idea of the evolution of religion, beliefs, and ceremonies in Russia. In doing so we shall meet with confirmation of the fact that the general evolution of religion has been the same throughout the world. From pre-human animal life there has been passed on to man the tendency to animate the inanimate objects of his environment, a tendency that has been prolific in the production of religious beliefs, especially when under cultivation by the ingenious members of the priesthood.

Unable to realize the meaning of the various phenomena, with which they were surrounded, the early Slavs performed superstitious rites and magic charms in order to gain favour with objects from which they feared harm might come. In time, feelings of gratitude and joy towards certain external phenomena developed, and produced a belief in kindly disposed silvan spirits who populated the woods and forests, and gave joy to all human beings who sought to please them. But the feeling of fear has been such an essential element in religious emotion that it has persisted even into the most fanciful beliefs concerning nymphs and genii. There have been good and bad among these beings of the grottos, the mountains, the trees, the rivers, and the flowers. As S. Reinach says:—

The nymphs mentioned by Procopious were the Vilas, common to all save the Baltic Slavs. The Vilas, who inhabited the clouds, the earth, and the waters, were pretty girls who passed their time dancing and hunting. Though sometimes benevolent and healers of sickness, they were often maleficent, raising tempests, killing or blinding those who surprised them bathing, and inflicting fits of delirium, like the Greek nymph (*Orpheus*, pp. 145-6).

Sacrifices of oxen, and even human beings, were frequently offered, by the ancient Slavs to their river-gods, and Volusu the god of flocks. The arts of divination were also performed in the hope that some knowledge of the future prosperity, or otherwise, of the fisherman or herdsman might be obtained.

Among the principal deities of the Slavs in Poland and Russia were Lada the goddess of love and pleasure; Kupala god of the fruits of the earth; Kolida god of festivals; and, Forlong tells us, that three great rivers, the Dnieper, the Don, and the Bug, were represented by images and adored. (Art. 'Slavs' in *Faiths of Man*, vol. i., p. 318).

The chief deity of the Slavs, however, was Perun or Perkunas the god of thunder or of the sky and fire. He was "lord of the universe," to whom cattle and other victims were sacrificed. His wife was the earth, but he seems to have had an interest in Stri-bog the sun goddess. The ancient Russians kept a perpetual fire

burning in connection with his worship, but fire was also a symbol of the sun. Not only so, according to one writer, Perkunas or Perun is represented, in Lithuanian songs, as a champion of the sun-goddess.

According to one of these songs Perkunas cleft the moon—which, we must remember, is masculine among the Slavs—for his infidelity to the sun, which is feminine. He had deserted her and fallen into love with Jutrzenka, or the morning-star (*Religious Systems of the World*, p. 262; *Slavonic Religion*, by W. R. Morfill).

The Slavonic conception of the god Perun was in keeping with one aspect of the popular idea of God, which implies wealth and power. Perun manifests his power in the making and wielding of thunder-bolts. So persistent has the worship of Perun been that he is in reality worshipped under the guise of the prophet Elias by many modern Russians. The powers of Perun, as god of thunder, have been transferred to Elias. When it thunders it is Elias driving in his chariot on the clouds, while the flashes of lightning are the arrows, which in anger, he throws to the earth. It is for him to send or withhold the rain or hail, and to him the people pray that the harvest may be abundant. (See Stepniak, *Russian Peasantry*, p. 359, vol. i., ed. 1905). Such is the power of Christianity to purify the world from pagan beliefs!

With the Baltic Slavs, one of the most important deities was Sviantovit, to whom there was erected at Arkona, the capital of Rugen, a fine temple constructed of wood. He was a god of war, who seems to have been closely associated with the agricultural and pastoral pursuits of his people. Year by year, when the harvesting was over, a great ceremony was held in his honour. Much feasting took place, and sobriety on the occasion was looked upon as sinful. During the ceremony it was the duty of the priest to take from the hand of the idol, of Sviantovit, a horn which had been filled with liquor at the previous harvest-time. From this he predicted whether there would be plenty at the next harvest.

In the worship of the river-gods, the god of flocks, the god of fruits, and in the worship of Sviantovit and Perun we note the influence of the economic factor. Here is man expressing gratitude for a full stomach, and hoping that a plentiful supply of food will be forthcoming in the near future.

Some idea as to the power of the soul to exist apart from the body seems to have developed among the early Russians. They were in the habit of placing various things around their graves in the hope that the one who had departed this life would make use of the gifts in the other world. To quote S. Reinach:—

The word *raj*, common to all the Slavs, must have meant the other world before it was used to designate the Christian Paradise. The rites of burial and cremation were both practised; Slav widows, like those of the Hindus, were sometimes burnt on their husbands' funeral pyres. Banquets were given in honour of the dead, who were supposed to eat the remains. There is still a survival from this custom" (*Orpheus*, p. 147).

With the development of the patriarchal state of society from the Matriarchate, there seems to have developed a belief in ancestor-worship, and in the existence of house-spirits. The chief house-spirit, called the grandfather of the house, was believed to remain in hiding during the day, and to come out during the night. Then he would eat whatever food was left for him. His blessings and help were invoked, and sacrifices were offered to him. When the peasant and his family changed their abode, they invited all the house-spirits of their own household to go with them. Even now, at the celebration of a country wedding, in

many parts of Russia, the bride goes through a ceremony of farewell to the house-spirits of her parent's household. After this she must perform the rites of introduction to the spirits of her husband's household. In the case of a bride who has misconducted herself before marriage, she must undergo a process of purification. This she does by sitting in a carriage by the side of her future husband, and thus crossing a huge fire which is ablaze in the yard of the bridegroom's house. A pagan method of purification nearly as cheap as the Christian washing in the "blood of the Lamb." (See Maxime Kovalevsky's *Modern Customs and Ancient Laws of Russia*, pp. 23-36; W. R. Morfill's *Slavonic Religion in Religious Systems of the World*, p. 266; and S. Reinach's *Orpheus*, p. 146).

For a long time the Russian peasants were "pagan" enough to believe that, provided they had their parent's approval, young people could be truly married without the consecrating hands of the priest being waived over them. This, however, did not mean good business to the Church. So the usual scheming for power and pelf was entered upon until marriage was turned into a Christian sacrament in Russia as in other Christianized countries. To quote Kovalevsky (as above, p. 37):—

For many centuries the Russian clergy had to fight against the inveterate custom of our lower classes to contract unions without the sanction of the Church. The young couple saved the expense of a religious ceremony and thought their union legally established as soon as they were publicly joined to each other in the presence of the community.

"Saved the expense of a religious ceremony." Oh, the poor clergy!

As the worship of the Phallus, or male reproductive organ, has been one of the most widespread of religious acts, it is not surprising that it is to be found in Russia.

In the sixteenth century a Russian monk, named Pamphil, complains of the yearly phallic festivals, in which a good deal of sexual promiscuity took place. In the State of Novgorod the worshippers went to the banks of the rivers to hold their meetings, and to perform the rites which had been indulged in by their ancestors in pre-Christian days. Speaking of this M. Kovalevsky says:—

The meetings took place, as a rule, the day before the festival of St. John the Baptist, which, in pagan times, was that of a divinity known by the name of Jarilo, corresponding to the Priapus of the Greeks (as above p. 11).

It is known that phallic festivals in honour of pagan deities have persisted into modern times in many parts of Russia. Here we have but another instance of the fact that widespread conversion to Christianity often, if not always, means nothing more than the adoption of Christian names, to take the place of the old, for various beliefs, rites, and ceremonies. Some modifications take place as time goes on, but, fundamentally, the pagan ways and pagan thoughts are there.

E. EGERTON STAFFORD.

(To be concluded.)

It is, of course, not the Germans, but our noble Allies, the French, who have completely secularized national education. Has the result been disastrous to the moral of the French nation? Is true religion weaker or stronger in France than it was when the educational system was effectively controlled by the clergy? Religion will not perish if it ceases to be indifferently taught *ex officio* to herds of inattentive babies in the elementary schools, and religious influence will remain the only force that tells—the personal characters of the masters and mistresses.—*Professor Alison Phillips.*

Acid Drops.

Freethinker readers will probably remember the story circulated concerning the late Queen Victoria and the African chief. It ran that the Queen handed a Bible to the chief, remarking that that was the source of England's greatness. When some inquisitive person ran the story to earth, it was confessed that it was "founded on a misapprehension." A similar fate has now overtaken another and similar legend in which the late Lord Roberts figured. That impossible and constitutionally unvarnished person, the Bishop of London, stated in a National Mission leaflet that Lord Roberts, shortly before his death, said, "We have got the men, we have got the guns, we have got the money; what we now want is a nation on its knees." For our own part, we considered it the kind of thing that Lord Roberts might have said, since he had said things equally silly; and a nation on its knees is what many would desire for various reasons. A great many things would be possible were that end achieved. As Ambrose Bierce remarked, camels and men take their burdens kneeling.

But it turns out that this story is one more to be added to the list of pious lies. *John Bull* wrote to the Bishop, asking for his authority for the statement. He was referred to a little booklet by the Rev. E. A. Burroughes. On the latter being written, he replied that the story was given him by a friend, who had seen it in a letter written by Lord Roberts, but he had not seen the letter itself. The name of this friend was given as Dr. Richardson, of the Church Army. On being written to, Dr. Richardson replied that he had not seen the letter; the sentence had been repeated to him by a friend. Dr. Richardson suggested that a certain member of Lord Roberts' family would be the best person of whom to inquire. To an inquiry, this relative of Lord Roberts replied:—

I am quite certain Lord Roberts never made the statement you quote in your letter.....You are at liberty to say that Lord Roberts never made the statement.

Finally, on being confronted with this disclaimer, the Bishop of London replied, through his secretary: "If you can prove to the Bishop that this story about Lord Roberts is untrue, it is needless to say that, should a new edition of *Cleansing London* be issued, the Bishop would withdraw the quotation from it."

Observe the attitude of this man whose professed desire is to moralize London. He cites a story on behalf of which not a shred of evidence is offered. He is confronted with the statement that a member of Lord Roberts' family flatly denies that it was made, and his reply is that he will keep on telling the lie until you prove that Lord Roberts never said it! How on earth can one prove that a dead man never said it? Not being a bishop we were under the impression that right-minded people required some evidence for a statement before making it. Bishop Ingram's rule is the other way about. And we have no hesitation in saying that the rule indicates the man. Anything is lawful so long as it serves his purpose. Any statement is permissible so long as it serves the purpose of the Church. We suggest to the bishop—no, not to the Bishop, he is hopeless, but to the public—that one way of improving the morals of the Christian world would be to cultivate a sense of intellectual rectitude.

Writing on "Religion and the War" in a Sunday paper, Rita, the well-known novelist, says, "Every commandment, every tenet of faith and justice, every doctrine as Christ preached it and the Church canonized it, stand broken and aghast." Just so! But the dear clergy, who are "too proud to fight," still draw their salaries.

Why is it that so many newspapers advertise the doings of the clergy so industriously? Recently, the *Daily Chronicle*, in an article on "Prayer in the War Zone," said, "Of all the actors in the great tragedy of the War, none stand out more heroically than the chaplains." Is that the sober truth? We do not think that the Allies' cause would triumph if it had to rely solely on the aid of the clergy. Their chief duty is to

administer communion to the soldiers, and they are paid handsomely for the service—far better than the soldiers themselves. The editor of a great daily newspaper ought to be aware of such things.

The new Headmaster of Eton is evidently bent on making a record—for stupidity. In his first sermon, after taking up his new post, he said the German peace proposals were not Christian either in theory or practice. We should not care to discuss this point, but the reverend gentleman goes on to say that these proposals were based solely on reason; from which we draw the conclusion that things based on reason are opposed to Christianity. A correspondent, in sending us the cutting, wonders whether anyone outside a lunatic asylum—except a clergyman—could be guilty of such an absurdity. We confess to having doubts. Walter Bagehot said once, "There are lies, damned lies—and statistics." We often feel inclined to paraphrase this by saying, "There are fools, damned fools—and clergymen."

The Headmaster of Eton was addressing the boys committed to his care, and, after saying what has been quoted, he declared that "reason by itself was not able to keep a boy straight for one half-year." There are, of course, other things than reason that go to the determination of conduct. But it is hardly a healthy symptom when the headmaster of a school commences by sowing in the minds of his boys a profound distrust of reason. After all, reason is the best guide we have, and it is the duty of a good teacher to train those committed to his care to use it well and wisely. Reason guided by sentiment is almost bound to lead one astray. Sentiment guided by reason is the only sane and useful rule. Such teaching as that of the Headmaster of Eton sets one wondering why a clergyman is appointed to the headmastership of a great school. It does explain why English education is in so unsatisfactory a condition.

Although thirty-nine bishops share £180,700 annually, their names have not yet figured among the subscribers to the War Loan. As they will not permit their clergy to fight, and will not assist the country financially in its hour of need, one might ask what they are doing that is at all useful.

The Rev. James Boyle, on taking the vicarage of Wembden, in the diocese of Wells, writes in the *Mitcheddean Parish Magazine*:—

Very shortly the parish will see its tenth rector in less than 40 years. Few places can boast so melancholy a record. Of the nine who have vacated the benefice only three have done so on account of preferment.

When I came to you in 1910 I said I should stay just as long as it suited my convenience—not an hour longer, not an hour shorter. I have kept my word.

It is a real wrench to leave our magnificent church and the reredos. I wish I could say the same about the people as a whole. We part with much regret from a few staunch friends, but the bulk of the people do not seem to have the faculty of arousing a rector's interest or of responding to his attempts to win theirs. If this were an unusual thing the blame would appear personal, but the parochial history seems to point elsewhere.

I am sure Mr. Colchester Wemyss (the patron of the living) will get you the best man he can, but his work will depend upon you. There are some, however, who belong to the synagogue of Satan, who try to undermine the rector's work with consistent impartiality. How long will you be beguiled by them?

First impressions are lasting. When your new rector comes see that you give him the impression that it is what you can do for him, and not what you can get out of him.

We venture the opinion that this clergyman's pastorate has not been quite a success.

The tender affection of the clergy for education has been shown over and over again during the course of the War. They dare not openly oppose it, the time has gone by for that, but no opportunity is lost of using Germany as the "horrible example" of the results of education, and of impressing upon the people of this country, that in any case education, to be of service, must be under religious

control. Thus, the Rev. A. C. Hill, of Elgin Place, Glasgow, said the other day: "We must not follow the German lead in education too closely, but must educate the conscience and train the ethical faculties." Greater nonsense was never uttered. What else has Germany been doing but training the conscience of its people? It may be said, and with justice, that it has trained the national conscience in the direction of giving a servile support to militarism; but that is all. The War would have been impossible had Germany not trained the people in this way. The real charge against Germany is that of the misdirection of education. To use Germany as a warning against devoting our energies to education is, to put it mildly, absurd.

"Give us this day our daily bread" was emphasized in a special service held in Berlin on the Kaiser's birthday. It strikes us that the prayer would be better addressed to the British Navy, which has far more to do with it than the Deity. And whether addressed to Admiral Beatty or God Almighty the answer to the prayer is likely to be the same.

Sir Robert Newman, speaking at a Church Union meeting in Exeter, said he believed that "the majority of men and women in this country did not believe in Christianity at all." We wish we could endorse Sir Robert's opinion on the matter, but we take it as a pleasing admission of the fact that a very considerable portion of the population are as described. All we wish is that this proportion would say so, and say it in a way that could be heard by all. Sir Robert Newman also confessed to a fear that when the War is over there would be a school advocating brotherly love in such a way that one would not know whether a man was Roman Catholic, Anglican, or Plymouth Brother. Sir Robert need be under no apprehension on this score. Christian brotherly love is never likely to be so aggressive as to prevent Christians showing by their conduct that they belong to different sects. Religious zeal will always be strong enough to keep Christians fighting.

War is a great national cleanser, say the clergy, although they like to see other men doing the fighting. At Barking recently it was stated that all the reformatories were full, and three boys were ordered to be birched.

In view of the call for men for national service some of the bishops are of opinion that the clergy ought to volunteer their help, so long as it was some sort of non-combatant service. Evidently they are discovering the blunder of their attitude towards the Military Service Act. But this move will hardly improve their position in the eyes of intelligent persons. We could appreciate the last move if the clergy had stood apart from the War and confined their energies to those of a peaceful and humanitarian character. But they did not. They have been energetic recruiting agents. And we have nothing but contempt for people who urge others to go to war while declining military service for themselves. And, we fancy, many others—not of necessity Freethinkers—will share our feeling. The only man who is justified in urging others to fight is the man who is willing and ready to fight himself.

The great European War is to benefit religion the clergy tell us, but there are few signs that point that way. A writer in a Sunday paper, speaking of the question of immortality, says "Religion, as taught and accepted, does not answer the question except by a demand for belief in miracles and a faith opposed to all reason. If the Great War has done nothing else, it has brought that fact home to thousands of suffering, questioning, breaking hearts."

In Paris a hospital patient has been asleep for twenty-nine months. The Christian Church has been asleep for centuries.

The War has not absorbed the energies of a kindly Providence. Landslides have occurred on Bali Island, causing over six hundred deaths, and a fishing village has been wiped out on the Devon coast by a furious gale.

C. Cohen's Lecture Engagements.

February 11, Liverpool; February 25, Clapham; March 11 Birmingham; March 18, Leicester.

To Correspondents.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—February 11, Walsall; March 25, Avondale Hall, Clapham.

"FREETHINKER" SUSTENTATION FUND.—T. Raff (Western Australia), £2 2s.; A. Pringle, 5s.; Old Sailor, 9s. 6d.; S. E., 2s. 6d.

T. V. WILLIAMS.—Pleased to hear from one of a family of ten—all Atheists. You ought to be a fearfully depraved lot; but somehow we feel you are all "all right," in spite of so demoralizing an environment.

H. M.—Domestic differences arise on many other questions besides religion. And we certainly see no reason, in the general run of cases, why one should wait for the rest of the family to avow heresy before doing so oneself. Someone must make a start every time.

T. MATHEWS.—Let it stand that Christianity did not cause the War. Is it not enough that it did not prevent it? On that there can be no dispute.

H. LEWIN.—Glad to have your appreciation of "Acid Drops." We note that you would like more each week. We should also like an extra pair of hands and a few more hours per day. We are doing our best with one pair of hands and a day strictly limited to twenty-four hours.

W. P. (Ashton-under-Lyme).—*Li Hung Chang's Scrap-Book* is published by Watts & Co., 17 Johnson's Court, E.C. Price 6s.

W. LAURENCE.—As you take the trouble to write a long letter, we must believe that you find the *Freethinker* "painful reading." Still, keep on, and we have no doubt you will come to like it, and thank us for having brought you to that state.

T. RAFF.—Literature is being sent as requested. Thanks for appreciation of the *Freethinker* under our editorship. We hope that the *Freethinker* will become "a greater power in the land in the near future." We are doing our best to make it so, and it does exert far more influence than many people imagine.

J. C. ROBERTSON.—Certainly there is a difference between "not very apparent" and "not yet very apparent," but the criticism is not seriously affected thereby. We, of course, depended upon the report before us.

G. E. WEBB.—"Balderdash" is the right word. We agree with your wife as to the folly of placing such men in such a position. Still, it is part of the historic policy of all the Churches to keep a hold on the machinery of social life, and they will continue to do so while the folly of people permits them.

Mr. T. MAY, of Mexboro, asks us to call attention to the fact that he is not the T. May whom we accused of talking nonsense in the *Freethinker* for January 28. We have much pleasure in doing so. The correspondent to whom we replied wrote us from the West of England.

J. B. (Newcastle).—We very much regret to hear of the death of Mr. McIntee. We have a very lively recollection of him, and believe that he deserved all the good things said of him—and more. We note that the obituary notice you send is very reticent as to his freethinking opinions. Candour and courage are rare qualities.

H. A.—We can't promise, but we will do our best.

T. W. GAISS (S.A.).—The writer in *South Africa* who has noticed the uneasiness of Atheists—on account of their Atheism—must have keener powers of observation than we possess. But, there! religious folk have a whole menagerie of Atheists that no one ever meets in the flesh.

C. W. MARSHALL.—Will be useful for our next issue. Thanks.

KAL ELTHON.—We do not quite catch the drift of what it is about which you wish to write us. Personally, we have no objection to "cranks." We rather like them, and agree with you as to their utility. Please note that all communications must be accompanied with name and address, but not for publication unless desired.

H. SILVERSTEIN.—Too late for this week, but will serve for next issue.

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.

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.

Lecture Notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

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

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.

The Bowman case is still pursuing its course in the House of Lords. The hearing commenced on Tuesday, Jan. 30, and was continued on the Thursday, Friday, and Monday following. It now stands adjourned until Thursday, Feb. 16 (We are writing this on Tuesday), and all that one can say with certainty is that it is four days nearer the end. As the case is undecided, we are precluded from saying much that we might say otherwise, so prefer to mention nothing more than that we await the result with confidence. We are arranging to publish next week a summary of the argument, to be followed by a full report of the judgment. In any event that will be a document of, one may say, historic importance.

Mr. Cohen lectures to-day (Feb. 11) at Liverpool. The meetings will be held in the Alexandra Hall, Islington. In the afternoon the subject will be: "The Place of Mind in Social Evolution." This is a topic which we fancy will yield a lively discussion. In the evening the subject will be "Can We Have Morality Without Religion?" We hope Liverpool "saints" will do their best to bring some Christian friends along to both meetings. Tickets for the meetings, 6d. each, may be obtained of Mr. W. McKelvie, 21 Globe Street, Kirkdale, Liverpool.

For some time past the propaganda at Manchester, owing to various causes, has been in abeyance. It is very regrettable that this should be so, and, as Mr. Cohen is lecturing at Liverpool on Feb. 11, he has, in his capacity as President, and at the request of the N. S. S. Executive, invited all members and friends of the movement to meet him at the Merchants' Hotel, Oldham Road, at 7 o'clock on Saturday, Feb. 10. Mr. Cohen will leave London early on Saturday to permit his meeting the friends, and will travel to Liverpool by a late train. We hope there will be a good muster, so that a thorough review of the situation may be made. Manchester is a very important centre, and there are quite enough Freethinkers in the city to maintain a very strong movement.

Mr. J. T. Lloyd is lecturing to-day, Feb. 11, at the Co-operative Hall, Bridge Street, Walsall, at 6.30, on "Self-Reliance v. Trust in God." As this is a new effort, and intended to be the forerunner of regular work in Walsall, we hope that friends from Wolverhampton, Wednesbury, Dudley and neighbouring towns will be present.

We see that one firm of paper manufacturers made over £10,000 profit in 1916 as against £80 in 1914. And, on the whole we believe, paper merchants have been doing well. It is the poor paper users who have sweated. Our opinion that the threefold cost of paper, as against pre-war prices is quite unjustifiable, and we are threatened with yet another rise in price. It is a fine commentary upon the patriotic "gush" that is being poured out to observe the way in which all who can squeeze the last half penny out of the public—whether in increased prices, or out of the Government in the shape of interest on war loans, do so. We should like to see it made absolutely impossible for anyone to make a penny profit out of so ghastly a thing as a war. Suffer we must in time of war; suffer we should, and no genuine patriot would complain at the suffering even though he may regret the occasion.

Members of the N. S. S. should be particularly interested in the debate to be opened at the St. Pancras Reform Club to-night (Feb. 11) by C. E. Ratcliffe on "Secular Organization: its Strength and Weakness." Last Sunday evening a most interesting and useful discussion followed Mr. Van Biene's enlightening address on mind and matter. It is most desirable that these meetings should be made more widely known, and we hope to see them extended to every quarter of London. The General Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, is inviting co-operation towards the opening up of a similar series of meetings in West London, and we hope to hear shortly that, with the promised assistance of the Executive, this has been accomplished.

Under even normal conditions works written from a standpoint of rational humanitarianism meet with scant recognition, and at a time of war they are nearly completely ignored. It is not surprising, therefore, *The Flogging Craze*, by Mr. H. S. Salt (Allen & Unwin, 2s. 6d.), has received small notice at the hands of the ordinary newspaper reviewer. And yet it is, in the best sense of the expression, an important book. Mr. Salt has devoted his life to humanitarian work, and has been chiefly responsible for the carrying on of the Humanitarian League under discouraging conditions. For his long and unselfish devotion in this direction he deserves the thanks of all interested in genuine social reform.

In *The Flogging Craze*, Mr. Salt deals with the question of corporal punishment from every possible point of view, and his case against it is stated with an impressive calmness that should affect all impartial readers. Its failure as a deterrent, as an aid in the training of juveniles, and as a normal part of prison discipline, is well dealt with, and the advocate of the last is left with little logical ground from which to defend his favourite instrument. As Mr. Salt remarks, the only real argument in favour of the lash is that it saves time. But only at the moment. Its general consequences, not only on the one who is flogged, but also on the one who flogs, far outweighs its value in even this direction. The tendency in all civilized countries to diminish brutal punishments is, in itself, a condemnation of the practice. The whole question does, in fact, resolve itself into the old antithesis of the scientific prevention of crime through the reformation of the criminal, the betterment of the social state which fashions him, and the infliction of brutal punishments which satisfy only the unthinking and the semi-civilized.

There is another, and a very unsavoury aspect of the subject, with which we are pleased to see Mr. Salt deals. The physiological connection between flagellation and morbid manifestations of sexual emotion is well known to all scientific students of the subject. The annals of the monastic life, the biographies of certain individuals, and other materials available to the student, supply ample evidence on this point—which is, indeed, well known to all medical writers of authority. And that is, perhaps, as Mr. Salt points out, the final argument against such as would reserve the use of the whip for a certain class of offences. In such cases we bestialize still more thoroughly the already sufficiently bestial. There are other aspects of Mr. Salt's book with which we should like to deal, but space forbids. We will only say that it is a volume which should find a place on every reformer's bookshelves.

In view of what we have said concerning the patriotism of the pious—at five per cent., we have pleasure in noting that the wife of Lieut.-General Maxwell has offered to the Government as a war loan a third of his capital, amounting to £35,000, free of all interest. We commend this example to other "Patriots," particularly to the Church of England with its loan of three and a half millions, in which it will claim the last farthing of interest. Lady Maxwell has set a good example, and deserves all honour for doing so.

The Church of Ireland has contributed the tidy sum of £1,400,000 to the War Loan. The original Christian Church, proprietor and founder included, was sold up for thirty shillings.

A Turning Point.

IN the city whither I was going were many brave, bright, hospitable spirits, each one of whom would have shared with his fellow-mortal the last shilling and the last crust. But it is so easy to abuse hospitality, to impose on good nature. And even among "kindred spirits" a mischievous mistakenness persists. One cannot always—at least, not everyone can—afford an Inn, where one can be so free and independent, so monarch of all he surveys. And, as Shenstone truly sang:—

Who'er has travelled life's dull round,
Whate'er his fortune may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
The warmest welcome at an Inn.

And, as an Ayrshire poet, Ebenezer Smith, has well, if somewhat bitterly, expressed the sentiment in the lines:—

Compared wi' me, the poorest cock
Is blest that rests on Ailsa's Rock;
The home to which it now has flown,
However humble, is its own.
I, drawing in a stranger's chair,
A stranger's parlour here maun share,
And, from strange clatter all but dead,
Seek refuge in a stranger's bed.

How savoureth of salt the bread of others! But the strangeness may be merely subjective, psychological, metaphysical, or *Scotch*, in keeping with Ingersoll's and Barrie's "metaphysical peasantry," or at worst misunderstanding; so to our tale.

It was a dreary, dripping, clammy, kindless Sunday in December when the daughter of a late leader, and one whom we all revere, Charles Bradlaugh, lectured in the city; and I, with twenty miles to walk, took a notion to be there, and duly set out under the umbrella of respectability. On the way a wooded ravine, with a gleaming, surging torrent sounding and winding its way amid huge boulders and masses of splintered rock, invited me to Nature-worship, to magnificent sermons in stones and books in the rushing stream.

But, no; onward, onward, onward. But how to get back? that was the thought that paled the native hue of resolution. I was half-way now, and getting into swing, when suddenly I stopped—moved on, stopped again—like poor Le Fevre's pulse in *Tristram Shandy*. Shall I go on? No! It was the turning point. It was sadly, but I felt wisely, resolved upon. Had they known, perhaps the friends I faltered from had been disappointed too.....Babies are noticing folk. I had passed a group of children, and, as I repassed them on my way back, a little chap in arms, and just beginning to lisp, said, "The man's turned!" It is true, precocious darling; but only bodily; otherwise I am on the straight path, the path of reason and experience; the plain and safe direction, even if the road be rough. But what a crooked world, and world of crooks and fools, you have just entered! And all so brave and confident, you and your baby contemporaries, "puir wee souls"! How many turnings you may take, and reach how many turning points. But you are sharp, and may win your way; but the charlatan and his imposing but shoddy magic awaits you. You will be solemnly, officially, and pompously misdirected by godly men in black, themselves misled, and nescient as thee, but suffered and presuming to teach the unintelligible, the unknown, and the unnecessary to an ignorant and credulous generation.

The great objective given up, the traveller had leisure to turn aside and rest by the ruined mill, the cascading rapids, and the roaring waterfall. He wanted to shout louder than the linn itself, to worship in some Pagan way, but feared the alien unsympathetic, because misunderstanding, eye and ear. And all too soon, reluctantly,

he left the frowning rock, the red of heaped-up leaves and soil; and the grey leap of waters showing and thundering through the trees, and the white "quilt" of foam on the shelving pool between the criss-cross rapids and the brink, keeps circling ever round as the last foot-step departs and the shadows deepen in the glen. He had been to church, and had come away serious but satisfied, his peace of mind, like the fading twilight skies, softly reflected in the quiet hedgerow pools. One other thought he had among a thousand unexpressed was, that it might please the Lady of the Lamp to know that her and her father's memory were honoured in those rustic shades, and that the mind of the dutiful daughter—tired at times, no doubt, might unconsciously and vicariously lave itself in that living stream and be refreshed.

And he thought of all the "saints" of Freethought, far and near, illustrious and obscure; all on whom this twin light of reason and humanity had fallen. Even if the light failed to illumine immediately, in the inner light of his mind was a grand reunion of all the choicest spirits of the earth as the outer shadows deepened on the lonely homeward way.

THE MODERN PILGRIM.

The French Revolution.

III.

THE MARSEILLAISE.

(Continued from p. 77.)

THE Assembly, after a little further thimble-rigging of the electoral laws in favour of the wealthy, offered the Constitution to the King for his final acceptance, which he signified. This proceeding was the hollowest farce; for the King was by now in regular communication with Austria and Prussia, who were leagued together by the Treaty of Pilnitz to intervene in France in the event of further developments unfavourable to monarchy. On Sept. 30, 1791, the Assembly dissolved, after declaring its work complete. Hoots and hisses from the populace greeted the constitution-mongers as they left the hall. They were regarded as accomplices of the King. But when Robespierre and Petion, the spokesmen of the Radical section, appeared, they were carried shoulder-high by the crowd. They alone, and the few with them, were regarded by the people of Paris as true Revolutionists.

The new Parliament, the Legislative Assembly, met next day. No member of the old Assembly could, by law, be elected to it. As was natural in a Parliament chosen on a limited franchise, and by indirect election at that, the Conservative element predominated. The out-and-out Radicals were very poorly represented, comprising a dozen or so unknown men of very moderate abilities, who, from their seats being on the high benches on the extreme left of the hall, were nicknamed "the Mountain." None of the well-known Radicals were members. There was, however, what we should call a strong "official Liberal" party consisting of a number of talented lawyers, theoretically Republican, but prepared to accept the existing Constitution, and insisting only on the greater responsibility of Ministers to the Assembly. The leader of this group was Brissot, a Paris journalist with a gift for wire-pulling, who had been concerned in the Republican agitation, but was prepared to support the Constitution if only his party could control policy. The chief speakers of Brissot's party, however, were a knot of able men representing the department of the Gironde, and from them the whole party came to be known as the "Girondists."

The chief question to be faced by the Legislative Assembly was the threatening attitude of Austria and

Prussia, together with the measures to be taken regarding the emigrant nobles and the priests who had refused the oath of fidelity to the Constitution. The Assembly decreed that the emigrants should be called upon to return on pain of death and confiscation of their property; and that the non-juring priests should be liable to arrest in the event of religious disturbances in their parishes. The King, who retained the right of veto under the Constitution, vetoed both these measures. This served to increase public discontent.

In March, 1792, the Royalist Ministry fell owing to internal dissension, and Louis was forced to call Brissot's party into office. Ministers could not be selected from among members of the Assembly; and the head of the administration was Roland, who was dominated by his more famous wife. Dumouriez, a military officer of no very steady principles, was Foreign Minister. The first act of the new Government was to declare war on Austria.

The declaration of war was welcomed by everyone except a few of the popular party. The Court hoped that the French armies would be defeated and the Revolution undone. The Constitutional Royalists hoped that war would strengthen the authority of the King by necessitating a strong Government. The Girondists hoped that it would throw power into *their* hands, and, if the worst came to the worst, force the King to declare himself openly for or against the Revolution. Only three men attacked the war policy. Robespierre, Danton, and Marat had the sense to see that the war could only prejudice the cause of democratic progress; and each of them, from slightly different points of view, attacked the Girondists for precipitating it. Their fears were borne out when disasters began, and the French troops were beaten. However, the Revolution was now on the defensive against an absolutist coalition, and there was nothing for it but to win through. The situation was, indeed, gloomy. Against the imminent invasion what had France by way of defence? The King and Queen were in collusion with the enemy. The officers of the army, led by Lafayette, were not, indeed, traitors to this extent, but they were, for the most part, much more afraid of democracy than of reaction; and if forced to choose between a monarchy supported by foreign arms and a democratic Republic, they would be certain to prefer the former. The majority of the wealthy classes, at this time, probably inclined to the same view. Only the peasantry and working-class, with a resolute minority of the well-to-do, were still heart and soul for the Revolution, and determined to save it at all costs. Marat, who saw all this clearly, wrote with fury in "L'Ami du Peuple" of the treason of the Court and the governing class, especially Lafayette. Venting without restraint the anger and despair with which the situation filled him, he declared that the only hope of France lay in the instalment of a popular dictator, with a free hand to slay all, generals, ministers, or politicians, who were guilty of treachery to the nation. These articles of Marat excited the indignation of the well-to-do classes, and led the Girondist Government to proceed against him; yet what he had stated was no more than the truth. As yet, however, he stood alone.

The Government, though hating Marat and the advanced Radicals, yet had to do something to defend the country against the enemy without and within. They proposed to establish a camp of 20,000 men near Paris, for use as might be required, and to disband the King's bodyguard. Louis opposed his veto. The Government remonstrated; whereupon he dismissed them from office, and recalled his Conservative advisers. Lafayette, from the head of his army, wrote to the Assembly demanding the forcible suppression of the Jacobins, or opposition,

party. Feeling ran higher than it had done for many months. On June 20, 1792, a patriotic demonstration was got up in Paris by the opposition rank and file. A deputation waited on the Assembly, and, of course, was put off with phrases. After demonstrating in the Assembly hall, the multitude proceeded to the royal palace of the Tuileries, broke in the doors, and surged into the King's presence, demanding sanction for the law authorizing the camp of 20,000 men, and the recall of the "patriot ministry." No harm was offered to the King—a proof that, even at this eleventh hour, the democratic party had no thought of regicide, and that Louis might even now have saved his throne if he had consented to lead his people instead of betraying them. To humour the crowd, he put on his head the red woollen "cap of liberty," which was now becoming popular as a badge of democratic sentiments, and drank a glass to the health of the nation. But he would not grant their demands. At last certain Girondist deputies from the Assembly, and Petion, mayor of Paris (Robespierre's old colleague in the former Assembly) persuaded the crowd to disperse.

The only immediate result of the demonstration was to frighten the well-to-do classes into a fever of Royalism. Lafayette left his army and appeared at the bar of the Assembly to demand once again the adoption of vigorous measures to suppress the agitation. The authorities of the department of Paris suspended Petion from the mayoralty for not having prevented the demonstration; and many men concerned in the movement were prosecuted and imprisoned. The Assembly—the Girondists equally with the Royalists party—continued to shut its eyes to danger. All that the Girondist leaders ventured to do was to address a private memorandum to the King, and remonstrate with him once more.

The friends of the Revolution outside the Assembly had, therefore, to save themselves in spite of their official representatives. Steps were taken to carry out the proposal for an armed camp in spite of the King, by inviting the municipalities of provincial cities to levy men locally on their own authority. Barbaroux, a young man from Marseilles, and a friend of the Girondist leaders, wrote to the mayor of that city for "500 men who knew how to die." The municipality forthwith raised 500 volunteers, who marched to Paris, singing as they went the world-famous hymn:—

Allons, enfants de la patrie !
Le jour de gloire est arrive ;
Contre nous de la tyrannie
L'etendard sanglant est leve.

Brest and some other towns also sent volunteers.

And, indeed, it was time. Prussia was now arrayed with Austria against the Revolution; and the combined armies, massed on the French frontier, and opposed only by the treason-ridden army of Lafayette, were commanded by the Duke of Brunswick. This German potentate had a reputation, it seems, for Liberalism; and, in July, 1792, some of the Girondists were even talking of offering the throne of France to him instead of Louis, and so solving two problems at one time. Great was their consternation when, on July 25, Brunswick issued a manifesto in the name of the allied sovereigns, threatening to destroy every French town which resisted the invaders, shoot all "National Guards" who might be taken in arms, and, finally, if any violence were done to the King, to deliver Paris up to "military execution"—in other words, to treat Paris as Brunswick's modern successors have treated Louvain.

This manifesto—inspired by the rancorous emigrant French nobles—put an instant stop to the Royalist reaction in France. Even the wealthy were not disposed,

after this, to stand between the King and his fate. Already the Assembly had declared "the country in danger," called for volunteers, and mobilised the National Guard. Petion had been restored to the mayoralty of Paris. On July 26, the 500 men from Marseilles marched into the city, and the famous hymn was heard in the streets for the first time. The common people began to demand the dethronement of the King; and continued petitions to this effect were made to the Assembly by the various "sections," or wards, into which Paris was divided. Still the Assembly did nothing. The advanced Radicals, led by Danton, determined to organize a popular rising, like that which had stormed the Bastille three years before. The volunteers from Marseilles and Brest would lend a hand. In all the "sections," except one or two in the fashionable quarter of Paris, delegates were chosen to see the business through. On August 8 the Assembly added the last straw, by voting by a large majority against the proposal to impeach Lafayette. Next day, a deputation informed them that, unless the dethronement of the King were voted that day, the people would rise. At midnight, between the 9th and 10th, the alarm bell was rung, the drums were beaten, and the delegates of the "sections" proceeded to the Hotel de Ville, where they installed themselves in place of the municipal council. The Royalists, on their part, marched as many of the National Guard as they could muster to the palace, and posted the mercenary Swiss Guard to assist in the defence. The insurgent leaders then sent for Mandat, the commandant of the National Guard, to the Hotel de Ville, and ordered him to prison. He was murdered by the mob as he left the building. As day broke on August 10, the insurgents marched on the Tuileries, led by the Marseilles volunteers. The National Guard declined to face the people, and dispersed. The Swiss mercenaries, however, who had no ties with the French, fired on the insurgents killing hundreds. But the whole populace had now risen, and the Swiss, overwhelmed by superior force, were cut to pieces or made prisoners.

It is lamentable that democratic Switzerland should have seen fit to erect a monument at Lucerne to these mercenary soldiers. Certainly they fought with courage that day, as became their profession; but they fought neither for Switzerland nor for France, for no country and no cause, but simply because they were hired to do so by a King who was a traitor to his people. They no more deserve a monument than Turkish Bashi-Bazouks.

The King and his family had taken refuge in the Assembly early in the day. After waiting to see how the cat would jump, the Girondist leaders proposed and carried a resolution suspending Louis from his functions, and ordering that a National Convention, elected by universal manhood suffrage, should meet to decide on the future Government of France. The oligarchic Constitution, in the phrase of Carlyle, was "burst in pieces." Lafayette, on hearing the news, deserted his army, and rode over the frontier with his staff, hoping to reach Holland. He was captured, however, by the Austrians, who, unable to forgive even so constitutional a reformer as Lafayette, threw him into prison, where he remained for some years.

ROBERT ARCH.

(To be continued.)

I deny altogether that idleness is an evil, or that it produces evil, and I am well aware why the interested are so bitter against idleness—namely, because it gives time for thought; and if men had time to think, their reign would come to an end. Idleness, that is, the absence of the necessity to work for subsistence—is a great good.—Richard Jefferies.

Correspondence.

"THE CREED OF NAPOLEON."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I read with interest the letter from Minnie Spencer in the *Freethinker* for January 28, regarding the creed of Napoleon. Like her, I looked in vain for his name in Wheeler's *Dictionary of Freethinkers*. As the point is of some interest, you will perhaps grant me space to quote the verdict of Mr. J. M. Robertson, in his unrivalled *History of Freethought*, vol. ii., 2nd ed., pp. 292-3:—

As he grew up he read, like his contemporaries, the French Deists of his time, and became a Deist like his fellows, recognizing that religions were human productions.....His language on the subject is irreconcilable with any real belief in the Christian Religion; he was "a Deist a la Voltaire," who recalled with tenderness his Catholic childhood, and who at death reverted to his first beliefs.

After discussing Napoleon's purely political motives in his actions regarding religion and the papacy, Mr. Robertson concludes that "he had, in fact, no disinterested love of truth," and that "Freethought can have no warm claim to such a ruler."

If, however, Bonaparte be really included in the current or some previous edition of Wheeler's *Dictionary*, it will be seen from the foregoing that the inclusion would not be without some justification. For Deism is a form of belief sufficiently attenuated, and sufficiently philosophical, as compared with the average religious creed, to merit the application to it of the term "Freethought"—at least, in the time of Napoleon, if not to-day. For Freethought is a relative term. Even the most anthropomorphic of Theists, if he developed his system independently in a tribe of totem-worshippers, would surely merit the name of Freethinker as truly as does the Atheist or Monist in the midst of a cultured society. H. TRUCKELL.

"AN END TO LYING."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In a recent issue of the *Freethinker* it was suggested by Romain Rolland that the above heading should be adopted as a motto for all writers during the coming year. If it was to be universally adopted, what would be the consequence? Such a revolution even the present War would be unable to compete with.

It reminds me of a play I saw many years ago, entitled "The Palace of Truth," wherein everybody was overpowered by some strange influence which compelled them to speak their minds freely and truthfully. The result can better be imagined than described.

If, in the first instance, this test or motto was to be adopted by the clergy of all denominations, would they be tolerated, or any longer allowed to draw their salaries of £15,000 a year downwards for propagating lies? And if the present European conflict is the direct outcome of two thousand years of Christianity, is it not time to put "an end to lying"? Or, are these miserable superstitions so ingrained in human nature that it is absolutely hopeless to try and eradicate them?

The latter question is suggested in consequence of the writer's experience in nearly all parts of the globe during the last twenty years. Most of the stay-at-home people of these islands appear to have some vague idea that all other races outside Europe are simply heathens, to whom they are in duty bound to send their missionaries to convert them.

If they could only see for themselves, as I have done, the effect of these missions, they would soon cease to squander their money and their time on such foolish and misguided efforts. How can they ever hope to eradicate the inborn superstitious beliefs of millions and millions of Asiatic coolies who never heard of Christianity or any other form of belief, and do not wish to? If ever there is to be "an end to lying," it must begin at home, and their own house must be first put in order.

Take as an instance that great country, China, where I have spent the greater part of the last twenty years. It is almost a sealed book to the great majority of the Western people;

but, believe me, it *does* contain some few intelligent people amongst its four hundred millions.

As an example of this, I was much impressed with what one of them wrote some twelve years ago as a criticism of our Western civilization, and which has turned out to be a wonderful prophecy in view of the present conflict in Europe. These are his words:—

Commercial intercourse between nations, it was supposed some fifty years ago, would inaugurate an era of peace; and there appear to be many among you who still cling to this belief. But never was belief more plainly contradicted by the facts. The competition for markets bids fair to be a more fruitful cause of war than was ever in the past the ambition of princes or the bigotry of priests. The peoples of Europe fling themselves, like hungry beasts of prey, on every yet unexploited quarter of the globe. Hitherto, they have confined their acts of spoliation to those whom they regard as outside their own pale. But always, while they divide the spoil, they watch one another with a jealous eye; and, sooner or later, when there is nothing left to divide, they will fall on one another. That is the real meaning of your armaments; you must devour or be devoured. And it is precisely these trade relations, which it was thought would knit you in the bonds of peace, which, by making every one of you cut-throat rivals of the others, have brought you within reasonable distance of a general war of extermination.

If, after this sample, your readers would care to have some more criticisms of their vaunted civilization from a Chinaman's point of view, I should be happy to oblige them.

W. WILMER.

CHASTISING THE DEITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Confined to bed with influenza, I made the hours of illness and convalescence pass more agreeably by reperusing the back numbers of your highly esteemed *Freethinker*. I thus came again across your excellent article, "Another Day of Intercession," in the last year's last issue. In that article, the passage referring to Central African savages thrashing their god for suffering them to be defeated, arrested my attention on this occasion. The passage ended with: "But this occurs only with savages." It is my impression that the European Christian savages are as prone to chastise their Deity for not granting them their prayers as are the Central African negroes. Instances of such proneness are by no means rare, and perhaps I may be allowed to mention a few of them that may interest your many readers.

The first that comes to my mind occurred in Italy before the Italians became a united nation; and, if my memory serves me right, I read a report of it in a foreign journal many years ago. A Neapolitan brigand-chief had decided upon an expedition involving robbery, violence, and probable murder. Whilst passing along a country road, he stopped before a wayside shrine containing a wooden image of Christ crucified, and kneeling before it fervently prayed for divine blessing upon his criminal scheme. He arose confident of success, but as the immortal poet has it: "The best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley"—and so it happened on that occasion. The local carabinieri had got wind of the brigand-chief's intentions, and frustrated them. They killed some of his men and caught others alive, but the chief escaped unhurt into the mountains. A short time after, a bullet was found embedded in the wooden image of Christ the escaped brigand had prayed to. Eventually he was caught, tried, convicted, and sentenced to the "pena capitale." Before dying, he confessed that it was he who had fired a bullet into the image of Christ out of revenge.

Another instance of a Christian's revenge upon his Deity occurred in that very Christian and religious country that calls itself Holy Russia, and was vouched to me by trustworthy Russians as genuine and true. It happened during the first half of the nineteenth century, when railways in the dominions of the Tsar were either few or non-existent, roads bad, postal arrangements primitive, and private letters opened and read by official censors. A landed proprietor wrote a confidential letter to a friend residing at a considerable distance beyond the intervening steppe-region, and wishing his letter to escape the lynx-eyes of the local censor, he entrusted the delivery of it to one of his own serfs. This

moujik, after walking some days, at last tired and footsore, reached the steppe-region. Here an idea suddenly occurred to him, and he forthwith brought out from his bosom a scapulary with a diminutive picture of St. Nicholas, the patron saint of Russia, better known and more prayed to by the lower classes than either the Almighty himself, Jesus Christ, or the Virgin Mary. He prayed to his portable icon for a friendly lift in a casual kibitka or any other conveyance. Not long after, it happened that a stud of horses was being driven across his path not a mile in front of him. One of the horses lagged some distance behind the main group, and thus came almost in touch with our tired pedestrian. The moujik at once saw in the equine apparition St. Nick's answer to his prayer, jumped on its bare back and galloped away as fast as his stick could persuade the horse to do. The steppe, however, was as flat as the proverbial pancake, so the men in charge of the stud were soon able to see the galloping thief. They pursued him, overtook him, bound his legs and arms, and, stretching him on the ground, delivered thirty energetic strokes with their nagaykas upon the back parts of his anatomy. Smarting with pain, the moujik brought St. Nick out again and, with rage in his eyes, shouted at him in his forcible vernacular, which can mildly be translated thus: "You abominable rascal! You unmitigated scoundrel! You contemptible cheat! You have played me a dirty trick, but I'll pay you back for it. If I am to continue my journey on foot, you will have to do so likewise." Saying this, he tied the tapes of the scapulary to his ankles and dragged St. Nick on the ground until he came in sight of his destination.

Another Christian savage did not scruple to cheat the same Deity, for, according to a Ukranian tradition, Ivan Ivanovitch, a poor Cossack, drowning in a rapid river, vowed to burn a dozen extra candles before the icon of St. Nick, hanging in the isba of his humble home, if the saint would only save him from a watery grave. He sank, but timely human help was at hand and the Cossack was rescued, brought to terra firma and restored to consciousness. Walking home, he said to himself: "St. Nick was a good fellow, and deserves the tallow dips; but as no one heard my vow, I'll not burn the candles, and will never bathe again."

B. F. B.

A Modern War Chant.

RALLY round the counters of the Y.M.C.A.
Gather round the counter, boys; quick, without delay.
Rally to the tea-urn, and to the buns and cake,
Remembering 'tis for God on High and his Son Jesus' sake.
See, the door is open wide; Ragtime calls you in.
Do not hesitate to buy; we know you've got the tin.
Tea and coffee, chocs and fags, also buns and blacking;
Free salvation for you all—nothing here is lacking.
You're going out to murder men, your brothers, over yonder.
We cheer you up with a penny cup, and trust you will not wander.
Our aim is Christianity; we know you never doubt it
Because we realize that you know nothing much about it.
So give three cheers for the great Y.M.C.A.
Rally round the counter, boys; quick, without delay.
Rally to the "Woodbines," and to the tea and cake,
Remembering 'tis for God on high and his Son Jesus' sake.

ARTHUR F. THORN.

In the recent explosion a mission church was destroyed, and another church had its windows blown out. Providence seems as careless of his churches as his children.

The dear *Daily News*, gushing on the Kaiser's birthday, says that "Wilhelm "in his own person represents the thing that is wrong with the world." And the Kaiser is a Christian and a monarch.

The Bishop of Willesden's appeal for drink prohibition was published in a number of papers. This publicity looks as if the Church is learning that sweet are the uses of advertisement.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.

INDOOR.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, off Kentish Town Road, N.W.): 7.30, Debate, "Secular Organization: Its Strength and Weakness." Introduced by C. E. Ratcliffe.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Avondale Hall, Landor Road, Clapham, S.W.): 7, Open Debate, "The Humanizing of the Schools—How to Attain It." Introduced by G. F. Holland.

MR. HOWELL SMITH'S DISCUSSION CLASS (N. S. S. Office, 62 Farringdon Street): Thursday, Feb. 15, at 7.30.

CAXTON HALL (Westminster): February 14, at 8, "Determinism," Mr. Shaller.

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Messrs. Saphin and Shaller; 3.15, Messrs. Kells and Dales, "Miracles"; 6.30, Messrs. Beale, Saphin, and Kells.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

ABERTILLERY (Tillery Institute): 6, Debate, "Has the Church Always Hindered Progress?" Negative, Miss Minnie Palmer; affirmative, Syd Jones.

LEICESTER (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, A. C. Brant, "Lafcadio Hern, the Japanese-Englishman Author."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N. S. S. (Clarion Cafe, 25 Cable Street); Chapman Cohen, 3, "The Place of Mind in Social Evolution"; 3, "Can We Have Morality Without Religion?"

WALSALL (Co-operative Hall, Bridge Street): 6.30, J. T. Lloyd, "Self-Reliance v. Trust in God."

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