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Views and Opinions.

The L.C.C. and Freedom of Propaganda.

Nearly a year ago we called attention to the attempt of the London County Council to seriously curtail the rights of propaganda in the parks and open spaces under its control. On May 30, 1916, a resolution was passed deciding to prohibit the sale of literature after September 30. The fixing of the date was in itself suspicious. If the literature sold was such as ought not to be permitted, or if the selling of it was a nuisance to people using the parks, the proper course would have been to stop it at once. But, with the meetings in full swing, this would have ensured a public outcry, and publicity was the last thing the reactionists on the Council desired. By postponing the enforcement of the order until the lecture season was practically over, it was, undoubtedly, hoped that the thing would have been accomplished without more than an ineffective grumble, particularly as public attention was absorbed by the War. This, we think, would have happened but for the publicity given the matter in the *Freethinker*. That exposed the plot. On the initiative of the N.S.S., a meeting of London societies was called, and the Rev. Stewart Headlam opened the fight in the Council itself. A protest committee was formed, of which Mr. F. Verinder is chairman, Miss Vance, secretary, and on which I represent the N.S.S. That committee consists of between thirty and forty London societies, including the London Trades Council with its very large membership. It has been at work right through the winter, and, with the opening of the lecture season, it will assume a more public activity. * * *

The Purpose Behind.

What was there behind the Council's attempt to prohibit the sale of literature in the parks? The avowed reason, the one given at the time the resolution was passed, was that there was no longer any necessity to permit it, as it could be bought elsewhere. There was no hint that those who had permission to sell abused that permission, or that there had been annoyance

to anyone in the selling. A more miserable excuse for an attempt to rob the public of a long standing right was never made. It imposed on no one. Those who voted for the resolution knew better, and those who voted against laughed at it. There is no doubt whatever, there is no room for doubt, that this prohibition was intended as a first step towards abolishing the meetings altogether. They have always been regarded with disfavour by some members of the L.C.C., and these thought that distraction of mind by the War offered a favourable opportunity for action. The prohibition was a first step. It is the literature to-day, it will be the meetings to-morrow. It is wiser and easier to resist reaction at the outset than to fight it when it has gained confidence through success and grown insolent through achievement. * * *

Forcing the Issue.

That is the view taken by the committee of protest, and it is one with which we heartily concur. Writing last year, we said that literature *would* be sold in the parks whether the Council agreed or not. In spite of a discussion on the Council, in spite of the arguments of a deputation it agreed to receive, the Council declined to budge. It would not even agree to postpone the whole matter until after the War. It probably felt it was a case of "now or never." Well, the result was that the sales went on as before. Literature was sold right through October and part of November. It was then dropped owing to the severe weather, which made outdoor meetings impossible. The names of a number of sellers were taken, and, in due course, Miss Vance was written by the Council's solicitor to the effect that literature had been sold at N.S.S. meetings in defiance of the Council's regulations, and that unless an "undertaking" was given not to repeat the offence proceedings would be instituted. Of course, the undertaking was *not* given, and no proceedings have been instituted. That is how the matter stands at the moment of writing. The Council has not withdrawn its prohibition, neither the N.S.S. nor the other societies associated have weakened in their determination to keep on selling. The commencement of the summer lecturing season once more brings the question to the front. If the Council, by its unjustifiable interference with a long standing public right, forces a public agitation, at a moment when such an agitation may be deprecated "in the interests of the War," it has only itself to blame. * * *

Step by Step.

Let us once more emphasize the real nature of the Council's action. The right to sell literature in the Council's parks has never yet been interfered with, save to the extent of requiring that copies of the things to be sold should be submitted to the Council for approval. And this, it will be observed, gave the Council the power to prohibit any literature which it thought unsuitable for sale. The literature could only be sold *at* the meetings, so that the general public could not be subjected to annoyance. This arrangement has worked with the

utmost smoothness for years. The Council's own officials report that there has been no complaint and no trouble. Why, then, interfere now? The only reason is the desire to ultimately prohibit meetings altogether. That, indeed, is the logical thing to do. To prohibit propaganda by literature and permit it by speech is ridiculous. What a man writes, he will usually exercise some care over; whereas a man may, on the spur of the moment, say things that are unwarranted, and even reprehensible. And we do not believe that the reactionists on the L.C.C. are so illogical as to willingly permit the one while they deny the other. The right of publication and the right of public meeting hang together. The Council is trying to prohibit one as a preliminary to forbidding the other.

* * *

A Call to Arms.

The issue, then, is once more before us. Had we not been at war, a County Council election might have convinced these reactionists that they had embarked on a dangerous course. But there are ways of influencing the members of the Council even between elections. And to this end we repeat our advice of last year. Let lovers of freedom write letters of protest to their L.C.C. members. Let societies everywhere follow the same plan. If these fail, well, the Council is a statutory body, and it may find that there are means of challenging the way in which it exercises its powers before another and a higher tribunal. Above all, we must show the Council that we are in earnest. *Literature will continue to be sold in the parks*, and if the Council is obdurate, people will be prosecuted, and we presume fined, for selling it. To that end we must organize our forces. It is useless having a score of sellers in one place and none in another. Let all who are willing to act as sellers of pamphlets while the struggle is on send their names in to the N.S.S. Secretary, who is also Secretary of the General Committee, saying when and where they are prepared to sell. The fight can then be conducted on effective lines, and we shall gain a maximum of result with a minimum of effort.

* * *

Worth Fighting For.

This is the second attempt made by the Council within five years to curtail freedom of propaganda. Knowing that many struggling societies depend upon collections to help meet expenses, it first issued a ukase that collections would no longer be permitted. This was resisted, and we won. The second attempt is now being made, and we think we shall win again if we only show ourselves determined enough. If we are told that this is not a time for internal public quarrels, the reply is that the quarrel has been forced upon us, and we cannot stand quietly by while our liberties are filched from us. Five millions of British soldiers are under arms for the purpose, we are told, of preserving our freedom. Well, let us remember that if they are fighting for our liberties abroad, it is our duty to defend their liberties at home. When they return, it should be to a homeland not less free than when they left. It would be the cruellest of satires to find that just when we are beating Prussianism in the field, we are quietly submitting to its establishment in the Council-chamber. There is nothing more difficult to gain than freedom; there is nothing easier to lose. In this case vigilance and courage will, we are sure, overcome the efforts of a handful of reactionaries clothed with temporary power. And we have no doubt we shall have a good public opinion behind us in the fight.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

A racehorse has been named Armageddon. Is this another proof of the promised revival of religion?

Christianity and the Symbolism of Factuality.

UNDER the above heading the Rev. F. E. Powell contributes a second article to this journal for March 15 in criticism of my friendly attack upon his theological views as originally expressed in a published sermon, entitled "The Father-Heart of God and the World-Agony of War"; but, with all due deference, I must say that instead of answering he ingeniously evades all the points raised in my article for March 25. In doing this he indulges in several curious charges against me. The first is that I "part company with known facts and speculate upon unverifiable assumptions" in expressing my acceptance of the scientific belief in the eternity and infinitude of the universe. I should like to have those known facts, from which I thus depart, enumerated and named, and I invite Mr. Powell to undertake the task. What facts are there, for example, against the eternity of Nature? Everybody admits that our solar system has had a beginning, and must of necessity come to an end; but we learn from astronomy that it was preceded and shall be succeeded by other solar systems; these come and go, but Nature stays on for ever. It is true that, in 1850, when *Social Statics* appeared, Spencer believed in creation, the argument from design, and the possibility of balking "the creative design" (pp. 81-88, 517); but, by 1862, when the first edition of *First Principles* came out, he had outgrown those views and come to teach the Indestructibility of Matter, which implies its eternity. Either a beginning or an end to matter was now philosophically inconceivable. As Mr. Powell persists in thrusting Spencer at me, I feel obliged metaphorically to pelt him with Spencer in return, for Spencer is decidedly on my side. He puts the case for the eternity of matter thus:—

Thought consists in the establishment of relations. There can be no relation established, and therefore no thought framed, when one of the related terms is absent from consciousness. Hence it is impossible to think of something becoming nothing, for the same reason that it is impossible to think of nothing becoming something—the reason, namely, that nothing cannot become an object of consciousness. The annihilation of Matter is unthinkable for the same reason that the creation of Matter is unthinkable (*First Principle*, p. 158).

Sir Oliver Lodge, also, is substantially sound on this point. He says:—

We may all fairly agree, I think, that whatever really and fundamentally *exists* must, so far as bare existence is concerned, be independent of time. It may go through many changes, and thus have a history; that is to say, must have definite time-relations, so far as its changes are concerned; but it can hardly be thought of as either going out of existence, or as coming into existence, at any given period, though it may completely change its form and accidents (*Life and Matter*, p. 101).

Spencer's very definition of Evolution involves the idea of the eternity of the universe in some form or other. The sum total of Matter never varies; but it is perpetually undergoing changes of form, and evolution, according to Spencer, is the name given to the whole series. What is evolution? Mr. Powell's Master answers: "Evolution under its most general aspect is the integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion." It may be simple or compound, but in essence it is always the process that creates history.

Again, are there any known facts which give the lie to the belief in the infiniteness of nature? The reader will notice that I did not say it can be *proved* that the universe is infinite in extent; but all the facts hitherto

discovered by astronomers point in the direction of its limitlessness. This is a legitimate assumption, because it rests, not upon mere speculation, but upon well-attested astronomical facts. Neither did I speculate in any direction upon that assumption, whether verifiable or unverifiable; I merely stated that I accepted it, and could discern no trace of an infinite and eternal energy above or apart from the force and energy within the universe known as natural laws. Mr. Powell does me a direct injustice when he accuses me of "dogmatizing" concerning the infinitude and eternity of the universe. With the utmost respect, I challenge him to point to a single dogmatic statement either in my review of his sermon or in my rejoinder to his reply. I am not in the habit of dogmatizing on subjects concerning which I know nothing; and the only fault I found with the reverend gentleman was, not that he cherished beliefs which I could not share, but that he offered such beliefs to the public as well established facts. My contention was and is, not that a person has no right to believe in "the Father-heart of God," if he can, but that the Father-heart of God is not an established fact. But I do affirm most unhesitatingly that the reverend gentleman is radically mistaken when he says that his belief was Spencer's.

It is altogether too funny to say of me that "whilst affecting Agnosticism concerning the origin and destiny of the vast world-process, I immediately blossom out into a full-fledged Gnostic who knows what is and is not consistent with the nature of the force underlying all phenomena." I have not made the least pretension to such wonderful knowledge. What I have said and do say is, that I have neither consciousness nor knowledge derived from observation of "the Infinite and Eternal Energy" which, to Mr. Powell, means the Father-heart of the God of Jesus Christ. I plead total ignorance of the two Gods, the one stern and the other loving, and of the two Fathers, the one of science and philosophy and the other of revelation and experience, whom the reverend gentleman believes in and preaches. The ultimate significance of the universe is beyond me altogether, and those who talk about it with such confidence do, in my judgment, but darken counsel "by words without knowledge."

Mr. Powell declares that "the supreme question is, not how far Spencer believed in the Infinite or Eternal Energy as apart from and of prior existence to the universe, but whether such an energy exists at all." To begin with, Spencer does not assert that *such* an energy does exist at all. Mr. Powell says that "we can only know of it by its effects"; but, I ask, are there any effects which directly or indirectly testify to the existence of an energy apart from and of prior existence to the universe? How can there be, when, to adopt Spencer's own words, "we can no longer contemplate the visible creation as having a definite beginning or end" (*First Principles*, p. 506)? "Science," says Mr. Powell, "is concerned with phenomena only." Spencer agrees with him, but significantly adds:—

Intellect being framed simply by and for converse with phenomena, involves us in nonsense when we try to use it for anything beyond phenomena. This inability of the thinking faculty in presence of the Unconditioned is shown not only by the self-contradictory nature of its *product*, but also by the arrest of its *process* before completion. In attempting to pass the limit it breaks down before it has finished its first step.

That extract is from the Postscript to Part I. of *First Principles*, written in the year 1899, in which he says further, that "it cannot be denied that to affirm of the Ultimate Reality that it is unknowable is, in a remote way, to assert some knowledge of it, and therefore

involves a contradiction." And yet he contends that, despite all contradictions and nonsensical attempts to think the unthinkable, there remains a consciousness of that Ultimate Reality, but, alas, "a consciousness which cannot be put into shape." Tens of thousands of people are without that shapeless consciousness, that illogical belief in the supernatural which cannot give an intelligible account of itself; and to them there is nothing outside, beyond, or above the universe. On this point Sir Ray Lankester writes as follows:—

One may regard the utmost possibilities of the results of human knowledge as the contents of a bracket, and place outside that bracket the factor x to represent those unknown and unknowable possibilities which the imagination of man is never wearied of suggesting. The factor x is the plaything of the metaphysician.....The self-appointed task of the metaphysician was not long ago compared by a keen thinker and great lawyer to that of "a blind man in a dark room hunting for a black cat which—is not there." The black cat which is not there is the reality represented by x . The search for it is surely not a very healthy occupation either for the blind man or for those who solemnly give attention to his accounts of his subtle devices and evergreen self-assurance (Preface to Hugh Elliot's *Modern Science and the Illusions of Professor Bergson*).

Now, as regards Spencer, it should be borne in mind that when *First Principles* appeared in 1862, he was under the spell of the philosophy of Sir William Hamilton as interpreted by Dean Mansel in his *Limits of Religious Thought*, a work from which he liberally quotes in Part I. Mansel's position was that it is contrary to reason to believe in the Unconditioned, the Absolute, or God, and that the Christian's faith rests, not upon reason, but upon the authority of the Bible as God's infallible Word. In the light of the Higher Criticism that position is no longer possible, except to members of the Bible League. Spencer maintains that thinking signifies relationing; but there is a limit to the power of relationing; and writing of it in 1899 this is what the distinguished philosopher says:—

The inevitable effect of our mental constitution is that on reaching the limit thought rushes out to form a new relation and cannot form it. A conflict hence arises between an effort to pass into the Unknowable and an inability to pass—a conflict which involves the inconsistency of feeling obliged to think something and being unable to think it (*First Principles*, p. 100).

One personal word may be allowed in conclusion. Towards Mr. Powell, though in sharp intellectual opposition to him, I entertain the friendliest possible feelings. I admire his great courage in so intrepidly championing views which are violently denounced by the overwhelming majority of theologians even in his own church. I wish to extend to him the right hand of cordial fellowship for venturing out in defence of those views into the columns of this journal. He occupies to-day the ground on which I stood, or tried hard to stand, for many years. I passed into it out of the narrowest and most bigoted Calvinistic orthodoxy; and, at last, after a long and painful struggle, I passed out of it into pure Humanism, in which I have found a home that satisfies at once my intellect and my heart. To me now the fatherly and brotherly heart is a product of social evolution; and, as Mr. Powell himself admits, evolution is an extremely slow process. Social welfare can be won only as the reward of persistent struggle, and there are times when the struggle seems futile; but our firm hope is that, in the long run, the fittest shall survive. J. T. LLOYD.

Bishop Brent says there is Prussianism in the Churches to-day. This is very sad news, for the clergy maintain that Prussianism means Atheism.

Mr. Kipling's New Book.

A Diversity of Creatures. By Rudyard Kipling. (Macmillan; 1917.)

SINCE Byron awoke one morning to find himself famous, few writers ever took the field with so instant and signal a success as Mr. Rudyard Kipling. Emphatic, impetuous, and audacious, he voiced contemporary passion and sentiment with no uncertain sound. Its possibilities and dangers were both mirrored in his stirring talent. First came the rumour of a new genius from the Orient, after the manner of creeds from time immemorial. Then *Plain Tales from the Hills* put many in an uncritical stage of admiration. *Soldiers Three* and *In Black and White* completed the conquest; and subsequent works in prose and verse caused the reading public, like Oliver Twist, to ask for more.

There has been, perhaps, a slackening of public interest in Mr. Kipling's works during later years, but the production of an *édition de luxe* of his writings—a rare compliment to a living author—met with so ready an appreciation that it augured well for the continuance of his fame. And Mr. Kipling's latest book, *A Diversity of Creatures*, is typical of his talent; but the prevailing impression left upon the reader is surely one of instability. The range of his subjects has widened, it is true, and the variety of his experience has increased, but there is far less sympathy and artistry, and his humour lacks the old, rich relish of former days. In a sense he may be said never to have entirely grown up. His youthful ideals are his ideals still, and they are voiced with the implacable accents of middle age. The sure touch of the true artist is so often changed for the rougher methods of the politician and propagandist.

This is particularly noticeable in his studies of abnormal phenomena, in which the neurotic element frequently approaches the "tommyrotic," such as the story of "Mary Postgate." She is a middle-aged companion to an elderly lady. The old lady has a nephew, whom the companion loves secretly. When the War breaks out, the lad joins the Flying Corps, and is killed by an accident before he goes to the Front. Mary stands by his open grave, and all the tenderness of which her womanhood was ever capable leaves her. Grief turns her into a monster, and she takes an awful vengeance on a wounded German.

Another story, "As Easy as A.B.C.," deals with the world in the year 2065, when mankind has got rid of war and democracy, and suffers only from fear of crowds. This story is vitiated by Mr. Kipling's sniffing contempt for his fellow-men. It will be seen that the gods of Mr. Kipling's youth are still the gods of his maturity, but sadly battered by the process of the years.

But Mr. Kipling's passions were always elemental, and he has given crude expression to his hatreds in some of the verses interspersed among the stories. The following lines embody his creed:—

Whatsoever, for any cause,
Seeketh to take or give,
Power above or beyond the Laws,
Suffer it not to live!
Holy State or Holy King—
Or Holy People's Will—
Have no truck with the senseless thing.
Order the guns and kill.

Happily, the book does not deal only with the sinister side of life. For Mr. Kipling has other facets to his talent, among which is a real sense of humour. Indeed, his earlier stories, such as "The Taking of Lungtugpen" and "The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney," recall the open-air humour of Marryatt and the high spirits of Fielding and Smollett. The comic satire, "The Village

that Voted the Earth Flat," is quite in the old irresponsible, boyish vein, and as funny as anything he has ever written. A country member of Parliament and magistrate sets traps for motorists, fines them heavily, and insults them from the Bench. Two of his victims happen to be a great music-hall proprietor and the owner of a hundred newspapers. They take their revenge, and lampoon him on the stage and in the press. They arrange for questions to be asked in Parliament, and invent a society advocating the Flat-Earth theory, and send it down to the village for its annual meeting. By bribery, the villagers are induced to vote that the earth is flat, and in the end the publicity given to the M.P. causes him to retire into private life amid a blaze of ridicule.

There is another comic story, "The Horse Marines," in which two opposing armies at manœuvres pelt each other with mangel-wurzels, and yet another of public-school life, introducing once again "Beetle," poking fun at masters and boys alike. The remainder of the stories give life and vigour to a lively collection, which, while it will not add much to Mr. Kipling's reputation, will yet give pleasure to his numerous readers.

Like Meissonier, Mr. Kipling always succeeds best on a small canvas. *The Light that Failed*, *Stalky & Co.*, and *Captains Courageous* were magnificent failures; but his short stories, at their best, are admirable. Despite his limitations, he is one of the most popular writers of the day. With Bret Harte, he presents us with infinite riches in a little room. The best of his work would hardly bulk more largely than one of the interminable novels of old Samuel Richardson, which used to draw tears from the eyes of our great-grandmothers. For readers of to-day like their sensations brief and pungent. Had Mr. Kipling's stories been told in the manner of the "penny dreadful," devoid alike of grace and grammar, we had yet read them with pleasure, so vital are they in essentials.

The most extraordinary thing about Mr. Kipling is his piety, which is constantly peeping out in his writing. The young men of the Tory press proudly acclaim him as the most religious writer since Dryden, and the Non-conformist journalists shake their heads and retort sorrowfully that he has no "soul." This, however, is the merest partizanship. Of all the gods created by men in their own likeness, the Anglo-Indian deity of Mr. Kipling is the most astonishing. For the piety is so often charged with politics, and the hymns are so often hymns of hate. But, fortunately, people read his books for his fun and fancy, and not for his theology. He helped to make India a reality to dwellers in the United Kingdom, which is no mean achievement. And he is a clever and entertaining artist.

MIMNERMUS.

Science and Spiritualism.

VIII.

(Continued from p. 262.)

We agree with Mr. Maskelyne that there is no use laying down a test for the spiritualists any more than for the clairvoyants. To begin with, they always object to it, and when the tests are rigidly enforced by men of a scientific cast of mind, the wonder-workers always fail. How often, for example, have the clairvoyants or ghost-seers been asked to read some document or tell the number of a bank-note carefully locked up, and always in vain? Sometimes they offer the excuse that spirits cannot, or will not, tell everything. Very likely, it is said, the shades do not care whether physiologists believe in them or not, and will not condescend to answer impertinent questions or to suffer cross-examination of a detective character. You must take what they tell you in the way they tell it to you. The spiritualists have never told us anything worth knowing, and, what is worse, they are in hopeless disagreement with one another. Will common sense

not teach people that, if there really were a channel of intercourse between the living and the dead, many a message would come from friends gone before, of serious and weighty import instead of trifles and ineptitudes which have a suspicious resemblance to echoes of the thoughts of the living.

—Dr. Ernest Hart, "The New Witchcraft," p. 164.

As for religion—why, I served it, sir!

I'll stick to that! With my *phenomena*

I laid the atheist sprawling on his back.

—Sludge, in Browning's "Sludge the Medium."

ALTHOUGH Home was never publicly exposed in the act of trickery, still there is no doubt that many must have seen through his tricks, or some of them; but, as we have pointed out, his peculiar position as an honoured guest placed him above the category of the ordinary professional medium. Mr. Podmore, in fact, mentions a letter written by a gentleman in 1889, "in which the writer relates that at a seance held in 1855 he saw plainly that the alleged 'spirit hands' were supported by and in obvious connection with Home's arms."¹ But as this was written thirty-four years after the event, it would not be fair to attach much weight to it.

It has also been stated that Browning, the poet, caught Home in the act of trickery. Browning denied this to Mr. Myers; but, nevertheless, he considered Home a trickster and a charlatan, disagreeing with his wife on this matter, who seems to have been converted by Home to a belief in Spiritualism, much to the Poet's distress. There is not the least doubt that Browning's scarifying *Sludge the Medium* was aimed at Home. Home himself, in a savage attack on Browning in *Incidents of My Life*,² declares, "Mr. Browning did intend his fancy portrait of Mr. Sludge to represent me," and tells of a violent scene that occurred between them a few days after Mr. and Mrs. Browning had attended one of Home's seances, Mrs. Browning, according to Home, taking sides with Home against her husband.

Another famous man who was very dissatisfied with Home and his phenomena was Dr. Barthez, Napoleon's physician, afterwards physician to the Prince Imperial.

In his recollections, entitled *The Empress Eugenie and her Circle*, there is a letter, written by himself from Biarritz, September 5, 1857, in which he describes a visit by Home to the Empress Eugenie, who had sent for him as soon as she knew Home was in the neighbourhood. Dr. Barthez observes: "The entire belief she has in him, the animation and violence with which she speaks of him, really distress me." Home's apparent ingenuousness did not impose on Dr. Barthez, who observes: "His simple, timid, half-awkward air seemed to me to conceal a very able *savoir-faire*."

The Doctor did not attend the first seance, but, being requested to remain to the second one, he joined the company round the table, upon which the company placed their hands. Immediately the table moved, raps were heard, there were scratching sounds right and left—whether the spirits were scratching themselves, and if so, why? is not stated—Her Majesty's dress was pulled; a handbell was taken from a gentleman's hand; an accordion, held by Home with one hand, played an air. All this took place under the table, and lasted a quarter of an hour. Then the spirit rapped out a message that there were too many present, and indicated those whose presence it did not desire. "I was among the number," says the Doctor; "the explanation of that being the incredulous smile which I felt was visible on my face."

Dr. Barthez declares to his friend that he is absolutely ignorant of the manner in which the phenomena were produced, but remarks that "inasmuch as everything has to take place under a table, out of sight, and as no one is allowed to look, feel, or examine; so long as I

am not allowed to use such means as I have at my disposal to obtain information and avoid error; so long as I am told that my incredulity hinders these manifestations from the other world; I shall say that I have a perfect right to disbelieve in spirits and to suspect the existence of very ordinary means, although these may escape me. In short, Mr. Home seemed to me to be a very able man, not only as a performer of tricks, but especially as a man who can command intelligences; but the spirits he evokes are not those of the other world; they are living intelligences that do his bidding."¹

However, Dr. Barthez did not remain long in ignorance as to Home's method of producing phenomena; for, in another letter to his friend, he throws light upon the subject. He says:—

It will amuse you to hear that one of the means by which Mr. Home evokes his spirits has at last been detected. The Empress is reduced to saying that the Home of to-day is not the Home of other days; that he has lost his power and is seeking to replace it by subterfuges. The matter is simple enough. Mr. Home has thin slippers, easily drawn on and off; he has also, I fancy, cuts in his socks, which leave his toes free. At the proper moment he throws off a slipper, and with his toes tugs at a dress here and there, rings a handbell, gives a rap on this side or that, and the thing once done, quickly slips his foot back into the slipper again. This was seen by M. Morio, who drew up a full signed and written statement, with all the details necessary to establish the genuineness of his discovery. Home saw that he was found out, and I can tell you he cut a very sorry figure. He went out, saying he was ill, and all night he had nervous attacks and visions, and has been surrounded by spirits. Finally, as he was judged to be on the point of death, a priest was sent for, and a doctor.

The next day, death seeming still to be imminent, Dr. Bartley was sent for, and continues:—

He pitched a long tale about his sufferings, the spirits that tormented him, and so forth. Unhappily he had the most natural pulse imaginable. Then he pretended to go into a trance; his eyes turned up and became fixed; evidently the spirits were returning, and about to torment him again. So I took him by the arm, shook it rather roughly, and said in his ear, "Come, Mr. Home, no nonsense; let all the spirits be; you know I don't believe in them." The trance ceased at that, and he looked me straight in the face, and saw plainly enough that I was laughing at him; and the spirits immediately flew away.....I even drew up a statement which I gave to M. Morio de l'île to add to his account. The evocation of spirits at the villa has suddenly ceased, and we will hope this unworthy charlatan is revealed in his true colours. But Her Majesty cannot admit that anyone could have the face to play tricks on herself and the Emperor for a whole year.²

The signed and attested statement of M. Morio ought to be published, if it has not been destroyed in deference to imperial wishes. It is certain that Home would have been exposed upon this occasion but for the fact that the presence of the Empress prevented the exposers from causing a scene. That is where Home had the advantage over the ordinary medium; his position as a member of society on an equal footing with his patrons protected him.

We can see by this account of Dr. Barthez how Home did some of his unaccountable tricks. He could use his feet as a substitute for his hands. We know that this is quite possible if the feet are trained fairly early in life; and, as we have seen, Home commenced mediumship in his teens. I can remember, when a lad, hearing

¹ Podmore, *Modern Spiritualism*, vol. ii., p. 230.

² Second Series (1872), p. 98.

¹ Dr. E. Barthez, *The Empress Eugenie and her Circle* (1912), pp. 139-142.

² Barthez, *The Empress Eugenie and her Circle* (1912), pp. 164-5-6.

my father say that he saw an armless painter in Antwerp Cathedral painting pictures, holding the brush with his toes. The unshod peoples of warmer climates are much more proficient in using their toes than those whose feet have been cramped by boots. Eusapia Palladino, as we shall see, used her feet to produce "phenomena" in exactly the same way; and as her parents were Italian peasants, probably she went unshod in early life.

(To be continued.) W. MANN.

American Churches and the War.

IGNORING as of none effect the dictum of their Prince of Peace that they who take the sword shall perish by the same instrumentality, the New York Federation of Christian Churches has endorsed by a vote of 158 to 52 the universal military service which men of violence propose, and recommend the most extreme measures necessary. The vote by Churches stood:—

	FOR.	AGAINST.
Baptist	16	1
Congregational	10	0
Disciples of Christ	3	0
Seventh Day Adventists	1	1
Protestant Episcopal	27	3
Reformed Episcopal	0	1
Evangelical Association	1	2
Society of Friends	0	2
German Evangelical Synod	0	1
Lutheran... ..	14	7
Methodist Episcopal	23	4
Primitive Methodist	1	0
Moravian	4	1
Presbyterian	27	20
Reformed	19	3
Unitarian	1	0
Universalist	1	2
Union Protestant	10	4

It required the 20 negative votes of the Presbyterian communion to prevent the Churches from going 5 to 1 for the sword. The *Public*, which holds that Christianity has "received a blow in the house of its supposed friends," observes that sixty years ago the Federation of Churches would have voted thus affirmatively for black slavery. The record for belligerency that the Church is making now will not give it any hesitancy, after peace shall have been established permanently by Humanitarianism, in claiming that it abolished war.—*Truthseeker* (New York).

Correspondence.

ATHEISM IN THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I am obliged to Mr. Robert Arch for his reply to my defence of Hebert, which calls for further comment. May I say at the outset that the "case against Hebert," as originally drawn up by Robert Arch, K.C., on behalf, it would seem, of the *Society of Bourgeois Respectability* and the *Guild of Serious Humour*, contained nothing whatever about Hebert's "dishonesty," nor the question of his taking the wrong "political" road? Therefore, I respectfully submit to my learned brother for the prosecution that I am only concerned with the original indictment under which I accepted a brief for the defence. This latter charged the defendant Hebert, the editor of the *Pere Duchene*—a "disreputable paper," we are told—with being a "gutter journalist," "not worthy of respect," since he used the "vilest slang of the gutter" at the expense of "dignity and decency."

Now, I submit, my Lord (Mr. Editor), and I think that the gentlemen of the jury (the readers of the *Freethinker*) will agree, that the prosecuting counsel has not substantiated his case against Hebert. All we have been told is that he can-

not produce the actual incriminating document against Hebert, but that the indictment was framed upon the testimony of a person named Aulard, who gave a few specimens of the language used by Hebert. But this, I insist, is not evidence; and, mark you, the prosecution does not even say what Aulard says that Hebert says! At the same time, I am willing to agree that this Aulard is certainly a most reliable witness; and as the prosecution begs the court to give particular attention to this witness, I will go so far as to admit him.

Yet, strange to say, this witness does not help the prosecution an *iota*. In no place does this Aulard condemn Hebert's journalism as "vile," "indecent," or "disreputable." On the contrary, we are told that Hebert is a "prudent" writer, though possibly for another reason. But I do know of another person further out of court from a point of view of "evidence" than Aulard, and I refer to his English translator, who has taken it upon himself to vilify Hebert, as he does Thomas Paine, in the most outrageous manner. I submit, though I hope I am mistaken, that Mr. Arch may have been influenced by this unscrupulous person.

However, it is upon the *excerpts* (a few seeds from a granary, though by no means a specimen of the harvest) from the *Pere Duchene*, as quoted by the original witness Aulard, that Mr. Arch bases his indictment. These *excerpts* I have since looked into, and I can assure every right-minded person that, even when translated into colloquial English, they would probably leave a Methodist mothers' meeting unmoved. Yet Mr. Arch insists that if the *Freethinker* were to "habitually" use "some" of the phrases "customary" with Hebert (Mr. Arch refers possibly to other than those given by Aulard), it would be prosecuted by the police as "obscene." Of course, if we must go to the police for an opinion upon "obscenity," nothing further need be said. The truth is, that the "customary" phrases with Hebert are such as those I have already quoted. I have a distinct recollection of their nature, as I once made a comparative study between Hebert and his imitator in the Paris Commune of 1871—Eugene Vermesch, who also edited a *Pere Duchene*. As to "some" phrases, but not "habitual" with Hebert, which Mr. Arch, or at least I might say the police, might call "obscene," we must bear in mind that the open and free mind of the Gallic race is totally at variance with the cramped and narrow notions of the Anglo-Saxon race to which Mr. Arch, the police, and myself belong. May I recall, in conclusion, the incident of H. M. Stanley and the Arab sheik? Stanley was abashed at the sheik's ideas on wives, and the Arab was equally scandalized at Stanley drinking coffee! Surely nothing further need be said.

H. GEORGE FARMER.

RELIGION IN THE ARMY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Referring to the interesting letter of Mr. Arthur Chapman, in your issue of April 22, and his experiences, I should like to point out that they were the result of ignorant junior officials in the Army. The War Office has explicitly laid down that a recruit, either at his attestation, or on any subsequent occasion, is not to be heckled in any manner whatever, but that his answers are to be entered accurately in the document that is being dealt with. Here is the official notification on the subject:—

ARMY COUNCIL INSTRUCTION.

No. 179 of January, 1916.

War Office, 21st January, 1916.

179. Religious denomination of a Recruit on attestation.

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

In this connection attention is drawn to W.O. letters 27/Gen. No./2514 (Chaplains), of 23rd Nov., 1914, and 27/Gen. No./4279 (Chaplains), of 30th June, 1915, and all

Officers and N.C.Os. are reminded that whenever it may be necessary to obtain information as to a soldier's religion, as for the completion of his identity disc, etc., his own statement on the point should be taken without any attempt to influence him, and should be acted on without question. 27/Gen. No/5063 (A.G. 2B).
By Command of the Army Council.

It would be well if any Freethinker, likely to be associated with the military, cut the above out, and produced it when necessary.

E. B.

Acid Drops.

Mr. H. G. Wells has created a very uneasy feeling, to quote our alleged democratic newspapers, by a letter to the *Times* advocating the formation of Republican societies in Great Britain. Mr. Wells explains that he intended the subject to be discussed quite apart from the question of our own monarchy—which reads as though he were writing with his tongue in his cheek. Republican societies in this country could hardly discuss the subject without reference to our own monarchy, although it might well be done without reflection upon the present occupant of the throne. Others denounce Mr. Wells, not because Republicanism is wrong in principle—that could hardly be done in the face of recent events—but because they say we are already a Republic—a Crowned Republic. Any phrase will do so long as it sounds well.

Of course, there is no need to attack the personal character of the present occupant of the British throne, or to attack the personal character of any monarch, in order to discuss the respective merits of Republicanism and Monarchy. A change in the form of Government may be advocated at any time without the least reference to the character of anybody. All the same, the discussion has hitherto shown the small amount of clear thinking people bring to bear upon political or social issues. For the essential issue is, not whether the monarchy in its present form is good or bad, but whether it is democratic. And the complaint of rational democracy is that it is hereditary. If the people elected the head of the country, it would not make the least difference whether he were called President, King, or Emperor, or by any other title. But an hereditary monarchy, carrying with it a hereditary aristocracy, is anti-democratic, whether it be a good or a bad thing. And it is a pity that this simple issue cannot be kept clearly before the public.

The Mohammedan priests are very like other ecclesiastics. In view of the adverse military position of the Turks, the priests have carried off the treasures of the famous temple at Medina, which are said to be worth millions. Apparently, Allah is as powerless as all other deities in face of military force.

A brass tablet is to be placed in St. Matthew's Church, Ealing, in memory of the late Rev. H. C. Douglass, who died while celebrating Holy Communion. Had he been a Secularist who had died whilst lecturing, there would have been an edifying moral.

St. George's Day was almost forgotten this year, owing to the strenuous times in which we live. Perhaps it is as well, for this Cappadocian bishop was originally a fraudulent contractor who made big war-profits by providing the Roman Army with bad bacon. This saintly sinner was made patron of England by Henry V., and "St. George for Merry England" was long a battle-cry. Now England is no longer merry, perhaps we can dispense with the saint?

The North Leith United Free Church is periodically treated to a lengthy letter from its pastor, the Rev. Hugh Alexander, who is with the Y.M.C.A. in France, and the letter is faithfully reproduced *in extenso* in a local paper appropriately named the *Leith Burghs Pilot*. In the course of a recent letter this sky pilot says:—

The other day I took the Bible Class, and had for my subject, "Is Prayer Answered?" It was a most memorable meeting. Each man recounted his experience on the subject

—how God has answered his prayer. One man told how he was sent from one line of trenches to another. He had seen comrade after comrade shot down by the enemy, and when his turn came round he engaged in silent prayer, asking God to spare him for the sake of his loved ones at home. Not a shot was fired at him, and when his comrades asked him why he had so miraculously escaped, he replied, "It is in answer to my prayer."

What a soldier! And what a God! Week by week, for years and years, the latter was prayed to in innumerable churches to "Send peace in our time, oh, Lord!" but it did not restrain him from permitting the horror of the present conflict, and the blasting in the flower of their manhood of thousands and thousands of fine young lives. What about *their* loved ones? Will all the members of Mr. Alexander's congregation swallow the ineffable rubbish he pens from France?

Clerical psychology is a fearful and wonderful thing. Mr. Alexander says that "What saves our faith from disaster is the assurance that in the world to-day God is suffering on that account most of all; and this War means for God Himself sorrow and anguish. Such is the very message of the Cross, a God who suffered for the sins of men, and a God who still suffers for the sins of men. It is worth while being a preacher in these days to proclaim such a Gospel." Echo answers: "Such a Gospel!" It is, therefore, only in sorrow, suffering, and gloom that God is a reality! Brightness, cheerfulness, and mirth are *taken* in the presence of this lachrymose old deity. But all his weeping is not going to save *Him*. According to Christian teaching, he *could* have prevented this War and did not raise his little finger to do so. By his silence and indifference he has consigned millions of human beings to untold miseries. It is the sins of God and not the sins of men that require expiation. If we weigh the "sins" of men against the sufferings, physical and mental, which are imposed upon them, we shall find that the latter far outweighs the former. And the only "sins" that men can be guilty of are offences against nature, and nature, by her inevitable law of cause and effect, alone imposes the punishment. We commend this view of life to the apparently guileless Mr. Alexander.

In the House of Lords, on April 24, the Marquis of Crewe, objecting to the War Office exercising authority over the press, said: "The habit of authority grew upon those who exercised it, and he easily foresaw that at the close of the War all manner of reasons might be advanced for continuing the powers conferred by the Defence of the Realm Acts." We commend this semi-prophecy to those who so lightly view the surrender of civil liberties because it is "for the period of the War only." It is always easier to lose liberties than to regain them.

At last we have a really genuine case of faith-healing. And it is given in the *South Wales Echo*. Selina Hicks, aged ten, of Cadoxton, was diagnosed to be suffering from tuberculosis of the knee. Her knee was placed in plaster of paris, and she was advised to be sent to a home in Hampshire. Some time after she said to her mother, "Take me out of the chair; I can walk. Jesus tells me in my heart I can do so." And when the mother took off the splints, the child could walk. And the child, who "had been fond of reading the Bible," said, "Jesus has cured me." That settles it.

Many people have complained of the nuisance of church bells, particularly since the War has brought home so many nerve-shattered men, to whom quiet is a vital consideration. Mr. Newman, a Manchester solicitor, has offered, through the columns of the *Cambridge Magazine*, to give £5 towards a fund to test the right to ring church bells in defiance of the wishes of near-by residents. It is really astonishing that whereas the calling of newsboys disturbs the day of rest, the ringing of church bells and the blaring of Salvation Army bands is held to conduce to its restfulness.

We see that the prohibition on Mr. Zangwill's play, "The Melting Pot," has been withdrawn. It was disallowed because it depicted the sufferings undergone by the Jewish

people in Russia at the hands of the late Government—and the Church. Now that the play is permitted, we wonder whether Mr. Zangwill will be permitted by the Press Bureau to publish the suppressed chapter—"The Story of the Steam Roller"—which should have appeared in his book "The War for the World." —

At Forest Hill a woman was sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment for telling fortunes. Yet 50,000 ministers, who tell people where they will spend eternity, are never molested. —

The Rev. H. S. McClelland, of Glasgow, tells us that on his way to the south, recently, he found himself in a railway compartment with three fellow-travellers, "each of them typical, in his own way," of many of his Correspondents in the *Christian Commonwealth*. "One was an Atheist; that, at any rate, was what he called himself"; but before they reached the end of the journey Mr. McClelland had shown him that the creed he held deserved a better name than Atheism. This is a story with which we are perfectly familiar, and which we are bound to characterize as essentially false. That is to say, either the Atheist was in no sense "typical," or Mr. McClelland was entirely mistaken in thinking that he had won him over to any form of Theism. —

Our contention is that in Mr. McClelland's article, entitled "Talking Theology," in the *Christian Commonwealth* for April 25, there is no argument for Theism which a fairly enlightened Atheist would have had the slightest difficulty in triumphantly rebutting. The reverend gentleman's argument was thus stated:—

The love of the ideal, the very possession of an ideal, is only possible to personality. How comes it, then, that Humanity possesses that which you say cannot be found in the Supreme Power from whom Humanity came? The less cannot produce the greater.

No intelligent Atheist believes in the existence of "a Supreme Power from whom Humanity came," or that the possession of an ideal is any indication whatsoever that it has had a supernatural origin. To him all we are and have is the outcome of the evolutionary process. Ideals are social assets gradually acquired during countless æons of social experience. Mr. McClelland may be a very clever man; but he does not even understand the Atheistic position. —

From a purely religious point of view, Dr. Horton is amply justified in opposing Sunday labour, even as a means of preventing future starvation, because the permission of Sunday labour for any purpose whatever would be the effectual beginning of the end of Puritanical Sabbatarianism. Dr. Horton, being fully aware of this, does his utmost to oppose the introduction of the thin end of a wedge which he knows would rob Nonconformist ministers, in particular, of the congregations upon which they depend for their livelihoods. This, too, explains the divergence of views between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Hampstead Congregational divine. —

The snobbish reverence for authority affected by many people is something that helps their self-interest. Dependence upon God and an everlasting dread of what people will think are the marks of the helpless parasite who has no imagination, and who so long as he can find something to feed on will conform to any system or state of society. —

Religious folk have a perfect genius for misrepresentation. The *Daily Telegraph* says the War "is veritably a crusade undertaken on behalf of the fundamental claims of the Christian faith." We do not think that the soldiers of "Infidel France" would agree to this assertion. —

An evening paper has made a sensation with stories of German corpse-burning, and prints a message stating that the Pope is terribly upset. Yet Catholics are taught to believe in the resurrection of the body, and in the dogma of hell-fire.

Many newspapers made eloquent references to the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in America on the occasion of the service at St. Paul's Cathedral, held to commemorate the entry of the United States into the War. This recalls Ingersoll's jest that it was a pity that, instead of the pilgrims landing on Plymouth Rock, the Rock had not landed on the Pilgrim Fathers. —

In his sermon at St. Paul's Cathedral, Bishop Brent emphasized the spirit of democratic liberty which has always inspired the American Commonwealth. He forgot to mention, however, that this "spirit of democratic liberty" stops at the colour line, and that white Christians are very prone to kick coloured brethren under the coat-tails. —

The Rev. Thomas Phillips, of Bloomsbury Chapel, though a zealous advocate of the immoral doctrine of the Atonement, admits that it is supremely difficult to bring it home to the modern mind. The truth is that the modern mind, realizing its true character, rejects it as at once dishonouring to any respectable God, and humiliating to man. Mr. Phillips admits, further, that the Pulpit cannot win the modern mind until the Cross of Christ breaks its heart, which means that the Pulpit's day is practically gone—gone for ever. —

Speaking at the recent Baptist Union meetings, Dr. Selbie, Principal of Mansfield College, declared that unless a revival came soon, the Church was doomed; "that they would either win great triumphs for the Gospel during the next twenty-five years, or, humanly speaking, they would go under." What stubborn things facts are; they force even clergymen to tell the truth about their own prospects—*sometimes*. —

Mr. Hamilton Fyfe writes in the *Daily Mail* of April 25 that "chief among the agencies for the spread of sympathy with the German is the Church" in Spain. This is very magnanimous of the Spanish Church seeing that, as our own clerics inform us, Germany has renounced Christianity and become a nation of Atheists. —

Mr. Fyfe also says that the parties which are for better education, for elections fairly managed, for honesty among officials, and for an enlightened national policy, oppose the Church as their obstinate foe. He adds that: "For the Atheism which prevails among so many of the educated and progressive in Spain the clergy are responsible." The essence of the statement is that Atheism in Spain stands for enlightenment and progress. But it would never have done to have told the readers of the *Daily Mail* the truth in that way. —

God has always been useful, if not necessary and indispensable, to the powers that be in every land. The fear of God has been cunningly described as "the beginning of wisdom," whereas it is really something entirely different. It is a means by which the common people are kept in ignorance and in subjection to their "betters," and it is the chief pillar of autocracy and despotism. The names of wealthy people and high Government officials are always appearing as patrons of God and his ambassadors on earth. —

We are reminded of this on observing the circulars of a touting agency called the Evangelization of India Society, or a similar name. Three British Lords have their names printed on these circulars as patrons of the Society. These three Lords are all servants of the British Empire holding high posts with large salaries! Must not our Mohammedan fellow-subjects marvel at our politeness? It is surprising that English noblemen should lend their authority to such impudent sectarianism as is manifested by this precious evangelization society. They might also reflect that total detachment from missionary schemes of the kind would better consort with the dignity of their positions, seeing that the British Empire contains only a small minority of Christians—a minority too unimportant to stop the opium traffic in India.

About Ourselves.

WE have received a number of complaints lately from readers who find it impossible to get their *Freethinker* regularly, or get it only after considerable trouble. We know of no justifiable reason why this should be the case. Some have solved the difficulty by subscribing for it by post, others have pressed their newsagents until they did get it. But this is very annoying, and naturally, has a tendency to do us injury. Will readers please, therefore, note that the *Freethinker* is supplied to all newspaper agents at the usual trade terms, and on sale or return. No order has been issued by the Board of Trade prohibiting the return of unsold copies, and we have not, therefore, departed from our usual system.

It is very difficult to counter the bigotry that seeks to injure us by reporting the paper "out of print," or by inventing some other excuse, and we earnestly beg the assistance of our friends in this matter.

Just now it is more important than ever that our sales should be, if possible, more than maintained. The cost of production is ever on the increase, and only those who are behind the scenes can appreciate the constant labour and anxiety of keeping a journal like the *Freethinker* alive in these times. We feel ourselves justified in asking Freethinkers to be on the alert to help their paper whenever opportunity offers. They can do this by inducing their newsagent to display an extra copy, by calling the attention of their non-subscribing friends to its existence, or by sending a copy wherever they think it is likely to be appreciated. We will send it ourselves if the addresses are forwarded.

If only a fourth of our present readers were to gain us one new subscriber each, our troubles, on the financial side, would be about at an end. That is not an impossible achievement, and we believe it could be realized if our readers worked with a will in the matter. We are doing our best, and working our hardest at this end, and that encourages us to ask for the assistance of those who are as interested as we are in seeing that neither the bigotry nor the indolence of newsagents stands in the way of the *Freethinker* reaching the largest possible public.

To Correspondents.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—May 6, South Place Institute, South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C.

I. IZKOWITZ.—We have read your letter with great interest. You have evidently passed through a rather trying experience, and we congratulate you on having achieved mental serenity at the end. The paper is being forwarded.

W. ROSCHER.—Your subscription has been handed to the N. S. S. Secretary. We wish all Freethinkers were of your opinion that it is almost a crime not to join the N. S. S. We have no knowledge of the "Ten Commandments for Freethinkers"; it never reached us. If you will write the N. S. S. Secretary, she will be able to suggest the best way for the disposal of your back numbers.

J. BENTON writes to thank us for the copies of the *Freethinker* sent him to Egypt.

HUMANITARIAN.—We quite appreciate the difficulties of your position. In such a situation, everyone must help the cause in the way that seems best, and we have no doubt that you are doing your part.

NORWICH.—Will come in as a useful anecdote for some purposes.

H. T. PHILLIPS.—Pleased to have the good wishes of a regular reader. We are not surprised to learn that you greatly value your acquaintanceship with our contributor, Mr. A. F. Thorn. If that, and the War, have converted you from a passive to an active advocate of Freethought, it has, at least, done that amount of good.

W. GREGORY.—It is useless inserting notice of a meeting on May 3 in a paper dated May 6. Your card is evidently a week late.

H. MAINS.—Our opinion of Haeckel's work as a Freethinker has not been changed in the least by his attitude towards the War. Why should it be? His intense patriotism cannot affect the quality of his pre-war work as a scientist, any more than, say, the quality of Darwin's work would have been affected had he attempted to assassinate Queen Victoria.

F. DOWNATON (Wigan).—We shall be pleased to hand Mr. Underwood any communication that reaches this office.

L. COTTAM.—We do not think the *Nation* ever said that our soldiers were found wanting, whatever criticism may have been directed against their leaders and the Government. The corrective for ill-informed newspaper writing is a well-informed public. In any case, the suppression of papers by officials is a dangerous practice. By the way, you are mistaken in saying that Marshal Haig complained of the article. The Government has stated that this is not the case.

E. GREENWOOD.—Crowded out this week.

T. PATTERSON.—Your communication received and contents noted. We have for some years adopted the plan of sending specimen copies of the *Freethinker* to addresses furnished by our readers.

F. HOBDAV.—P.O. received. Pamphlets are being sent.

E. J. PEARCE.—Received. Many thanks.

The Secular Society, Limited, office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

The National Secular Society's office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

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. 4 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. 4.

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4, 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.

Mr. Cohen opened the course of lectures at South Place Sunday evening last, and the meeting was in every way a success. There was a fine attendance, the lecturer was in excellent form, and the meeting was *alive* from start to finish. Mr. Collette Jones presided, and discharged his duties as chairman with dignity and efficiency.

The lecturer to-day (May 6) is Mr. Lloyd. His subject is "Humanism Versus Christianity," and in his hands it is bound to be an interesting topic. We hope that London Freethinkers are doing their best to make these meetings known. Mr. Lloyd's meeting offers an excellent opportunity for inducing Christians to attend. We hope that many will avail themselves of it.

Whit-Sunday is approaching, and with it the National Secular Society's Annual Conference. The Conference Agenda will appear in our next issue, and there is just time for Branches to send any resolutions they have for discussion. The Conference this year will be held under difficult circumstances, but we hope that Branches will do their best to send delegates, and that individual members in goodly numbers will find it possible to attend. Those provincial friends who intend visiting London on Whit-Sunday, and would like accommodation found for them, should write Miss Vance without delay, stating requirements. She will do her best to see they are "fixed" up as comfortably as is possible.

Mr. E. A. Cave, B.A., Headmaster of the Boys' High School, Harrow, writes in the *Daily News* very appreciatively of the educational work of Mr. F. J. Gould. Such a helper, Mr. Cave says, "deserves a State pension of £200 a year

for life." We quite agree; but we are certain that he won't get it.

One of our lady readers sends us the following concerning her brother—a member of the Canadian contingent now in France:—

My brother and I are members of a family reared in the Protestant faith. I was the first to break away from the Church after my marriage, four and a half years ago. Once firmly convinced of the truth and justice of Freethought, I have never lost an opportunity of trying to impress others, with more or less success, as occasion offered. While my brother was on leave, prior to his departure for France, nearly twelve months ago, he stayed with us a couple of days. My husband and I talked to him on the subject of Freethought, and aroused his interest. I tried to keep it alive in my letters to him, and a few months ago I asked him if he would like me to send him the *Freethinker*. He replied, "Yes." I then wrote to you and asked you to send him a few copies. You did so, but when no more came he wrote and told me they all missed it very much, and would I send him some more. I immediately placed an order for an extra copy, and have sent it to him regularly ever since, and shall continue to do so. In his letters he has repeatedly told me that not only himself but others as well were coming round more and more to our way of thinking.

I hope the following quotation will justify the foregoing remarks:

"Just received your welcome letter, also *Freethinker*, which I welcome, as I am very interested in it now. I guess I am getting round a lot to your way of thinking; a fellow can't help it out here with the sights he sees, and I can assure you I am not the only one by a good many.

"I had a good laugh the other night; we were talking about the War ending when one fellow said: 'I wish Jesus Christ would just drop down on to No Man's Land, and hold up his hands and say, 'Stop this!' Another chap made reply: 'If he did, he would damn soon get a blighty.' It raised a good laugh. Well, Flo, I can tell you the fellows don't place much faith in God when they are going in the trenches or over the top, it's always 'Well, we are off again, wonder what luck this time.' So I am afraid the Churches will have very few attendants out of the returned soldiers after the War."

I am pleased to be able to tell you that he has come safely through the latest fighting.

A correspondent points out, *apropos* of our remarks in a recent issue concerning the way in which the notices of the Holyoake centenary ignored his being an Atheist, that *Lloyd's Newspaper* duly chronicled his "anti-religious" opinions, and also the fact of his imprisonment for blasphemy.

We have received the following resolution from the Newcastle Branch of the N. S. S. which was passed at a public meeting:—

That this meeting of Newcastle Secularists and Ratepayers strongly protest against the Newcastle Education Committee's agreement to engage ministers of religion as teachers in State schools, believing that the interests of the country and education would be better served by withdrawing the teachers from the Army and reinstating them as required, and thus obviate giving a false air of importance to an unnecessarily privileged class. We, therefore, urge the Education Committee to use their best efforts to secure the return of the teachers.

The Humanitarian League holds its Annual Meeting at the Caxton Hall on Wednesday, May 9, at 7.30. Sir George Greenwood occupies the chair, and there will be several speakers. We feel sure that many of our readers will be interested in the work of a Society which deserves well of all who appreciate unselfish labour in a worthy cause.

REALIZING HIS OWN IMPORTANCE.

Louis is the only boy, not only in the immediate family, but also in the collateral branches. One night, at his nurse's knee, he said his prayers aloud:—

Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die—

Pausing, he reflected a moment, and then broke out: "Golly! Wouldn't there be a row in this family if that 'u'd happen."
—*Harper's Magazine*, February, 1917.

Woman and Christianity.

IT would be difficult to point to a time when life in general was happier, and the character of men and women set in more noble forms, than as depicted in the pages of the Greek poet Homer, who lived 1000 B.C. Like all great poets, he does not hold woman's nature in light esteem. Penelope bears up for twenty long years of faithful life, awaiting the return from his travels of her husband, Ulysses. Nausicaa, the daughter of King Alcinous, is playing ball with other maidens, when the slimy and naked Ulysses is cast upon her father's coast. She is the perfect conception of female modesty, and meets the situation with an exquisite naturalness and courtesy which could only have been bred in a society of highly cultivated men and women. Andromache behaves with all the natural tenderness of a modern wife and mother. In Homer, we have the Caucasian woman advanced to a fairly high point in the path of her progress. Women are as capable of heroic virtue as men were, and the ideal of this heroism is one to which we have scarcely added. There is no trace of any mental seraglio system. The ladies appear in society naturally and gracefully.

It is true that an undercurrent of antipathy to woman is observable in the later Greek poets. But we get the heroic love of Alcestis, voluntarily dying that her husband might live; the filial piety of Antigone; the majestic grandeur of the death of Polyxena; the more subdued and saintly resignation of Iphigenia, excusing, with her last breath, the father who had condemned her.

As regards ancient Rome, the historian Lecky says:—

Monogamy was, from the earliest times, strictly enjoined, and it was one of the greatest benefits that have resulted from the expansion of Roman power, that it made this type dominant in Europe. In the legends of early Rome we have ample evidence of the high moral estimate of women and of their prominence in Roman life. The tragedies of Lucretia and of Virginia display a delicacy of honour, a sense of the supreme excellence of unsullied purity, which no Christian nation could surpass (*History of European Morals*).

It is quite realized that, generally speaking, woman never reached her highest and purest selfhood in Greece and Rome; but the condition of the courtesan in the ancient world compares favourably with that of the armies of prostitutes in the Christian cities of Europe.

According to Christian apologists, woman owes her position in the modern world, such as it is, to Jesus of Nazareth. The Bishop of London describes Christianity as woman's best friend. Other bishops assure women that Jesus Christ was the first to respect them, and represent the Christian attitude towards women as an advance on all previous attitudes. But the truth is that all the progress women have made in the Western world has been in spite of the Church. Woman has only really come into her own in any sense during the last hundred years or so. Whilst she lay bound for nearly twenty centuries of Christendom under a few New Testament texts, two Freethinkers—Mary Woolstonecraft and J. S. Mill—came to her rescue. Harriet Martineau, another pioneer of the Woman Movement, was outside the Church, and to day there are hundreds of freedom-loving women without religious beliefs.

Certain texts in the Old and New Testaments have been constantly employed to hedge women round. Women writers from time to time have written the story of the degradation of their sex in Christian Europe, and it is the object of this article to assist other women readers of the *Freethinker* in clearness of vision with regard to the arrogant assertion of the modern Churches on the subject of women.

There is nothing in the Gospel Jesus which can be construed as a factor for promoting the individuality or the social power of woman, making her a force in human progress. The nominal founder of the Church was neither a lover, a husband, nor a father. His kingdom was not of this world, and he utters nothing new upon the relations between the sexes. The oft-quoted Matthew v. 28 was already the ethic of the contemporary Jewish leaders like Rabbi Hillel. The Talmud says: "He who regards men and women with an impure intention has already, as it were, committed adultery." Again: "In every act, it is above all the thought, the intention, which he will judge." Romantic love appears in ancient Greece about 400 B.C., and, like science, art, and philosophy, is entirely absent from the New Testament. The first Christists were too intent upon getting to heaven to worry about any of the problems of earth. Of the few passages showing Jesus' attitude towards women, take Luke ii. 49. Here he appears to have anticipated G. B. Shaw's dictum that children are useful to shock their parents and keep them up-to-date. By playing truant at the age of twelve, he caused his parents much anxiety in searching for him, and coldly replies to his mother's agonized reproach, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing," with "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?" When a man claims to be God Almighty, one would expect him to behave with superhuman tenderness towards his earthly mother, setting an example of chivalrous devotion for all time to succeeding generations. According to the legend, he was pedantic enough to instruct the wise men of his age; but he makes no allowances for the solicitude of his loving, distracted mother, thereby falling below the level of normal humane feeling. His manners did not improve with age. At the marriage feast at Cana (John ii. 4), in response to his mother's statement that there is no wine, his churlish reply is, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" No man worthy of the name would have answered his mother in such a way. Yet, with the inconsistency to be expected of a legendary narrative, Jesus nevertheless performs the desired miracle, to prove his thaumaturgic power as a God. Later on (Matt. xii. 46), his mother, standing on the edge of the crowd to whom he is speaking, sends a message saying she wishes to speak to him, but receives the callous answer, "Who is my mother?" His example has given warrant for the behaviour of thousands of Christian saints through the centuries who have deserted their earthly duties as fathers, mothers, and citizens in order to devote themselves exclusively to the selfish salvation of their souls. Jesus did not disdain feminine society, but knew how to exploit women for his own ends, as his followers have done up to the present hour. In Luke viii. 2-3 we find him followed about the country by women, who ministered to him of their substance, and he resented any attempt to divert their activities into more useful channels (Luke x. 41; John xii. 6). But though Jesus graciously accepted the ministrations of the women, it is evident that he regarded them as inferior beings, whose touch was unclean. After his crucifixion, he says to Mary Magdalene, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father" (John xx. 17), while it is recorded in the same chapter that he invited Thomas Didymus to "Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side."

At the cross he apparently softens towards the mother who bore him, and graciously confides her to the care of John, who "took her unto his own home," and, we trust, treated her with more filial respect than her own son had given her.

For other references to Jesus' teaching regarding sexual

relationships, see Matt. v. 27-32 and Matt. x. 34-38, which poison the sources from which all human life and happiness spring. In the private life of the family, the secret of public welfare is reposed. The foregoing extracts show that Jesus left no word of encouragement, enlightenment, or guidance for women; yet pious women through the ages have turned him into a fetish, and endowed him with qualities for which there is not the slightest evidence in the Gospel narratives.

When we come to study the character of Paul as revealed in the Epistles bearing his name, we get more clearly defined views of woman than the scanty sayings attributed to the mythical Carpenter of Nazareth. This peevish monogynistic gentleman has no insight into the essentially feminine soul. He appears to have no idea of the refined feelings which a true woman brings to love and marriage, or of the mental and moral stimulus which one sex can have upon the other in a decently civilized community. There is no charter for woman's freedom in the preposterous nonsense of the chapter 1 Cor. 7. Here, again, we see faith is a malignant principle, separating those whom reason and love would join together. This is inspired teaching—the fruits of the Holy Spirit. It is noteworthy that most religions are drawn up by men for men, and that women are expected to accept them with all the passivity of children, who cannot think or frame a trustworthy ideal of their own. Men, seeing the difference between their ideal and their actual, have created priesthoods to keep the ideal before their minds; but what woman has any need of Paul's teaching? In the mother nature there is no war between her flesh and her spirit, that obsession harped upon in the Epistle to the Romans. Only an ancient priesthood, fighting for its existence in a continually evolving society, could dare to claim, in the face of Paul's plain utterances, that Christianity has elevated woman and bestowed freedom and holiness on the begetting of human life. Seeing that, after twenty Christian centuries, women are beginning to think for themselves once more, the Christian Church must claim that the Woman Movement was contained in the teachings of the New Testament, only somehow it has not been detected heretofore. The truth is that the so-called inspired writers could not rise above the level of the communities in which they lived, and were not even cognizant of the high position which women had partially attained in Greece and Rome. They wrote for the lower classes among the socially and politically disinherited communities of the Eastern Mediterranean world in the period of the Roman decline, people credulous to the extreme, and without any pretence to scientific or philosophic culture.

As with Jesus, so with Paul, it is a hallucination for woman to think that the Epistles throw any light on the psychology of woman, or provide her with a spur or incentive for making the world a happier and better home for himself, or her husband, or her children. "I know that in me—that is, in my flesh—dwelleth no good thing," says Paul, in Romans vii. 18. All that is born into the world of man and woman is sinful, under God's anger and curse, condemned to death. All men born of a father and mother are children of wrath by nature, as Paul testifies in Epistles to the Ephesians ii. Theories of original sin and total depravity are foreign to the woman-nature. For the mother, her body is full of sweet and holy mysteries, and there is no war between the flesh and the spirit. According to Paul, marriage is only a reluctantly adopted safety valve for sensuality (1 Cor. vii.). The mystery of original sin is the mystery of sexual desire. Sex life was then condemned as unclean, and supreme virtue imputed to the celibate. The churching of women after childbirth is a survival of this superstition. However much Paul may appeal to men,

a woman has no part or lot in his pathological condition, and can only see in his serio-comic views of womanhood the choicest specimen in all literature of masculine vanity, impudence, and profound conceit. "But she is happier, if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also I have the spirit of God" (1 Cor. vii. 40). Paul does not agree with Thoreau that "for him to whom sex is impure, there are no flowers in Nature."

The Fathers of the Church were not slow to follow Paul's lead, and the priestly literature of the Dark Ages teems with abuse and condemnation of woman. A sentence taken from Chrysostom will suffice to illustrate this: "What is woman but an enemy of friendship, an unavoidable punishment, a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable affliction, a constantly flowing source of tears, a wicked work of nature covered with a shining varnish?"

For the aberrations of the Christian clergy under the influence of the ascetic doctrines of the New Testament, see the work of a Christian writer, *The History of Sacerdotal Celibacy*, by H. C. Lea. It is a history of the sufferings and slavery of women as nuns and concubines, of confessional scandals and solicitations. For the brutal details of the questions which the confessor was required to ask of his penitents, female as well as male, see Burchard's *Decretorum*, lib. xix., c. v. I dare not give even a specimen.

FRANCES IVOR.

(To be continued.)

The Monarch of Cereals.

VI.

(Continued from p. 268.)

THE growing wheat plant is preyed upon by about one hundred species of insects, while fifty others infest the granary. In America the Hessian fly is an undesirable alien. It is an ancient pest in Europe, Asia, and Northern Africa, and the exasperating insect derives its name from the alleged fact that it was introduced into New England in straw conveyed to that region by the Hessian troops sent over by George III. to vanquish the insurgent Americans who shook off British supremacy. This destructive fly is now widely distributed in Canada, and, since 1888, it has invaded New Zealand. The female insect deposits from 100 to 300 eggs in the plant blades, and the reproductive season continues through the summer. The fly is a deadly foe to the developing cereal, and the average annual injury inflicted in America amounts to more than 50,000,000 bushels. In several seasons it has ruined half the crops, and, in some instances, it has occasioned utter failure. In 1900 the Hessian fly played havoc with the American wheat when the damage throughout the States totalled 100,000,000 dollars, while the loss inflicted in 1901 in Ontario was very serious. Systematic and concerted action among the wheat raisers is the only practical remedy for the depredations of the insect.

The chinch bug is another parasite which flourishes in various lands, and, owing to its immense rate of reproduction, appears to be increasing in destructiveness in some areas. Insect enemies of wheat are comparatively rare near the Pacific coast, and this is attributed to the custom of burning the straw over the grain fields every year. The hibernating insects are thus destroyed. Other checks to the chinch bug are the useful insectivorous birds, and several fungus diseases ravage the parasite.

The wheat midge, plant lice, and locusts are all troublesome pests; but the latter, which in the past, at times, swept entire territories bare of vegetation, are

now usually kept under control. But in Canada, as late as 1901, a plague of locusts invaded the land, and, even now in parts of Montana, they frequently destroy every available form of plant life. Other pests penalise the wheat grower, and the combined ravages of all the various insects injurious to the cereal may be safely estimated at 20 per cent. of the crop. The total annual loss to the wheat raisers in the States alone has been put at 100 million dollars. Nor is the ordeal ended with the gathering of the grain, for weevils, worms, moths, and beetles infest the stored wheat, and a further 10 per cent. loss is occasioned to the grain and flour. This makes a total damage of 30 per cent. to the growing and garnered cereal.

Farmers can insure against given risks to their crops. Insurance societies cover the crops for a small premium against the risks of storms and conflagrations. Insurance against hailstorms was known in Scotland in 1780, while there existed twenty mutual and five stock hail insurance companies in Germany in 1888. Barrau made a fruitless attempt to establish a system of insurance against hail in France in 1801. Quite naturally he was accused of profanity in presuming to tamper with the designs of Providence. The Government officials obstructed him, and, in 1809, the Council of State decreed his society illegal, thus bringing the progressive Barrau to ruin. By 1823, however, public sentiment had become sufficiently enlightened to permit the founding of permanent hail insurance in France. Austria, England, and America followed the example thus set, and this useful system is steadily extending wherever the crops are liable to serious damage from wind or storm.

Wheat being essential to civilized humanity's sustenance, and its price, in company with that of other necessities of life, being subject to supply and demand, a subtle and complex system has arisen which enables speculators of several grades to profit by the temporary fluctuations in the exchange value of the commodity. The operators who manipulate the great grain markets have at their disposal the latest resources of scientific communication. Unlike the local producer, whose decisions are determined by his ordinary information when he sells his grain or waits for an advance in price, the modern expert, who operates on a giant scale, receives prompt telegraphic intelligence regarding wheat from every quarter of the globe. He notes the overdue monsoon in India; he hears of the crop prospects in Minnesota and Dakota; of the early arrival of grain from the Southern Hemisphere in London; of the rise or fall of freights; of the risks which attend war, with the scores of other details which assist him in his capacity as dealer or speculator in the food supply of mankind.

The wheat speculator has attained his highest position in the States. The Chicago wheat-pit is probably the most celebrated institution in which men gamble with the world's bread stuffs. And much as the betting system depends for its stability on the comparative honesty of the racing fraternity as a whole, so, among the wheat speculators, a high standard of integrity is maintained. This is not because the brokers and others are any better than people in general, but simply because it would spell disaster were the manipulators dishonest among themselves. As a shrewd writer has observed:—

Any quantity of wheat can be bought on the floor of the Chicago Exchange by a sign, a nod, or a shout, or by a scrawl on a trading card. Either party to the deal could easily claim that the sign had not been noticed or understood, and the contention could not be disproven, nor could the contract be enforced before any court in the land. Considering the great confusion and excitement of the pit, the ease and rapidity with which fortunes are often made and lost, and the many opportunities and

temptations for dishonest dealings, it is certainly an exceptional record that the Chicago Board of Trade finds it necessary to expel, on an average, only five members a year.

The evils of speculation may assume international proportions when manipulators secure sufficient of the year's wheat to dictate terms to the market. The "corner" is an ancient institution, and the legend of the prescient, if modest, Joseph may contain some basis of fact. Piles of money have been gained and lost by modern cornerers. Hutchinson operated successfully in the 'sixties: but Lyon, who copied his methods, was ruined in 1872. In 1887, a group of "bulls," who seemed anxious to screen their identity from the vulgar gaze, were eagerly engaged in cornering wheat. Rumour had it that this clique was composed of several smart millionaires and their special friends. The battle which raged between the clique and the wheat interests ended in the rout of the former. The immaculate E. L. Harper was found among the fallen. Harper was charged with robbing the bank of which he was vice-president, and "the last chapter of the corner was written in 1906, when the United States Circuit Court rendered a verdict against Harper for \$5,280,333 in favour of the receiver of the Cincinnati Bank."

More nefarious in some respects was the notorious corner of 1897-98. The cornerer, Joseph Leiter, picked out a period when the world's wheat harvests were much below the average, and at a time when the United States held the bulk of the export crop. The plan of this American Joseph was to completely control this corn and compel the European consumer to purchase at his price. The campaign was conducted on a colossal scale, but the elevator or great granary companies fought him relentlessly, and their leader, the astute Philip Armour, by almost superhuman efforts, loaded Leiter with wheat as fast as he could pay for it. The cornerer amassed enormous stores of grain, and for a time monopolized the market. Prices rose, and the European loaf became dear, so dear that the costliness of bread led to riots and bloodshed in Italy, and much misery elsewhere. During his period of supremacy Leiter is said to have netted profits to the tune of \$5,000,000, but he was unable to maintain his monopoly, and the corner smashed. All the millions he had wrung from the toil and sufferings of the poor he lost, with millions besides. Professor Emery contends that owing to the scarcity of wheat, prices would have soared in any case, and that it was to the world's advantage to realize the truth that at any time the general wheat supply might fall far short of the public needs. If this was the lesson to be learnt from Leiter's nearly successful manipulation, it was disregarded by the world. There are also solid reasons for the statement that in 1896 the then Russian Government submitted to the United States a scheme for promoting an international corner in wheat. The American authorities gave no countenance to the proposal, which was based upon the theory that the Russian Empire and the Western Republic would hold sufficient wheat for consumption within their own borders, while foreign States would be compelled to purchase grain at the price demanded by the surplus-holding countries.

The milling of wheat, like everything else, is a matter of evolution. Primitive man ground his grain with his teeth, but more satisfactory methods were slowly devised for milling. Hand stones for pounding acorns, nuts, and grain date back to the Old Stone Age. The stone mortar and pestle came later, and the crushing of corn was succeeded by grinding between two stones. From the ancient "saddle" stone device were evolved all subsequent forms of milling-stones. The extinct civilizations of Babylon, Assyria, and Egypt utilized these rugged

mills, and the prehistoric Swiss pile-dwellers likewise employed them. Even in Imperial Rome corn was commonly ground by hand between stone slabs. In Homer's day the Greeks, like other early races, allowed the labour of corn-grinding to devolve upon the women, and a large proportion of the population devoted their labouring hours to preparing flour. With the growth of society milling became a distinct and highly respected occupation, and the merry miller, his mill, and his men, were commemorated in song and story among all the cereal-eating nations of the earth. Water-mills have existed in Western Europe from traditional times, but in some lands the windmill seems to have preceded the old stream machines. England treasured both, but the windmill was the greater favourite, and several existed in our island by the year 1200. The steam-mill was first used in England in 1784.

In contemporary milling three basic processes are indispensable. The grain must be spotlessly clean, and free from foreign seeds and other impurities. Then it must be tempered, and water or steam, or both combined, are applied for this purpose. Then comes the milling itself, and the wheat berry is ruptured so that the bran may be easily eliminated from the white interior which forms the flour of commerce. An immense mill is that of the Pillsbury Washburn Company of Minneapolis. This mill's average production is now about 17,000 barrels of flour per day. Ten years ago the mills of Minneapolis prepared a total of 90,000 barrels daily. The tremendous advance of the milling industry is vividly shown "when it is remembered that the first crude mill of the ancients could not produce over three bushels of partly ground meal in one day. Later, the Greeks ground from five to ten bushels of meal per day."

And there has also been a constant increase in the quantity of flour milled from each bushel of wheat. Prior to 1860 the annual output of flour in the Minneapolis mills was 60,000 barrels, but at the close of the nineteenth century their yearly milling yielded some 15,000,000 barrels. Budapest remained the premier milling centre until 1890, when the Hungarian capital was eclipsed by Minneapolis. The Hungarian flour is of very superior quality, and commands a better price than the finest American product. The English miller bears, and doubtless deserves, an excellent reputation, and Liverpool is one of the world's milling cities. The miller's trade has revived in Holland, and other countries are making progress in this important industry.

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

A Voice in the Wilderness.

The Dangers of Half-Preparedness. By Norman Angell. Putnam's Sons. 2s. 6d. net.

EITHER by implication or by direct avowal, Mr. Angell makes in this essay what we cannot but regard as a questionable, if not dangerous, assumption. He assumes that, because military preparedness in Germany has not led to peace there, therefore it will not lead to peace elsewhere, that because the dominance of a militant ideal has had evil effects in Germany, therefore it will have a like influence elsewhere; that because "My country, right or wrong," is bad in Germany, therefore it is bad elsewhere; that because the erection of the idea of the State as superior to all the dictates of the individual conscience is an evil in Germany, therefore it will be an evil elsewhere. In other words, Mr. Angell assumes that like causes produce like effects, and, although that is an axiom in science, it is an unsafe inference in sociology—in war time. It is a patriotic duty to assume that the German psychology is fundamentally different

from the psychology of the Allies. Indeed, we think that a case might be made out—in the *Daily Mail* or in *John Bull*—to establish the proposition that even those biological laws which apply to the Allies do not apply to the Germanic peoples.

If we overlook this fundamental flaw in Mr. Angell's essay, the rest of it is perfectly clear, as are all this author's writings, and might even be called unanswerable—if we were not at War. The larger part of the world is at war, and the rest is thinking of joining in. Those that are not at war are preparing for war, and before even the present conflict began there was the mania for "preparedness" of the Great Powers. Now, Mr. Angell does not denounce "Preparedness," on the contrary, he professes a belief in it. What he does not believe in is "Half-Preparedness"—that is the notion that peace can be maintained by each nation becoming stronger than the other one—which, when one looks at it, does seem a little odd. So he argues that the real preparedness is to—over and above the massing of men, and munitions, and ships—include in our preparedness for war a clear statement intelligible to the whole world of what it is we want, what it is we are willing to grant other nations, and what it is we are prepared to back up with all the physical force at our disposal. If men will suffer for their country, and work for their country, and die for their country, Mr. Angell calls upon them to take final steps in the scale of hardships and *think* for their country. Prepare for war by knowing exactly what it is your country stands for, and when *you* know, see that the whole world knows it, and also let it know that you are prepared to fight for those things to the last gasp.

That is the central idea of Mr. Angell's essay. In ordinary times we should say that its logic was impeccable, and its reasoning unanswerable. And we might have added that Mr. Angell has provided as powerful an indictment of pure militarism as has been written. But, as it is, we can only say that he has written a dangerous work. He asks people to pause and think what they are fighting about, and to make clear to the other party what they are fighting for. Could anything be more absurd?

CRITICUS.

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.

SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C.):
7, J. T. Lloyd, "Humanism *versus* Christianity."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 6.15, a Lecture.

FINSBURY PARK N. S. S.: 11.15, Miss K. B. Kough, "Liberty According to the L.C.C."

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley Road): 7, Mr. Burke, "In Search of the Kingdom of Heaven."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill): 3.15, Miss K. B. Kough, "Liberty According to the L.C.C."

REGENT'S PARK N. S. S.: 3.15, H. V. Storey, a Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15, G. Rule, a Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station):
7, Howell Smith, a Lecture.

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