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## CONTENTS.

	Page.
<i>The Origin of Parsons.—The Editor</i>	513
<i>Is Life Worth Living?—J. T. Lloyd</i>	514
<i>The Charm of Marcus Aurelius.—Minnermus</i>	515
<i>The Rise and Progress of Mental Power.—T. F. Palmer</i>	516
<i>Palmistry and Priestcraft.—J. Effel</i>	518
<i>Acid Drops</i>	519
<i>To Correspondents</i>	521
<i>Sugar Plums</i>	521
<i>Science, Telepathy, and Communion with the Dead.</i>	
—W. Mann	522
<i>Shameless Inconsistency!—T. Shore</i>	523
<i>Glen Beauty.—Robert Moreland</i>	524
<i>Letters to the Editor—Socialists, Freethought, and Religion, 525; Christianity and Colour Conceit</i>	525
<i>On Seeing Princetown Church.—Percy Ripley</i>	526
<i>"To any Clergyman in England."—C. W. B.</i>	526
<i>Notice of Meetings</i>	526

## Views and Opinions.

### The Origin of Parsons.

In an age saturated with the philosophy of evolution, we are all more or less interested in the question of origins. And rightly so. Our best teachers have taught us that, as all history is evolution, so all evolution is history. It is in studying how things came to be *what* they are that we understand *why* they are what they are. This being so, and it being the holiday season, when busy people make a little leisure, we venture to propound a problem that has given us much thought. What is the Origin of Parsons? Are they born, or are they made? We use the term "parson" in its generic sense as embracing all varieties, Catholic and Protestant, High and Low Church, Established or Dissenting, and would even extend the term so as to embrace local preachers, who are, so to speak, parsons in embryo, and may thus form a kind of missing link that will help to bridge the gulf between a parson proper and a normal human being. \* \* \*

### Congenital or Acquired?

We propound this question with all seriousness. Are parsons like poets? Are they born, or made? Are the parsonic qualities congenital or are they acquired? Books on natural history give us little help. The study of a whole species appears to have been overlooked. Not wholly so, perhaps, because anyone with a taste for symbolism who has watched a crowd of penguins must have noticed how suggestive they are of a conclave of parsons. Their colouring, so suggestive of a parson in full war-paint; the gravity with which they sit contemplating nothing in particular; their activity at feeding-time, and their fight for the poor eel, so reminiscent of the struggle between Church and Chapel for the control of the child. There is, also, a curious suggestiveness about the description of a penguin—"body elliptical, head small, bill moderately long, tail short." True, only modesty would describe their *bill* as moderately long. Their *tale* is certainly shorter than it used to be, intel-

ligence is demonstrably small, and if we take "body" as the equivalent of parsonic reasoning, there is no denying its elliptical character. Apart from this, natural history helps but little. Literature is equally indecisive. Montaigne does discourse about religion in a chapter "On Cripples," but Oliver Wendell Holmes suggests there is a religious microbe, which would point to parsons being made, not born. Anthropologists derive all existing varieties of parsons from a species that made its appearance about the time of palæolithic man, and explain their present existence as an example of the "persistence of type"; but, against this, parsons protest that they are really without ancestry. They simply began to be—were called into existence by a power of which we know nothing. *Pro* and *con.* seems about equally balanced here. \* \* \*

### The Case for Congenitalism.

Let us try and sum up the reasons on the one side and on the other. We will take first the thesis that parsonic qualities are congenital. And it must be noted that the function of the clergy is, in its way, unique. Every other organism known to science is related to a known environment. But the parson is not related to anything we know. He is not here to give reliable information, to inform people about things that can be otherwise discovered. His function is a heavenly one. It has no earthly use. The sole reason for his being is the existence of another world—a world of which nothing is known, of which in all probability nothing can be known, and of which he certainly knows no more than anyone else. We have an organism *minus* an environment. Then consider the qualities manifested by a parson—so peculiar that one of their own order placed the clergy in a separate sex. A parson *knows* that his career has been selected, just as the career of a boot-maker or a miner is chosen. Yet he *believes* that he has been specially called to it by God. He *believes* that prayer will save the sick, although he *knows* that in the absence of medical attention or native vigour, recovery is impossible. He *believes* a number of stories which for sheer improbability outrival Munchausen, although he *knows* they are not true. And it is argued that this capacity for knowing one thing to be true and believing the opposite proves the existence of an innate quality not possessed by ordinary human beings. \* \* \*

### Per Contra.

Those who believe to the contrary admit all the facts above stated, but place on them a quite different construction. They rest their case on the cumulative effects of habit and education. Sydney Smith's classification of "men, women, and clergymen," they put on one side as a piece of mere pleasantry. They admit that parsons are *now* different from ordinary human beings in their view of truth and of other matters, but they claim that this difference may be explained as the result of the two factors just named. They argue that if we take two children, as equal as we can get them, and subject them to a widely different training, the results will be widely

different also. If we train the one to take nothing for granted, to suspend judgment where the evidence is inconclusive, to observe, to analyze, to classify, and to compare, we shall evolve a scientific type of individual. He may not be a Newton, or a Darwin, but he will have a scientific cast of mind. But if we take the other, cram him with doctrines and dogmas that have no conceivable relation to present day knowledge, teach him that rational enquiry is the greatest of crimes and blind credulity the noblest of virtues, teach him to regard those who differ from him as either criminals or lunatics, train him on history specially written to conceal the truth, and on science with special interpretations to conceal its meaning, and then keep him for years repeating formulæ devoid of meaning to himself or to his hearers; do all these things, they say, and you will have created all the qualities that go to make the typical parson.

\* \* \*

#### The Power of Self-deception.

There are also additional arguments worthy of note. There is the influence of self-interest and the power of self-deception. So long as men of mediocre intellect find a living waiting for them in the Churches, so long there will be no lack of applicants. Five hundred a year for preaching a doctrine is, to many, five hundred reasons in favour of its truth. It is an illustration of the pious rule: "Prove all things and hold fast to that which pays." It is not alone in the law courts that a counsel argues his brief. And self-interest is first cousin to self-deception. With many people, wishing a thing were true is a long step towards finding it true. And with a much larger number still, if the same thing is repeated often enough, a kind of belief is inevitable. Many parsons are, unquestionably, in this state. They are not exactly hypocrites, they believe their own stories as the outcome of sheer repetition. And many who commence by deluding others end by deluding themselves. Thus, while we have one party explaining the existence of parsons as due to some inherited quality slowly evolved during generations of growth, we have others who point to self-interest, to habit, to education, to unconscious self-deception as completely covering the ground.

\* \* \*

#### A Rudimentary Structure.

There are strong arguments on both sides, and it is to be hoped that the question will receive greater attention in the near future. For there is no denying its importance. It is no small matter to have in the community a body of people, many thousands strong, with their origin unknown, their function unsettled, their utility doubtful. Probably a careful enquiry would disclose the fact that the parson stands in the same relation to the community that the rudimentary tail does to the human organism. In the latter case we have a structure which points to an earlier type of life from which the present man has evolved. So in the case of the parson, it may be found that he also is a rudimentary structure in the body politic. He may be reminiscent of the time when man crawled on the earth fearful of those imaginary powers he believed determined his destiny. The parson, in the form of the magician or witch doctor, may then have performed what people believed to have been a useful function. To-day he is a mere survival, a rudimentary organ of the body politic. As a piece of natural history he is interesting, as a part of civilized society he is an anachronism.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## Is Life Worth Living?

THE love of life is an instinct common to all living things. Consciously or unconsciously the state or condition known as life shrinks from the state or condition known as death. What it is to be alive is, as yet, an unsolved mystery, though not necessarily insoluble, all we know being that the very idea of being dead is instinctively disagreeable. Of course, it does not follow that this instinctive clinging to life is any indication that life possesses intrinsic value of any sort. The question so frequently asked, Is life worth living? is really meaningless, because we have not an authoritative definition either of life or of worth. It is utterly impossible to determine life's worth when we do not know what life is. To the theologian alone is the mystery of existence easily soluble; but it so happens that his solution only intensifies the mystery. The Shorter Catechism assures us that "man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever"; but everybody who thinks at all is aware that, even according to the Church's own teaching, God is an unknown being; or, in the words of the Athanasian Creeds, "the Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible." Now, can anybody inform us how we can glorify and enjoy an incomprehensible Deity? The Catechism's definition of the chief end of man is thus seen to be but a darkening of counsel "by words without knowledge." You cannot solve one mystery by the introduction of another and greater mystery, as the theologian endeavours to do.

One who signs himself "Lay Preacher" asks Professor David Smith, in the *British Weekly* for August 9, to expound the text, "The candle of the wicked shall be put out" (Prov. xxiv. 20). "Lay Preacher" has a Bible class of young men, to whom he attempts to interpret the Scriptures; but that passage baffles him completely, and the commentaries render him no aid whatever. The statement is most emphatic, and the natural inference from it is that death ends all for the wicked. Dr. Smith treats it thus:—

The best commentary on Scripture is the Scripture itself. It frequently illuminates a passage when another passage is laid beside it, and the passage which connects itself in my mind with this of yours is Prov. iv. 18: "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

He then calls attention to the fact that our English Bible is "merely a translation," and that "the shining light" would be more accurately rendered "the light of dawn." The following passage explains itself:—

The idea is that the life of the righteous is like the day; the light breaks dimly, but it deepens and broadens until it attains the full radiance of the glorious noontide. This is his comfort. He may be compassed with shadows, but he knows that they will disperse; the clouds will lift, and by and by he will see the blue sky and the light of God's face. The perfect day is the glory of Heaven, "the Shadowless Land behind the light of the setting sun."

The righteous is thus immortal, and it is immortality alone that makes his life worth living. Now comes the contrast:—

"There will be no future to the evil man; the lamp of the wicked shall be put out," in contrast to the experience of the righteous man, whose path is as "the light of dawn, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

We are now in possession of Dr. Smith's philosophy of life, which is that life is worth living only to those whose interests are in eternity. What eternity means we are not told, but love and purity are represented as

"eternal possessions." Does Dr. Smith verily believe that a man of the world is destitute of love and purity, that he cannot rise to the highest forms of goodness and nobility? He admits that "the light of a man's life is what he sets his heart on and finds his gladness in." It inevitably follows that "a worldly man is one who sets his heart on worldly things and finds in these his gladness." The Professor goes a step further and allows that worldly things are "not necessarily evil things," and that, consequently, a worldly man is not necessarily wicked. Strangely enough, "this is God's world, and all its things are good and beautiful." Yes, a worldly man may be exceptionally refined and philanthropic, who lives to serve his fellow beings. And yet the Professor looks down upon him with pity, and says that death will be the putting out of his light. Of worldly things he declares that "their defect is that they are all transitory. When we pass from the world we must leave them behind us; and if they have been our only gladness then death is indeed 'a putting out of our light.'" But this passing from the world is a theological invention, completely outside the sphere of verification. So far as we can see, death is the end of individuals. We are children of the earth, and to the earth we return. There is absolutely no evidence that we shall pass from the world and leave its things behind us. Death is simply a return to the inorganic state. As Meredith puts it, "we go that others may come—and better if we rear them in the right way." Death is dissolution, disintegration, disorganization, and beyond it we cannot go.

Is life worth living? In certain moods we confidently exclaim, "Yes, abundantly"; but in certain other moods our answer is emphatically in the negative. Much depends upon the state of our health, and upon the circumstances in which we find ourselves. But we totally disagree with the following statement by Dr. Smith:—

It seems to me, more and more, that the supreme good is the prospect of reunion in the Hereafter. The dearest and sweetest thing in life is human affection, and it would be, to my mind, an unspeakably awful calamity if death were the end of it, if we parted to meet no more. I simply could not endure to live, if I had not the assurance more clear and strong with every passing year, that death is, in St. Bernard's phrase, the door of life, the entrance into a larger and nobler world, where all the broken threads will be knit again, and we shall find all that we have lost, and resume the old familiar relationships with a closer and more tender intimacy.

That is a fine picture of life after death, and the only fault we can find with it is that it has been painted by the imagination alone; or, rather, is but an interlude of the fancy. Dr. Smith regards it as literally true, and is of opinion that he could not endure to live if he did not so take it; but myriads of people look upon it as a dream, and are not distressed by the thought that death ends all. As birth marks the beginning of individual existence, so does death indicate its close. The worth of life is not dependent upon its duration, but upon its quality. What supremely matters is not how long we live, but the use we make of life, be it long or short.

Because he cherishes, with such glowing fervour, the hope of immortality, Dr. Smith imagines that if he were to lose it, life would be an intolerable burden to him; but he has no moral right to affirm what he would feel were he to get into a frame of mind as yet unexperienced by him. Sir George Adam Smith admits (*Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament*, pp. 209, 213) that "in the thinking of civilized men there has been for years a steady ebb from the shores of another life," and that "it is well for us all sometimes to pitch

our religious life in terms which do not include the hope of a future." It is certain that, for those in whom that hope has been extinguished, the present life is not less, but more interesting and joyous, than it was before, and that to them, as to Dr. Smith, "the dearest and sweetest thing in life is human affection," which is all the dearer and sweeter because it so soon comes to an end. Life is pre-eminently worth living, if lived wisely and well, even if its day be but of twenty-four hours. J. T. LLOYD.

## The Charm of Marcus Aurelius.

To bear all naked truths,  
And to envisage circumstance, all calm;  
That is the top of sovereignty.—Keats.

TIMES of war and stress are usually supposed to be fatal to philosophic calm, and it is curious that the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, the immortal book animated by high purpose and fortitude, should have been largely written at odd moments in a tent on the battlefield. Indeed, many of the famous maxims in the *Meditations* were jotted down in the actual theatre of the present war—as, for instance, at Carnuntum, on the Danube, a few miles from Vienna.

Monarchs have rarely been philosophers. Frederick the Great delighted in the society of Freethinkers, and attracted the best brains of Europe to his court. The Empress Catharine, of Russia, befriended Denis Diderot and other French Freethinkers; and Marguerite, of Valois, to her eternal credit, held out her fair hands to the "intellectuals" of her day, at a time when to avow heretical opinions was a matter of life or death. Once only, however, has a philosopher sat on the world's throne and realized the dream of wise Plato, who sighed for the fulfilment of his ideal of a philosopher-king.

Marcus Aurelius, one of the greatest of the Roman Emperors, was no feather-bed soldier, nor did he review his troops solely within the safe purlieu of the parade ground. His philosophy was thought out amid the storm and stress of actual battle, the elation of real victory, and the sorrow of defeat. What others learnt in calm, he learnt in tempest. The most perfect expression of "the gospel of those who do not believe in the supernatural" was produced to the dread monotone of war. Far away on the wide Roman marshes might be heard the endless, ceaseless sound of beating horses' hoofs and the marching feet of men. The barbarians were gathering their legions, and no man could say what the morrow would bring forth.

The Emperor died in the camp, surrounded by the soldiers he led. "Why weep for me," were his last brave words, characteristic of the noblest Roman of them all. His legacy to posterity was his book of *Meditations*, which was never intended for publication, and in which he recorded his inmost convictions on life and death. Burdened with the weight of empire and of Rome, he penned such words as these—not to be read at the distance of twenty centuries without an accession of pride and strength: "Every moment think steadily as a Roman and a man to do what thou hast in hand with perfect and simple dignity." And, again, "Do every action of thy life as if it were thy last."

This life, he tells us, is all that concerns us:—

Though you were destined to live three thousand, or, if you please, thirty thousand years, yet remember that no man can lose any other life than that which he lives now, and neither is he possessed of any other than that which he loses.

Epicurus bade his followers depart from life as a satisfied guest from a banquet. Marcus Aurelius, in

sterner language, bids us leave life's stage as an actor who has played his part. It is this perfectly sane view of things which has caused the golden book of the *Meditations* to become one of the most prized of volumes. It is this wise Secularism which takes tired people back to Marcus Aurelius when all other religions and philosophies have failed them. What a book might be written of the great men who came to the *Meditations* in the bad moments, when fame and fortune, and honour itself, seemed as unreal as the fabric of dreams. For, by the irony of fate, this austere wearer of the imperial purple has become one of the great consolers of men. His treasure of the *Meditations* is one of the most precious heritages handed down the centuries by the masters of the world.

Oh! the charm of Marcus Aurelius. He was so much more than a mere writer, for he bound men by something stronger than a chain of roses, the thrill of the dance, or the sparkle of Falernian wine. It is not his grace of language that causes men to read his book to-day. It is not merely his philosophy that causes men to turn to him from all other wisdom. It was not to Lucretius, with his world-grip of human destiny; or Virgil, with his tears of mortal fortune; or Horace, who sings so well and sweetly of banquets, the laughter of women, the joy of summer days; but to the austere soldier-leader, that men turned in the last resort to which they are pushed so often "with close lipped patience for their only friend."

The waters of thought slip slowly away, and it is not a little amazing to realize that the ideas of the Roman Emperor should still have sufficient vitality to fire the hearts and brains of men and women of our generation. It is a splendid achievement—power over millions of all ages, races, and sympathies. Small wonder that Ernest Renan, a writer of nice distinction, and a rare critic, has spoken of the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius in terms of more unmixed eulogy than he has ever bestowed elsewhere.

The *Meditations*, be it remembered, were never intended for publication, and were written for their author's own eyes alone. They are simply the Emperor's commonplace book, where he entered his reflections, often quite unconnected, on life and death; and the questions that knock at every thoughtful man's heart. The little volume was considered for long a literary curiosity. It fitly headed the very brief list of the writings of kings, a class not in any way remarkable for literary genius. Critics talk of the Greeks as being the teachers of Marcus Aurelius. It is true; but the golden book of the *Meditations* could only have been written by a Roman. The strength, the tenderness, the humanity, the resignation, these are the gifts of the lords of human things, the masters of the world.

Matthew Arnold has pointed out that the *Meditations* are counsels of perfection. They do not claim to be other than self-communications. The maxims should be read, as they were written, one at a time. Marcus Aurelius addressed them, not to any reader, but to himself, as the sentinals, and supports of a conduct of life. The present moment is one in which such high-minded advice is priceless, for in all the world's literature there is no other book so full of perfect sanity and Secularism. It is because the *Meditations* are a bracing tonic in a time of moral slackness that the book ranks among the assets of the day. The pomp and majesty of ancient Rome has long faded, "like snow upon the desert's face"; but the great Emperor's words of wisdom remain a most precious legacy, because he saw life steadily and saw it whole.

Not Cæsar dying amid Roman sighs,

By Pompey's statue, seems more great than thee.

MIMNERMUS.

## The Rise and Progress of Mental Power.

### III.

(Continued from p. 507.)

OUT of automatic actions states of consciousness slowly emerge. In those animals in which faint remembrances of past sensations are combined with a capacity to associate simple impressions, a dim form of awareness arises. Organisms, such as the Coelenterata (jelly fishes, etc.), manifest a rudimentary mode of consciousness, while the Echinodermata (star fishes, sea urchins, etc.), judging from the complexity of their nervous adjustments, are possessed of a fuller power of perception. Many competent observers place the Annelida above the Echinodermata, and various of their activities indicate a fair amount of intelligent adaptation. The Mollusca display even clearer signs of intelligence, and conscious adjustments become increasingly involved as we ascend the ladder of life. Insects and spiders are certainly remarkably adaptive in their responses to stimuli. Wasps, ants, and bees manifest associative capacities of a degree most highly developed. The Batrachia—frogs, toads, etc., and the fish family, reveal more intelligence than any of the invertebrates, save only the ants, wasps, and bees, and, perhaps, the spiders and crabs.

Slightly more advanced in mental development are some of the reptiles when compared with frogs and fish. But the social insects appear to possess the power of communicating information, for the evidence of this, both in ants and bees, is very considerable. The birds show a wide range of mental ability, thus rising immensely above their reptilian ancestors. Some of the rodents, notably the beavers, reveal marked intelligence. Many, if not most of the herbivorous quadrupeds, unquestionably reason, while carnivorous creatures, such as the lion, tiger, wolf, and bear, display mental powers of a complicated character. Even one of the lowlier rodents—the rat—is notoriously cunning in his conduct. With the monkeys and the elephant mental capacity of a high order is found, while, in the man-like apes, psychical powers approaching those of man himself, stand clearly revealed.

As already intimated, the semi-erect attitude of the anthropoid apes enables them to utilize their upper limbs as organs of manipulation. The complete mastery of the power to stand erect that was gained by man's semi-simian ancestor provided him with still greater opportunities for amassing knowledge of surrounding nature. In the mammalian world, as a whole, as among the less evolved reptilia, all four limbs remained for untold ages mainly occupied in locomotive duties. Among the bats and birds the fore limb became modified into an organ of flight. Representatives of the family, of which man is the first member, evolved the beginnings of the later marvellously pliable hand of apes and men, and with the advent of a mammalian biped a revolution in the world of life began.

While many of the lower animals are endowed with more than a mere modicum of mental faculty, the apes rise above them all in capacity for thought. The superior mental qualities of the apes have profoundly impressed all those who have studied them, and even prejudiced observers have admitted their astonishment. A qualified judge, Professor Hartmann, declares that "their intelligence sets them high above other mammals." Professor Romanes, who enjoyed exceptional opportunities for study both in the Zoological Gardens and his own residence, came to the conclusion that they, undoubtedly, "surpass all other animals in the scope of their rational faculty."

While many animals are easily taught, and unquestionably reason for themselves, it is noteworthy that the apes seldom need teaching, and display every evidence of independent thought. And this, despite the fact that our intelligent domesticated animals have derived great advantages from their contact with man through countless generations, and have inherited increased mental aptitudes, while the monkey tribe has almost invariably been confined to its native forests. Among the numerous psychical qualities manifested by a cebus monkey closely observed by Romanes, was his untaught custom of cracking his nuts with a hammer. The animal showed a quite human dislike for ridicule, and would hurl any available missile at his tormentor in a manner most dexterous. He would secure any object out of the reach of his hands with the aid of a stick, and when the stick proved unavailing the monkey utilized a shawl in the most ingenious fashion to gain possession of coveted articles. Perhaps the most striking instance of this creature's cleverness was shown in his dealings with a hearth brush, which he had managed to purloin. He was anxious to remove the handle, and he soon discovered how to unscrew it, and then he was determined to screw it in again. On this problem he promptly set his wits at work, and as Charles Morris, in his excellent *Man and his Ancestor* continues the story:—

At first he put the wrong end of the handle into the hole, and turned it round and round in the right direction for screwing. Finding this would not work he took it out and tried the other end, always turning in the right direction. It was a difficult feat to perform, as he had to turn the screw with both hands, while the flexible bristles of the brush prevented it from remaining steady. To aid his operations he now held the brush with one foot, while turning it with both hands. It was still difficult to make the first turn of the screw, but he worked on with untiring perseverance until he got the thread to catch, and then screwed it in to the end. The remarkable thing was that he never tried to turn the handle in the wrong direction, but always screwed it from left to right, as if he knew that he must reverse the original motion. The feat accomplished, he repeated it, and continued to do so until he could perform it easily. Then he threw the brush aside, apparently taking no more interest in that over which he had worked so persistently. No man could have devoted himself more earnestly to learn some new art, and become more indifferent to it when once learned.

Innumerable examples of a kindred character could be cited among the higher apes and monkeys in which the feeling of curiosity has revealed itself spontaneously. This spirit of inquisitiveness, so very widespread throughout the monkey group, forms one of the most important foundations of all mental advance.

Social creatures are the monkeys, and, like social animals in general, they manifest superior intelligence when compared with their solitary kindred. The social beavers, and, perhaps, the noxious sewer rat, stand immeasurably above the entire rodent order in the realm of mentality. Yet there are more than 900 known species of rodents. The ants, bees, termites, and a few others, amid all the immense array of insect life, are profoundly distinguished by their psychical activities from the remaining insect fauna. The intelligent forms are all extremely social. Various other gregarious animals illustrate the same truth.

But the part played by the social instincts in the evolution of mind is, probably, most pronounced in the case of the communal ants and bees. Hundreds of species of social ants are distributed through the world. Varying materially alike in habits, and range of intelligence, all display high powers of mentality. Yet the various solitary ants scarcely rise above the ordinary insect mental standard. Of the bees the same holds

true. The most elaborately organized community, that of the hive-bees, is composed of the most intelligent representatives of these insects. Bees with less perfected social arrangements are on a lower mental level, while the solitary bees rarely ascend above the average insect plane. Among the carnivores, with the gregarious dogs, wolves, and others, the same fact is seen, while herbivorous animals, which dwell in troops and herds, are usually more intelligent than their solitary cousins. Jackdaws, gulls, rooks, the house sparrow, and starling, birds both impudent and clever, are all fond of the company of their fellows. There is this, however, to be remembered that strictly communal creatures tend to evolve psychical specialization. The mental powers, which have been developed in the course of their social evolution, tend in these animals to relapse into instincts when their objective has been completely gained. There, then, remains little scope for further variation.

Albeit social in its habits, the monkey family retains ample scope for the play of individual initiative, and with this group continued progress remained possible. No monkey is specialized for, or restricted to, a particular function. In this sense the ape is an individualist, and any variation of value tends to be preserved through imitation. Mental communication among the lower animals is, probably, more extensive than is commonly supposed. Remembering how rare are original ideas among mankind, we cannot escape the conclusion that useful discoveries have, in most cases, been treasured through a recognition of their value by the general community. The few discover and invent, while the many ultimately benefit. Apart from the social bond, which binds organisms together in groups, this would be impossible, and it is also to be noted that new notions are extremely unlikely to arise among solitary creatures.

Modern civilization and culture are chiefly due to the intellectual achievements of the superior few which have ultimately become the property of the general population. As a recent writer says:—

The intellectual standing of any civilized nation depends upon two things: the preservation in books, in memory, and in works of art and industry, of the ideas of ancient workers and thinkers; and the mental activity of living thinkers and inventors, whose work takes its start from this standpoint of stored-up thought. Rob any community of all its basic ideas, and it would quickly retrograde to a primitive condition of thought and organization, from which it might need many centuries to emerge."

The lemurs are related to the monkeys, but they are quite destitute of social life, and they are decidedly unintelligent. Dwelling in similar surroundings, the apes derive enormous advantages from their social habits, and when placed in an environment entirely unlike that to which they are accustomed they constantly exhibit keen powers of observation, and a remarkable fondness for experiment. Probably, if primitive man had made his cousin a domesticated friend; had the monkey enjoyed the same advantages as dogs and other tamed animals, simian mental powers would have been developed quite equalling those of many dull-witted men still to be met with in the most civilized communities. Absence of opportunity rather than lack of native ability has tended more and more to widen the gulf which exists between the mental capacities of apes and monkeys and modern man.

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

A London newspaper, in reviewing the life of Herbert Spencer, refers to it as "a drab existence." Christian editors prefer highly coloured lives, such as the career of Dr. Crippen.

## Palmistry and Priestcraft.

IN the minds of all right-thinking persons, there can be nothing but contempt for those sleek, designing rascals who, under the pretence of scientific knowledge and the possession of wonderful powers, exact money from the ignorant and credulous for "information" concerning individuals and events, which could not possibly be known in the ordinary way.

As a means of looking into the future, of finding happiness for oneself or of preventing misfortune, palmistry, clairvoyancy, psychometry, or whatever fancy name the nimble professors and madames may give the art they practise, is valueless, and the high priests of occultism are either scoundrels or fools.

I cannot say I enthusiastically agree with that highly virtuous section of the community which would seek to stamp out fortune-telling by heavy fines and terms of imprisonment, conviction invariably being procured by an *agent provocateur*. After all, there are degrees of villainy, and P.-C. XYZ—even in plain clothes—has not great powers of discrimination, whatever may be said for his veracity. In my experiences in show-land, I met on every fair ground some lady who could "tell the tale" according to a stereotyped formula; she was generally the wife of a showman, and, if sufficiently weather-beaten, posed as a gipsy. "The fair young man, not the tall dark one, my dear; a long journey, short illness, plenty of money showing in your hand," etc.—that was the stock-in-trade. I don't for a moment justify fortune-telling when it is only on a small scale, and done stupidly, but most of this sort of thing is indulged in for a lark by those who are "doing the shows" in proper fashion; and I have found the caravan-living itinerants, as a body, decent folk of a simple live-and-let-live philosophy.

When, however, we consider the machinations of educated men and women, who, taking advantage of the widespread anxiety caused by the War, are working on the overstrung nerves of wives and lovers of our fighting men, and extracting money from these victims under the pretence of affording them comfort or by predicting the safe return of the loved ones, it is small wonder if our atavistic instincts for revenge are aroused. But, of course, punishment is the wrong end of the stick. I don't think the members of the N.S.S. will part with much money for crystal-gazing to find the issue of fighting in Flanders. Conversely, it seems strange that Christians, whose religion teaches them to believe in all manner of weird prophecies and predictions quite at variance with our knowledge of daily happenings, should disapprove of modern prophets; or, rather, one section of the mystical fraternity only. If it be granted that those who delude the weak-minded ought to be punished, then the whole army of professional ministers, priests, spiritualists, and salvation sellers ought to be arraigned along with the palmists, seers, faith-healers, and kindred rogues. But the punishment ought to be graduated to fit the enormity of the offence. As sixpenny hand reading, dealing with the trifling detail of the colouring of a suitor's hair, and the number of children likely to accrue from a happy marriage, is venial beside the traffickers in the emotions of tortured wives and mothers, so even those latter fall short of the preachers of "the Word," with their stupendous falsehoods, their feeble philosophy, and, above all, their hypocritical pretence that, whatever happens, all is for the best, and that sufferers in this world can extract comfort from their speculations of the compensating rewards in a hereafter of which nothing has ever been known.

I have before me as I write a little magazine called

the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, an Irish Catholic publication, the organ of "The Apostleship of Prayer." Part of this issue is devoted to letters of thanksgiving from "grateful patrons" of the Sacred Heart for favours received; and it is, in truth, gloomy reading for Rationalists. We have undoubtedly a long way to go in Ireland. Let me give readers of the *Freethinker* one or two samples of the thanksgivings.

Two parties (25 and 10 respectively) of Catholic soldiers wish to thank the Sacred Heart for signal protection. Both parties were engaged in dangerous patrol work behind the German first line. They all received Holy Communion that morning, and carried badges of the Sacred Heart. Both parties returned without a scratch, and now wish to fulfil their promise of publicly thanking the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Now, the worst of this is, that *all* of them took communion and wore badges, and that there doesn't seem to have been a solitary shot fired. Had one of the number been a wicked Protestant; or, better still, a dirty Atheist, and had a stray bullet ricocheted merrily from each of the thirty-five bits of red flannel worn by the devout Irishmen, ultimately finding its billet in the unguarded body of the unbeliever, that would have been "some" evidence of discrimination.

"Through the Sacred Heart shield and Invocation" we hear of wonderful doings in County Cork. "Things were looking very dark with us twelve months ago." Then, after purchasing a shield (which is a painted bit of tin), and placing over the door, "Thank God, from that day on, things began to improve rapidly."

Readers of Zola's *Lourdes* will remember his description of the excellent business done in holy water bottles, candles, etc., at the grotto. The same thing obtains with the Church everywhere. Sacred Heart badges, scapulars, shields, and the latest innovation, rosary beads in Sinn Fein colours, meet with a good sale, and are generously advertised by patrons who have derived benefit from them.

"Things looking dark," and then, "Thank God, improving rapidly," doesn't seem a very serious state of affairs; but I cannot complain that all the grateful ones are indefinite. Expressions of gratitude, which are pretty well stereotyped, are grouped under different headings. Like the Astral Planers, the Sacred Hearters find "The War" productive of most trade, but "Means of Livelihood," "Temperance," and "Conversions" appeal to many.

"Thanksgiving for not being on duty when one of our guns exploded, and we had a lot of casualties." My criticism in the other case of superstitious soldiers applies here; and were there no devotees of the Sacred Heart on duty? The Sacred Heart is thanked for protecting some; those who pray and yet fall, succumb to the Divine Will, which we must not question. We treat God with infinitely more charity than we show towards our fellow-men. Why is it always all praise and no blame for God; who, after all, is responsible for everything?

"Employment found," "Good position secured," are typical; but "Husband kept on when he feared dismissal" is a departure. Probably, if he ceased praying, or wore his scapulars at an irreverent angle, the Sacred Heart might get him the sack, to provide employment for a client more assiduous in praying, or who spent more in gee-gaws.

"For forty years my father has lived, nominally a Protestant, but in reality a Pagan. He has now entered the true fold." Poor old dad! Fancy, after forty years lying a-bed on Sundays, smoking and reading his sporting paper, to be "converted," and have to rise for early Mass! Not if my wife and children put shields all over

our doors, sew Sacred Hearts inside my waistcoats, gird themselves with scapulars, and, prostrate before burning candles and highly coloured Virgin, offer incessant supplication in Gaelic, will I give up my long-lie and Sunday paper. My heart is sore for the nominal Protestant.

Unfortunately, there are millions who think that the "Sacred Heart" means more than "The Shielding Shadow" or "The Laughing Mask." That half-witted illiterates should be fooled in this manner is bad enough, but that men of education, and good sense in all mundane affairs, should allow themselves to be chloroformed into tacit acceptance of idolatrous superstition, shows what a price is paid for the abnegation of private judgment in matters of Faith and Morals.

As I said earlier, there are degrees of rascality, and the priest who condemns a Hindu for telling fortunes to the wife of a policeman, while himself perpetuating mendacities concerning the great problems of life, is a hypocrite as well as a charlatan.

J. EFFEL.

## Acid Drops.

The Lutheran Synod issued a pastoral which was read in all the churches in Berlin on the anniversary of the outbreak of War. In this document it is declared:—

We will comport ourselves as Christians towards our enemies, and conduct the War in the future, as in the past, with humanity and chivalry.

We should be the last to deny that in sinking hospital ships, torpedoing passenger vessels, etc., that the Germans have not comported themselves as Christians, because there is no barbarity that Christians have not manifested towards their enemies. But humanity and chivalry! That is quite another matter. We advise the German pastors to stick to the claim that they have behaved as Christians towards their enemies. That is at least a defensible proposition.

In our own Christian country we observe that Major Carter, the man who was responsible for exposing the scandal of the treatment of the wounded in Mesopotamia, and for the improvement effected, has been rewarded by being transferred to another post where he is receiving £300 per year less in the shape of salary. So said the Secretary for India in the House of Commons on August 7.

The Dean of St. Paul's has been dubbed "gloomy," or "dismal," because he is too conscientious to indulge in optimism at the expense of well attested facts. His brethren confidently assert that Christianity is a grand success; Dr. Inge knows and frankly admits that hitherto it has been a gigantic failure. The fact is that it doesn't pay to speak the truth, the truth being the commodity least required at any Christian market, specially the truth about religion.

At a Conference of Modern Churchmen, organized by the Churchmen's Union, held at Girton College, Cambridge, on August 9, the Dean read a paper, entitled "Did Christ Found the Church?" in which he maintained that the "Church was the result of historical conditions," and in no sense whatever founded by Jesus Christ. This is heterodoxy with a vengeance, but all scholars know that it is the truth. Speaking of Catholicism, the Dean said:—

It owed more to Greece and Rome than to Galilee. It was an adaptation of the old religion of the Mediterranean races, and derived much of its strength from its non-Christian elements.

For teaching this heresy, M. Alfred Loisy, of Paris, was deposed from the priesthood of the Catholic Church, and Dr. Inge would undergo a similar penalty were the orthodox party in the Anglican Church to have their way. The Church has flourished on fiction in all ages; and even now she stands in mortal terror of the truth.

The piety of the Sunday papers is a fearful and a wonderful thing. The *Sunday Herald* had an article on "Sickly Illusions of Doddering Pacifists." Would the editor of the *Sunday Herald* describe the author of the phrase, "Blessed are the peacemakers," as a "Doddering Pacifist"?

Politics and religion usually make a delightful blend, but it is seldom that English editors have the courage to express themselves as freely as the Christian conductor of the *Louisville Courier Journal*, who bade farewell to Herr Dernburg in the following words: "Let him go and be damned to him, and now, as ever, to Hell with the Hohenzol'ern and the Hapsburg."

The text, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," used to be parodied by the old Radicals as "The earth is the House of Lords" etc. The recollection is prompted by the number of estates which are changing hands. Recently, the Duke of Sutherland sold the Lilleshall estate of 6,818 acres in Shropshire, while Earl Normanton disposed of the Rushall estate of 4,647 acres in Wiltshire. Lord Alington is selling his famous Hoxton estate with its 2,500 houses, and Lord de Saumarez is offering the Lawshall Hall estate of 1,000 acres in Suffolk. The Earl of Shrewsbury is also selling his Cheshire possessions, totalling over 4,000 acres.

Principal P. F. Forsyth is in a painfully depressed, pessimistic mood, as, in a short article in the *Christian World* for August 9, he contemplates the prospects of the Church of Christ. She has lost her "great note," and he can see but few signs of its coming again. Of the future of Congregationalism even he entertains no strong hope:—

First, it may break. Second, it may die of futility and sink away into sand—not for lack of natural energy, but for lack of energetic power in its belief. Its spiritual imagination is ill-nourished.....Third, it may be swamped, for lack of belief in the Church and its ministry, by the undenominational religion of the Y.M.C.A. or the Student Christian type.

The Principal is perfectly right. The "great note" has departed never to return. Spiritual imagination is ill-nourished, because it has been touched by the light of reality through the intellect, and the food on which it used to subsist no longer agrees with it. It is lack of confidence in the supernatural that accounts for the steady decay of religion, and not all the theologians and preachers in the world can bring back that confidence. At last knowledge has come to stay, and in its radiance faith is doomed to vanish away.

Everything does not go well with the Brixton Parish Church, of which Rev. A. J. Waldron was Vicar, before forsaking it for the music-hall. The present Vicar writes in the Parish Magazine under "Answers to Correspondents":

AGGRIEVED PARISHIONERS.—We refuse to see people at the vicarage except by special appointment or in case of serious illness (1) because our parlourmaid has nineteen steps to climb before she arrives at the front door, if she is in the basement when the bell is rung, and anything up to three flights of stairs to descend if she is upstairs, at the time; (2) because we must have some leisure in which to read and write. If you were to subscribe to the Freewill Offering Fund, we might be able to...

The Government must be careful! There are some things that liberty-loving Britons will not stand. They have stood well the taking away of liberty during the War—indeed, vast numbers of them do not appear conscious that they have lost anything worth bothering about. But there are limits, and the proposal that the ages of people shall be given on the new sugar cards, which are to be handed in to the local grocer, has called forth indignant protests in the *Daily Telegraph*. "To what purpose," writes one indignant correspondent, "is this affront to our womankind?" The Government control of the press was nothing, conscription was a bagatelle, the suspension of Habeas Corpus a trifle, but to expose the age of our women folk to the rude gaze of the local grocer—that is really serious and leads for revolt.

The leader-writers became lyrical on the occasion of the third anniversary of the War. That distinguished Christian, Mr. Horatio Bottomley, wrote that on the fourth of August "each of us became a soldier in the army of God." In his excitement, Mr. Bottomley forgot that 50,000 clergymen were "too proud to fight."

According to the *Daily News* there have been worse Augusts than the present. In August, 1577, a thunder-bolt struck Blythburgh Church and killed twenty people; passed on to Bungay, six miles distant, and fell on another church, killing two people whilst kneeling. Providence was as much given to practical jokes in the sixteenth century as in the twentieth.

The sedate *Saturday Review* is calling for a film controller, and remarks: "Passing through the remotest country villages of England one finds that the primeval disfigurement of the local Græco-Baptist chapel has everywhere been supplemented by the white and gold of the local picture-palace." Another testimony to the revival of religion.

At last we have the explanation of the heavy August rain. Rev. J. Thomas, Precentor of Chelmsford, attributes the rain to "Divine displeasure at the amount of Sunday labour performed on allotments." Good Lord!

"The Universe has been in labour for a hundred million years," says Sir Oliver Lodge, "and has produced—us. We are a remarkable product, and we are behaving at the present moment in a remarkable manner." Noting *how* we are behaving, it hardly looks as though the product were worth the hundred million years of labour. Certainly, if the universe were conscious of what it has produced, it might with justification decide to bury its past, blot the whole lot out again, and start afresh.

But, naturally, Sir Oliver thinks the labour justified because it has produced "us." Human egotism is a monstrous thing, and it assumes that, because we have been produced, it is "us" that the universe was striving after. But man has been produced in no other sense than has anything else that lives. It took as long to produce the germ that destroys human life as it did to produce the human life that is destroyed. There is as much, or as little, intention in the one case as in the other. Nay, it takes as long to produce an earthquake that wipes out a city and all its inhabitants, if we are to read purpose into the process, we must say that Nature laboured for millions of years to get a crowd of people into a given area, and then let loose an earthquake which it had been carefully producing for their destruction. The truth is, of course, that there are no purposes and ends in Nature; there are only processes and results. As a scientist, Sir Oliver knows this perfectly well. As a religionist, he forgets all about it.

Sir Oliver Lodge gives it as his "firm belief" that "science will shortly prove the definite survival of human life after death." We are under the impression that many of Sir Oliver's followers are inclined to believe that science *has* proved the fact of survival. They will please note that he only expresses the pious belief that one day science *will* prove it. And, of course, it is very hard to disprove a statement of that kind.

Another of Sir Oliver's opinions is that after the War "great and powerful assistance will be given us by 'spirit helpers.'" There is really no limit to this kind of thing. Anyone can go on supposing things of this kind without end. But why on earth should these great and powerful spirits wait till after the War? There was room for them to operate long before the War, and even during the War. Next to the absurdity of the spirits the most striking thing about them is their uselessness.

"If the shade of Jeremy Bentham still hovers around the philosopher's old home at Queen Anne's Gate, it will be interested in the location there of the new Ministry of Reconstruction. And the Ministry might do worse than emulate

Bentham's attitude towards social problems. Whatever may be thought of his principles of 'Utility,' and 'The greatest good of the greatest number,' his passion for civic liberty, his terseness and simplicity, and his contempt for time-worn formulæ, made him one of the most influential reconstructors of his generation."—*Daily Chronicle*.

The Rev. T. Rhondda Williams, of Brighton, contributes a weekly article to the *Christian Commonwealth*, entitled "From my Point of View." In the issue for August 8, he criticizes most sarcastically the form of prayer which has been prepared for use in the Free Churches at the commencement of the fourth year of the War. The principal petition is this: "Send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead us and bring us to a speedy and successful conclusion of our great endeavour." Mr. Williams mordantly observes:—

What sincerity can there be in asking that God's light and truth should lead us to victory in war when we know perfectly well that for such victory what we have to use is, not light and truth, but as much deception and trickery as possible? Was it by the use of God's light and truth that we took the Ypres salient? Or was it by secret tunnelling and stealthy placing of explosives for many months before action?

The whole article is in the same sarcastic but truthful strain, and our only wonder is that so sane a thinker believes in God at all. We fail to see where God comes in in this brutal conflict. The divines all assert that he *does* come in somehow and somewhere, but no two of them agree as to the how and the where.

Hushing up the Mesopotamian Report is "a crime against God and Man," says Mr. Bottomley. It may be a crime against man, but as God allowed so many of our men to suffer through official neglect, it is not clear why it is a crime against him. If Mr. Bottomley carried any intelligence with his piety, he would see that the Report is naturally an indictment of God, as well as certain officials. Particularly as Mr. Bottomley believes that we are on God's side and he is on ours. But piety—particularly new-found piety—and intelligence seldom run together.

Lord Burnham, of the *Daily Telegraph*, presided over the Hampstead Summer Garden Meeting the other day, and took occasion to make a few remarks on the present position of the press. "The Press," he said, "was now part of the machinery of the State, but he hoped that this arrangement would not survive after the War." The tone of this is sufficiently serious to make all lovers of real freedom anxious. That the press is now largely under Government control, both in the kind of news it gives, and in the news it suppresses, we are all aware. Practically we know all that a handful of men thinks it good for us to know, and this is tolerated because we are at War. But we believe, as we have said more than once, that this control of the press by the Government will not be readily given up even when the War is over. Every governing class, once it has seized power, struggles to keep it, and, unfortunately, the general public cares very little for liberty of any kind that does not interfere with the pleasures or requirements of the moment. Witness the fact there was greater public concern over the shortage of beer or the stopping of racing than over the establishment of a press censorship. Anyway, we are glad to see Lord Burnham alive to the danger, and we hope that his warning will awaken others.

The clergy appear to be singularly narrow-minded. The vicar of a parish, near the district devastated by the Silver-town explosion, is advertising plaintively for help because the girls' club and mothers' meetings have to be held in the vicarage drawing-room. Dreadful, isn't it?

The London daily papers wasted columns in describing the War Service at Westminster Abbey, and some of them even printed verses from the hymns used on that occasion. The editors of parish magazines could not have done more.

The pious *Daily News* refers to Bank Holiday as the feast of Saint Lubbock. The founder of Bank Holidays did more for the working people than all the calendar of the saints.

## To Correspondents.

T. M. MOSLEY.—Your letter appears to have been delayed in transmission—judging from the date it bears and that of its receipt. However, we are pleased to hear from you, and also to get your account of the discussion on "The Case for Atheism." Is it not time there was some definite organization in your district?

C. EMERY.—Don't trouble about whether science can explain everything, the real points are (1) that science does explain things, and (2) where science fails, nothing else succeeds.

THANET.—We do not know a better pamphlet for your purpose than *Bible and Beer*, by G. W. Foote. It can be sent, post free, from this office for three halfpence, or on special terms if a quantity is needed for distribution.

Y. C.—Received. Hope to publish shortly.

J. O. HARDING.—(1) An Atheist is one who is without belief in a God. No other meaning has ever been given to it by those who were in a position to speak. (2) Freethinkers are not, as Freethinkers, hostile to Socialism. Some believe in it, and some do not. (3) The origin of protoplasm is a question that belongs to the region of bio-chemistry. Almost any up-to-date text-book will give you information on that point. At any rate, we could not, without misunderstanding, reply in this column.

C. MARTIN.—We are not sure we have your name correctly, but, as is not unusual, the signature is the least legible part of your letter. We do not write that everyone will agree with us. If we did, we should confine ourselves to platitudes. We write only that people may read us and consider what we write. That is all any decent person asks or expects.

T. RICHARDS.—It is curious why a writer, generally so clear as Fielding Hall, should revert to the *Designer of Nature*. Probably, however, he means less by it than a literal acceptance of his language would imply. We do not know whether you have read the same author's delightful *Soul of a People*. If not, we strongly advise you to do so. It is a charming work. We are pleased to have your appreciation of "the excellence of the *Freethinker*."

J. A. REID.—Thanks for cuttings. We could print some copies of the verses if desired.

F. BETTS.—Received. Hope to use shortly.

REMLAP.—Quite all right. Paper will be sent as usual.

T. JONES.—Our manager is writing the newsagent on the subject. Thanks for your trouble in the matter. We quite believe there is good scope for the getting of new readers in your locality.

C. W. MARSHALL.—Pleased to note that your newsagent has secured new subscribers through the slips advertising the *Freethinker*. Our shop manager is sending more as requested. Thanks for help.

S. LIDGETT.—See "Sugar Plums."

B. DUPREE.—Next week.

N. DOUGLAS.—Thanks for the lines from Juvenal.

D. HOURLAIN.—We can quite appreciate a Frenchman's astonishment at the English people tolerating a priesthood which urges all civilians to join the Army and then demands exemption from military service for itself. But what do you suggest we can do more than we are doing? We are trying to make Freethinkers, and that seems to us the best way of working. If we kill the religious cant, other forms of cant will weaken considerably.

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

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## Sugar Plums.

It is really time the Home Secretary undertook to give instructions to some of the Jacks-in-office who sit on the judicial bench. At Eastbourne, on August 10, a taxi-cab driver was summoned for driving his vehicle to the danger of the public. Offering evidence on his own behalf, he declined to take the oath. On this the magistrate's clerk asked: "You have no religious convictions at all?" "No," replied the defendant, "I am an Atheist." The clerk then retorted: "You had better go back if you cannot take the oath." Subsequently, the man's evidence appears to have been taken, but this does not excuse the impertinence of the clerk. As he does not appear to have been ignorant of the terms of the Oaths Act, there is no word other than impertinence that fitly describes his remark.

Our attention has been called to a misprint in the letter from France in last week's "Sugar Plums." Our correspondent wrote, "There is a widespread wave of Freethought abroad." By printing "wane" for "wave," the meaning of the sentence was reversed.

The *Two Worlds* is on our list of exchanges, but we overlooked a letter in its issue for July 27 reflecting on the editorial conduct of this journal. Mr. E. W. Oaten writes to the *Two Worlds* complaining that he had asked if the *Freethinker* columns were open to a reply to Mr. Mann's articles on Spiritualism, but that he had "not even had the courtesy of an acknowledgment of my letter." We recollect receiving Mr. Oaten's letter, and we replied saying that these columns would be open to a brief reply, "brief" being interpreted with a view to the length of the articles criticized. Apparently Mr. Oaten did not receive our letter. We regret this; but we cannot make ourselves responsible for delivery. We need only add that our reply still holds good.

The *Humanitarian* reprints the following effective lines from Mr. Ralph Hodgson's *Poems* :—

### THE BELLS OF HEAVEN.

I would ring the bells of Heaven,  
The wildest peal for years,  
If Parson lost his senses  
And people came to theirs,  
And he and they together  
Knelt down with angry prayers  
For tamed and shaggy tigers,  
And dancing dogs and bears,  
And wretched, blind pit ponies,  
And little hunted hares.

Want of space prevented our noting last week the very successful close of the month's mission at Sheffield, conducted under the auspices of the N.S.S. The speaker on the concluding Sunday was Mr. Willis, of Birmingham, who reports that the meeting was well attended, orderly, and enthusiastic. We feel sure that his address must have left an excellent impression, and it remains now for local friends to see what can be done to improve the occasion. There are a large number of Freethinkers in and about Sheffield, and we feel sure that, provided it is taken in hand by the right people, a good local society could be built up. Headquarters will give every possible help, but it must be on the basis of local effort.

We do not know whether the *Sydney Bulletin* is prevented circulating here, but several times this year we have received notes from Australian readers saying they were sending a copy with marked passages for notice, but none have come to hand. We are writing this so that they may understand the absence of any kind of acknowledgment of their kindly offices.

## Science, Telepathy, and Communism with the Dead.

V.

(Continued from p. 502.)

By their own showing, the mediums cannot command their manifestations. These appear and disappear, come and go, in the most capricious manner. A spirit will be voluble and communicative and expansive at one hour, and in the presence of one set of people, and the entrance of a single sceptic like Sir James Crichton-Browne will so offend him that he goes off in a huff, and the failure of the rest of the sitting is due "to the offensive incredulity" of the stranger. Queer people, these spirits! One would have expected the presence of a known sceptic to put them on their mettle, and rouse them to give some manifestation that should compel conviction even in the most doubting Thomas; but not a bit of it. They are so tetchy and so easily offended that when doubt is thrown upon their existence, instead of taking steps to remove the doubt, they run away.—Dr. Charles A. Mercier, "*Spiritualism and Sir Oliver Lodge*," p. 57.

TELEPATHY, or Thought-transference, can never be proved until it can stand a scientific test; for Sir Oliver Lodge and his followers absolutely decline to furnish test cases to men like Dr. Ivor Tuckett and Sir Ray Lankester. They want us to believe these things on their word, without proof. Why should we? Sir Oliver Lodge, with other distinguished men, publicly declared that some of the phenomena produced by Eusapia Palladino could not have been produced by the known forces of Nature. He believes so still—at any rate, he has never publicly retracted his statement. We know now that all Eusapia's phenomena were nothing more nor less than common conjuring tricks. What reason is there to suppose that Sir Oliver Lodge is any more correct regarding Telepathy and spirit communications than he was concerning Eusapia Palladino?

Many scientific tests have been made to prove communication with the spirits of the dead. The best known was that devised by Mr. F. W. H. Myers. Mr. Myers' book, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, may be described as the New Testament of modern Spiritualism. It is an immense compilation, in two volumes, of the phenomena of mediumship, hypnotism, telepathy, death-warnings, hallucinations, trances, etc.—a veritable encyclopædia of superstition. There is no doubt that the influence of this book has been very great, and has had a great deal to do with the present revival of Spiritualism among the upper classes.

Mr. Myers was an educated gentleman—he had been appointed classical lecturer at Cambridge—and there is no doubt that he honestly believed in the marvels he wrote about. Not only did he devote his life to the attempt to find a firm foundation for Spiritualism, but he devised a test which, if it had proved successful, as he anticipated, would have convinced the world that the spirits of the dead continue to exist, and that they can communicate with the living. The test consisted of a message in a sealed letter, which Mr. Myers entrusted to Sir Oliver Lodge on the understanding that after his (Myers') death he would communicate the message through some medium. Ten years later, on January 17, 1901, Mr. Myers died. On February 19, 1901, about a month after Myers' death, Sir Oliver Lodge had his first communication from Mr. Myers, through the mediumship of Mrs. Thompson. The spirit of Myers says:—

Lodge, it is not as easy as I thought in my impatience. Gurney (a deceased friend) says I am getting on first rate. But I am short of breath.

Sir Oliver: Do you want to say anything about the Society?

Myers: What Society?

Sir Oliver: You remember the S.P.R.

Myers: Do not think I have forgotten. But I have; I have forgotten just now. Let me think.

After some more of this sort of thing, Myers tells Sir Oliver that he will see him in April; whereupon Sir Oliver asks: "And will you then read what you wrote in the envelope?" To which Myers replies: "What envelope?—I shall be told."

This is Sir Oliver Lodge's own account, as given in his *The Survival of Man* (1909), pp. 287-288. Is it conceivable that the spirit of Myers, who spent his life in searching for evidence of the survival of the spirit after death, and left a message behind which, if repeated, would bring conviction to the most stubborn sceptic, would answer in this fashion? Is it conceivable that a spirit would talk about being "short of breath?" Do spirits have lungs, then? And if so, how do they travel through the ether of space, where there is no air to breathe? Is it conceivable that Myers would ask "What envelope?" when asked about the all-important message, and then reply? "I shall be told." How could he be told? No one knew what message the sealed envelope contained but himself. Is it not as evident as the sun in the heavens that the communications are the communications of Mrs. Thompson, the medium, and not those of the discarnate spirit of Mr. Myers?

After this, the spirit of Myers was in great demand; so much so that he complains through one medium that he can get no rest. Everybody is calling him, and he talks about everything and anything but the mysterious sealed envelope. However, nearly four years later, the well-known medium, Mrs. Verrall, reported that the message had been communicated to her. Sir Oliver Lodge immediately convened a meeting of the Council of the Society for Psychical Research, to be held at the Society's Rooms, 20 Hanover Square, London; and on December 13, 1904, Sir Oliver Lodge obtained the envelope from the bank where it had been deposited, and produced it at the meeting. The highest expectations were aroused.

Here, in the fateful envelope, lay the crucial test—the answer to the question which so many agonizing souls had addressed to the cold and indifferent stars, without success. If Mrs. Verrall had really received the test message from the spirit of Mr. Myers, the question would be settled once for all. The Materialist would be confounded; science itself would reel under the shock. To-morrow the news would flash over the world that the future life had been proved beyond the shadow of a doubt. The papers would be teeming with the news—the greatest revelation, thanks to Myers' foresight, the world had ever known.

We give the result in Sir Oliver Lodge's own words:—

On the envelope being opened, however, it was found that there was no resemblance between its actual contents and what was alleged by the script (of Mrs. Verrall) to be contained in it. It has, then, to be reported that this one experiment failed, and it cannot be denied that the failure is disappointing.<sup>1</sup>

Sir Oliver Lodge says "this one experiment failed"; but it is not the only failure. Dr. Hodgson, another member of the S.P.R., the exposé of Madame Blavatsky, also left a test letter behind, with the same result. Besides this, he "left behind him many private papers written in cipher. The key to the cipher is unknown to anyone now living." He has promised to reveal it, but has not done so yet. He was unable to give the solution to two charades of his own composition. Podmore, who gives the above particulars, adds:—

He made many statements about his childhood, some true, some false, many unverified. His sister, to whom all the messages were sent, wrote: "To my mind there is nothing striking in any of the statements." She pro-

<sup>1</sup> Sir Oliver Lodge, *The Survival of Man*, p. 123.

pounded in turn three test questions, to which the trance intelligence gave no reply. Moreover, the Piper-Hodgson (that is, the spirit of Hodgson, communicating through the mediumship of Mrs. Piper), when questioned by a sister, could not remember the name of his schoolmaster in Melbourne. We have seen already that the Piper-Hodgson failed in England to recognize some of his intimate friends.<sup>1</sup>

That there are many people who honestly believe they receive messages from the dead I have no difficulty in believing. Those who have studied the history of witchcraft know that many witches were condemned to death on their own confession for having intercourse with the Devil, perhaps relying upon the power of the Devil to rescue them at the last moment. Flammarion, the French astronomer, has related the trust he once reposed in the spirits, and how he was disillusionized. He tells us:—

As is well known, I have been one of the stoutest apostles of Spiritualism. I always believed I was having regular intercourse with the other world. Galileo's spirit never failed to come to me when summoned. His revelations about the appearance and manners of the inhabitants of other planets were incorporated in my writings always with the utmost confidence till modern instruments discovered five satellites of Jupiter and nine of Saturn, whereas what I believed was the spirit of Galileo always affirmed to me that Jupiter had four moons and Saturn eight. At first I felt sure the astronomers must be mistaken, but now I have seen with my own eyes. Therefore, as it is inadmissible that real spirits could err or jest, evidently my intercourse with Galileo was a long delusion. I acknowledge it frankly and without shame, because I have acted in good faith in this matter and refuse to lend support to error.<sup>2</sup>

In last week's article, the figures "1310," in the quotation from Dr. Mercier, should have been "1310."

(To be continued.) W. MANN.

## Shameless Inconsistency!

### II.

(Concluded from p. 508).

BELIEVING always in the efficacy of the "concrete" rather than disquisitions on the "abstract," it has been rather a habit to collect from the land of "Who's Who?" some of the examples of how they engineer their lives with their double standard of morality and ethics.

Of late, it has been unpopular, almost dangerous, to ventilate any views against birth-limitation. Bigger and yet bigger populations, so as to secure bigger and yet bigger armies, has been the cry in every land. The clerical purists and prudes have been extra busy in airing their half-baked ideas on sociology and economics, and the consequence is, that the papers provide the drollest commentary of the "mixed grill" which some call popular "thought," but which is so often the emptiest of rhetoric and foul gas; the empty stuff so contemptuously treated by a great judge in the House of Lords, when he stigmatized some much-quoted words of Lord Mansfield as mere rhetoric, and as of no value as law—rhetorical flatulence, which has been treated as law for years; and it is interesting to note similar happenings in connection with the teachings of the Church in regard to marriage and family, and mark the attitude of the clerics when it comes to a question of putting the teachings into practice.

Keeping in mind the axiom so stressed by King George V. that the State is built upon the family, and

keeping in mind the claim by the Church that "only" by a marriage "sanctified by the Church formula" can a family be soundly built, it is interesting to take note of the attitude of Church personages when acting in any official or quasi-official position which calls into play some expression of authority.

By the unfair local power which the clergy have in the course of years been able to get, they now command an altogether too big and important share of almost every form of Local Government Board work, such as on Boards of Guardians, infirmaries, almost all forms of schools, and a detailed study of all such will prove to anyone the all-round evil of the sacerdotal slime.

A few samples from a collection of some hundreds will prove the truth of this contention.

The *Farnham Herald*, of July 27, 1907, in reporting the proceedings of the Alton Board of Guardians, mentioned the application of the "porter labour master" and the "assistant matron" for permission to get married.

The Chairman of the Board was, of course, a cleric, a canon of the Church of England, by name Theobald, and he was supported at this meeting by three other clerics of sorts, the Rev. A. C. Machlachlan, the Rev. H. Wheat, the Rev. C. Hopkins, this last being, I think, a Roman Catholic, and, therefore, to be excused if holding anti-marriage views; there were also one or two women Guardians—but you never know what to expect of them.

Leaving out of consideration the impertinence, the indignity of one public servant having to beg of some other public servant permission to get married, permission to be adult, permission to be a citizen; keeping in mind that there were several ministers of religion pledged to support the holy rite of marriage—leaving out of consideration the "Right"—we have in the reply of the Board, as voiced by the Rev. Canon Theobald, the clearest proof of the "shameless" disregard of loudly professed principles: "They can get married if they like, but they cannot retain their posts if they do."

It may seem a far cry to go back to the Alton Board but quite recently, at another Board in the same district, a new proof of the continuity of spirit and method of which so much is made when it serves some fresh tyranny, presented an opportunity to raise a fresh protest.

The *Farnham Herald*, of November 18, 1916, reporting a Guardian meeting, gives an account dealing with the penalization of a nurse for the crime of getting married without first having secured permission of the Board. At the Board table there were one or two military men, one or two lawyers, one or two women, at least one parson; all, one would think, persons concerned in upholding the dignity of marriage, the cause of morality, and, not least, the increase of the birth-rate. But the committee, the shylocks of bumbledom, cried for their bond, and felt that they must enforce the penalty in order that it might be seen that the Board meant what they said. The £10 bond must be enforced; morality, religion, law, and justice is of small account when there is a bond.

This case, like the Alton one, being in the diocese of Winchester, and in the town which has the honour of containing the official residence of the Bishop, seemed to warrant—and demand—a direct approach to the Bishop.

But in the opinion of the reverend big-wig the matter was not of sufficient importance, or the letter was not in sufficiently humble terms to suit the official supervisor of morality of the Union, or else contained too much truth to please, so the shepherd, called officially "Edward Winton," took occasion by raising a false

<sup>1</sup> Podmore, *The Newer Spiritualism*, p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> *English Mechanic*, July 28, 1899.

issue to ride off—outside a pulpit they are shy of fight.

It is, perhaps, no part of a bishop's job to support a mere "labour-master porter" in his desire to be a citizen, or to help a nurse to comfort a soldier, broken in our wars when he returns to his native land and lover, in the hope of making a new start in life by taking a wife, and founding a home and a family; that's no part of Winton's job, whatever it may have been, if he had remained in a more democratic station, and with the name of Rev. Edward Stuart Talbot, D.D. It suited the mood of the bishop to make a charge of blustering discursiveness against the writer, winding up with a reference to the Alton case as being years old, which of almost all pleas is the poorest sort, in the case of an officer who makes use of a signature which claims its most important sanction from a far-reaching antiquity, that a bishop continues all the time.

This is the sort of conduct which justifies a statement made by the Rev. H. S. Woolcombe, Vicar of Armley, when he says that the Church, founded on democratic principles and the mother of all democracies, is, of itself, the most undemocratic of the institutions of the kingdom" (*Daily Telegraph*, January 18, 1917).

It is interesting to note that this same H. S. Woolcombe, when on the Bethnal Green Board of Guardians, took part with the Rev. J. E. Watts-Ditchfield, now Bishop of Chelmsford, in a fight in favour of morality and marriage, and against the official celibacy craze so cordially supported by the Local Government Board.

St. Giles's, Bloomsbury, is on record for having discharged an officer for getting married *sans* permission.

During the last few weeks the Chiswick District Council advertised for a man and wife without encumbrance, and when the attention of the President of the Local Government Board was drawn to the fact, he wrote that the discretion of the local authorities might be trusted to regard the claims of family life. This in spite of public advertisements to the contrary.

Some while back the Daventry Board of Guardians advertised for "Young Married Couple, without encumbrances"; and here, again, it was left to two ministers to put up a protest, one of them putting his finger right on the spot by charging the Guardians on the score of an attack on Christian morality, saying that "the Guardians were not merely encouraging race-suicide, but attempting to enforce it."

From the reports of almost every public and quasi-public body in the kingdom, in almost every department of employment, this same shameless contradiction: pulpit and public encouragement of marriage on the grounds of religion and morality, and the same persistent "They can get married if they like, but they must leave their job if they do." The Rev. Canon Theobald *plus* the Rev. R. Meddings crystallize what is one of the most emphatic denials of our much-vaunted theory of religion ever put on record, for it is the formation of a complete indictment of every detail of our social, ethical, and political system, the so-called religious claims first and foremost.

T. SHORE.

### Glen Beauty.

TERRIBLE and more terrible, with the passage of time, becomes the human carnage, heavier and heavier become the burdens on the shoulders of humanity, darker and darker loom the clouds that cover the fair face of the sun. Thundering reverberations of devilishly ingenious guns still deafen our ears. Ghastly shades, in ever increasing numbers, still tread the lonely road to crowded graves. Farther and farther into soul of society

penetrates the subtle poison of reaction. The future fight becomes daily a struggle whose intensity develops in perspective with its postponement. It will try the bravest of hearts. It will test the strongest of spirits. Idle prophecy, perhaps, it may be to forecast the severity of this intellectual warfare; but the protection and strengthening influence militarism affords all the reactionary aspects of society can scarcely be over-estimated.

So it is that peace seems to have become possessed of a new and more joyful meaning than before; and when we pass through the old beech and ivy robed archway, and walk up the avenue towards the house that has been to us a place of materialized peace, the real value of quietude floods our beings, and we wish never to leave it.

Tranquility of a degree unknown to the world resides here. Restfulness that men deem folly has nestled down within the walls of our home. Happiness is imprisoned between the beech hedges, and lingers within the glens, and uses the hills as its recreation-ground. Peace abides here in all its fulness, even in all its majesty. The ordinary everyday occurrences share not a little of its regal raiment; and difficult as it is to forget the bloodstained mad world, with its tragic infinitely sad confusions, we can, for a little, let it slip our memories.

Peace is always more powerfully active than war; it is more valuable; it is more fruitful. Peace even produces war, and ultimately conquers it; and, however absurd it may seem, in the end war must come pleadingly to peace, asking that it may lay its weary head on her restful bosom. We discover the truth of this when the shrieking incoherencies grow dim in our ears, when the lurid streaks of conflict fade from our vision, and then we forgive the sentimentalist for speaking truthfully at the right time.

We climbed the hill in the forenoon, and risked our necks on a sledge that enjoyed burying its nose in the tufted grass. We explored the woods and glens in the afternoon. We dozed before a huge log fire in the evening until Nature awakened a vibrant chord in the complicated being of Mainie drawing her to the window. She unbarred the shutters and peeped out.

"Mack!" she whispered. "Come and see this!"

I said farewell to the man who wrote the Hymn to Proserpine. I knew what would happen.

"Look! See there!" she said. After a minute or two of mental concentration I could see them. On my life, I swear, I saw them, and Mainie can back me up. Hundreds of winter sprites of the fairy family were dancing around the rhoddy bushes on the lawn. They were clad in bright green garments. Their pink feet shone as they flitted above the snow. Curly hair streamed out from the little heads into the moonrays like silken threads of gold alive with light. These tiny strangers were radiantly happy, and as they danced on the snow-carpet they sang the quaintest of delightful melodies that ever one could hear.

Mainie spoiled the picture, for we went out to come into closer acquaintance with them, and to discover they had disappeared. But they had not taken the beauty with them into their old-fashioned home amongst the tree roots, as Mainie says.

Nature had robed herself in snow. Lawns, and paths, and terraces were covered with a glittering mantle of the purest white. Through the silvery filagree of tree branches streamed the moonrays. Bushes and hedges sparkled with millions of miniature lights. And down the slope to the road stood the pine strip, darker because of the snow light, impenetrable to the moonbeams, guarding the house like a sentinel who disregarded

not one word of his duties, black-browed, immobile, statueque.

After walking round the lawns we took the garden path to Glen Beauty, and in a few minutes we entered the woods. Overhead hung heavy pine foliage that transformed the trees into a huge natural cathedral along whose aisle we walked. Here and there the pathway twined into the light: but, with a few steps, we were again the quiet-footed, soft-tongued visitants of Nature's Holy of Holies. Through the restless windows, for the pines kept company with oaks and elders, sycamores, elms, and ashes, filtered queer gleams of light. On strange places they fell. Within a cleft of an old oak we saw a chaffinch's nest. Despite the frost and snow it was as cosily dry as if it had been finished but yesterday. In the hollowed bough of an elm one shaft of moonrays found the dainty little home of a wren; and another of the moon's searchlights played upon two black rabbits that were nibbling the juicy bark of a fallen sapling beside an entanglement of snow-tufted wild rose and bramble bushes.

Down and up glens we followed the aisle pathway, over fir-built bridges, along the shelving sides of fern-clad rocks, under archways of intertwined trees and bushes, until we reached Glen Beauty. In our ears rang the music of its creamy waters as they merrily flashed their way to the meadow burn. The moon was high in the heavens above the hill. Deep upon the bracken on the other side lay the snow. Each little bush that clung, beside the trees, on the precipitous declivity beneath our feet, bore its soft burden of white light rivalling the trees in its loveliness.

Mainie went into silent raptures: we had never seen Glen Beauty so entrancingly beautiful. The spirit of the place we loved deepened within us. Missionless it was, yet its knowledge, as it were, of our needs seemed as deep as that of genius. It brought us a message of peace. Reasonless it was, but its tranquility was profound like that of wisdom. Voiceless it was, yet the mellow music of the waters sang of joy to our hearts. In the quietude were no echoes of disaster, no reflections of folly, none of the brutalities that make men mad, none of the crimes that open the lives of women and children to endless sorrow and suffering. From the outside world peace had come here to rest awhile.

As we leaned over the fir railing and let the loveliness purify our hearts, we thought of the contrast the scene afforded to the lives of men and women. We could not help it. Here were light and purity; there darkness and mystery. Here was peace; there war. Here were the things that gave mankind the happiness for which we long; there nothing but striving and its hopelessness.

Life might be sweeter and cleaner did we love beauty more. We would not be content with the dirt, the squalor, the ugliness, and bitterness of the ingredients of our daily tasks if we knew what beauty was, and how easily it could become part of us and part of our everyday environment. We would not suffer the horrors to exist, nor would we tolerate the man who solemnly told us they were the fires through which we travelled to God.

There was no deity in the moonrays that turned the glen into a wonderland of joy and loveliness; there was no deity in its influence upon us; there was no deity in the happiness that stole through us. God remained as far from us as he does from his own children. Here was the peace God could not give to peace-craving nations—the peace that strengthens those engaged in a more fateful conflict than that which gives nothing and takes all.

To us the peace of Glen Beauty was the peace that shone in the eyes of the pioneers of all times. It was the peace the downtrodden and oppressed dreamed of and never experienced. It was the peace that glimmered far on the road of progress, and is reflected in the hearts of all revolutionaries—from the man Jesus Christ, if he lived, to the man who, to day, is spending his weary hours in prison that his conscience may still be free. It was the peace that every sensitive soul sees shining in the future; and Mainie and I discovered some of that peace in moonlit loveliness of snow-clad Glen Beauty.

ROBERT MORELAND.

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## Correspondence.

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### SOCIALISTS, FREETHOUGHT, AND RELIGION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—There is virtually nothing left at issue between Mr. Effel and myself. Mr. Effel thinks that Christianity is an obstacle to progress—so do I. Mr. Effel thinks that Marxism and Christianity are mutually exclusive—so do I. Mr. Effel asks me if I "have ever met a Marxist who was a Christian?" I have met quite a lot of people who *thought* they were Marxist and *said* they were Christian, and weird "wild fowl" they were, too! The trouble is, they were perfectly sincere. "This kind is not cast out save by prayer and fasting." As for the "psychologic bond"—we shall see!

THOS. A. JACKSON.

### CHRISTIANITY AND COLOUR CONCEIT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I do not often defend Christianity; it is seldom accused of anything of which it is not guilty. But I think your article of July 29, in which you say colour conceit is "an offshoot of Christianity," is not true to history. Colour conceit is an independent growth, which the Christian Church has absorbed because she could not remove it. She absorbed the Christmas and Easter festivals for the same reason; she is absorbing the nebular theory and Darwinism for the same reason now.

Originally Christians classified men thus—(1) true believers, (2) heretics, (3) heathen. And they disliked all cross-classification as tending to distract attention from the main one. National patriotism was never regarded with much approval by the Church in its first fifteen centuries; still less would the colour line have been approved—if it had existed. But it did not exist. In the ages when Christianity was strongest, the Western Christians no more thought of despising Arabs or Indians than we would think of despising Germans. There was hatred, and curiosity, but no scorn. It is true our forefathers thought themselves more civilized than the African negroes, but the explanation is simple; they *were*! It was not till the seventeenth century that the West began to draw ahead of the East. The main reason of the gain is clear enough; Christianity was less powerful than Islam or Hinduism, and therefore did not succeed so well in suppressing thought. A secondary reason may be found in the alphabet we inherit from the Phœnicians. Imperfect as it is, it gave the printing-press and education a far better chance than the Arab alphabet or the 214 signs of Chinese ever could give them. A third reason is perhaps the accident that one man of genius, Francis Bacon, was born in the west. Whatever the reasons, the advance was real. And during the eighteenth century we find a subtle conceit creeping into the literature of the Western Aryans—especially that written by men who had not helped the advance or had hindered it, and who individually were not superior to the members of the races which had fallen behind. But this tendency has grown stronger as Christianity has grown weaker. The more pious Christians have always opposed it, and still oppose it, not on the true individualist grounds, but on the same ground as of old—it is a cross-classification to the classification they want to emphasize.

C. HARPUR.

### On Seeing Princetown Church.

Princetown is proud of the fact that its Parish Church was built by the forced labour of American and French prisoners of war.

By sweating slaves were temples built,  
And captives churches raise,  
Wherein the saved may thankful lilt  
Their grateful hymns of praise.

But still our God is Lord of Love;  
He sets the prisoner free;  
And any pious priest can prove  
The Church's sanctity.      PERCY RIPLEY.

### "To any Clergyman in England."

THERE is no God—You need not pray:  
Save your full words for such as they  
Who took in youth the battle trail.  
Some will live and some will fail,  
But only their red blood can pay.

You need not kiss your "man of clay,"  
Or crucifix, or Book and say—  
"O God Forgive." 'Twill not avail.  
There is no God.

There is no God—Yet these men lay  
Their bodies down on War's red way  
For love of man. And your sweet tale  
Is foolish now. Behind the veil,  
They too have seen—for France to-day.  
There is no God.

C. W. B.

### HEAVEN.

Fish (fly-replete in depth of June,  
Dawdling away their wat'ry noon)  
Ponder deep wisdom, dark or clear,  
Each secret fishy hope or fear.  
Fish say, they have their Stream and Pond,  
But is there anything Beyond?  
This life cannot be all, they swear,  
For how unpleasant, if it were!  
One may not doubt that, somehow, Good  
Shall come of Water and of Mud;  
And, sure, the reverent eye must see  
A Purpose in Liquidity.  
We darkly know, by Faith we cry,  
The future is not Wholly Dry,  
Mud unto mud!—Death eddies near—  
Not here the appointed End, not here!  
But somewhere, beyond Space and Time;  
In wetter water, slimier slime!  
And there (they trust) there swimmeth One  
Who swam ere rivers were begun,  
Immense, of fishy form and mind,  
Squamous, omnipotent, and kind;  
And under that Almighty Fin,  
The littlest fish may enter in.  
Oh! never fly conceals a hook,  
Fish say, in the Eternal Brook,  
But more than mundane weeds are there,  
And mud, celestially fair;  
Fat caterpillars drift around,  
And paradisaal grubs are found;  
Unfading moths, immortal flies,  
And the worm that never dies.  
And in that Heaven of all their wish,  
There shall be no more land, say fish.

—Rupert Brooke, "1914 and Other Poems."

Lord Haldane says "an educated man does not take starvation wages or live in a slum." Was he thinking of the dear clergy when he made the remark?

### 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.

MR. A. D. HOWELL SMITH'S DISCUSSION CLASS (N. S. S. Office, 62 Farringdon Street): Thursday, Aug 23, at 7.30.

##### OUTDOOR.

BATTERSEA PARK GATES (Queen's Road): 11.15, George Rule, a Lecture.

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

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

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley Road): 7, Mr. Burke, "The Cobwebs of Religion."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill): 6.30, Percy S. Wilde, a Lecture.

REGENT'S PARK BRANCH N. S. S.: 3.30, "Our Conversion to Secularism." Messrs. Doughty, Miller, Storey, etc.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3, F. Shaller, a Lecture.

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

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Mr. Shaller; 3.15, Messrs. Yeates and Dales; 6.30, Messrs. Kells and Hyatt.

### GOD AND THE AIR-RAID.

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