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Views and Opinions.

About God.

A gentleman belonging to what W. S. Gilbert called "the dignified clergy" has been getting into trouble for saying that God had sent the heavy rains as a mark of his displeasure at Sunday labour on allotments. Subsequently he explained that all he meant was that people did not pay enough attention to God—did not give him enough of their time, or confidence, or trust. This, we may suppose, is really a serious offence—from the point of view of a clergyman. For in practice trust in God means trust in the clergy. It means giving *them* a portion of your time—and cash. It means subscribing to Church funds, and, if your belief is not lively enough to make you a pillar of the Church, imitating a famous Lord Chancellor and becoming a buttress. From A to Z of the religious order, from medicine-man to modern priest, "trust in God" means that. The parson speaks to you in the name of God. He collects your offerings in the name of God—even though he spends them in his own. The clergy are God's representatives on earth. And when we look at *them* we can only hope, for God's sake, that the representation is not a faithful likeness.

* * *

A Question.

But let us get back to God, and the allotments, and the weather. It is settled, apparently, that God was not responsible for the rain and the damage done. He did not cause the rain, neither did he prevent it. It happened without his connivance, perhaps without his knowledge. Very good. That relieves him of responsibility; but it also rules him out of the department of meteorology. We know he has nothing to do with physics, or astronomy, or geology, or chemistry, and various other sciences; but hitherto he has been left with a little influence on the weather. True, after creating and controlling whole planetary systems, this is not a very dignified post. It is like offering the job of local tax-collector to a man who has been Chancellor of the Exchequer. Still, even managing the weather is something. But if this is not to be left

him, then one feels impelled to ask, "What the Devil does he do?" or "What the deuce does he exist for?" A God who does nothing might just as well not exist. There is no benefit to anyone in mere existence. Things, or persons, are to be reckoned with on account of their activities, good or bad. And *if* God exists, will someone be good enough to explain what it is that he does *now*?" So far as one can see, he does nothing—and he has a large army of clergy to help him get through the business.

* * *

The Unimportance of Deity.

Pseudo-philosophic defenders of Deity solemnly assure us that we must believe in God, because unless we assume his existence an understanding of Nature is impossible. By this they mean no more than that we cannot in the present state of our knowledge explain everything to our satisfaction, and that our widest scientific generalizations leave us with an unexplained residuum. We all admit this; but ignorance is no ground on which to base a positive statement. If we cannot explain a thing, we have a good reason for further search, a justification of silence, but no argument whatever in favour of belief. Besides, the difficulty is an imaginary one. In practical life, people see that scientific generalizations work in a quite dependable manner. They see that the belief in God is of no *practical* value whatever. Belief in God without a knowledge of science is of no use to anyone. Given a knowledge of science, the belief in God adds nothing of value. There is not a position of importance in the world to which a knowledge of theology is counted as essential. Natural forces affect all alike, and, observing this, the Freethinker concludes that our practical interest stops this side of Deity. God may have an interest in finding out man. For the life of us, we cannot see that man has any interest in finding out about a God who does nothing.

* * *

The Logic of Life.

And is there not something that calls for explanation in the fact of man ignoring God? Man has been in the world for a very long time, and he did not commence his thinking career by ignoring the gods. Quite the contrary, he spent a large part of his time in attending to their supposed desires. It was only as he grew older, mentally and socially, that he turned his back on them. And is not *that* suggestive? Facts are not things that men discover and then put on one side. Beliefs that are vital to welfare are not lightly cast away. A fact is a stubborn and undeniable thing; a useful fact a prized possession. How comes it, then, that we have learned to neglect God? And not only neglect him, but are quite unconscious that we lose anything by our neglect. Does not that argue that we are neglecting nothing of importance? It is quite useless the believer telling the unbeliever how much he has lost. *We* know all about his position; we have been there. He does not know our position; he has yet to arrive. A believer lecturing an Atheist on how much he has lost is like a

confirmed drunkard instructing a teetotaler on what he has missed by not getting drunk. Health with whisky-drinking cannot prove whisky essential to prevent disease. Health without whisky does prove that it is quite unnecessary. The testimony of one man without religion must always be better evidence than that of a thousand with it. The pressure of fact is behind the Atheist. The logic of life is on his side. The world grows to ignore God, because the slowly maturing wisdom of the world proves that the belief in God is of no value. It is the logic of life *versus* the logic of mere theory. And the logic of life wins.

* * *

Practice versus Theory.

Of course, the world is growing to ignore God. How could it be otherwise? Experience may not be always expressed in words, or formulated in theory, but it is there. We may profess to believe that God cures disease, but we place more reliance on the doctor. We may pray for a safe voyage over the seas, but we rely upon a stout ship and a good navigator. We religiously profess to believe that God is on the side of right in the present War, but we rely upon men and armaments. We go on professing God in theory and ignoring him in practice until the incompatibility of the alliance becomes pronounced and a separation results. And this is only what one might expect. Practice is always before theory; it summarizes life rather than dissects it. And this separation of theory from practice, this trusting God in words and ignoring him in acts really means that the forces of life are too insistent for religious doctrines. Our beliefs are like forms of life, ultimately amenable to the law of the survival of the fittest. If they are useful they flourish and increase. If they are harmful they languish and decay. If they are merely harmless they may persist for an indefinite time. Practice tells, and man's lost confidence in God is an evidence that the confidence is unwarranted. It is to the misfortune of the clergy that men can neither be fooled nor go on fooling themselves for ever.

* * *

Creatures of Belief.

Emerson said that theological doctrines were the "soul's" mumps and measles and whooping-cough. He added that a simple mind, one that had not been distorted by training, would know nothing of these enemies. Unfortunately, few of us are permitted to grow up the possessors of a "simple mind." Our training from infancy to maturity, and social forces from maturity to the grave, lead us to place things last that should be first, and emphasize as of the greatest consequence things that are of no importance whatever. Apart from these inculcated notions, we are convinced that none would to-day bother at all about the question of "God." Atheists get on well enough without God, and it is hard to see where the Theist benefits with him. And yet the Atheist could not ignore God with impunity if he really mattered. If you ignore bad drains, or breathe bad air, you pay the price sooner or later. But no one suffers from not believing in God; no one but God. And that is what the lament of the clergy comes to. God suffers because gods, like kings, only exist so long as men believe in them. The gods are born of human credence; disbelief in them signs their death warrant.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

In an advertisement of the Poor Clergy Relief Corporation the patrons and president are stated to be the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Bishop of London. These saintly ecclesiastics share £40,000 yearly between them.

The Newer Dogmatism.

THE City Temple, London, opened forty-three years ago, has had a remarkable history. For the first twenty-eight years its pulpit was occupied by Dr. Joseph Parker, one of the most famous pulpit orators of the nineteenth century. Though essentially orthodox, he was often suspected of heterodoxy; while his enemies, who were many, charged him with insincerity arising from his ruling passion, love of popularity. This charge, however, was generally made by men much less popular than himself, a fact which almost proved that it sprang from jealousy. The truth seems to be that Dr. Parker was naturally eccentric, impulsive, pugnacious, fundamentally honest, open-hearted, and endowed with a highly original and imaginative mind. He was followed by Mr. R. J. Campbell, who, finding the City Temple famous, made it notorious. For a time he was intensely evangelical, appealing directly and with considerable force to the emotions. Then a strong wave of Rationalism set in; orthodoxy was violently attacked, and its exponents addressed as "Liars"; supernaturalism lost its charms, and was to be resorted to as seldom as possible. This was the era of the New Theology which, while it lasted, was characterized by enormous enthusiasm and exasperating dogmatism. During this period, Humanism, pure and simple, or Secularism, was knocking more or less loudly at the door, but never succeeded in getting fairly in, supernaturalism being still in too strong evidence. To be a spectator of the New Theology movement was by no means an edifying experience, for it was chiefly a movement of bitter denunciation and arraignment of the Old Theology, the orthodox God himself coming in for his full share of abuse. We now learn (*A Spiritual Pilgrimage*, pp. 167-266) that during this time of acrid controversy, Mr. Campbell was under the spell of one or other of the representatives of progressive European thought, such as Professors Eucken and Bergson. Later on other influences, of a reactionary character, laid hold of him; the emphasis of his teaching, as he called it, changed, and gradually he returned to the orthodoxy he had so vehemently sneered at and condemned; and now, at last, having renounced Nonconformity and all its errors, he styles himself "Priest of St. Philip's Cathedral Church, Birmingham."

From a homiletic point of view, from Dr. Parker to Mr. Campbell was a step downwards, but from Mr. Campbell to Dr. Fort Newton, the third minister of the City Temple, may reasonably be described as a step upwards. Dr. Newton, too, is a New Theologian, but of a much quieter, milder type than his predecessor. He cannot rise to the torrential eloquence of Dr. Parker, nor play on the magnetic note peculiar to Mr. Campbell; but he possesses qualities which both his predecessors lacked, chief among which are judgment and weightiness. He has one thing, however, in common with all occupants of "the sacred box," namely, dogmatism. Curiously enough, he is a dogmatic despiser and contemner of dogmatism. The historic creeds are all wrong, but he and those who agree with him are all right. A sermon published in the *Christian Commonwealth* for August 22 may be selected as furnishing a fine illustration of his general theological attitude. The text is Hebrews xii. 27: "And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken, may remain." If you consider those words in the light thrown upon them by the context, you will find that what they predict is the passing away of all created things, which are destructible, in order that the indestructible, or unshakable, things may remain.

Now, after all so-called created things have been removed, what can there be left? When heaven and earth are no more, is it not sheer folly to talk of anything as still remaining? More strangely still, the text assures us that all created objects are to vanish that certain other uncreated substances may flourish abundantly.

Let us now turn to Dr. Newton's discourse founded upon that astonishing passage. The first thing we observe is that the reverend gentleman tears his text clean away from its context in the Epistle. He may justify himself on the plea that he does that in order to bring it to bear upon a new context found in the world-conditions obtaining at this moment. Well, then, let us take the War with all its unspeakable atrocities, and see how the teaching of this Epistle applies to it. Dr. Newton says:—

God is in it all, behind it, above it, working out his awful will. If the old order is breaking up, passing away in catastrophe, and leaving only a wreck behind, it is God who is doing it.

Who can really believe in and bow down in adoration before such a Deity? Then the preacher has the audacity to assert that all this frightful, brutal carnage, which never ceases day or night, is no wanton, haphazard destruction, but "a shaking down of old outworn encumbrances, and a making ready for a new and better building." Are we to believe, can we, dare we, believe that those brave, fine young fellows on every battlefield who are being mown down by the million, are to be described as "old outworn encumbrances?" This preacher goes further still and dogmatically declares that "this shaking is not meant simply to remove what is no longer useful, but to reveal the eternal things that cannot be shaken." Can you conceive of a Being of boundless wisdom and love deliberately slaughtering countless myriads of young men in order to "reveal the eternal things that cannot be shaken"? For veritable believers in God no greater blasphemy is possible than to talk as Dr. Newton does here. Is it only in that fiendish manner that it is possible for mankind to "receive a kingdom that cannot be moved?" For our part we would infinitely rather go without the kingdom than obtain it at such terrific and senseless sacrifices.

Now, what are the things that abide upon which we are exhorted to lay hold in these troubled times, and not to give way to panic in the midst of the upheaval? We agree that such things do exist, but positively decline to believe that a God worthy of our faith and worship could only reveal and establish them by such a devastating conflict such as is now making the Western world a veritable hell. It is quite possible that the War may result in some permanent benefit to mankind, though we may regard it as being in itself the greatest of evils; but what we point blank refuse to admit is that a Deity of infinite justice and tenderness is in it, behind it, and above it, and using it as an instrument to accomplish his own beneficent designs. And yet, incredible as it may seem, this is how Dr. Newton proceeds:—

First of all, whatever befall, God remains our refuge and our redemption, yea, "though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." As for man, he is of the present only, and a brief to-morrow; but God abides. Not the God of our clumsy creeds, not the God of our hair-splitting subtleties, but the real God of things as they are, whose designs are vaster than we can dream, and whose love is deeper than we can fathom. He it is who is shaking down our little systems as of old he shook down the empires of Egypt, Assyria, Rome, and the rest.

That is how the newer dogmatism glorifies itself and denounces the older. One would imagine that Dr.

Newton is prepared to endorse the Bishop of London's foolish saying that this War is a "glorious day of the Lord," or as Dr. Orchard *used* to call it, "God's operation"; but is he? Listen:—

Deny it who may or will, the Eternal Christ is still with us here, a living Presence even in these days when Mars seems supreme. At once our Captain and Comrade, he is fighting us while fighting with us—the keen edge of his sword felt in our innermost hearts—the Enemy of all that is evil within us and the Ally of all that is good.

If Dr. Newton's teaching is true, the greatest of all bunglers is God, and the most notoriously inefficient of all Saviours is the Eternal Christ, however emotionally real their presence may be to City Temple worshippers.

Apart from God and Christ, the things that cannot be shaken, as enumerated in this sermon, are typically human, and as old as the hills, such as "the splendour of courage," and the wonderful resources of the soul. We flatly deny that these things were unknown as grand realities in human life before the War broke out. We maintain that courage and endurance have been practised on a larger or smaller scale from prehistoric times down to this; but, in any case, to think of the King of kings and Lord of lords as sending this horrible conflict on purpose to bring them into play, is an inexcusable libel upon God, and an unforgivable insult to man. Good people act in accordance with their principles even in time of war; but Dr. Newton forgets that to thousands of other people the War is simply an opportunity of indulging in the lowest forms of selfishness and greed, such as even they never dared to exhibit in peace times. Did God send the War for their benefit also? The preacher dwells proudly upon one side of the picture, and prudently ignores the other, as the preachers of all ages have been in the habit of doing.

J. T. LLOYD.

The Shadow of the Sword.

War Poems from the West Country.

Plain Song 1914-1916. By Eden Phillpotts. Heinemann. 1917.

IN the intervals of such leisure as can come to an author who has won great and deserved success in the two arts of novel-writing and drama, Mr. Eden Phillpotts has sought relief by trying his hand at verse. To him, as to other authors, there have come moods which did not seem to lend themselves to the medium of the story or the play; lyrical moods that called aloud for the gracious help of rhyme and rhythm. These have accumulated till there were sufficient to fill a small volume, and he has issued them under the modest title, *Plain Song 1914-1916*.

The poems are mainly concerned with the present world-war, and Mr. Phillpotts sings of the conflict from the point of view of an Englishman. That is, he believes in war only as a last resort; but having accepted the challenge of the aggressors, he will fight with the passion of a righteous cause. His poems are eloquent and beautiful expressions of the moods of the fighting Englishman, who is a civilian rather than a soldier. To his credit, he has not ignored the sordid and terrible side of warfare, and there are passages that bleach the colour from the romance of war, and others that cause the optimistic faith that is in one to go out in darkness like a blown candle-flame. Let me quote in illustration the piece he calls "War":—

They know war who freeze and drown and moil
And breathe the air of corpses and breed lice;
Foul to the aching eyes with filth they toil—
Brothers, perchance, who made the sacrifice.

Thigh-deep in slough they stand, where, like a den,
 Opens the trench of torment; for a space
 They fire and load and fire and load; and then
 One brother's mangled heart splashes the other's face.

And they know war who, shattered, rent in twain,
 Their living fragments still with power to think,
 Half men, drag carnal rags to yonder drain
 Raging for water, ravening for drink
 Though it be blood. Their last expiring lust
 Denied them, there a little while they roll,
 Unseen, unheard, upon the reeking dust
 In final agony of flesh and mind and soul.

To this the pomp and splendour of it come
 Behind the burden of their country's yoke,
 Behind the bravery, behind the drum,
 Behind the Fetich that they all invoke:
 Life, sacred life, without one pang of ruth,
 In mad contempt of human sanctity,
 Squandered for doubtful honour, doubtful truth—
 All doubtful, save the scorn at frantic reason's plea.

Mr. Eden Phillpotts' poetry is a scholar's verse. The widest knowledge inspires his happiest phrases, and there is no narrowness in his terrible impeachment of Militarism. Listen to his lines on "Germania":—

We do not smite a nation, but a pest;
 Humanity makes reasonable quest
 To free a noble slave.
 Full deep she groans and faints, and fainting feels
 Archaic torture of a tyrant's heels
 Grinding her to her grave.
 Possessed of devils now, mad with her woes,
 She wounds the world and turns her friends to foes;
 But cast her devils down
 And broken, humbled, contrite, healed and sane:
 Oh may she shine her glorious self again—
 Pearl in Europa's crown.

And they accurst, who bred this in her heart,
 Shall from the councils of mankind depart,
 While over sea and shore
 The silver trumpets of the sunrise cry
 That each pursue her solemn destiny
 By blood and iron no more.

Enmity has seldom been expressed more chivalrously. Add to these verses his fine lines on "France":—

For all the wit of age and might of youth
 Wed at her sweet, deep heart—therein we sound
 A well of reason, where doth harbour truth,
 And faith and an endurance without bound.
 Most sane, most spiritual, because most sane,
 Upon her bitter road she steadfast shows
 The sacrifice majestic, while again
 Freedom's own everlasting altar flows
 With France's blood; in that most sacred stain
 Once more her own immortal genius shows.

But you have not Eden Phillpotts complete unless you add to the scholar the humanist and the lover of Nature. He loves, as few scholars really love, the sea and the sky; he can picture the death of Rupert Brooke, the young soldier-poet, in a lyric purely Pagan in its atmosphere. But he reaches a higher note in his poem on the young soldiers who fell in the War, which has the dirge-like note of a funeral march:—

Now is death only plucking flowers, he leaves
 The garnered grain and sunset-coloured fruit,
 Neither to bending bough, nor mellow root,
 Nor threshing of the amber harvest sheaves
 He comes; but where in joyous youth serene
 The sunny blossoms laugh and fear no sickle keen,
 Gone; all their promise gone, for nevermore
 Shall sun and rain rejoice to do them good,
 Or glad earth labour to create their food.
 Naked their places, and where, heretofore,
 The shining blossoms sprang that now are sped,
 Only remain the stocks who built and nourished.

No reader can take up this book of verse without gaining a further knowledge of one of the most thoughtful and keenest analysts of contemporary life, or one of our most distinguished literary craftsmen. For the thoughts set down are not only striking, but they are impressed

with notable imagination, and their form is that of beauty. Although Mr. Phillpotts emphasizes again and again the horrors and beastliness of war, he sings of it with passion and intellectual conviction. To him one figure rises from the shambles of the battlefields, and blazes with the beauty and strength of courage, and that is the radiant form of Liberty. For Mr. Phillpotts realizes that if the Moloch of Militarism is allowed to work its will, the earth would be a shambles inhabited by slaves.

Again the world is meeting might with might,
 And when the battle's fought and lost and won,
 Pray victory decree, as primal right,
 That reason also wins a kingdom in the sun.

Then shall she swiftly for our world-wide-shame,
 Bend to the Mother from her starry place
 And, in humanity's almighty name,
 For ever dry the tears upon that sacred face.

It is significant that only your freethinking poets write with real conviction and intensity about the claims of humanity. But then their faith is set upon the rock of reason, their vision undimmed by dogma. But enough has been said about a little book of verse which, no doubt, its author regards chiefly as an interlude between strenuous bouts of drama and fiction. After all, Mr. Phillpotts may truly be credited with a passion for liberty, he is a humanitarian in a genuine sense, and he is always preoccupied with noble and lofty thoughts. We hope he is the harbinger of a great brood of poets, the herald of a New World.

MIMNERMUS.

The Rise and Progress of Mental Power.

V.

(Continued from p. 539.)

ALTHOUGH language is not absolutely essential to inferential reasoning, it enormously increases the scope of psychical processes. Perceptual consciousness of coloured objects is confined, for instance, to the recognition of red as the distinguishing colour of blood, or of blue as the constant attribute of a sunlit sky. But when we possess the words for green, blue, red, etc., it becomes possible to extend our perceptions of these colours to any object displaying them. The terms "redness" or "blueness" serve as a sign of colour appearances, and denote more abstract awarenesses arising out of our percepts and receipts of objects presented to our visual organs as red or blue. From our perceptual impressions of this or that entity as red, blue, green, or yellow, will emerge a further abstraction—an idea of colour pure and simple—through a process of combining our percepts and receipts of coloured substances into an amalgamated concept of colour.

The name "man," again, embraces all our innumerable percepts and receipts of individual men. Such being the case, the term covers all the phenomena common to the various human stocks. Comprising, as it does, all the members of the animal kingdom, man among them, the term animal has an even wider significance. In truth, in all departments of objective study, the greater the necessity for generalizing the phenomena, the more comprehensive our word symbols become, and the further are their meanings removed from the relatively simple perceptions upon which they ultimately rest. With our verbal symbols

we climb into higher and higher regions of abstraction: by thinking in verbal signs we think, as it were, with the semblance of ideas: we dispense altogether with the necessity of actual images, whether of percepts or receipts:

we quit the sphere of sense, and rise to that of thought.

Darwin once half-humorously referred to mathematicians as beings gifted with a sixth sense. Yet the stupendous abstractions to which a Kingdon Clifford, Cayley, Sylvester, or Gauss, were able to rise, are all demonstrably based on animal capacity to count, and Sally, the ape, was ultimately taught to count up to nine. Upon our percepts of spatial relations, and an understanding of the simple arithmetical laws of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, are reared all the ideal achievements of the mathematician and astronomer. Savage man began by counting his digits, and his later symbols were the outcome of evolution. As Lewes said:—

Man begins by counting things, grouping them visibly (*i.e.*, receptually). He then learns to count simply the numbers, using his fingers and toes for symbols. He then substitutes abstract signs, and arithmetic begins. From this he passes to algebra, the signs of which are not merely abstract but general; and now he counts numerical relations, not numbers. From this he passes to the higher calculus of relations.

It is much the same in commercial transactions. By a system of direct exchange commodities passed from one to another. Then certain tokens were employed as money, leading up to the use of the precious metals. Now all important business dealings are settled in terms of the more abstract notes, bills, and cheques, which have supplanted the more concrete commodities or coin as symbols of exchange value. Several thousands of millions sterling are now annually settled between debtor and creditor by the bank clearing houses in London without the interchange of a single coin. The condensation of complicated industrial and commercial phenomena into a few words and figures in a ledger would be impossible apart from the symbols which bankers and traders employ.

Gradually developed out of percepts, the receipts of animals enable them to distinguish between the various aspects of their environment. Birds, sheep, and other organisms seek shelter in a storm. Their ancestral and individual percepts have elaborated instinctive receipts which mould their conduct. Aquatic-fowl alight upon land and ice in a way quite different to their descent into water. The receipts of man and other animals cause them to act differently, when moving over solid ground, than when travelling in a liquid medium. But when the receipts of solid and liquid substances reach the realm of cognition, the names "solid" and "fluid" become possible, and general concepts of these two dissimilar states of matter are at our service. The named receipts, solid and fluid, form the foundation of ascending orders of abstraction, and some of the most subtle refinements of modern physical science are based on our simplest concepts of hard and soft bodies. Language does not usher reasoning into a world in which it was previously unknown. What it really does is to combine rudimentary notions into ideas of increasing complexity. The power of the word is immense, but

it does not come upon the scene of its creative power to find only that which is without form and void; rather does it find a fair structure of no mean order of system, shaped by prior influences, and, so far as thus shaped, a veritable cosmos.

Wherever the etymology of any abstract word can be traced it is found to rest finally upon a simple receipt. In the course of involved linguistic evolution, the original words have frequently been lost. But the historical development of many terms is known. The highly abstract word "virtue" can be traced back to the

Sanscrit, *vira*, "a man." The complex term government, again, is derived from the Latin, *gubernare*, to steer a ship, yet when we survey the mass of men, virtue is seldom suggested, while, unless we remember the Navy, the word Government is rarely associated in normal times with the great shipping industry in any of its innumerable departments.

The term language, as ordinarily understood, is restricted to written and spoken words. But any system of signs which serves to convey ideas is really a language. "Thus," states Professor Broca, "speech, gesture, dactylogy, writing both hieroglyphic and phonetic are all so many kinds of language."

The germs of the sign-making faculty are present in ants, bees, and wasps. The Ecitons, which form powerfully organized ant communities, in which division of labour is maintained on a military scale, when on their plundering expeditions, show by their complex actions their faculty of inter-communication. Belt and Bates, both reliable observers, testify to this. Ingenious experiments, prosecuted by the late Lord Avebury, proved incontestably that ants are able to communicate, and that they possess a receptual capacity to realize number. Other competent observers have proved that the sign-making powers in ants and bees mainly consist in gestures produced by the insects' antennæ, although other bodily movements are also employed.

Among mammals and birds capacity for communication is common. There exists a wide difference between the hen's cluck of contentment and her alarm note, and Houzeau concluded that the fowl utters at least a dozen significant sounds. Blackbirds, thrushes, and other feathered bipeds, reveal to the interested inquirer various mental and emotional states in their calls and cries. All our domesticated animals present in their actions, attitudes, and vocal displays their ability to convey their feelings to others. The famous naturalist, Forbes, furnishes a striking instance of a male monkey's use of gesture language when begging for the body of a female just shot dead. "The animal," he states,

came to the door of the tent, and finding threats of no avail, began a lamentable moaning, and by the most expressive gestures seemed to beg for the dead body. It was given him; he took it sorrowfully in his arms and bore it away to his expecting companions. They who were witnesses of this extraordinary scene resolved never again to fire on one of the monkey race.

Other and even more remarkable cases are recorded by trustworthy witnesses concerning monkeys, while Lord Avebury taught an intelligent dog the correct use of written signs. This animal would carry a card with such words as "water," "bone," "pet me," etc., written upon it, when he wished to inform his master of his wants. Thus was established an association of ideas in the dog's mind between "the appearance of a certain number and form of written signs, and the meaning which they severally betokened."

Noises of numerous kinds are employed by animals to express their feelings, and these sounds are frequently accompanied by gestures. Even the human infant shows marked progress in tone and gesture prior to its acquisition of the faculty of speech. Among imbecile children, whose powers of articulation are permanently limited, experience proves that a fair amount of information may be acquired through the use of signs. These signs they utilize as a means of expression. Savages also employ gestures, grimaces, and intonation in conversation to a much greater degree than civilized races. So poorly developed are primitive powers of speech that tone and gesture seem necessary to supplement them. Tylor, the great anthropologist, in his *Early History of Mankind*, declares that "the array of

evidence in favour of the existence of tribes whose language is incomplete, even for things of ordinary import, is very remarkable." And this, he claims, lends strong support to the view that gesture language formed the original utterance of man, from which the later speech faculty has been imperfectly evolved among savage peoples. Burton, the linguist and traveller, states that savages, such as the Arapahos, so imperfectly pronounce the very few words of their language, that they fail to understand each other in the dark.

Children of the most advanced races, long after they are able to speak, continue to watch the gestures and facial expressions of their elders when they are anxious to fully understand their meaning. And Colonel Mallery, in his valuable *Sign Language among the North American Indians*, shows that the use of signs enables Indians of different tribes to carry on a long and detailed conversation by gesture alone. In this system of signs a cup was formed by the right hand, which, when carried to the mouth, indicated drinking. Eye-glasses were simulated by forming rings before the eyes with the thumb and index finger, while, when both palms were pressed to the temple, and the head swung from side to side, a drunken head-ache was represented. And so on through an animated conversation which covers sixteen paragraphs.

It is to be observed that primitive gesture language, in common with that of deaf mutes everywhere, is restricted to the conveyance of concrete ideas. More conventional and abstract concepts require a more developed system of articulate expression. All these facts point to the derivation of the most evolved tongues from rudimentary forms of tone and gesture. As Mallery notes:—

The insane understand and obey gestures when they have no knowledge whatever of words.....Sufferers from aphasia continue to use appropriate gestures. A stammerer, too, works his arms and features as if determined to get his thoughts out, in a manner not only suggestive of the physical struggle, but of the use of gestures as an hereditary expedient.

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

Correspondence.

ADULT SCHOOLS AND FREETHINKERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Under the above heading, a few months ago, a letter appeared in your columns, signed "Fred Hobday." Mr. Hobday strongly advocated that we, as Freethinkers, should make use of the Adult Schools, owing to the freedom in the Adult School Movement for expression of opinion. I was interested in the letter at the time because it was the Adult School Movement that brought a new line of thought into my life. I had been brought up in the narrow school of Nonconformity and belief in all the old orthodox ideas, when the Adult School started me to unthink all I thought.

The question has appealed to me with considerable force of late. Being in the Army, I miss the local Free Library and my little stock of books at home; so I troubled to take a stroll a few days ago to the nearest newsagent. I said "newsagent." When I arrived at the shop, I looked at the something about five feet ten inches behind the counter, and said, "I want something to read"; to which he invited me round his varied stock of books. I asked for William Morris, Thomas Paine, G. J. Holyoake, Shelley, Spencer, amongst others; and the reply in every case was "No." And when I ventured to ask for Omar Khayyam, he asked if I was trying to pull his leg? I smiled, and assured him I really was in earnest about my business. At last I said: "Have you a book of poems?" He said: "Sorry to disappoint you, but I have not a book of poems in the place, and you are the very first to ask for such a thing."

Now, Sir, down here there are some thousands—nay, thousands of thousands—passed through this camp since the War commenced, and to think that I am the first to inquire at the local bookstall for a book of poems is to my mind remarkable. And to think that the best of the world's writers are never asked for! I sympathize with the crowd; and had it not been for the Adult School Movement, I might have been travelling in that narrow school of sophistry to-day instead of the Freethought Movement. I hope this humble epistle will be of some mild interest to at least one Freethinker, and that they will make use of the Adult School for the expansion of Freethought.

Bovingdon Camp, Dorset.

ERNEST POYRDON.

Acid Drops.

After the angels of Mons we have now angels at Grays. Angels have been seen in the sky carrying banners on which were inscribed "Peace," and scores of people have travelled from London to see them. We see that a local clergyman has written that there are no angels at Grays—none of the heavenly kind, and few of the earthly variety. Certainly, he ought to know. But what a revelation of the state of intelligence amongst large numbers of the people! And they possess a vote with all the other privileges of a civilized human being. No wonder Bottomley came to believe in God.

Rev. Joseph Hocking writes in the *Sunday Companion* that we are not yet fit for peace because we are not spiritualized enough. One fault appears to be that of placing faith in men and guns instead of in God. We do not know whether Mr. Hocking means that we ought not to trust to men and guns and leave it to God alone. That would suit the German Army quite well. Or does he mean that God is keeping the War going until we are "spiritualized"? But as we shall only keep the War going with men and guns, and as we cannot get spiritualized until we cease depending upon them, and as the War will not stop until we are fit for peace—that is, spiritualized—it looks as though we are in a pretty bad kind of a tangle. Unless it is Mr. Hocking that is in a muddle. And, as he is writing for the *Sunday Companion*, perhaps the latter is the correct solution.

Writing on the third anniversary of the War, Mr. Horatio Bottomley says we have "tasted hellish horrors." Was he thinking of War bread? —

Dr. T. R. Glover is a Baptist divine who has published several books on theology, and who occasionally preaches. A few Sundays ago he occupied a London pulpit, and, as reported in the *Christian World* for August 23, stated that "the Christian religion is not good conduct, nor escape from hell, but Jesus Christ." Dr. Glover was perfectly justified in supplying his hearers with that definition of Christianity. It is historically incontrovertible that Christians have never been noted for good conduct as members of society, while amongst them have been found the most notorious scoundrels that ever lived. Not a few of the Popes, God's highest representatives on earth, have led shockingly bad lives, and we shudder with shame as we read their history.

Emphatically, then, the Christian religion neither is, nor produces, good conduct. A truer statement was never made. But when Dr. Glover declares that it is not "escape from hell," he flatly contradicts the Gospel Jesus, and particularly his apostles John and Paul. John says many times over that faith in Christ delivers from perdition, and Paul regards it as escape from the wrath of God. We agree with Dr. Glover that Jesus and his apostles were vain dreamers, and that Christianity means Jesus Christ—something vague, mystical, which no one can explain, but which produces pleasant sensations in those who believe it, a sort of spiritual intoxication called religious experience. For this species of inebriation genuine believers develop an irresistible craving, a form of disease from which they seldom recover.

Christ is a purely mystical being, of whom there are as many different descriptions as describers. To many he is the Christ that was, to others, the Christ that is, and to others still, the Christ that is to be, of whom Tennyson so sweetly sings. To some he is a Divine, to others, human, and to others, both in one. In reality, nobody knows who or what he is. Everything about supernatural religion is mystical, remote, obscure, inexplicable, and that is why the ignorant and superstitious revel in it. Theologians are all mystics, dreamers, despisers of reason, scornors of common sense; and there is no escape from the conclusion that they are more or less mad, and do many mad things. In Southern India a young man felt a great call to some mystic mission, and he prayed: "Lord, here am I; send me, but for goodness sake don't." That prayer Dr. Glover calls "the honestest prayer I have ever heard." The man was mad; but into the midst of his madness there penetrated one pale gleam of sanity.

The *Daily Mirror* published the other day a picture of the Bishop of London seated on an old brass cannon. That is quite a safe position, although we suppose the position is meant to convey the idea that the Bishop is doing his bit towards winning the War. And one may trust Winnington Ingram for getting all the advertisement possible.

The *Globe* has been advocating the utilization of cathedrals as places for storing the reserves of wheat. This would certainly be the best function they have ever discharged, although some correspondents of the paper fear that in the case of air-raids there would be more chance of these store-houses being destroyed. That, decidedly, says little for the belief of people in the efficacy of prayer.

A Scotch clergyman, the Rev. James Wishart, just home from France, has some wonderful stories to tell about the men. For instance, when the weather interfered with the operations of the British forces, some of the men would ask him "if God was not, after all, a German God?" We should imagine the soldiers were pulling Mr. Wishart's leg. It is hard to imagine soldiers as stupid as Mr. Wishart paints them. But some of our warlike parsons seem to think they are at liberty to picture the men as quite foolish, provided they talk of their being good fighters.

We would like to know how the Salvation Army manages its communications with Germany. According to the *War Cry* of May 12, 1917:—

Our leader, Lieut.-Colonel Treite, has been able to complete his journey through Saxony, which embraced meetings in four different towns and the inspection of a corresponding number of social institutions.

In Leipzig, the first of the towns to be visited, the meeting was held on the Saturday night, and finished up with six souls at the penitent form. On Sunday the Colonel led the Holiness Meeting at Hauen, the afternoon meeting at Zurckan, and the night meeting at Chemitz. In the last-named town, where God has blessed our work in quite a special manner, twelve soldiers and recruits were publicly received.

The italics are ours, and are intended for those stalwart Christians in Britain who are always saying that Germany is wholly given over to Atheism. But the whole paragraph has a bad odour in the nostrils of any decent Britisher. Who is this Treite, "our leader," if you please? The Salvation Army is first of all a business organization. The word "International" is printed on the front page of the *War Cry*, and we suggest that the Salvation Army is a trading organization—trading in Germany—and trading with enemy aliens. How the devil the "news" above quoted can be got through here with such apparently smooth facility, we confess, amazes us! We do not like the flavour of it, and we think the matter might well be considered—and pondered—by the British authorities.

Under the heading "Atheists in the Camps," this *War Cry* says: "Twelve men knelt at the penitent form, among them being two drink slaves and a professed atheist." And this is what the "atheist" was reported to have said after his conversion: "Well, in all my twenty years of atheism,

I never came across anything with half the happiness in it that you show to be in salvation. You people always seem to be happy." It is also stated that he asked the officer to write to his wife, who was converted, and had been praying for his conversion for many years. Of course, we have heard again and again of these "professed atheists" who suddenly find salvation in the manner described in this story. But when the cases are probed, the Atheism of the Atheists disappears like thin smoke. And names and addresses are never given.

A writer in the *Daily Express* points out that navy chaplains are known as "Sky-pilots," "Devil-dodgers," "Mouldy Men," and other "ungodly names." Surely, men who invite such derision are like "*Chaplins*" of the Forces.

The calm assumption by nearly all the War Offices that God is on their side, is rivalled by the dutiful newspaper editors. Perhaps one of the most amusing is that of the *Sunday Herald*, which states in leaded type, "Germany began the war of hell against heaven." This means that Messrs. Lloyd George, Winston Churchill & Co. are archangels, which, as old Euclid would say, is absurd.

The *Age* (Melbourne) in its issue for May 23, reports a rather interesting discussion before the Methodist Conference on education in Fiji. The Government had offered a monetary grant on the usual condition that there should be a conscience clause for native and Indian scholars. This was opposed by a Rev. Dr. Gault, who said that the Methodists ought not to co-operate with the Government of Fiji in any educational scheme in which religion was not compulsory. He was supported by the Rev. J. W. Burton, who said that the "religious atmosphere" in a school with a conscience clause was all "moonshine." For nine years he had not made a single convert attending his Indian day-school, and his predecessor had for five years a similar experience. Eventually the Government offer was accepted, but it is quite true that where religious instruction is not compulsory few people want it.

All the same, we confess that our sympathy lies with Dr. Gault and Mr. Burton, and not with his opportunist brother clergymen. If religious instruction is really essential to individual and national welfare—and all the clergy profess to believe this is so—then every reason that holds good for compulsory education in secular subjects holds good for compulsion in religious subjects also. And, in that case, these parsons are simply selling a principle purely for a cash consideration. If, on the other hand, it is admitted that religious instruction is no more than the gratification of a desire having no more than a personal application, the case for religious instruction is gone. You can have religion if you please, you can do without it if you please. It is of no consequence to anyone but yourself. A religious instruction from which children are permitted to withdraw kills the case for it, and provides a complete justification for the State limiting its educational curriculum to secular subjects alone.

A young Zulu chief, who served as a private in a labour battalion, and who died of wounds, left three wives and eighteen children. His ideas of the sacredness of marriage are paralleled in the earlier pages of the Bible.

The Bishop of Liverpool is undergoing a surgical operation at his house, says a newspaper paragraph. In an age of faith, prayer alone would have been sufficient to cure "all the ills that flesh is heir to."

According to the *Daily Chronicle*, "the first woman cathedral organist has been appointed at Rochester Cathedral." The Christian Church of England is in no violent hurry to recognize women as human beings.

The grille in the ladies' gallery of the House of Commons, a barbaric relic of sex distinction, has been removed after

an agitation extending over half-a-century. The grille should be relegated as a curiosity to St. Paul's Cathedral, for the Christian Church has ever been a most determined opponent of sex-equality.

"Ours is the heroic age," says the Mayor of Maidstone. Yet tens of thousands of parsons are "too proud to fight," although they do not object to "christening" battleships and consecrating regimental colours.

Some time since a London newspaper editor wrote "King George reigns over an educated people." What this education consists of may be estimated by reading the reports of the Public Libraries. At Westminster Free Library, for instance, of the 348,960 volumes issued, 116,550 were novels, and 1,671 were classed as "philosophical."

The *Daily Chronicle* comments on the youthfulness of church organists, and mentions several instances of boys from twelve to fifteen years of age who are filling the position. It seems appropriate to employ boys as organists in the second childhood of religion.

In view of the Papal claim to infallibility, it is interesting to note that most critics agree as to the "Austrian inspiration" of the Peace note. The note itself, however, is couched in the usual pious form calculated to deceive the ignorant and credulous.

From a handbill sent us by a correspondent, we see that the "Yorkshire Wonder" is, at present, visiting the Congregational chapel and Salvation Army barracks at Goldthorpe. The "Yorkshire Wonder" is an ex-burglar who—so runs the handbill—was an associate of Charles Peace, spent twenty-eight years in prison, and three-and-a-half years in chains and dark cells. The "Wonder" will appear in convict uniform and chains, and we can faintly picture the admiring glance of many of the younger ones who will attend his meetings. If they will not long to emulate him—prison, chains, and cell—we shall be greatly surprised. For the "Wonder's" claims is not what he *is* but what he *was*. And, really, we prefer him as he was. Then he was at least an *honest* burglar. The chances are that he is now a sanctimonious scarecrow—more pious, but, probably, less straightforward. And the people who advertise *him* talk about the demoralizing tendency of picture shows!

The *Daily Chronicle* points out that Westminster Abbey possesses ancient rights, being a "Royal Peculiar," and enjoys complete independence of episcopal control. This partially explains why eminent deceased "intellectuals" are refused burial in this English pantheon, and room is always found for the friends of the Church.

Old newspapers make very interesting reading, and sometimes there is a topical touch about these remote paragraphs. A copy of the *Sunday Times*, issued ninety years ago, contains a caustic allusion concerning a lady and an officer, and concludes: "Oh, these red coats! We are half convinced that the Old Serpent seduced Eve in a suit of regimentals."

General Smuts is a smart general, but his theology is not above criticism. He says that "the world is out of joint, and only a kindly Providence can set it right again." It looks as if Providence is killing us with "kindness," for thirty million Christians are doing their best to murder each other.

That genial humourist, Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, admits that he is "fed-up with copy-book sentiment of irreproachable character, concerning the eternal principles of right and justice," and adds: "I want to know what it all means, translated into terms of practical politics." "Aye, there's the rub!"

In these days when obscure individuals are prosecuted for profanity, it is interesting to find that a Biblical parody is published amid a chorus of acclamation from the press.

The work is entitled, *The Book of Artemas*, and contains some pointed political skits, couched in a smart imitation of ecclesiastical English.

Leopards do not readily shed their spots, and it is not surprising that the Canadian clergy have secured exemption from military service. The Senate, however, is not so complacent as the British Houses of Parliament, and divinity students were excluded.

A new publication bears the arresting title, *Madame Adam*. It does not refer to Mother Eve, but to a famous French woman.

A Conference is to be held on the Reform of the House of Lords, under the chairmanship of Viscount Bryce. We hope that due attention will be paid to the position of the Bishops of the Established Church in the Second Chamber. If they cannot be eliminated, their number should be greatly reduced.

The *Daily News* complains that "a human, not to say slangy, touch" seems to be creeping into Mr. Lloyd George's speeches. The criticism is well founded. Not only is the Prime Minister's vocabulary vulgar, but his ideas are commonplace. In a recent speech he referred, with unction, to the "Great Artist" who had made Serbia and Wales. It was as touching as the memorable invocation of "Great Architect of the Universe" made by the lamented Dr. Crippen.

Profanity is becoming popular. The Inns of Court Officers' Training Corps, better known as the "Devil's Own," has published a periodical with the alluring title, the *Gehenna Gazette*. It is said that a soldier, seeing a copy on the bookstall, said, "Where the h—ll is Gehenna?"

The Paper Shortage.

THERE are many aspects of the paper shortage, but we are specially concerned with the fact of the large number of cases in which people are going short of *this* paper. Worse still, they do not even know of what it is they are short. There are many thousands of people to whom a knowledge of this journal is the only thing needed to make them regular subscribers. How to bring these potential readers and the *Freethinker* into actual contact is the problem always before us.

The majority of our readers have always been gained through the method of personal introduction. That is a method of doing service to the *Freethinker* and to the Freethought Cause which comes well within the range of everybody's power. Once the introduction is effected we will attend to the rest. You find, we keep. That is an assured programme. During the three years of war, we are glad to say that the enthusiasm of our readers has enabled us to enrol a large number of strangers as regular subscribers. But the more we get, the more we want. There is only one *Freethinker*. Its place can be supplied by no other paper. Whether a man reads the *Daily Tweedledum* or the *Daily Tweedledee* is a matter of indifference. But there is a vital difference between taking and not taking the *Freethinker* regularly.

That is why we are asking readers to do all they can to see that their friends know all about the *Freethinker* and its purpose. If they had not helped so effectively during the past three years we should not be asking for more help now. But we believe they have as much pleasure in increasing the demand for this paper as we have in supplying it. Editor, contributors, readers, are all fellow-workers in a common cause. And every new reader represents a potential soldier in the great and even conquering army of Freethought.

To Correspondents.

- P. V. MORRIS (France).—Pleased to receive your letter and to know that your experience bears out that of our other correspondents as to the amount of freethinking among the men at the Front. It is good to know that the War has determined you to take a more active and more militant part in the fight against superstition. That is a greater war than even the present one, and the need for good fighters in that war will continue when the present one is ended.
- W. THOMAS.—An article on "Omar Khayyam," by "Mimnermus," appeared in the *Freethinker* for December 12, 1915, and one on Edward Fitzgerald, the translator of Omar, in our issue of August 12 last. An article on the same topic also appeared on January 9, 1916.
- R. CRAUS.—The real test of liberality of thought is claiming liberty of expression for opinions with which we disagree. There is no sure liberality in claiming freedom for one's self. Our opinion may be wrong, but suppression does not prove it so. It proves only that our enemies are afraid to let it have a hearing.
- C. R.—We do not consider it our business to expose every black-guard Christians feel inclined to encourage on their platform. Circumstances sometimes render exposure necessary, and in that case we should not *hesitate*.
- A. E. MANDER.—Your congratulations are somewhat cryptic, but if you are proud of Mr. Mann's articles, we should be the last to dissent.
- H. T. HUMPIDGE.—Paper is being sent. The War has delayed publication of that book, and of others. Thanks for good wishes, which we warmly reciprocate.
- G. E. QUIRK.—Thanks for list of addresses. We are sending specimen copies, which is an excellent method of introducing the *Freethinker*. Pleased to know you think the paper gets better each week.
- H. HIND.—Glad to hear from still another *Freethinker* reader at the Front. We should say it would not be a matter of very great difficulty to start a Branch of the N. S. S. there. We hope to see you and all other Freethinkers safely back whenever the War comes to an end.
- H. ROBSON.—We do not think that the alteration of title would be any real gain. It is the purpose of a journal that arouses the hostility or receives support, and we must be prepared for the one and welcome the other. Thanks for excerpts, which will prove useful.
- T. C.—We have not yet had an opportunity of reading Dr. Figgins' book on Nietzsche, but judging from the reviews, it appears to be a more honest and able work than many that have appeared. Of course, the ordinary newspaper writer on Nietzsche neither reads nor understands him.
- J. BREESE.—We are sending a small parcel of *Freethinkers* for distribution to the address given, also the paper for six months.
- H. A.—See "Acid Drops."
- T. RAWLINSON.—There have been many essays on Bruno in English. The two most complete works are *Giordano Bruno*, by McIntyre, published in 1903; and a *Life*, by Frith, in 1887. A complete edition of Bruno's works was published, in Italian, in 1891 (3 vols.). A translation of one of his works, under the title of *The Heroic Enthusiasts*, was published about thirty years ago.
- S. W. WHITFIELD.—We cannot say whether there are other Freethinkers in your battalion. From all we hear, it will be strange if you do not come across some intellectual chums sooner or later.
- A. MILLAR.—Don't forget to call when you are in London. We shall be pleased to have a chat with you. If you drop a card advising us, it will be the better.
- M. B. R.—We have no other knowledge on the matter than that contained in the article you enclose. We are inclined to think the visit and the conversation are both imaginary.
- J. FLAHERTY.—We have no hesitation in saying that no such person as the Jesus portrayed in the New Testament ever existed. Your other question is more difficult to answer—say, about fifty years later.
- J. EFFEL.—Papers received. Will attend to other matter next week. Thanks.
- "KERIDON."—We do intend republishing Mr. Mann's articles, but we must wait until he concludes, and even then publishing may be delayed awhile for obvious reasons. Still, we shall not wait longer than is inevitable. We are obliged for your efforts. Will attend to the matter as you suggest.
- J. A. REID.—We hope your activity will bear good results, although editors have usually pretty thick hides.

A. H. WORTMAN.—MSS. received. Thanks.

DORRINGTON (Wigan).—No objection whatever to doing what you ask. But what are the "old, old stories" to which you refer?

WARWICKSHIRE MINER.—We should say that a parson who can quote "The Lord is mindful of his own" after a bomb has been dropped on a school deserves a good sized one all to himself.

H. ROBSON.—To "hope" is to have a desire with an expectation that the desire will be gratified. There is, therefore, justification for the language used. The hope will be stronger as the expectation of realization is greater.

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

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

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

Lecture Notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4 by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4, and not to the Editor.

Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

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

Sugar Plums

We were sorry to hear from Mr. E. Egerton Stafford, an occasional contributor to these columns, that he has been the recipient of a German decoration in the shape of a wound from a bursting shell. Fortunately, the wound was a slight one, and Mr. Stafford is getting all right again. We have in hand a lengthy article by Mr. Stafford, which we hope to soon publish.

Mr. H. B. Price writes:—

I was pleased to see Mr. T. Shore's article, entitled "Shameless Inconsistency!" in your issue of August 19; but the old idea of advertising joint appointments for "married couples without encumbrances" is fast disappearing.

I remember on one occasion the Chairman of a Board of Guardians asking a married couple if they had any encumbrances, and the husband replied, "No, sir; no encumbrances, but two children."

On another occasion an officer applying for a position was a "Freethinker," and the Chairman asked him his "religion." He said, "I am a retired Christian, sir."

We want more Freethinkers on public bodies, especially on Boards of Guardians, for vast sums of money are wasted at present in paying chaplains of all sects, which could very well go in extending the material comfort of the inmates.

There are evidently a large number of Freethinkers in Cape Town, and other parts of South Africa, who only need a little pushing to form themselves into an organization. We have had several letters of late from Africa on this topic, and here is one just to hand from Mr. I. Smith, of Glangariff Road, 3 Anchor Bay, Cape Town. Mr. Smith says:—

To quote your words: "The present is a golden opportunity for the Freethought movement."

I am unaware of any Secular Society existing in this country, and, as I am sure there must be many Freethinkers who would welcome such a society being formed, would you be kind enough to insert a par. in your paper suggesting a meeting of all interested here in Cape Town.

Although I am not clever enough to organize this movement, my name and address may be given as above to which names may be sent just to start the ball rolling.

Of course I am willing to help in any way, but it will need men and women of ability to make it a success.

Perhaps Freethinkers in Johannesburg and other towns would also like to send in their names:

I may mention that your paper is only obtainable at one bookstall (to my knowledge) here in Cape Town, and whether it is due to the large number of readers or the few copies imported, they are very quickly sold out. The *Freethinker* is never by any chance placed on the stalls to the public view, but kept under the counter.

We insert Mr. Smith's letter in the hope that it will lead to the desired end. If a meeting can be arranged between a few enthusiastic spirits, we feel sure good results will follow.

From another South African reader comes the following, which has some bearing on the foregoing:—

I am a native of South Africa, and Dutch on my mother's side, and, naturally, have fuller acquaintance with the psychology of the Boer than a home-born colonial, and am convinced that a fuller knowledge of the trend of modern thought on the part of my more ignorant countrymen, would foster that spirit of "sweet reasonableness" so necessary to the peace and development of this country. We need here a courageous Dutchman to tell his illiterate fellows the *truth* about things, and lift from their shoulders the burdens of superstition and ignorance which has made them the hinds that they are for so many decades; but in place of that our public men mouth pious phrases with hypocritical dissimulation for the sake of pelf and power! In our towns and cities we are more enlightened, but they count as nothing beside the menace of the Calvinistic backvelders! I wish my health and resources permitted of my doing more for the "Cause." I sometimes feel, as one of the obscure and hidden, how feeble and ineffective my little attempts must be, and yet my zeal and desire to do things amounts almost to a nervous passion.

It will be noted that both correspondents are as one as to the need for Freethought work in South Africa. And the tone of both letters shows them to be written by men far above the average in intelligence.

Science, Telepathy, and Communion with the Dead.

VII.

(Continued from p. 534.)

One of Sir William Jenner's favourite maxims was "Never believe what your patient tells you his doctor said.".....And if it is unsafe to depend on second-hand testimony for what Dr. Brown said to his patient, what reliance can we place on what Sir Oliver Lodge says Mrs. Piper says the ghost of Rector says the ghost of Dr. Hodgson says? We have Sir Oliver Lodge's word for it that Mrs. Piper does not always speak distinctly; we have Mrs. Piper's word that (the spirit of) Rector does not always speak distinctly; we have Rector's word that (the spirit of) Dr. Hodgson does not always speak distinctly. What their several powers of hearing may be, we do not know. We know that Dr. Phinuit at any rate is not always an honest witness. What guarantee have we for Rector's and Dr. Hodgson's honesty? What guarantee have we of Mrs. Piper's honesty? Would any man of ordinary prudence buy a box of matches, or believe that it is raining, on the strength of such evidence? Sir Oliver Lodge founds a religion upon it, and believes in miracles on the strength of it; and he asks the world to adopt his religion and to believe in his miracles. The English language is a language of extraordinary force and vigour, but it does not contain words strong enough to express my opinion of Sir Oliver Lodge's attempt, or of his powers of estimating the worth of testimony and of interpreting evidence.—Dr. Charles Mercier, "*Spiritualism and Sir Oliver Lodge*, p. 130.

IN the year following her visit to Dr. Cocke, Mrs. Piper first came under the observation of the Society for Psychical Research. She was then under the supposed control of a French physician named Dr. Phinuit. Now, Dr. Cocke's spirit control was claimed to be the spirit of a French physician named Finne or Finnett. Podmore remarks of this control:—

Phinuit appears to be a creation of the same order as Simandini and Leopold—Balsamo—Cagliostro. He was transferred, as we have seen, from a professional medium to Mrs. Piper. We first make his acquaintance in the questionable company of Chlorine and Mrs. Siddons.

He claims to have been a doctor, but does not know the names of the Latin or French drugs which he prescribes, and cannot recognize common medicinal herbs when shown to him. He claims to have been a Frenchman, though his knowledge of French is apparently limited to a few common phrases and a slight accent, which frequently proved serviceable in the old days in disguising a bad shot at a proper name. His ignorance of French he has explained as being due to his having passed the later years of his life at Metz, where there were many English residents. He has given his full name, with particulars of his life at Paris, but no trace of any person of his name can be found. On being more closely questioned he betrayed some uncertainty whether he had been born at Metz or Marseilles, and finally came to the conclusion that his name was not Phinuit at all, but Jean Alaen Sciville, and that he had never had any connection with Dr. Cocke.¹

This popular spirit exercised almost exclusive control of Mrs. Piper for eleven years, until 1896, when he retired in favour of a band of superior spirits under the guidance of Imperator. The plain English of which appears to be, that when the character of Phinuit began to grow thin under the ordeal of persistent questioning, he was, to use a vulgar term, "outed," and his job given to Imperator—a more nebulous character, if possible, whose previous earth-life is altogether unknown, and of which we may be sure Mrs. Piper, taught by experience, will make no disclosures. This Imperator was one of the controls of the late Stainton Moses, who died in 1892, and, being thus left unemployed, was no doubt glad to take service under Mrs. Piper.

"Now," as Podmore points out, "Stainton Moses, as we have already seen, was a physical medium, and as Imperator and his company can hardly be acquitted of connivance with their medium's doings, the admission of their claims to substantiality would still further complicate Mrs. Piper's case by involving it with the whole question of these presumably deceptive phenomena."² Professor W. James, himself a believer in these occult phenomena, is of opinion that these controls "are all probably dream creations of Mrs. Piper."³ Sir Oliver Lodge says: "Whether such a man as Dr. Phinuit ever existed I do not know, nor from the evidential point of view do I greatly care."⁴ Well, he is easily satisfied. As to Phinuit's often-remarked tendency to fish for information, Sir Oliver admits: "At times Dr. Phinuit does fish; occasionally he guesses; and sometimes he ekes out the scantiness of his information from the resources of a lively imagination."⁵

What is Mrs. Piper's own explanation of these things? According to Sir Oliver Lodge: "Mrs. Piper pretends to no knowledge as to her own powers, and I believe her assertion that she is absolutely ignorant of what she has said in the trance state. She appears to be anxious to get the phenomena elucidated, and hopes by sitting to scientific investigators to have light thrown on her abnormal condition, about which she expresses herself as not quite comfortable."⁶ On the other hand, says Sir Oliver, "She herself when in the trance state asserts that she gets it by conversing with the deceased friends and relatives of people present."⁷

Mr. Edward Clodd says: "Mrs. Piper, in October, 1901, made a confession denying that she had had any communications from the departed when she was in the trance-state. She afterwards recanted, and a defender of the faith explained that her 'statement represented

¹ Podmore, *Modern Spiritualism*, vol. ii., pp. 282-283.

² Podmore, *The Newer Spiritualism*, p. 284.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 284, note.

⁴ Sir Oliver Lodge, *The Survival of Man*, p. 203.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

simply a transient mood.' But the fact of the confession remains, and the transient, probably, was the true. Let Sir Oliver and the rest of the credulous explain it as they may or can; ingenuity will never fail them."¹ The quality of Dr. Phinuit's communications through Mrs. Piper may be judged by the verdict of Professor James, who declared, "I was too disgusted with Phinuit's tiresome twaddle to even note it down," and of Professor Shaler, who, after a seance in 1894, calls him a "preposterous scoundrel."² And yet Sir Oliver Lodge declares, with regard to Mrs. Piper, that the time for "suspicion" and "detective work" is over.³ No doubt it is with Sir Oliver Lodge, but not with us.

The spirits communicating through Mrs. Piper are no more successful at prophecy than they are at giving correct astronomical knowledge. For instance, the spirit named Rector informs Dr. Hodgson—through the medium of Mrs. Piper—that Mrs. Piper will pass over to the spirit-world (the cant phrase for dying) before him, and also tells Hodgson, "Thy life is only in its beginning."⁴ Seven years later—in 1905—Hodgson died. Mrs. Piper has not "passed over" yet.

Again, in the year 1899, the spirit of Moses—the mythical hero of the Old Testament—also through the medium of Mrs. Piper, prophesied the great world-war that was about to take place—a thing, by the way, which most people were prepared to witness, and which was being prophesied nearly every day by journalists, novelists, and political writers. Dr. Hodgson inquired whether he would live to see it, and the spirit of Moses replied, "Thou shalt live in flesh to know all."⁵ Dr. Hodgson died nine years before the great War broke out. In the only details the old prophet gives of the coming conflict, he is hopelessly wide of the mark. He declares that Germany will take no serious part in the War, which will be carried on by Russia in league with France on the one side, against England in league with America on the other!

We have given some instances of the spirits' ignorance of astronomy, and, as Mrs. Henry Sidgwick remarks, we should hardly expect the exalted spirits to use "scientific terms" "in a way that shows total want of understanding of what they are talking about." She continues:—

And the ignorance is not confined to science. Mrs. Piper might easily have given little attention to Old Testament history or the history of Christianity, but that Emperor, if the great spirit he professes to be, should undertake to instruct Hodgson in the true inwardness of these things, and contrive even while confining himself to vague generalities to talk so much nonsense about them, is difficult to conceive. Again, Mrs. Piper might well have erroneous notions concerning Adam Bede and imagine him to be a real person whom she might meet in the other world, but it is hardly possible that (the spirit of) George Eliot should make a similar mistake and report having met him without expressing any surprise.⁶

Of course, as everyone knows, Adam Bede is an imaginary character—the title-character of George Eliot's well-known novel.

But it was Dr. Stanley Hall who applied the decisive test to Mrs. Piper's spirits. In 1909 he had a sitting with Mrs. Piper, who was supposed to be under the control of the spirit of Dr. Hodgson, who had then been

dead four years. We quote from Mrs. Henry Sidgwick's account:—

Dr. Stanley Hall in 1909 took a short cut to positive evidence by deceiving the control Hodgson, and asking for a niece, Bessie Beals, who had never existed, but who was nevertheless produced at several sittings, and connected specific memories with the sitter—mainly, though not entirely, such as might be suggested by his statements and questions. When in the end Dr. Hall told Hodgson that he (Hall) had been deceiving him, and that there was no such person as Bessie Beals, Hodgson maintained her reality. The following is the report of the conversation (Miss Annie Tanner, *Studies in Spiritism*, p. 254):—

"Dr. Hall: Well, what do you say to this, Hodgson? I asked you to call Bessie Beals, and there is no such person. How do you explain that?"

"Hodgson: Bessie Beale is here, and not the ——"
(Note by Miss Tanner.)

[At this point we laughed and I made some remark to the effect that that was just what we had said Hodgson would do, and the hand continued (writing) thus.]

"Hodgson: I know a Bessie Beals. Her mother asked about her before. Mother asked about her before.

"Dr. Hall: I don't know about that, Hodgson. Bessie Beals is a pure fiction.

"Hodgson: I refer to a lady who asked me the same thing and the same name.

"Dr. Hall: Guess you are wrong about that, Hodgson.

"Hodgson: Yes, I am mistaken in her. I am mistaken. Her name was not Bessie, but Jessie Beale."

Mrs. Sidgwick remarks on this: "We can only say about this explanation that it is not plausible.....Dr. Hall might accidentally have hit on the name of a previous communicator, but it is very unlikely that this communicator would have had *memories appropriate to Dr. Hall's fictions and have admitted him as her uncle.*"¹ For our part, we believe that Mrs. Piper would put you into communication with the spirit of anyone asked for, whether they ever existed or not. This exposure so upset Mrs. Piper that she gave up her trance-sittings for a time.

(To be continued.) W. MANN.

Socialism and Freethought.

THE name "Socialism" appears in the most bewildering connections. Its Red Flag flies over the palace of the Tsar; its apostles occupy in various parts of the world, with seeming impartiality, the Ministry of State and the prison cell—they endure with equal fortitude the rank of a colonel and the firing platoon (after court-martial). Rumour has it that the German Socialist may appear at any moment at the barricades to secure liberty by force and arms; in the British House of Commons, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, in the name of Socialism, calls upon the Churches to "follow Christ" and lead the way to peace.

The Freethinker may well be puzzled, and even a little alarmed.

The question for the Freethinker is this: What will Socialism do in the day of its triumph for (a) the right of Freethought, speech, and discussion; and (b) with the established Churches? Otherwise stated: What is Socialism doing, and what will it do, to disestablish religion, dissipate superstition, and make universal the recognition of Science as the only Providence of mankind?

At first glance it would seem that the aim of Socialism is wholly secular, its method rational and critical, and its theory based upon the material facts of human society as a developing organism.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 178. The italics are ours.

¹ Edward Clodd, "Is Sir Oliver Lodge Right?" *Strand Magazine*, July, 1917.

² Podmore, *The Newer Spiritualism*, pp. 200-287.

³ *Survival of Man*, p. 278.

⁴ *Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research*, 1915: part lxxi., vol. xxviii., p. 332.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

So much is this the case that orthodox opponents of Socialism have always treated it as hostile to religion and the Churches. More than this: the supposed identity of Atheism and Socialism has led to the supposition that all leading Atheists—Charles Bradlaugh, for instance—were necessarily Socialists.

By contrast we have the "Socialist leader" (dozens of him) on the P.S.A. platform claiming Christ as a "comrade" and the Gospels as his inspiration, the Christian Socialist parson, and ("*et tu Brute*") the Marxist who hurls at Freethought the desolating epithet of "bourgeois"! It would appear that even if organized Socialism is Atheist, it is not friendly to Freethought.

The writer wishes to clear the issue of misconceptions, so that the problem may be accurately understood.

Modern Socialism begins with Karl Marx (1818-1883). His writings are translated into every civilized tongue. His grave is a point of pilgrimage, his portrait hangs in a million homes scattered all round the globe, and his disciples pay to his name a reverence which is not much caricatured when classed as "divine." The sentimental devotion with which he is regarded by his disciples—the present writer among them—has provoked the scoffs of the un-sentimental. Marxism has been likened to Christism. In an early essay on the "Illusions of Socialism," Bernard Shaw jeered at the Socialist "Bible of the Working Classes" (Marx's *Capital*), and likened the hoped-for "Revolution" to the "Second Advent." But when all allowance is made for the excesses of the enthusiasts, Marx remains vast and titanic, and his work and that of his "apostolic succession" the foundation and inspiration of the Socialist International. In the *National Reformer* for March 25, 1883, "D" says:—

The death of Karl Marx—which will be regretted by economists of all shades of opinion—removes from the world's stage the ablest of the Socialist writers; but the theme on which he wrote will long disturb the thoughts of men and the slumber of statesmen.

The special feature of the Marxian system is its concept of social development, usually styled by Marxists "*The Materialist Conception of History*." If it deserve the name, it must be thoroughly Atheist; and whether sound or not, at any rate, it deserves its name. It is, in fact, a magnificent attempt (the first attempt, except that of Buckle) to reduce the phenomena of history from a Vitalistic chaos to a Mechanist intelligibility.

It is best to give Marx's own words:—

The general result at which I arrived and which once obtained served as a guide for my subsequent studies can be briefly formulated as follows:—In making their livelihood together men enter into certain necessary involuntary relations with each other, industrial relations which correspond to whatever stage society has reached in the development of its material productive forces. The totality of these industrial relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis upon which the legal and political superstructure is built and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The method of producing the material livelihood determines the social, political, and intellectual life-process in general. It is not men's [individual] consciousness which determines their life; on the contrary, it is their social life which determines their consciousness (*Critique of Political Economy*; 1857).

Marx, be it remembered, was a Communist, who had reached Communism *via* the Atheist Humanism of the Hegelian Left—the school which produced Schleiermacher, F. C. Baur, D. F. Strauss (author of the *Life of Jesus*), and Feuerbach (author of *The Essence of Christianity*). He came to the study of sociology, therefore, an Atheist, a Materialist, and an Evolutionist.

His practical preoccupation was the "Revolution" for which, in 1848, all Free-spirits hoped, and of which the faith and hope has lasted with varying fortunes to this day. His aim was to find a rational explanation of past revolutions and a positive base for belief in a future Communist Revolution. As a Materialist, it was necessary to interpret social development by material facts. That the God of all religions was man-made, and that the Christ of Christianity was a projection of human consciousness, was a foregone conclusion. Feuerbach had demonstrated so much. There remained only to show why beliefs changed and why political society was periodically revolutionized. The current Communist speculations (Robert Owen, St. Simon, Fourier) had shown how potent were the reactions upon social conduct and social experience of the institutions of "property" and "the family." It was but a step to rise to the generalization that the play of ideas culminating in revolution was the "ideologic" aspect of man's desires, which, in turn, begotten by their needs, were determined by their "property relations." "All (written) history is the history of class-struggles." But on what depend property relations? As a Materialist, Marx could give only one answer. The idea of property must originate somewhere in human experience; it must be begotten of some need; and of all possible needs of mankind, the greatest need is to keep alive. Feuerbach had already said "Man is what he eats"; and as for the individual man, so for society: its basic need is to feed and reproduce. Man must battle against Nature—his victory depends upon his weapons and his strategy. Throughout history "ownership" follows upon *use*.

A brief summary will make the idea clear. Primitive man is found living in groups. Drawn into association by his needs (of sex and defence), he remains grouped because the group has a greater survival value than isolation. Natural Selection eliminates the isolated.

The primitive group, when it has invented the weapons, is able to live by the collective hunt. In the hunt, those who "beat up" the game are as necessary as those who slay; hence the product of the tribal hunt is communally consumed. When animals have been domesticated, the need of pasture and sustained attention compelled the break-up of the tribe into the pastoral household—family property has appeared.

When men have learned to till the land they, in the long run, settle down to a territory. As inventions multiply, trades are specialized. This "division of labour" makes man more than ever interdependent. The history of man becomes more and more the history of "the Tool; its origin and outcome."

When, as in the "Middle Ages," the tool is such that one man alone can use it, one man owns the tool, uses it, and enjoys the product. At this stage arises the philosophy of the individual and his rights.

By the progress of invention—the introduction of steam, electrical and other mechanical power—the tool becomes such that only an army can set it in motion. Labour is subdivided more, and with specialization grows greater interdependence. Nations grow interdependent. Britain depends upon America for corn, cattle, and cotton; America upon Britain for cloth and textiles. The tool of production requires for its full and free exercise the consent and co-operation of society as a whole. Here arises a demand for the Social Ownership of the Tool, *i.e.*, Socialism. This demand is resisted by the private proprietor class now politically dominant. Hence the struggle for the idea of Social Ownership becomes the practical struggle of the propertyless or wage-receiving class for political mastery. If analogy can be drawn from history, the victory of the propertyless and the triumph of Socialism are inevitable.

Such being the Materialist concept, we are in a position to answer the question with which we commenced.

Marxism, so far as it develops the thought of its founder, must more and more become identical with scientific sociology. As evidence of the Socialist recognition of this, we need but cite the fact that the list of books published by the various Socialist Parties all give prominence to the works of Darwin, Haeckel, and Buchner. From the prominence given in these same lists (see, for example, that of the Socialist Labour Press, 50 Renfrew Street, Glasgow) to Lecky, Draper, Buckle, etc., it is clear that Marxism for its adherents presupposes the triumph of Freethought. It is as complete a negation of Christian theology and ethics as can be conceived. And it is not without significance that the country wherein Marx is repudiated by the majority is also the land wherein "Socialism" is theoretically inchoate and morally flabbiest—the happy land of "Jesus the Socialist"—Britain.

Why, then, is "Freethought" scorned by some Marxists? On the Continent and in America the Socialist parties have put forth a whole library of works dealing with Socialism and its implications. The works of Marx, Engels, Bebel, Kautsky, Lafargue, Dietzgen, Untermann, Boudin, and De Leon constitute a library of large and closely reasoned volumes to which justice could only be done by the omnivorous diligence and inspired shears of our own W. Mann. It stands to reason that of the thousands of working men attracted to Socialism, only a minority have the money to buy or the leisure to master the science in all its details. When added to that is the fact these works can, in this country, only be obtained in imported American editions—supplies dependent upon the War and the Censor—a tendency to "narrowness" and "dogmatism" is inevitable. Then, too, the exigencies of political polemics lead to over-statement, and polemic literature exiled from its land of origin becomes liable to grave misconception.

It will be common knowledge to readers of the *Freethinker* that, in France, Freethought is a much more "fashionable" thing than here. Many, if not most, of the French *bourgeois* are Freethinkers (more or less Voltaircan).

Paul Lafargue (son-in-law of Marx), a brilliant satirist and the leading *litterateur* among French Socialists, was never so happy as when taunting the Voltaircan *bourgeois* with their political alliances with "l'infame." His words, taken literally in the English translation, have led some Marxists to suppose that the "correct position" is to treat Freethought always and everywhere with contempt. This is the reverse of the truth.

Lafargue's view is developed at length in his essay, *Causes of Belief in God*, and his argument—developed in terms of the "class struggle"—may thus be summarized: "God is an illusion invented by savages because of their ignorance. It is indispensable to the *bourgeois* as a ruling class. If it did not exist, it would be necessary for them to invent it.' The only class whose position and experience enables it to free itself from the 'God illusion' is the *proletariat*. They alone are, and can be, the real Freethinkers, and they alone, by their triumph, can win the battle of Freethought." That is to say, Lafargue's complaint is not that the *bourgeois* are Freethinkers, but that they are not. Which means, not that Socialism is indifferent or hostile to Freethought, but that the fight for Freethought is an integral part of the battle for Socialism.

This opinion the present writer shares. No Freethinker can afford to be ignorant of Socialism. Every genuine Socialist *must* be a Freethinker.

THOS. A. JACKSON.

Babies, Bunkum, and Biology.

Psychology is inseparably linked with physiology, and the phases of social life exhibited by animals other than man, which sometimes curiously foreshadowed human policy, fall strictly within the province of the biologist.

—Huxley, *Encl. Britt.*

BABY week and baby talk have recently had a good airing, and the papers and magazines have been well flooded with articles thereon, revealing another important national oversight, *i.e.*, that babies are the greatest asset of the nation—a statement which runs some risk of being mistaken for a stupid truism. The distinguishing feature, however, in nearly all that has been written, is the poor knowledge displayed of vital statistics and of biology. Early man was not much concerned about the infantile mortality rate. Endowed by natural selection with a full measure of the reproductive power, he could not be blamed if he followed blindly this instinct, while his members were kept down by the constant struggle against nature. Later on, with dawning civilization, and, finally, when he "conceived God," the brutish instinct of "blind reproduction" held its ground, and even received divine support under the spiritual injunction to be "fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth"—the one injunction to which man has responded more nobly than any other in the Bible. On the other hand, it is not quite so clear that the high infantile mortality rate—at present existing, and which has existed much too long—was originally one of the Almighty's intentions, although it is clear that Nature is not at all particular about a high infantile, or any other kind of mortality, for we find her producing in all forms of life enormous numbers of progeny, of which a very small percentage survive. It is estimated that of British infants which die prematurely 100,000 could easily be saved, and their loss is considered a national disgrace. How big a disgrace will be better understood from the following statistics covering so short a period as only five years, 1901-1905. In that time the chief European nations lost by infantile mortality alone the following:—

Russia	...	...	...	3,900,000
Bulgaria	...	...	...	114,800
Roumania	...	...	...	257,400
Serbia	...	...	...	16,500
Belgium	...	...	...	137,200
Hungary	...	...	...	738,150
Austria	...	...	...	955,500
Spain	...	...	...	504,000
Germany	...	...	...	2,040,000
Italy	...	...	...	950,000
Sweden	...	...	...	65,000
United Kingdom	...	...	...	746,000
France	...	...	...	573,000
Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland	...	...	...	227,000
				11,225,650

So much for Europe; now for Asia's contribution:—

Ceylon	...	...	...	129,200
Japan	...	...	...	1,177,600
India	...	...	...	15,750,000
China	...	...	...	20,000,000
				37,056,800

The actual statistics of China are not available, but they may safely be taken as the same as India, *viz.*, a birth-rate of forty per thousand, and an infantile death-rate of twenty-five per cent. Our grand total of the chief countries of Europe and the most heavily populated of Asia, for five years, reaches the interesting figures of 48,282,450! We can, therefore, safely say that the

disgrace is "international" rather than "national"; a rank Materialist might even call it a "Universe-al" disgrace. Such unpleasant figures and fact belong to the category which afforded Huxley the excuse for saying: "Of moral purpose I see no trace in nature"; and moved Tennyson to write:—

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems—
So careless of the single life.

In conceiving God, and losing sight of nature, man has been, and still is, under the delusion that he can produce and *raise* an unlimited quantity of beings of high quality—high physically, mentally, morally. He has not been very successful yet, and even the super-scientific German materialists, to whom an unlimited supply of cheap labour and cannon fodder is the greatest asset, have failed to get their infantile mortality rate much below twenty per cent., losing two million odd in the years 1901-5. In short, a little study of the *Diagrams of Vital Statistics*, by Dr. C. V. Drysdale, the greatest living authority on population questions, shows that, at any rate during part of the nineteenth century for which the figures are available, no country with a high unrestricted birth-rate has been able to avoid a high general and infantile death-rate. This is not a matter of opinion, but one of verifiable statistics—one of nature's unpleasant truths, and, in the meantime, there is only one humane way of dealing with it, that is, to leave these millions of superfluous infants in the great never-never land until such time as we are more certain than we are now of being able to rear them. Already all the better-informed people in Europe and America have found that by limiting their families to numbers, which they can adequately provide for, they greatly benefit themselves and their children; but, on the other hand, the poor and more ignorant, who nearly always have larger families than they can bring up, and amongst whom the high infantile mortality is most marked, are now being helped by the State to bring into being as many children as they can—a policy of deliberate dysgenics as opposed to the eugenic one of encouraging them to have the smaller families, and encouraging the better-off people to have the larger. The excuse offered being that the nation must "make up for the losses of the War," and that we are committing "race suicide." We can, however, easily reassure ourselves on this score by the perusal of an article in the *Malthusian* for February, 1916, which shows that if every married couple capable of bearing children averaged a family of no more than three, not only would infantile mortality be enormously reduced, but the nation would easily maintain its pre-War rate of increase of from three to four hundred thousand a year. Nor need we despair, if we really do need more in order to fill up the colonies. Hitherto the "policy" has been to let as many young men who wish to, emigrate to various ends of the earth, leaving their sisters behind to become old maids, whereas a little common sense and organization, together with any needful alteration of the marriage laws, might easily result in another half million marriages in the colonies where babies have a far better chance of surviving than in the slums of our great cities, as is seen by the low infantile mortality of Australia and New Zealand, which is only about eight or ten per cent. The question is a vital one, and needs to be looked at from the biological standpoint rather than from the sentimental and religious.

Y. C.

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BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 6.15, Miss Kough, "He Can't Do Anything."

FINSBURY PARK N. S. S.: 11.15, Miss Kough, "He Can't Do Anything."

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley Road): 7.30, Mr. Marshall, a Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill): 6.30, R. Miller, a Lecture.

REGENT'S PARK BRANCH N. S. S.: 3.30, R. Miller, a Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3, P. S. Wilde, a Lecture.

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

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Messrs. Shaller and Saphin; 3.15, Messrs. Dales and Ratcliffe; 6.30, Messrs. Kells, Swasey, and Sapirstein.

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