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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page.
<i>A Queer Defence.—The Editor</i> - - - - -	565
<i>"Our Daily Bread."—J. T. Lloyd</i> - - - - -	566
<i>The Revival of Devil-Worship.—Mimnermus</i> - - - - -	567
<i>A Note on Miss Royden.—J. F. Rayner</i> - - - - -	568
<i>"Freethinker" Sustentation Fund</i> - - - - -	572
<i>A Naturalist's Paradise.—T. F. Palmer</i> - - - - -	572
<i>Modern Methods of Salving the "Soul."—Keridon</i> - - - - -	573
<i>The Clergy and the Theatre.—"Verne E. Sheridan"</i> - - - - -	574
<i>Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, etc.</i>	

Views and Opinions.

A Queer Defence.

Most people are familiar with the story of the man who informed a friend that he had been defending his character against the defamations of a mutual acquaintance. "Why," he indignantly exclaimed; "he said you were not fit to black his boots." "Oh," said the aspersed one, "And what did you say?" "I said you were." And for this defence he was expected to be thankful. Now, there is a certain defence of Christianity which reminds one of the above story. When the Freethinker argues that Christianity should be rejected because it is not true, a common retort is that the rejection of Christianity jeopardizes the practice of morality. Now, if Freethought and immorality, and Christianity and morality, went hand in hand, there would be at least a *prima facie* case for the plea. But this is not the case. Freethinkers are not all monuments of vice, and Christians are not all paragons of virtue. We need not discuss the number of each that fall below a given standard of conduct, nor need we discuss how many of each in proportion to numbers betray moral shortcomings. It is enough that, taking the world as it goes, it is impossible to say of any man, by merely noting his conformity with accepted ethical rules, that he is a Christian or a Freethinker. To find out what he is we have to enter on an altogether different line of inquiry.

* * *

Conduct and Creed.

Now, the Christian of the type we are dealing with asserts that his morality is an outcome of his religious beliefs; and if we are to take his assertion seriously, some very curious conclusions follow. If he is married, we have to set on one side love of wife as having any great influence; if he is a father, affection for his children must be eliminated; as a friend, we must do away with any feeling of loyalty; as a member of society, we have to set on one side all feelings of duty. If we admit the moral force of these things we diminish the ethical importance of his religious beliefs. If affection for wife and children, loyalty to friends, and duty to society are admitted to be factors in determining morality, then it may happen that these may be strong enough to serve in the absence of religious beliefs. This kind of defender of the faith argues that he is only as decent

as he is because he believes in God and a future life, and would be much worse than he is if he did not so believe. We are stating the case bluntly, so that it may be faced clearly. * * *

Getting at the Facts.

Now, we are quite aware that humility is one of the Christian virtues, but this certainly seems like straining a virtue until it becomes a vice. It is carrying self-depreciation too far. That *some* Christians are the better for a little watching we should be the last to deny, but that *all* of them are not in this condition we strongly affirm. We do not believe that our Christian neighbours are only kept from burgling our house either because they believe in a God or because of the policeman on the beat. Were they so inclined they could easily evade the latter; and experience proves that when the latter can be avoided, the former is not an insurmountable obstacle to rascality. We do not believe that Christian husbands and wives, or parents and children, are what they are because of their religious beliefs, otherwise we should be denying them the possession of qualities that are obviously possessed by those who have no religious belief. We do not believe that all Christians are rascals held in leash by the fear of punishment. Many of their preachers say they are, a number of laymen think they are, and a proportion act as though they are. But *all* of them! Well, we have a much higher opinion of Christians than to believe it. We want to defend Christians against the slanders of the pulpit, and we claim that what the Freethinker can do the Christian can do. We believe in the substantial equality of the human race, and that all are alike in kind, however much they may differ in degree. And, therefore, we call attention to a significant fact, or series of facts. Freethinkers as husbands or wives; as parents or citizens, are as well behaved as Christians. No chief of police has ever reported that owing to the growth of non-religious opinions the number of crimes has gone up, and the police force has had to be strengthened. Freethought husbands and wives do not cut conspicuous figures in the divorce court. They are not notorious as child beaters. If Christians work for social and political reform so do Freethinkers. In extreme revolutionary movements Freethinkers have given their lives as cheerfully as have the religious. When the Christian asserts that only the power of Christ keeps him sober, the Freethinker legitimately replies that he can refrain from getting drunk without such assistance. There is really not a single social or domestic virtue practised by Christians that does not flourish with at least equal strength among Freethinkers. * * *

Are Freethinkers Superior to Christians?

Are we therefore to accept the calumny of the pulpit, and say that the Freethinker is so much more richly endowed with the higher human qualities that he can do, without religious hopes and fears, what the Christian is only able to accomplish with their assistance. If that is so, what a superior kind of mortal the

Freethinker must be? We do not say he is, we do not even believe he is; it is the Christian who implies as much. We are putting the case bluntly because we want it to be seen plainly. But it is certain that if all men and women were as bad as the Christian apologist paints them, society could not hold together for twelve months. A policeman is a bad teacher of morals, and he is certainly not improved by being shifted to an infinite distance and placed in an unlocalisable heaven. The moral groundwork of social life lies in the feelings and instincts and ideas that are generated by social contact, and for this reason substantially the same moral phenomena is manifested by all, irrespective of their religious or their non-religious opinions. The goodness of the Freethinker is a standing puzzle to the Christian. It is quite contrary to what he is led to expect. On the other hand, the goodness of the Christian—or his badness either—is no puzzle to the Freethinker. His philosophy of life includes the Christian view in a way that the Christian philosophy cannot include Freethought. To the Christian the Freethinker is an opinion *plus* a man, to the Freethinker the Christian is a man *plus* an opinion. The Christian hates the man in the interests of an opinion, the Freethinker hates an opinion in the interests of the man.

* * *

Defending the Enemy.

Hence our defence of the Christian against the slanders of his leaders. We are standing up for the innate equality of Freethinkers and Christians, because we do not believe that Freethinkers are made of such superior clay that they can play the part of real men and women under conditions that would demoralize a Christian. The Christian can be just as good as a Freethinker is if he will only throw off the demoralizing influence of his creed. If a Freethinker can be sober, honest, and reliable without religion, so can a Christian. The Christian is not an incurable moral cripple that must go through life on crutches for the issuing of which the clergy hold the patent right. Underneath the Christian there is a man, or the nucleus of one, if we can only get at him. The trouble is that most of them have been brought up with the idea that the deeper the man is buried the better, and they resent all attempts to disentomb him. At any rate, in relation to the morality of non-Christians the follower of Christ is between the horns of a dilemma. Either he must admit that his analysis of the moral forces is wrong, and that religion is not *the* moral determinant in the life of man; or he must assert, inferentially, that non-Christians are the innate moral superiors of Christians, since they are able to maintain a standard of conduct admittedly as good as that of Christians—sometimes better—and without any of the adventitious aids and extraneous incentives which the Christian believes is essential to his own right conduct. We have tried to place the issue plainly; if we did not know Christians so well, we might expect them to meet it with an equally plain reply.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Matter, in relation to vital phenomena, has yet to be studied, and the command of Canute to the waves would be wisdom itself compared with any attempt to stop such inquiries. Let the tide rise, and let knowledge advance; the limits of the one are not more rigidly fixed than those of the other; and no worse infidelity could seize upon the mind than the belief that a man's earnest search after truth should culminate in his perdition. Fear not, my friend, but rest assured that as we understand *matter* better, *mind* will become capable of nobler and of wiser things.—*John Tyndall.*

“Our Daily Bread.”

CHURCHES and chapels all over the country have been holding thanksgiving services for the harvest, but no notice has been taken by any of them of the fact that for many farmers in the Highlands of Scotland and Wales there has been no harvest, whole fields of grain having perished through bad weather conditions. Is God a respecter of persons, who smiles on the valleys but frowns on the mountains, who showers his favours upon the dwellers in the southern plains but wreaks his vengeance upon those who have the misfortune to till the northern hills? Some of the divines spoke of the harvest as “the annual miracle,” but they omitted to mention that in multitudes of cases the miracle was not completed. Is the harvest an annual miracle, or is it an annual instance of man's mastery over Nature, won after countless ages of more or less blind, unintelligent, but always resolute struggle for survival? As Ingersoll so well says:—

Many years ago our fathers were living in dens and caves. Their bodies, their low foreheads, were covered with hair. They were eating berries, roots, bark, and vermin. They were fond of snakes and raw fish. They discovered fire and, probably by accident, learned how to cause it by friction. They found how to warm themselves—to fight the frost and storm. They fashioned clubs and rude weapons of stone with which they killed the larger beasts and now and then each other. Slowly, painfully, almost imperceptibly they advanced. They crawled and stumbled, staggered and struggled toward the light. To them the world was unknown. On every hand was the mysterious, the sinister, the hurtful. The forests were filled with monsters, and the darkness was crowded with ghosts, devils, and fiendish gods (*Works*, vol. iv., p. 159).

Primitive man was utterly ignorant of the law of sowing and reaping; but as he had to live by his wits or starve, he kept on hammering at the door of the unknown until it began to open. Bread came to him, not as a free gift from the supernatural in answer to believing prayer, but as the reward of his own incessant strife with the very forces which often seemed bent on crushing him. He persistently wrestled with what he ignorantly feared, and ultimately prevailed. And yet, in a sermon published in the *Church Times* for October 18, the Rev. A. Hanbury Tracey, vicar of St. Barnabas' Church, Pimlico, describes food as God's gift to man, and as possessing, on that account, “a mysterious sacredness.” As a matter of simple fact, food is a symbol of man's triumph over Nature, and God is not in it at all, except to the blind belief of the pious. Mr. Tracey says that “man's need of food is that not of a higher sort of animal, but of one destined for Eternal Life”; but that is not true in any verifiable sense. Food does for man just exactly what it does for all other living things, and in its absence all life ceases. Of course, it is a clergyman's business to connect everything with religion, and Mr. Tracey, true to his profession, observes that this yearly operation of Nature, which the Churches thankfully commemorate, “is still eloquent of man's dependence on religion.” Two-thirds of his discourse he devotes to a most dogmatic assertion, not only of the superiority of Christianity to all other religions, but also of its absolute perfection.

In spirit this reverend gentleman illustrates the exclusive and tyrannical nature of the Christian religion. He tells us there are two ways of regarding religion. One is the world's way, and the other the Church's; but in reality the two are one. Sir Robert Peel may have been pre-eminently a man of the world; but it was as a hopelessly prejudiced religious man that he expressed himself

thus: "It is not prudent as a rule to trust yourself to any man who tells you that he does not believe in a God or in a future after death." The truth is, on the contrary, that the world does not as a rule trust itself to people who indulge in loud religious professions. As a member of the Catholic party in the Anglican Church, Mr. Tracey declares that "the Christian religion is the only religion which can properly be described as a social necessity, that it is the only religion which spiritually, intellectually, and morally can supply man with that which, having regard to his higher nature, he stands in absolute need of." This is a truth of which, according to him, numbers of professing Christians, and even Church people, are in total ignorance. In a glib and careless way they talk about the various forms of religion as if there were not much to choose between them. In Mr. Tracey's opinion this is very shocking, and in ours it is equally shocking to find that the reverend gentleman can be so bigoted and intolerant. This is how he puts it:—

The persons to whom I refer talk as if there could possibly be some comparison between a religion which makes its whole claim to be heard to depend upon the absolute truth of the self revelation of God in the Person of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, and a religion which does nothing of the sort. Such persons talk in their ignorance or their thoughtlessness about the mysteries and the dogmas and the moral excellences of such other religions as if the world were as much indebted to them as to the religion of Jesus Christ, as if, in fact, it were possible for one religion to advantage the world as much as another. It is shocking to note how some professing Christians and Church people thus dishonour their Faith.

To us the wonder is not that Mr. Tracy, holding his present views of Christianity, regards all other religions as utterly unworthy of comparison with it, but that in the present advanced state of the science of comparative religion he can honestly entertain such views. He is horrified to learn that any professing Christians can so dishonour their faith as to include other cults in the same category; but the most horrifying thing of all, from a religious point of view, is that Christians can so dishonour their God as to believe him capable of giving an absolutely perfect religion to less than one half of his children, and a great host of deplorably imperfect and corrupt ones to all the rest of them. Besides, with all available facts in our possession, it cannot justly be maintained that the minority who are Christians are on an average morally and socially any superior to the majority who are not. We do not in the least doubt Mr. Tracey's sincerity in regarding the Creed of Christendom "as an infallible utterance guaranteed by the consent of the undivided Church," but we do most seriously lay to his charge the offence of doing violence to the moral character of God whose servant he claims to be, and the merest tyro in history is fully aware that Christianity won its supremacy in the West, not by its intrinsic merit, but by repeated appeals to physical force.

This preacher's closing assertion is that Christianity is "a social necessity because of its unique moral value"; and this assertion is open to the criticism that it is radically false. Surely, a religion rooted in immorality cannot possibly make for an exalted type of morality in those who profess it. It may be true, but is by no means beyond doubt, that "it is the only religion which begins and ends with pure devotion to a Person"; but, unfortunately, that Person is at once its nominal creator and its real creation—a pure myth. Mr. Tracey's definition of a Christian is well worth quoting:—

A Christian is not a man who lives a certain life and believes certain truths, but a Christian is a man who

lives as he lives and believes what he believes out of pure love for him who is in himself the sum total of Christianity.

Being a sheer myth, Christ means a different thing to almost *everyone* who believes in him. Naturally, he is the sum total of Christianity, of which there are, in consequence, innumerable versions. No wonder Mr. Tracey goes to Napoleon for an argument for the Godhead of Christ, for there are divines not a few who curse Napoleon as a rānk and blasphemous unbeliever. At any rate, his alleged utterances at St. Helena are almost as legendary as those of the Gospel Jesus.

Of all curious things, however, the most curious is the statement that our indebtedness to Nature for our daily bread is eloquent of our dependence on a religion so essentially anti-natural and immoral as the one so irrationally eulogized by Mr. Hanbury Tracey. All mankind enjoy the fruitfulness of the earth, which, apart from the light and heat of the sun, would be impossible; but there are millions of people who have no sense of dependence upon a Supreme Being, and millions more who have no faith whatever in a virgin-born Redeemer. Nature works in simple obedience to her own inherent laws, and our life consists in subjecting ourselves to her ordinances and utilizing her resources. It is highly instructive to note that those who understand her operations best are the least dependent on any form of religion.

J. T. LLOYD.

The Revival of Devil-Worship.

There is no darkness but ignorance.—*Shakespeare.*

The vain crowds, kindly wandering, led by lies.

—*Lucretius.*

THE Christian religion places a premium upon ignorance. The Bible contains the warning that not many wise are called, and that "God" chooses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. The Christian seldom speculates about his Deity. In the rapture produced by receiving a direct message from Omnipotence, he does not criticize, and if reason raises its still, small voice, it is his duty to show reason the door, and lock it afterwards. Reason may be a divine gift; but it must be kept in a burglar-proof, iron safe. Its free use is sinful, and may have awful consequences in the next world. Even to inquire into the cause of this anomaly is fraught with peril. The only liberty left to the religious citizen of a free country is to read the Bible for the purpose of finding out God's will and then obey it, or put up with the fearful results. To be a Christian, one must swallow the Bible whole. It is a worse job than evading the skirts of Dora, but it must be got through somehow. The only way is to chloroform or kill the reason.

The religious propaganda among sailors and soldiers has called renewed attention to this form of religion. The numerous tracts, written especially to entrap the fighting men, show conclusively that Christians, like the Bourbons, "learn nothing and forget nothing." Most of them appear to be written by men ignorant of the very alphabet of science. They blandly assume, not only that the Bible is true, but that it contains all truth. The writers of these leaflets have never a shadow of suspicion that history contradicts it, science flouts it, morality disowns it, and that superstition is twin-sister to it. These wooden-headed fanatics, in the first quarter of the twentieth century, put forward the fabulous rubbish of twenty centuries ago as being the highest wisdom of our time.

In controversy with Freethinkers, when defending their faith, the clergy act like cuttlefish, and raise a camouflage of words by means of which they evade the

dilemma of dogmas. When they are addressing Sunday-school children, or haranguing village congregations, they forget their lame apologetics, and serve out unadulterated dogma. At a safe distance from the firing line, other things are served out besides cigarettes and currant cake. Here is a quotation from a tract, circulated among the troops, which shows Christianity in its most attractive guise. It bears the title, *What is there after Death?*

You will never forget in hell. The chords of memory will be swept to the awful wailing of the lost. You may think of your loved ones left on earth, and seek, as Dives did, to send a message to them. But no, the stern silence of eternity forbids.....Oh! poor lost souls in torment! The drop of water to cool your burning tongues can never be given.....You chose death, and ye must die.

Let there be no mistake about it. The best-known Christian preachers from Charles Spurgeon to Billy Sunday have been men who imagined that the world's clock struck at Jerusalem two thousand years ago, and that it has never moved since. Moody and Sankey, Torrey and Alexander, in spite of their great popularity, were half-educated men appealing to ignorant folk. In spite of his parade of an American University degree, the Rev. William Sunday, Doctor of Divinity, is an ignoramus and a charlatan. Many years ago he was a baseball player, who was converted. Imperfectly educated, he has a keen eye for business, and he finds working in the Lord's vineyard a more profitable job than his former profession.

This popular Christian preacher, who addresses the largest congregations in the world, is an ignoramus, if not worse. For example, this is what he says, or shouts, of science:—

Why don't we evolute a little now? I don't believe my great-great-great grandfather was a monkey, sitting up a tree, shying cocoa nuts with his tail across an alley at a neighbouring monk. I have too much respect for my ancestors. But if you think in that way, you can take your monkey ancestors and go to hell.

Sunday's command of slang is excellent, but, characteristically, he soils everything he touches. Recall the Biblical Story of the Prodigal Son, which, in its way, is not without art and dignity of a kind. This is how it emerges from the inspired mouth of this American evangelist:—

He came up to his father and said, "Dig up, I'm tired of this, and want to see the world." His father didn't know what he meant, "Come across with the mazuma; come clean, divvy, I wan't the coin see?" Finally the father tumbled, and he said, "I got you."

Is it not enough to make a decent Christian ashamed? Once in his career Billy Sunday did deliver an oration worth listening to. That was when he addressed some old soldiers in Pennsylvania, and the newspapers praised him "not wisely, but too well." Unhappily, it was found that Sunday had used one of Ingersoll's old orations. Those who remembered the evangelist's language concerning Freethinkers were amused, for he had borrowed, without acknowledgment, from a man he was in the habit of consigning to the hottest portion of Hades. "You can tell the whole dirty bunch to come on," said the Rev. W. Sunday, D.D., in replying to the soft impeachment, "I'm here, and I'm giving hell the best kind of a run I know how."

It is, surely, the bitterest comment on Christianity that such a man as Billy Sunday should be regarded by the orthodox as a veritable Saint George attacking the dragon of Freethought. Freethinkers, we hope, will learn the lesson that the degrading supernaturalism they so justly detest is the mere result of a grossly imperfect system of education. Christianity draws the very breath

of its life from the privileged classes, by whose money it is supported, because those classes realise that if working people trouble themselves unduly about a next world they will not care much about the conditions under which they live in this. So long as there are lower classes whose function it is to labour that the privileged few may enter into the fruits of their labour, so long will religion be necessary to keep the working-people in harness.

Christianity subsists to-day because it is profitable. Thirty-nine archbishops and bishops receive between them no less than £180,700 yearly, with emoluments in the shape of palaces and palatial residences. In addition 50,000 parsons have comfortable livings in peace, and an enviable position in war-time, when they are altogether exempted from the rigours of military service. Our work, as Freethinkers, is by no means over when tens of thousands of our countrymen are the prey of priestcraft. Any day the masses may be roused to an orgy of evangelism, for they do not lack credulity. The ghostly Russian army, the angels at Mons (vouched for by the Bishop of Durham), the regimental mascots, and the prevalence of charms among the soldiers, should make any Rationalist "think furiously." What critical acumen have those American citizens who kneel and weep at the bidding of an evangelist whose sickening utterances proclaim him a degenerate? The revival of devil-worship is a real menace. When Mark Twain was asked by a parson to subscribe towards the rebuilding of a churchyard wall, the genial humourist replied: "I do not see the necessity. The folks in the graveyard can't get out, and the people outside don't want to get in." When the democracy is educated, it will not see the necessity of paying money to hear the worn-out repetitions of orthodoxy any more than it will pay to see the revolutions of Tibetan praying-wheels. By directing men's thoughts to a to-morrow in heaven or hell parsons deter millions from thinking of to-day. And, as the schoolboy said: "to-morrow never comes." Our happiness is here, or not at all. Why should democracy sell its splendid birthright for paper promises on the Bank of Faith?

MIMNERMUS.

A Note on Miss Royden.

MISS ROYDEN, who preaches at the City Temple, and whose discourses are published by the *Christian Commonwealth*, may be taken as a sign of the times. Her moral teachings are quite excellent, and in close accord with modern Rationalism. They are certainly not Christian, though she seeks to gain acceptance for them by an attempt to reconcile them with the sayings of Jesus Christ, on which she puts a gloss unknown to the apostles, doctors, saints, and martyrs of the ages, and which in fact they would have repudiated with horror. Her very appearance in the pulpit is contrary to Scripture (1 Tim. ii. 11, 12) as it has always been accepted and acted upon. To argue that the doctrines of Christ have been everywhere misunderstood till Miss Maude Royden turned her attention to them is to brand Christianity as a fiasco.

In "Moral Problems, No. 1" and elsewhere she claims that Christ, our great exemplar, was no ascetic; but at all events his example did not include marriage. He was "tempted in all things even as we are," but the peculiar difficulties and stumbling-blocks of the married life he never experienced; nor did he lend any countenance to Miss Royden's pleasing views as to the "naturalness of man and woman desiring physical union"; on the contrary, he referred it to our hardness of heart, *i.e.*, sinfulness (Matt. xix. 8, 11, 12); and St. Paul, the greatest of the apostles, who was converted to Christianity by a special miracle, strongly deprecated all sex

intercourse (1 Cor. vii. 1, 7-9, 32, etc.). The Roman Catholic Church lays it down in so many words that sex intercourse, except for the purpose of procreation, is mortal sin, and the reputable Protestant Churches have never, so far as I know, repudiated this doctrine. The "purity" of Christian sex-morality has always been its greatest boast. Its fundamental idea has always been that sex-intercourse is a vile thing, and the less of it the better. So strongly has this notion permeated Christian thought that even in a typically modern work like Maxwell's *Devil's Garden* the hero is extolled for his "purity" in "ceasing to be a lover" to his wife. In her favourable notice of Islam as comparable to Christianity in its non-asceticism, Miss Royden forgets that Christians have all along denounced it as the "sensual creed of Mohammed."

Miss Royden's interpretation of "Take no thought," etc. (Luke xii. 22-34), as showing that Christ, with his allusion to "your Father who knoweth ye have need of these things," was concerned about bodily wants, is obviously forced. We all know we cannot exist without nourishment and (in cold climates) clothing, but the context plainly shows that the Christian is to take no interest in them, or even to try to get them. By the same rule he is to cast aside earthly possessions of all kinds (Matt. vi., 19), and so the saints have always seen it.

The lady's nerve reaches its climax in her treatment of Christ's teaching about divorce. It appears that when he said "Whosoever shall put away his wife.....and shall marry another, committeth adultery," he had no idea of its being taken literally. We do not act, says Miss Royden very truly, on his teaching about killing, or oath-taking, or judging—or, we may add, on any other of the injunctions of the Sermon on the Mount—therefore, argues she, just as we are now killing one another to an extent unparalleled in pre-Christian times, so we are entitled to divorce one another if we think fit. Christ was "laying down principles, not making rules." This remarkable opposition between rules and principles does not seem (so far as divorce is concerned) to have occurred to other Christian leaders, for they are pouring in petitions to Parliament against the Bill to relax the present divorce laws. In this they are quite consistent. It is an historical fact that freedom of divorce, prevalent in Pagan days, was abolished or greatly restricted by the first Christian Emperor, and never revived till the time of the "infidel" revolutionary Government of France.

If Christ, as Miss Royden asserts, "delighted in the beauty of health and vigour and strength" and the "needs of the body were as precious to him as the needs of the soul," it seems odd that his most devoted followers didn't notice it. Not to dwell on the hideous self-tortures of the early anchorites, we may point to the lady saint who boasted that she never washed except the tips of her fingers for the Mass, to St. Thomas of Canterbury, Chancellor and Archbishop, covered with lice, to Sir Thomas More with his hair shirt and his scourge. These were among the highest ornaments of Christendom, and its most characteristic products.

How much better it would be if Miss Royden were honestly to admit that she derived her ideas on the claims of the physical, of sex, and of women, not from the New Testament at all, but from Mary Wollstonecraft, J. S. Mill, Lecky, Buckle, Geddes and Thomson, Lea, Letourneau, Westermarck, and other Rationalists. But, doubtless, she knows her world. The Rationalist pill is bitter on the vitiated palate of the religionist, and the sugar of pious phraseology may help it down. She is, perhaps, wise in her generation. Still, the loyal Rationalist loves the plain truth, cost what it may.

J. F. RAYNER.

Acid Drops.

The House of Commons has taken the leap, and decided that women are eligible to sit as Members of Parliament. The level of the House has fallen too low for it to be a compliment for anyone to be there, but the admission of women is at least an assertion of right. There were very few objectors to the proposal that women should sit in Parliament; "scraps of paper" and assertions of principle by old-time opponents to the enfranchisement of women were tossed on one side quite lightly, and politicians showed themselves the equal of parsons in swallowing their previous professions when it paid them to do so. For our part, we regard the measure as one of justice and common sense, and another indication of the waning influence of Christianity.

One thing worth noting, however, is that the avowed responsibility for the change of opinion with regard to woman and the vote is, not the nature or the dignity of woman, but the part played by her in the prosecution of the War. These good Christian legislators have made woman's right to the vote contingent upon her readiness to help in conducting a war. As an example we may cite Mr. A. MacCullum Scot who, on a previous occasion, opposed the vote being given to women on the ground that all laws rested on force (a perfectly false and stupid doctrine), this time voted for women entering Parliament because, he said, his views had been enlarged "as to the extent to which women were capable of serving their country in time of war." Thus is stupidity piled on stupidity. If the capacity [for helping in war is to be made the ground for women voting, why not apply the same standard to men? And if this is not Prussianism, in its worst form, what is it? At the opening of the War we said that a large number of people in this country ought to try and make up their minds whether they hated Prussianism or were only jealous of it. We feel the same advice is timely now. It is a poor thing to be jealous, and if women justify their use of the vote, it will be as a war-preventing, rather than as a war-waging, factor. What the world needs is an end to Prussianism in both act and thought.

The *Morning Post* reports that the Kaiser is suffering from "a serious mental disease." The only symptom described is that he is "becoming more and more pious, praying the whole day." We do not know what other symptoms there are, but the one named seems conclusive.

The teachers of Scotland have at last taken their courage in both hands, and scrapped the Catechism. At the request of the Scottish Churches, the Educational Institute of Scotland (the teachers' professional union) undertook to draw up a Syllabus of Religious Instruction, and for eighteen months a sub-committee has been working at it. At the Council meeting held on October 12, Dr. Strong submitted the draft for approval. Dr. W. Boyd moved that the Catechism form no part of the Syllabus. There was a double objection to it. No educated person now agreed to the theological doctrines taught to children in the Catechism. Even if the doctrines were true, this would be a wrong way of teaching children. Miss Rattray seconded, and the motion to excise the Catechism was adopted.

A facetious writer in the *Daily Chronicle* says: "I asked a returning friend: 'What is war like?' He replied: 'Oh, you sit in a puddle and read one of last year's magazines.'" That friend must have been an Army chaplain.

An advertisement of St. Mary-at-Hill Church announces: "Sacred songs with orchestra and cinema. Speaker, Prebendary Carlile, on 'Hun Doves.'" It seems like the "old, old story" under a brand-new disguise.

Alongside of a poster on the Glasgow tramways announcing a great missionary meeting in the St. Andrew's Hall, is another poster appealing for funds for the National Society

for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Is Mr. Dalrymple trying to play a joke at the expense of those organizing the missionary meeting? What satire in a Christian country.

The Very Rev. Canon McBrearty, St. Anthony's, Govan, has left £2,776. Quite enough to pay his passage over the Jordan.

The writer of the weekly religious article in the *Times* (the Northcliffe Press, by the way, never neglects religion) discovers in the defeat of the German Army evidence of the operation of a "retributive Power inflicting its awful sentence on the authors of a colossal wrong against the world." The same old cant, and the same old stupidity. This "Power" remains idle while the wrong is being done, and only becomes active in the direction of wreaking vengeance. Even then, thousands of other people must suffer in the very act of inflicting retribution. It is, surely, either a dulled or a distorted moral sense that can write such rubbish as an apology for God. And there is little wonder that a militaristic, God-drunken, people like the German leaders have reached their present position.

Is Spiritualism a religious denomination? The Sheffield magistrates have decided that it is not. The question was raised in a case in which the President of the Spiritualist National Union was charged with failing to render military service. Perhaps Sir Oliver Lodge will explain. He has so many "spirit" friends in the "next world."

America has a very sharp way with men with "consciences." In the House of Commons it was stated that forty conscientious objectors were tried recently in the United States and sentenced to penal servitude for life, which was afterwards graciously commuted to twenty-five years' penal servitude. Should they die in prison, such very wicked men will have, doubtless, a further sentence in the next world of several million years, 212 Fahrenheit. They must appreciate the blessing of living in a civilized and Christian community.

Restaurant music is not liable to the entertainment tax, and is in the same enviable position as church music. The dear clergy still make a charge for musical additions to wedding services.

In his inaugural lecture of the joint session of the Edinburgh University Divinity Hall and the New College, Principal Martin, D.D., said there must be an early-restatement of the Church's faith. It was dangerous when the official creed of a church and the working faith of the average believer fell apart. Dangerous to whom? To the ministers or to those who were silly enough to believe what the ministers preach, but do not themselves believe?

In the name of freedom—press censorship, seizure of pamphlets without rhyme or reason, abolition of trial by jury (except in very special cases, freedom of speech severely limited, and now we have the Chief Constable of Preston prosecuting a newsagent for putting outside his door "Germans Confess Defeat and Accept President Wilson's Terms. War as Good as Over." And before the magistrate the Chief Constable said:—

if people wanted to disseminate information they should go to him for it. He was responsible for the good government of the town, and did not ask for the assistance of newspaper agents or theatres; when he wanted their assistance he would ask for it.

We are progressing in our knowledge of freedom. The attitude of the Chief Constable of Potsdam—we mean Preston—deserves to be remembered.

Dr. Clifford, in an interview, published in the *Daily News* says that the clergy are "fettered by traditions." It is a sample of wisdom while you wait, but there is nothing novel in the remark.

Dr. Clifford says that after the War the Christian Churches were going on to "new heavens and a new earth." He forgot

to mention that the stokers in another place will have entirely new uniforms.

The President of the Board of Trade has suggested that Church services should be held in daylight in order to save gas and coal. More daylight on religion should be very welcome.

"What's in a name?" asked Shakespeare. A Church of England curate bears the name of Herbert Spencer, and a private soldier is listed as "J. Cæsar."

A discussion on Christianity is proceeding in the *Heywood Advertiser*. A writer, who signs himself "W. Gibbs," tells two stories that deserve preserving. The first is about Bradlaugh. Bradlaugh went to lecture in Bristol. At the end of his lecture someone asked him, if he did not believe in faith, how did he account for Muller's Orphanage? Bradlaugh was silent, and never after spoke about faith. The second story concerns G. W. Foote. He was lecturing on "Did Christ Rise from the Dead?" W. Gibbs rose to ask a question, and "the men stood on the seats, pulled the pipes out of their mouths, and shouted at the top of their voices for me to sit down." We do not like to contradict Mr. Gibbs, but we think the story would have sounded more convincing if he had added that the audience threw pots of beer at him, that Mr. Foote escaped by the back door, and left the city without paying his hotel bill. Perhaps Mr. Gibbs charitably withheld these details.

The Archbishops of York and Canterbury are about to issue an appeal for five million pounds to carry "a big after War campaign of reconstruction." We wonder whether they will get it. We should not be surprised if five million fools could be found in the country who would give a sovereign each to such a stupid purpose. But we suspect that no small part of whatever is received will come from those who have made money out of the War.

The Bishop of Hull says the War has taught people to realize as never before "the real divine purpose of life." Quite evidently, then, the divine purpose of life is a funeral.

"It is a mystery how ministers of religion live," says Rev. P. Thomas, of Ferndale. It is a mystery to many people *why* they live. The *how* is simple enough.

No less than 22,500 teachers from elementary and secondary schools have joined the Army and Navy. The clergy are exempted from military service.

The Bishop of London is always talking of the dreadful poverty of the poor clergy, but they are not all in the casual wards and workhouses. The late Rev. Sir J. R. Laurie left estate of the value of £100,630. This should ensure his introduction to Dives in the place where there is no winter.

The *Daily Chronicle* points out that "the Prime Minister has two bishopric appointments to settle within the next few weeks." The dear clergy like people to think that the "Holy Ghost" makes the selection.

Providence still displays its playful partiality for human beings. A Reuter's telegram from San Juan de Puetorico states that nearly 200 persons were killed in the earthquake on that island, and much damage was done.

Giovanni Succi, who for many years puzzled the doctors by his ability to fast for periods of forty days, has died in Italy at the age of sixty-eight. No one regarded this ability to fast on the part of Succi as a proof of his divinity.

"Europe Smitten by Influenza" is a headline in a daily paper. A striking proof of the paternal regard of poor old Providence.

C. Cohen's Lecture Engagements.

November 10, Liverpool; November 17, Birmingham (N. S. S. Conference); November 24, Leeds; December 1, Ferndale; December 8, Leicester; December 15, Nuneaton; December 22, Glasgow.

To Correspondents.

- J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—November 3, Manchester; November 10, Sheffield; December 1, Swansea.
- S. C.—Received, and shall appear as early as possible.
- J. A. TOMKINS.—Crowded out. Shall appear next week.
- R. EDMONDS.—Women have been forcibly taken into the Navy. During the ages of Christian chivalry, namely, in 1379, when Sir John Arundel's fleet was overtaken by a storm, some sixty women were thrown overboard to lighten the vessels. Some of these women had volunteered to go with the sailors, others had been forcibly carried off.
- F. SMITH (Sheffield).—Sorry we are unable to use the MSS. submitted.
- J. WILLIAMS.—We are not surprised at your wondering how we manage to keep the paper at the old price. It is not done without much trouble and anxiety. All our work is done by Trade Unionists, under Trade Union conditions. Thanks for contribution to Fund.
- H. AUSTIN.—Free parcel being sent to address given.
- J. LAUDER.—Pleased to learn from a one year's reader that this paper has been of so much use to him.
- F. WHATCOTT.—Bag of waste paper was received. Thanks for same. It is extremely useful to help in this way, and we need all the waste paper we can get.
- C. A.—There is no such thing as blasphemy apart from the specific offence manufactured by Christians and other religionists. And no one can blaspheme unless he believes in a God. It is an impossible offence to one who does not believe in Deity. "Blasphemy" is an offence at law, but that is because Christians have made the law—and administer it.
- T. BELL (Glasgow).—Want of space prevents our noticing your communication until next week.
- E. SCHOFIELD.—Mr. Cohen's meetings will be held in Liverpool in the Clarion Cafe, Cable Street, at 3 and 7 o'clock.
- MR. B. COUPE (Glasgow).—We are sending on one of our free parcels to address. Shall be glad to hear of the result.
- J. ROBERTS.—Glad to hear from you, and to know that you are keeping well. Pamphlet being sent.
- H. W. MANON.—We are pleased to have been of use.
- R. POPPER.—We are sending copies as desired. Your experience has been a very hard one, and we sympathize with much that you say. We hope to see Mr. Effel's pen busy again at no very distant date.
- MR. E. TAYLOR.—We are very sorry to hear of your daughter's illness, and hope for better news soon. Shall hope to see you at the Leeds' meetings. Please make yourself known to Mr. Cohen.
- W. P. PEARSON.—If you will send on the papers here we will see to the rest. We have hopes of doing something in Ireland after the War.
- W. J. BOURNE.—Thanks for information which we have filed for future use.
- J. PARTRIDGE.—Very pleased to know that Mr. Snell had such a fine meeting at Birmingham on Sunday last.
- The National Secular Society's office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.*
- When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, giving as long notice as possible.*
- Lecture Notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4, by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.*
- 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.*
- All Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed "London, City and Midland Bank, Clerkenwell Branch."*
- Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.*
- Friends who send us newspapers would enhance the favour by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.*
- 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 regret that, owing to an oversight in proof reading, the date of the Secular Society's Conference at Birmingham was wrongly announced as November 13. The correct date is Sunday, November 17. We may take this opportunity of again expressing the hope that all Branches will be represented, and that as many members as possible will attend. Those who wish accommodation to be secured for them should write as early as possible to the General Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, stating their requirements. No time should be lost in doing this.

Manchester readers will please note that Mr. J. T. Lloyd lectures to-day in the Co-operative Hall, Downing Street, Ardwick. The meetings are at 3 and 6.30 o'clock. Trams run past the door of the hall, and we trust that it will be well filled on both occasions. Freethinkers should make a special point of bringing a Christian friend with them. They could not choose a better occasion on which to introduce them to a Freethought meeting. Admission is free to these meetings, but those attending should remember that the expenses are quite as heavy as usual. Mr. Lloyd is spending some days lecturing in South Wales, and will proceed straight from there to Manchester.

During the discussion of the Scottish Education Bill in the House of Commons, the Glasgow Branch of the N.S.S. forwarded to the Secretary for Scotland and other M.Ps. a well-worded resolution protesting against the inclusion of religious instruction in any form. Of these gentlemen Sir John M'Callum replied:—

Your letter of Glasgow Secular Society with Resolution received. I quite approve, and did my utmost in Committee to contend for the question at issue, but while we defeated the Government once, we were not successful in carrying this matter in the direction which you indicate, and therefore accepted the milder form of religious instruction without being mandatory.

We are glad to be able to publish this reply, and we hope to see Mr. M'Callum as active when the question of religion in English State schools comes before the House of Commons.

Next Sunday (Nov. 10) Mr. Cohen lectures twice at Liverpool. The meetings will be held in the Clarion Cafe, Cable Street, at 3 and 7 o'clock. Local Freethinkers are asked to do what they can towards making these meetings as widely known as possible.

We have received two works written by Mr. Theodore Schröder, of New York, neither of which state any published price. The first covers 120 pp., and is another contribution to Mr. Schröder's more numerous writings on the erotogenetic interpretation of religion. It consists of an unpublished essay on "Heavenly Bridegrooms," by "Ida C.," and describes the experiences of various women with "Borderland Bridegrooms." It is a fine sample of the workings of the sex-instinct and its mistaken interpretations in terms of religious mysticism. Religious history and literature is full of such instances, and it is only of recent years that the real nature of much of the so-called religious ecstasy has been recognized. To this enlightenment Mr. Schröder has helped in no small measure.

The second work is also of great interest to Freethinkers. It consists of a summary of Mr. Schroeder's prepared argument in the trial for "blasphemy" of a Freethought lecturer, Mr. N. X. Mochus, in Detroit, in 1916. After citing all the American statute laws on the subject, Mr. Schroeder gives an interesting survey of the various blasphemy prosecutions both in this country and in the United States, and the opinions of authorities thereon. It is an important publication, and, from the title page we gather, will form part of a larger work on Constitutional Free Speech. American Freethinkers owe Mr. Schroeder a debt of gratitude for his able and unwearying work in the cause of Free Speech.

Mr. Schroeder notes the importance of the House of Lords' decision in the Bowman Case, particularly as affecting that ancient shibboleth, "Christianity is part of the law of England." But he does not note another very important aspect of the judgment, which is that it makes a bequest to any Secular Society—that is, to a Society organized for the avowed purpose of destroying Christianity—perfectly legal. The fact of the Secular Society, Limited, being a registered body has led to the belief that a bequest to an unregistered Society was illegal. That is not, and never was, the case. Bequests to the National Secular Society, or to local Secular Societies, were set on one side solely because of the purposes to which the bequest was to be devoted. The decision of the House of Lords declares those purposes to be quite legal, and therefore legalizes a bequest to any Society, whether registered or unregistered. It is this which, in our opinion, gives the victory so sweeping a character.

We note that Mr. A. B. Moss made an "official" appearance at the Southwark Sessions the other day, and, as has been his custom for nearly thirty years, affirmed on the ground of being without religious belief. We should like to see Mr. Moss's excellent example followed by other Freethinkers who hold any post or office under local governing bodies, and whose appearance in courts is rendered necessary thereby. It has an educational effect on all concerned, and would serve to enlighten court officials who are sometimes painfully ignorant on the matter.

One of our Scotch readers and occasional contributors writes:—

A chance remark sometimes helps to make a lifelong friendship. This week, in a railway carriage, I met an old gentleman, who passed the remark that it was sad to see so much grain spoiled by the rain while God was in his heaven, and did nothing to help the poor farmer. This remark led to an interchange of ideas. My chance friend was an out-and-out Freethinker, and anxious to get into touch with the N. S. S. literature. He has now got a start, and is likely to get more, as he has been supplied with the address where he can obtain same.

The same correspondent adds:—

There is now such a demand for the *Freethinker* in Glasgow that usual readers are finding some difficulty in procuring a copy. Better give a standing order to your newsagent. The idea of ordering a few copies, and leaving your newsagent to dispose of them, has caught on. Very few copies are ever left over.

Another centre for the supply of Freethought literature is The Reformers' Bookstall, 126 Bothwell Street, Glasgow.

From the *East Rand Express* of August 3, we see that the Education Inspector of the East Rand Circuit reports that 318 children have been withdrawn by their parents from religious instruction. Our compliments to the parents of those 318 youngsters. We feel sure they will appreciate their parent's action when they grow older.

Many of our readers will no doubt miss Dr. Lyttelton's promised article in this week's issue. But up to the time of going to press nothing from that gentleman had reached us. We hope this is due to nothing worse than a postal mis-carriage.

The Glasgow Branch tried the experiment of changing its hour of meeting from 12 noon to 6 in the evening. Mr. Lonsdale, the Secretary, gave a very much appreciated address on Jefferies' "The Story of My Heart," but it has now been decided to revert to the midday hour as the time for meetings. To-day (Nov. 3) the subject is "The Higher Criticism."

"Freethinker" Sustentation Fund.

THE purpose of this Fund is to make good part of the deficit caused by the very heavy increase in the cost of paper, advance of wages, etc. A full statement on this head was made in our issue for September 1.

Ninth List of Subscriptions.

Previously acknowledged:—£404 4s. 7d. Sapper J. Rollason, 5s. Iris, 2s. 6d. F. Whatcott, 4s. 6d. Mr. and Mrs. Simpson, 5s. R. W. Blakeley, 10s. 6d. D. O., 2s. 6d. J. J. Roberts, 5s. S. Thompson, 5s. Mrs. E. Taylor, 5s. Mrs. S. Dobson, 5s. W. P. Pearson, 5s. B. E. F., 5s. W. Micklethwaite, 10s. F. Mareschel, 10s. W. Hill, 2s. 6d. J. Hardie, 2s. 6d.

Per T. Emery (Glasgow):—Mr. Newman, 10s. Mr. Harrison, 2s. 6d. Mr. Savill, 2s. 6d. Mr. Little, 3s. Mr. Learnouth, 2s. 6d. F. R., 2s. 6d. Mrs. Scott, 1s. T. W. E., 3s. Mrs. Turnbull, 5s. F. Turnbull, 2s. Mr. and Mrs. Lonsdale, 6s.

Per J. Williams (Ystrad):—T. Godfrey, 1s. R. Lloyd, 1s. F. Cox, 10s. J. Williams, 10s. Total, £411 11s. 7d.

A Naturalist's Paradise.

III.

(Continued from p. 561.)

HAVING reviewed those nearer relatives of humanity, the apes, monkeys, and lemurs of Borneo, a few words are necessary concerning man's remoter congeners, the bats. Twenty genera, subdivided into forty-six species, of these flying mammals, reside in the island. The huge fruit bats, it is said,—

are as familiar a feature of the Bornean landscape at evening as are in England the rooks winging their way home to roost; the bats, however, are on their way to some fruit trees, where they will feed all night, yelling and wrangling the while like all the cats of Kilkenny. During the day they have hung in numbers from the branches of trees, often at a considerable distance from their last feeding place, and they look like bunches of some grotesque fruit.

These voracious creatures devastate the fruit gardens, and in the adjacent island of Java the cultivators are driven to harvest their fruit before it is mature, so as to preserve it from the predaceous bats. Then there is an army of smaller bats, with appetites so keen that one only of these gluttonous animals will gorge more than its own weight in bananas in a single night.

Like all other organisms, bats are afflicted with parasites. A curious earwig infests the brood pouches of one Bornean species; but although bats are usually plagued by wingless flies, the flea is seldom a source of annoyance to them. Presumably, most human beings have observed, or even been temporarily exasperated, by the presence of fleas at some time or other. Yet we are assured by a high authority, Harold Russell, that our cousins the monkeys, in a state of nature, are free from the attentions of these leaping, blood-sucking parasites. In captivity, monkeys are liable to the attacks of human and other fleas; but we learn from Russell that "no fleas have been found truly parasitic on monkeys." When to the onlooker the monkey appears to be energetically occupied in flea-hunting, it is really searching, as Professor Shipley puts it, for "little scabs of scurf, which is made palatable to its taste by a certain sour sweat" (*Studies in Insect Life*, p. 19; 1917).

Bats are very unprepossessing in appearance, and probably suggested the traditional Evil spirit. The membrane of their umbrella-like wings provides an extensive pouch, common to both male and female forms, in which the offspring are carried. Whether the male bat ever carries the young is an open question. Indeed, our knowledge of the habits of bats is still very imperfect; and of the Bornean species it is asserted that not one of them has been adequately studied.

The Cat group is well in evidence in Borneo; but these carnivores give little trouble to the natives. The

Clouded Leopard is the largest of these creatures, but, distinctly unlike its relatives, the tiger and panther of the neighbouring peninsula, it avoids the vicinity of man. One of the wild cats of Sarawak proves a terror to the natives' fowls. Concerning another Bornean cat, *Felis planiceps*, Dr. Hose, in his valuable *Mammals of Borneo*, relates "that the animal is extremely fond of fruit, and has frequently been known to dig up and eat the potatoes which are grown by the natives." This statement may seem strange in the light of the fact that all the Felidæ are carnivorous; but when we remember how omnivorous domestic cats have become, our astonishment is diminished.

Various animals announce themselves to friend, foe, and neutral by their conspicuous markings. Such striking advertisements are frequently associated with nauseousness of taste or odour. The North American skunk bears his large white tail erect in such a way that it serves as a warning. The appearance of a skunk's tail in the distance is sufficient to deter anyone in the least degree susceptible to evil odours from any nearer approach to the animal. Several animals of this type are common in the Malay region, and are studiously avoided on account of their disgusting stench. One of these creatures is abundant in the Natuna Islands, and a naturalist engaged in collecting there assured Shelford that his native assistants "flatly refused to skin the specimens that he shot on account of the revolting odour." Several of these malodorous organisms are found in Borneo and the adjoining islands, and are all conspicuously coloured. Moreover, in Java an edible Musteline carnivore mimics the odious Mydaus, and doubtless its marked resemblance to its nauseous model serves as a protection against predatory enemies.

The munsangs and monkeys of Borneo are very partial to the coffee berry, and seriously injure the crops. But Nature moves in a mysterious way her wonders to perform. The animals' digestive juices, while acting on the delicate pulp enclosing the hard kernel, permit the berries themselves to pass through the intestinal channels entirely unimpaired, and thus they are expelled from the body. Their strange journey completed, the discarded berries are carefully gathered. In terms of the received theory—

only the ripest and best fruit is selected by the monkeys and munsangs for their meal, the dejecta are regarded as of first-rate quality and fetch a good price in the market—a fact which is mercifully concealed from the British consumer.

While the rodents are represented by twelve species of rats, three species of porcupine, and at least sixteen of squirrels, the hoofed animals are very sparsely present in Borneo. The noble elephant survives in small numbers in British North Borneo. Although these quadrupeds may be the descendants of a herd of elephants originally introduced from one of the Malay States, there seems small doubt that the elephant was at an earlier period indigenous to the island. A fossil tooth discovered in a Sarawak cave is evidence of this. But, apart from the Malay term "Gajah," there is no name for elephant in the primitive native tongues, and no tradition lingers of the former existence of the animal in Sarawak.

Another giant mammal, the rhinoceros, is still extant in British North Borneo; but the animal appears mainly confined to the little-visited interior of the island, where it struggles on the brink of extinction. Those lesser Ungulates, wild swine, boast three species in Borneo. In the primitive jungle these pigs progress in great herds from place to place. The reason for these migrations is conjectural. Possibly the need for new pastures, or even the prevalence of swine fever, or some similar epidemic

may explain these wanderings. In any case, the non-Moslem tribes take full advantage of these migrations, for when the animals emerge from the forest they slaughter them wholesale for food.

What Kropotkin termed "Mutual aid among animals" is cogently illustrated by the naturalist, Ernest Hose. Hearing a tremendous uproar of wild boars grunting and squealing in the forest near his residence in Santubong, Mr. Hose went out to ascertain its cause. He discovered that a huge snake had seized a young swine and was trying to kill it. "The snake," writes Shelford, to whom Hose narrated the occurrence,—

was surrounded by a number of full-grown swine which were goring it with their tusks and trampling on it; so resolute was their attack that the python was compelled to relinquish its hold of the loudly protesting young pig, when the herd catching sight of Mr. Hose, hastily made off, the young one, apparently little the worse for its adventure, trotting away with its companions. Mr. Hose examined the snake and found it to be so slashed and mangled that it was unable to crawl away from the scene of battle.

The Bornean wild boar, Shelford contended, provides a powerful example of the transmission of an acquired character. In the young animal each side of the upper lip is "deeply notched to accommodate the tusks which, however, have not yet made their appearance." This is obviously a weighty circumstance, for we have every reason to suppose that this notching originally arose through the pressure of the enlarged tusks. Now, these notches precede the appearance of the tusks which originally caused them by several months. In this instance the acquired notches have become firmly fixed by heredity.

The Plandok or Bornean mouse deer is one of the most beautiful and graceful animals in the world. This pretty creature is the hero of a host of native stories, and it has, doubtless, always attracted attention through its diminutiveness and beauty, for the mouse deer is no larger, and far less heavy than a hare.

In addition to several species of more ordinary deer, a few wild oxen survive. The only other mammals of moment are the aquatic dugongs, porpoises, and an occasional whale stranded on the Bornean shores. The solitary member of the Edentate order is the scaly anteater, an animal which is credited by the natives with far greater guile and general intelligence than is usually conceded to it by the average European naturalist.

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

Modern Methods of Salving the "Soul."

II.

(Continued from p. 557.)

HIS prepossessions are likewise revealed in the fact that his theories and dogmas are oracular pronouncements and not reasoned conclusions from established truths. I will give one example of it from his *Psychology* (Home University Series). On p. 174 he states in quite his oracular strain that "progressive evolution has been primarily an evolution of mental structure and only secondarily one of bodily structure." We are not, by-the-by, favoured with a peep into the metaphysical "cabinet of mysteries" and see the how and the why changes in "mental structure" occur in the absence of experience.

Now, the above statement by presenting a half-truth as if it were the whole, is tantamount to a falsity. It has all the ugly look of a *suppressio veri et suggestio falsi*. Why omit all mention and reference to the cerebral

system—the brain and its appendages? Why slur over in dumb silence the premier system of the body, and the very one that “leads and controls” the rest? Why allude to the body with such culpable vagueness, by the phrase “bodily structures,” as if all systems within it were co-ordinate—as if brain and ligaments, for instance, were apart in functional importance in the animal economy? Whether he intended it or not, his pet phrase, “mental structure,” by drawing attention away from the whole truth, does suggest the false. And it is upon this suggestion that his “soul” theory rests. A full and accurate statement of the facts would rob it of any basis. No one could imagine from his language in that chapter that the body contains an organ of mind. One could think that “mental structures” were metaphysical self-existences in no organic relation with brain and nerves. Yet no one knows better than he that there is no “mental structure” except in absolute correlation with cerebral structure, and that every change in the one involves a simultaneous change in the other.

Had he said that “progressive evolution” has been primarily one of *neural* structure, and the rest of the body a secondary one, it would be an accurate statement of facts; for muscles, bones, ligaments, glands, cells, and secretions are merely the instruments of the brain to effect its ends. And as the series of changes, usually, if not invariably, originate in the creature’s physical environment, it might be said without inaccuracy that the changes in “mental structure” follow the changes in neural structure, though strictly speaking they are simultaneous modifications.

The way to test his metaphysical dictum is to apply it to a familiar case in which its truth may be easily checked. For example, to become a smoker involves a complete change in “mental structure”—that is, from a feeling of disgust for tobacco to one of liking for it. Now, according to the above “principle,” this liking for tobacco is acquired by the smoker *before* he ever puts a pipe in his mouth. Otherwise it is not “*primarily* an evolution of mental structure,” for it would involve experience and the participation of the body in the change, and reverse the above order.

This example, though a voluntary one, is typical of the way in which every change in tastes, habits, and “mode of life” is effected by sentient creatures. It begins with a state of disharmony or antagonism between a stimulating environment (tobacco in this instance) and neural tissue; then, after a grim and often a protracted struggle, harmony is restored through a readjustment between the revolting neurones and the hostile environment.

Without pursuing the matter further, it is thus obvious that only a person in the firm grip of a prepossession would ever commit himself to such a “theory.”

Again, he seems to shun the obvious lessons of his his own teachings. At all events, he slurs over them in dumb silence. He not only admits, but teaches, in the most unequivocal and praiseworthy manner, the absolute concomitance, correlation, or parallelism which exist between mental and neural processes. Lest the reader should miss the significance of this fact, I will summarize in the briefest manner I can the lessons taught in the book. The parallel movement between the structure and activity of mind and brain may be advantageously summed up under three orders of concomitance. (1) An ascending order. (2) A descending order. (3) A functional order.

That is to say, the level of mental development or capacity ascends in strict concurrence with complexity of neural structure from amœba to man, and from infant to adult. Again, degeneration, decadence, or disappearance of mental powers, as witnessed in senile

decay, in insanity, and in cases of cerebral injury, keeps pace with neural conditions with the most absolute regularity. And, lastly, mental activity flows and fluctuates at every instant of life in strict accordance to the efficiency with which the brain functions as determined by rest, sleep, and the quality and abundance of the bloodstream that energizes it.

The irresistible inference or lesson from these facts is, that the mind is the offspring of organized neural substance, whatever may be its ultimate nature—whether it be a physical “something,” a metaphysical “nothing,” or a physico-metaphysical hybrid; and, further, that when the organization decays, is destroyed, or fails to function, mind vanishes. In other words, that mind is as mortal as body.

This lesson is further emphasized in his very remarkable but correct insistence upon extending the principle of causation so as to include, in the case of sentient beings, not only physical phenomena, but mental ones as well. That is to say, that alcohol and intoxication, for example, stand related to one another as cause and effect. Nobody, of course, outside Bedlam ever dreams of doubting that fact save those “extra mural patients,” the pure metaphysicians. It should, however, be pointed out that Dr. McDougall does not adopt this most sane but novel view for the sake of emphasizing the absolute correlation between mind and body, but simply because he considers it favourable to his “soul” theory—an object that will save him the execrations and derisions of the metaphysicians.

Such, then, seems to be the lesson taught by this little primer; and I fancy that Dr. McDougall would readily acquiesce in the above summary statement of it, though he fails himself to express it in a manner so outspoken and categorical, as if afraid of his own conclusions.

To me this lesson is so complete and absolute that it carries with it the corollary that the idea of a “soul” or “spirit” is so unnecessary and useless an adjunct as to be a meaningless superfluity in the mental economy of sentient life. To Dr. McDougall, however, that is not so. He thinks a “soul” is necessary to complete the mental machinery, and so sets about to salve it in right earnest. What this “soul” is, apart from mind, he does not tell us; anyhow, he acts on the maxim that “Silence is golden.” From the few vague allusions, however, we may hazard a negative description of this destitute and characterless vacuity: The “soul” is the mind’s sleeping partner during life, but which may wake up at death and carry on the mind’s business without the aid of its cerebral plant and machinery.

(To be concluded.)

KERIDON.

The Clergy and the Theatre.

(Reprinted from “Jack Canuck,” Toronto, August 17, 1918.)

A few weeks ago the Rev. James H. Boyd, at the Middlesex and Lambton Ministerial Association, gave voice to a general denunciation of all worldly pleasure, he, in turn, attacking the dance halls, card-playing saloons, books, and the theatre. The reverend gentleman receives his answer in the following letter (so far as the theatre is concerned) from a Newark, N.J., lady, who “follows a stage career.”

DEAR SIR,—As one of those “who follow a stage career,” will you permit me a word of reply to your rabid indictment before the Middlesex and Lambton Association of Baptist Churches?

Let the card players and dancers speak for themselves, but as one who is making her way in this world by work on the stage, I think I have a few things to call to your mind which you, in your holy zeal, have entirely overlooked.

My home is in the U.S.A., but I can safely speak for the artists of the stage in Canada as well as in England when I

say that, in the first place, when there is a great fire, a pestilence of any sort, a damaging flood, a catastrophe of any sort, to whom does the public first turn? Who are the first to offer their services *free*? Is it a minister of one of the many gospels? Not so you could notice it. The people of the stage are the first to stage a benefit, and thereby net huge sums which they turn over to the sufferers. When the Governments want to reach the people to have them conserve food, to buy bonds to defray the expenses of the present conflict in Europe, do they use the churches? Not much. They go to the theatres, where they are sure of courteous treatment by managers, actors, and other employees as well.

Would the ministers and priests surrender their pulpits as cheerfully as actors have their stages? Try the little matter out and see.

When the boys on the other side are in need of cheer and comfort, do the Governments call on the dominies to do the task? Yes, they do *not*. They call on the actors, and these respond gladly and cheerfully, and give their services *free*, which the ministers do not. Your ministers and priests may serve in some capacity, yes, but they go as *paid chaplains*, and not as voluntary workers.

Did the actors claim exemption in this world battle? They did not. But you ministers lost no time in getting on the exempt list.

Are actors paying their *full fare* on the railroads, and thereby putting themselves out of pocket by many dollars? They are. But ministers and priests still ride on the "half fare" graft, which they are not willing that returned soldiers, or soldiers about to go over, should enjoy.

Have you ever, my fine friend, looked up the statistics of the U.S.A. and Canada, which will tell you that there are any number of parsons in jails, while the number of actors, male and female, is a surprisingly small one in comparison? Of course you have not, because, in doing so, you might learn something about your trade, and those that pursue it.

Your actor is ever in the front rank of those that are giving—giving and doing it gladly—and without thought of recompense, while ministers and priests, the world over, dole out their salvation at so much per "salve."

"I do not see the U.S. Government getting together any number of parsons to go "over there" for the good of the *morale* of our heroes, but it certainly is getting together contingents of actors and actresses to bring cheer and comfort to the hearts of them that are fighting for us. If the theatre were the pernicious influence you and your kind are trying to make others believe that it is, the U.S. Government (in which I have every confidence) would try its utmost to keep actors far from the battle line, instead of sending them over. Think it over, and see if you will not learn something if it is not too late.

When you say that "Few of those who follow a stage career escape the meshes of the net" you are aware, of course, that you are attacking the women of the stage? Are you aware at all that when a woman works on the stage she is working harder for a living than ministers and priests. And that she gives the public, who pay the price, full value for money received, while you and others of your ilk dole out promises of a future hell and other stuff that should be banned for larger salaries than the average actress gets? She gives melody and artistry of some sort, while you give for the money you get only promises about something that will happen in the future life—which is all speculation, and nothing that you are *positive* of. The average actress has far finer ideals than the average minister, her life is cleaner and sweeter, even if you do not think so.

Consult your criminal records of murder, rape, and other bestialities, and compare the number of ministers and priests, not only accused, but *convicted* on these counts with surprisingly small numbers of actors and actresses that you will find.

My hat is off in all reverence to the members of the theatrical profession, while my hat is *not* off to ministers who Talk so much and Do so little to make this world a better place to live in!

Yours for truth,

"VERNE E. SHERIDAN."

Obituary.

Wm. H. Hall, aged fifty-five, of Seymour Place, Marylebone, died on October 23. His passing away will be regretted by all who knew him. For several years he and his wife devoted most of their leisure time in selling Free-thought literature at open-air meetings, principally in the vicinity of Hyde Park. His death at the very gate, and his brave resignation, after a long illness, was a splendid example to all who value intellectual freedom as the greatest treasure in life.—E. D.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.

INDOOR.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N.W., off Finsbury Town Road): 7.30, Percy H. Muir, "Internationalism."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (11 Place, Moorgate Street, E.C.): 11, Joseph McCabe, "The Foundations of Peace."

OUTDOOR.

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Mr. Shaller; 3.15, Messrs. Saphin, Kells, Dales, and Swasey; 4 and 7, Mr. Geo. H. Swasey.

WOOLWICH (Beresford Square): Councillor Harry Boulter, 11.30, "Some Bible Stories"; 3, "More Bible Stories."

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BURNLEY BRANCH N. S. S. (Irving's Studio, 48 Sheffield Road): Wednesday, November 6, at 8, Branch Meeting. An Essay on Thomas Paine will be given.

COVENTRY BRANCH N. S. S. (The Baths' Assembly Hall): 7, Mr. E. Clifford Williams, "Secularism v. Christianity."

GLASGOW BRANCH N. S. S. (Good Templar's Hall, 122 Ingram Street): 12 noon, A Lecture, "The Higher Criticism."

GOLDTHORPE BRANCH N. S. S. (14 Beaver Street, Goldthorpe): 3, Important Business. Members earnestly asked to be present.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, The Rt. Hon. John M. Robertson, M.P., "Trade Policy after the War."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Co-Operative Hall, Downing Street, Ardwick): Mr. J. T. Lloyd, 3, "The Fight for Freedom"; 6.30, "The Value of the Bible in National Life."

SHEFFIELD ETHICAL SOCIETY (Builders' Exchange, Cross Burgess Street): 6.30, Mr. E. A. Webb, "Religious Reconstruction."

SWANSEA AND DISTRICT BRANCH N. S. S. (Dockers' Hall, Swansea): Mr. J. C. Thomas, B.Sc. ("Keridon"), 3, "The Two Ideals of State"; 7, "The Art of Squaring the Circle, or Solving the Insolvable."

W. H. THRESH, Founder and Principal of Ruskin House School (Rationalistic), Southend-on-Sea, has for nearly two years been engaged in clerical work for thirteen hours daily, and has had a breakdown through the strain. He will be pleased to receive lecture engagements for low fees. Subjects: Popular Science, Evolution, and Education. The matter is very urgent. Mr. Thresh is an Atheist.—Address c/o 5 Waddon Court Road, Waddon, Surrey.

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