

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

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

Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper.

VOL. XL.—No. 38

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1920

PRICE THREEPENCE

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Views and Opinions.

A Play and the People.

When I wrote recently on the subject of Mr. Maugham's play, "The Unknown," I had not, as was then stated, seen the production. Since then I have taken advantage of a few spare hours to see the performance. And having seen it, I quite agree with the critique in the *Freethinker* for August 29th that the play cannot honestly be called a great one. That is not any fault of the performers. They all take their parts well, perhaps that done by Lady Tree is the least convincing, and the acting of Miss Wright deserves all the praise that has been given it. With a less able cast the ideas expressed in the play would not have carried it through; on the other hand, the dramatic power of the play is too small to have secured a success without the setting forth of certain ideas which so many are feeling, but without the courage or wit to express them. The whole truth being that the success of the performance is dependent upon the presentation of a few simple ideas carried out with peculiar force by a well-grouped set of performers. And this success is due, not to the ideas being new, or because they are held by a few, but for quite contrary reasons. Even in normal times the ideas that are voiced by the heretics in the play are held and expressed by many thousands; they are held, without expression, by a very much larger number; and now, with the shock of the war fresh upon us, the number has increased tenfold. The capacity for seeing the absurdity of the religious theory of the world was always there, it has now been roused to activity; what is still needed, as a final stage, is the courage to give it definite expression.

Twin Lies.

Mr. Maugham's play is concerned with the exposure of two lies—the lie of militarism and the lie of religion. Major Wharton, the son of two very pious parents, comes back from the war disgusted with the horror, the filth, and the brutality of it all, features which the various Governments are seeking to again hide beneath gaudy uniforms, talk of gallant adventure, the greatness of Empire, etc., which, as the people of the earlier centuries used perfumes to hide the smell from their filthy bodies, serves to protect war from the

assaults of common sense and decent humanity. The discovery of this lie of militarism leads to the unmasking of that older lie of religion, which fits the other as well as does the upper and lower jaws of a hyena—to use a simile of Ingersoll's. And the lies are so obvious to anyone who can rid their brains of the inherited fear of religion. Major Wharton's parents tell him that he has been preserved as a consequence of their prayers for his safety. The apt retort is, What of the others who prayed? The parson repeats the old futilities about our need for the forgiveness of God—in his world, and because it is as he made it, and the anguish wrung Mrs. Littlewood aptly asks, "And who is to forgive God?" And she says, after describing what her life has been, that she would not treat a worn-out horse as God has treated her. The Major asks how can they expect him to worship a God who permits such war, and the Vicar and his wife repeat the inanities of thousands of pulpits, that we are unable to penetrate the designs of Providence. All the queries put are pertinent and obvious, and the beliefs held by the religious characters are quite common. That is at once the strength of the play and the condemnation of our boasted culture. When the historian of the future wishes to make an attack upon the supposed high state of culture of the twentieth century, he may well take as evidence for his case the fact that in the year 1920 the people of these islands were solemnly discussing ideas that in all their essentials are not a bit better than the religious ideas of the cave-men, who were indeed their true and "onlie begetter."

Are We Civilized?

So what mainly interested me was not the play itself; chiefly I was interested in the audience, in the public outside the theatre, and in the excitement the play has caused. And while from the point of view of a life-long advocate of Freethought I was pleased to see so many of my youthful ideas expressed on the stage, from another point of view I felt somewhat saddened. Pleased with the fact that the world had got thus far, there was sadness in the reflection of the low state of culture prevailing. Consider. "The Unknown" was not intended for an "uneducated" audience. It was not a moral or theological tract for the benefit of the "lower" classes. It was produced at a West End theatre and was intended for the upper classes. It had been written up by journalists as a very striking production because of its daring character. Hundreds of the clergy had received free tickets to a performance as a means of inducing them to enlarge their education. They had attended and declared that it did really stimulate thought—and it had, but of the wrong kind. For when they came away it had not roused the clergy to any thought as to the real absurdity of the ideas for which they stood, but only as to the way in which they could get the people to still hang on to a set of essentially barbarous doctrines. In effect, what they said after seeing the play was this—"It is quite evident that the world is getting dissatisfied with our teaching,

people are beginning to see through the sham, we are being found out, and unless we are able to alter our presentation of religion we shall find ourselves altogether out in the cold." But the real moral of the play was, in my opinion, of quite a different order. When we have a discussion which turns on the importance of the belief in prayer, on the value of that survival of early cannibalistic religion, the sacrament, and of the government of the world by that remnant of primitive superstition, the God of current religion, when we find these things discussed, not as studies in delusion, or as problems in historical anthropology, but as sober beliefs of great present importance, then it is evident that we are dealing with beliefs that are in their essential outlook on life not civilized at all. That audience of medicine men, and the discussion of the play itself, constitutes a damning indictment of the character of our civilization. It indicates the prevalence of beliefs which all civilized men and women should be ashamed of holding.

* * *

The Need for Plain Speech.

And for this state of affairs I cannot help thinking that non-believers in religion are themselves partly to blame. As Major Wharton remarks in the play, we have behind us centuries of fear of religion, and from that influence very few seem to get complete liberation. For complete liberation two things seem to be essential. One is clarity of thinking, the other is moral courage. Neither quality is common; the combination of the two is among the rare things of the earth. And one illustration of this rarity is the existence among us of a very large number of people who, while not accepting religion, seem constitutionally incapable of approaching it save in an attitude that robs their attack of a very large part of its effectiveness. These people know that the beliefs they have rejected are without the slightest claim to veracity. It is not a matter of mere opinion with them; it is not at all upon the level of a discussion on the merits of the Freudian psychology or the Einstein theory of relativity. We know that these religious doctrines are absolute fables. Either we know this or we have no claim to call ourselves by the name we bear. But what is the believer in these fables to think when he sees the rejector of his belief accompanying the rejection with an "Alas!" or a confession of the beauty of the stories or the respect due to them, and putting forward his disbelief as a mere matter of opinion? Quite naturally he concludes that there is, after all, something extremely valuable about them, and that he had better not be in a hurry to give them up. It is an encouragement to the cultivation of the very frame of mind that we should seek to destroy. Surely it is high time that we made the religious world feel in what light these beliefs appear to a really enlightened intelligence. We have to make the Christian realize that his religious beliefs are not a whit more respectable than those of the "lower" races he is so anxious to convert, that there is no essential difference between the cannibalistic rites of a savage and the Christian doctrine of the sacrament, that the prayers of the primitive priest are as good as those of the archbishop of Canterbury—and quite as efficacious, that civilization does not consist in exchanging a waist-band for coat and trousers, and an electric torch for a lighted stick. It is essentially a change in mental attitude towards life, and in that respect the mass of believers are on no higher level than savages. Three hundred clergymen getting their free tickets to witness "The Unknown" and to listen to the opinions of the Major and Mrs. Littlewood is essentially a crowd of primitive medicine men getting a lesson by easy stages in civilized common sense.

Propaganda on Tour.

I cannot close these notes without saying that although there is nothing in "The Unknown" that is not very elementary so far as the *Freethinker* is concerned, this takes nothing from the merits of Mr. Maugham's play. The pity is that what he says should need saying. He deserves all credit for attempting to teach the alphabet of real enlightenment to those who have hitherto so stubbornly refused to learn. He might easily have said more, but doubtless he said as much as any theatrical manager cared to risk. I am informed that the play will shortly go on tour, and it will doubtless arouse the same interest in the provinces that it has awakened in London. It is certainly a play that all Christians should see. It may help to arouse some of that healthier humanity that Christianity has done so much to crush or distort. And those Freethinkers who see it will get some little encouragement to renewed effort in noting how surely their ideas are making headway, in spite of all the opposition that may be offered.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Science and Theology.

CANON E. W. BARNES, Sc.D., F.R.S., of Westminster, startled, and, to some extent, shocked, the religious world by the remarkable sermon which he had the courage to preach before the British Association at Cardiff on the last Sunday in August. I have not had the privilege of reading that discourse; but from numerous reports of it in the newspapers one naturally infers that it was an extremely bold utterance, in which the doctrine of the Fall of Man was treated as no longer believable. Such a doctrine, the preacher maintained, had been utterly discredited by the discoveries of modern science. Of course, Canon Barnes is by no means the first divine to regard the first three chapters of Genesis as largely, if not wholly, legendary. The late Professor Henry Drummond and Canon Driver interpreted them allegorically or poetically, not as history. Other divines, more conservative than those two, accepted the theory of evolution, but denied its application to man. Dean Burgon is reported to have remarked in the pulpit of St. Mary's, Oxford, that "we are quite content to leave to the scientists their ancestors in the Zoological Gardens, if they will leave us ours in the Garden of Eden." Canon Barnes goes further, and leaves to the scientists even our own so-called parents in the Garden of Eden. He says:—

Man was not specially created by God, as the Jews of old believed, and as it is stated in the Book of Genesis. Man is, on the contrary, the final product of a vast process by which all life has evolved from primitive organisms. Biologically he is cousin, a hundred thousand or a million times removed, to the gorilla, and his ancestry goes back through amphibians to fishes. Probably about a million years ago, primitive, very primitive, man evolved from the primates: life on earth stretches back for something like a hundred million years.

All that is now a scientific commonplace, but from a working clergyman it comes as a disturbingly new and dangerous utterance. Hearing or reading it, one naturally asks, what business or right has this man to be in the Christian ministry?

Now, it is to the various implications of the scientific doctrine of man's origin and history that I wish to call attention. In a *Daily Telegraph* leader for August 31st it is truly said:—

With the Fall of Man equally disappears the doctrine of Original Sin, and even, it would seem, the doctrine of Vicarious Atonement, at all events as expounded by the theologians. If all this be so, Canon Barnes must expect to find himself the object of a good deal of acrimonious censure.

The *Daily Telegraph* writer, who is evidently himself a liberal theologian, is perfectly right in thinking that the Fall is an essential, foundational Christian doctrine. Indeed, according to Paul and the overwhelming majority of the doctors of the Church in all ages, it was the fall of humanity in Adam that rendered Christianity necessary. Christ is called the second Adam, whose mission it was to repair the infinite damage caused by the first. Paul contrasts the two Adams thus: "As through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous"; "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead"; "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive"; "The first man is of the earth earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven." Is it not absolutely certain, then, that if Adam and his fall disappear, so, of necessity, do Christ and his redemption? And yet here is a man, to whom Adam is only a myth, who still glories in and preaches Christ as the Redeemer of the world. If Canon Barnes loves consistency, he must see that he is morally and logically bound to vacate the Christian pulpit, for the Gospel he preaches is founded on, and is itself, a lie. If we are not sinners lost and ruined by the Fall, surely nothing can be more absurd than to treat us as needing restoration, renovation, or regeneration through Christ.

Canon Barnes contributed an article to the *Evening Standard* for September 1st, in which he endeavours to show that the theory of evolution "does not upset the Christian doctrine of the soul and its immortality." The truth is that the reverend gentleman seems incapable of thinking scientifically. He merely assumes the existence of God and the soul, and yet he writes as if he knew all about both, though science knows nothing of either. He says that from the ether the electrons arose; from the electrons, matter; from matter, life; from life, mind; and from mind, the soul, or spiritual consciousness; but the curious thing is that he seems to conceive of life, mind, and soul as separate entities. Then he indulges in the following unscientific language:—

When life emerged from non-living matter, or, again, when self-conscious mind grew in living things, God made something new. So, also, in creating the soul of man he made something new, definite, real, something different from any previous evolutionary product. The soul, then, exists. It partakes of the nature of God, and so has entered the realm of things eternal with God. It can know God, as all the saints assure us, and by virtue of such knowledge it can become immortal with God.....If we look at things in this way, we see that evolution does not upset the Christian doctrine of the soul and its immortality.

If we could look at things in that way we could not be evolutionists, nor has Canon Barnes any moral right to be one. His conception of evolution is radically different from the one held by physicists and biologists. According to him, at different stages in the process, God has stepped in and engaged in creative acts. The appearance of life, of self-conscious mind, and of the soul, signified Divine intervention in order to bring into being entirely new existences. Each of these alleged existences differs essentially from all previous evolutionary products, and its appearance meant that "God made something new, definite, real." In other words, whatever may have been the case with the physical universe, life, mind, and soul must be regarded as the Almighty's special creations. When the Canon says, "from matter comes life, from life mind emerged, from mind in man spiritual consciousness is developing," what he clearly means is that life, mind,

and spiritual consciousness have no affinity whatever with matter, and may exist independently of it, as God is believed to do. If he does not mean this, on what ground does he believe in the immortality of the soul apart from the material body, through which alone it can now function? When he says further, "The soul then exists," he makes a statement absolutely incapable of verification. Does he not realize that to say a thing is alive is not at all equivalent to affirming that life exists; or that to say a man thinks implies that mind is an entity? As Professor Schäfer, the eminent physiologist, well says: "The problems of life are essentially problems of matter; we cannot conceive of life, in the scientific sense, as existing apart from matter." So, likewise, we cannot conceive of mind, in the scientific sense, as existing except as nervous activity. Of the existence of mind apart from brain there is not even the ghost of evidence.

Our conclusion is that Canon Barnes is not a scientific evolutionist. If he were, he would recognize the fact, proclaimed by physicists and biologists, that evolution is a process constantly going on under physical and chemical laws, from the operation of which there is positively no escape, and that, in all instances, evolution ends in dissolution. "The entire history of anything," says Herbert Spencer, "must include its appearance out of the imperceptible and its disappearance into the imperceptible." So, likewise, life ends in death; and, as Professor Schäfer points out, "there is physiological ground for regarding death as a phenomenon of life—it is the completion, the last act of life." But Canon Barnes believes that death is not the end of life, but an event which merely severs the connection between the mortal body and the immortal soul, and so makes possible an endless spiritual life in a spiritual world. The reverend gentleman advocates the acceptance of modern knowledge up to a certain point, beyond which faith is to exercise supreme sway. God, Christ, mind, soul, and immortality are not objects of knowledge, but of faith, and faith is simply the religious word for imagination. Theology deals exclusively with the unknown or supernatural, the very existence of which is insusceptible of any proof. Before the science of geology sprang into being, it scarcely occurred to anybody to doubt the historicity of the Book of Genesis; but when the discoveries of both modern astronomy and geology threw discredit upon the Biblical story of the creation and fall of man, the more thoughtful theologians began to offer *interpretations* of the story, which soon became both numerous and conflicting; but these interpretations are resorted to simply because, in some form or other, the doctrine of the Fall is indispensable. Being no longer credible as an historical fact, it becomes a parable. It is not true, but it has its value to Christian teachers. To Paul it was undoubtedly an historical fact, but the Bishop of Exeter assures us that "St. Paul teaches us to read our Old Testament as a series of parables." The truth is, however, that theology can now be at home and dogmatic only when treating of the supernatural, which is a purely imaginary realm, unacknowledged by any existing science. Consequently there can be no reconciliation between science and theology, because they have absolutely nothing in common, and because the former completely ignores the latter. The scientist, as such, is never a believer; and the tendency of scientific investigations and discoveries is to destroy faith, verifying the old saying that the more a man knows the less he believes. The scientific spirit cultivates a rationalistic attitude, with the result, as Canon Barnes frankly admits, that "the younger educated men and women of our age are drifting from the churches."

Hitting Below the Belt.

II.

(Concluded from p. 581.)

The crime of inquiry is one which religion never has forgiven.—*Shelley*.

Fear not the tyrants will rule for ever,
Or the priests of the evil faith. —*Shelley*.

ANOTHER work of reference, *A Short Biographical Dictionary of English Literature*, by J. W. Cousins, issued in Dent's Everyman Library, is open to somewhat similar objections. It is prejudiced and ill-informed. The following interesting passage relates to Shelley's opinions:—

The charge of Atheism rests chiefly on *Mab*, the work of a boy, printed by him for private circulation, and to some extent repudiated as personal opinion.

This is simple nonsense, and the writer displays his ignorance of Shelley by misquoting the title of the best known of the poet's works. Nor is this a solitary blunder, for, in another page, Cotter Morrison, the Positivist, is dubbed "J. C. Monson." Another singular statement, entirely gratuitous in a work of reference, is that Thomas Paine was "vain and prejudiced." James Thomson, the poet who wrote *The City of Dreadful Night*, the finest pessimistic poem in the language, is introduced as an awful warning, for we are told his "views resulted in depression which led to dipsomania." In the case of doubting Thomas Huxley, the information is given that "he was not a materialist, and was in sympathy with the moral and tender aspects of Christianity." Tyndall's famous Belfast Address, we are told, "raise a storm of controversy and protest in various quarters." After these gems of criticism, we are not surprised to learn that Ouida's writings have an unhealthy tone, and that Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads* were a "daring departure from recognised standards, alike of politics and morality."

The austere George Eliot does not escape censure. The information is given that "her general view of life is pessimistic," despite the fact that this gifted woman expressly used the word, "meliorism," in order to show her own attitude towards optimism and pessimism. Robert Buchanan's robust anti-Christian views are slurred over by the grudging admission that his poems, *The Outcast* and *The Wandering Jew*, were directed against certain aspects of Christianity.

Still another reference-book may be mentioned, *Chambers' Encyclopædia*, in an edition issued a few years ago, is full of bias against men and women of sceptical opinions. A diatribe against Thomas Paine is quoted from the pen of Leslie Stephen, which the writer afterwards apologised for, but there is no mention of the latter fact. Colonel Ingersoll, whose popularity could hardly be questioned, is said to have attracted more attention than he deserved. In an article on Charles Bradlaugh, the reader is referred for fuller information to the libellous "Life" by "Mackay" (and other scoundrels), a work which Bradlaugh himself proceeded against and had destroyed. Even the then-popular novelist, "Ouida," is accused of "muscular heathenry" and "encyclo-pædic ignorance."

Nor is this all, for a modest list of the various sects using places of worship in England has been deleted from *Whittaker's Almanac* because Orthodox folk objected to the publicity of the fact of the many varieties of religious opinion. They constitute the modern form of an infamous theological tradition which may be traced back through the centuries to Lucretius, and even earlier. The fortunes of really great writers,

like Paine, Shelley, Meredith, and Swinburne, to mention no others, have been much influenced by this frigid and calculated misconception. Freethought invariably incurs the hatred of the orthodox, and no enmity is more unscrupulous, more relentless, or more venomous. These methods are used towards Freethinkers of set purpose and with deliberation. They are used to discredit the characters and writings of men and women who do not bow the knee before the Christian superstition. Freethought has wrested so many positions from Christianity that in order to support the tottering edifice of superstition, believers will hesitate at nothing to buttress the wavering allegiance of their lukewarm fellow-Christians. The Churches will never rebuke their faithful and zealous followers for lying for the glory of God. Formerly the Churches used scaffolds, stakes, prisons, and torture-chambers; now she relies upon lies, libels, and misrepresentations. Orthodoxy must be found out. It is as well to have some of the misrepresentations and falsehoods nailed down for future reference.

MIMNERMUS.

Science and the Occult.

XI.

(Continued from p. 566.)

There are, however, a certain number of men, eminent for their scientific attainment and of undoubted integrity, whose judgment on many scientific subjects would be considered conclusive, and who have publicly stated that the evidence was clear to their minds in favour of the reality of spiritualistic phenomena, that is, of phenomena which could not be explained by the ordinary known laws of nature. What can be said in regard to the evidence of such men as these? First and most important in relation to the value of their evidence is the fact that it is entirely *personal*, and in its nature insusceptible of proof. If these same observers stated a scientific fact they would scarcely expect its acceptance unless they produced proof with it. As it is, we have only their personal belief. In science it has always been an accepted fact that personal belief without proof is of little value, except as the basis of an hypothesis.—"Report of Committee on Mediumistic Phenomena."...*Proceedings of the American Society for Psychical Research*. December, 1887. p. 235.

THE result of the dream, and Mrs. Piper's verification of it, was to send Mr. Dodge to Mexico at once to investigate the case, and bring back the young man, if possible, from his enforced captivity.

To Prentis C. Dodge, Mexico was a land of mystery, inhabited by treacherous people from whom anything might be expected. He was filled with suspicion from the start, suspicion which his investigations in Mexico City all tended to confirm.

At the hospital he learned that Connor had occupied a room in the contagious ward at the rear of the hospital, and not the front room marked on the photograph sent by the Consul-General. The matron, although very positive that the young man had died, and been buried in the American cemetery close by, had not actually seen the body after death. A Mexican male nurse who had attended young Connor could speak very little English, and the head physician made an unfavourable impression. The Consul-General had not attended the funeral, as he declared he had—in fact, nobody but the Mexican bearers and the cemetery workers had been present at the internment; and no trace of the precious stones supposed to have been possessed by Connor could be found. To further aggravate the case, the young man had been buried in an ordinary, common grave, whereas his parents had been charged, and paid for, a cemented brick-lined grave.

Mrs. Piper had insisted that the body be exhumed, and after some time and much difficulty, an order was obtained and the body exhumed, in the presence of

several American residents, after it had been in the ground for about a year. Some teeth were removed, also a lock of hair was cut from the skull, and a photograph taken of the skull.

In spite of all his deep-rooted suspicions, Mr. Dodge was pretty well convinced at the time that the body exhumed was that of his friend, Dean Bridgman Connor, and so wired to the young man's father.

Mr. Dodge also wired for more "light" if possible from Mrs. Piper, and received the following telegram:—"Piper sitting yesterday. Phinuit said Dean taken along south road into country house. George went to see and said Dean had been taken to Tuxedo. No chance for another sitting.—Hodgson."

Phinuit and George are "controls" or "spirits" said to take possession of Mrs. Piper while she is in the trance state, and speak through her.

Mr. Dodge found the information somewhat hazy; he could not find any place named "Tuxedo" in Mexico, for the very good reason that there is no such place there. Neither could he find any "south road" leading from the hospital, in front of which there was a very ordinary street which led into the main street that runs into the heart of the City of Mexico. After some further investigations, with little result, Mr. Dodge came home with the teeth, hair, photographs, and a great many doubts and fears.

His results only tended to confirm them in their conviction that Connor was alive. The teeth were examined by the dentist who had attended the young man some years previously, who pronounced them as not the teeth of Connor. The hair was examined by an eminent physician, who had known young Connor, and it was compared with a sample in the possession of Mrs. Dodge, and pronounced as not the hair of the young man.

Here, then, was scientific testimony backing up the dream and Mrs. Piper. In the face of these declarations, Mr. Dodge smothered his doubts, and became convinced that the body he saw exhumed was not that of Dean Bridgman Connor.

The only thing left now was to wait for Mrs. Piper's recovery and obtain more information from the "spirits," and this did not happen until six months later, in the October of 1896, when the "sittings" were again resumed.

Mr. Philpott gives a verbatim transcript of some of these "sittings," and we can only express our astonishment that a man of Dr. Hodgson's ability could be taken in by such idiot's babble. As Mr. Philpott's remarks, "A peculiarity of all the communications through Mrs. Piper is their broken and fragmentary character. There is also what looks like 'fishing' for a suggestion from those present." And we may add that when a suggestion is made, Mrs. Piper invariably replies "Yes." For instance, when Dr. Hodgson suggests, "When you told us Tuxedo before, I suppose you mixed up the sounds of Tuxedo and Puebla?" Mrs. Piper replies (by the spirit of George Pelham), "Yes, how in thunder did you know that?"

In the first sitting where she revealed Puebla, in place of the mythical Tuxedo, as the place where Connor had been taken, Mrs. Piper wrote the name as Pueblo all through the sitting, but at the next she wrote it correctly Puebla; she had found out her mistake in the interval.

The suggestion of Hodgson, so eagerly accepted by Mrs. Piper, that she had mixed up the sounds of Tuxedo and Puebla, can only be explained by Dr. Hodgson's desire to save the medium's credit, on the

principle that any excuse is better than none. For there is not the slightest similarity between the two words.

The upshot of the sittings was that Connor was held captive in an institution in the city of Puebla (which lies about seventy-five miles south-east of the city of Mexico), under the control of a Dr. Cintz.

Armed with this new "light," Mr. Dodge, along with a friend, Dr. Spahawk, started immediately for the city of Puebla, where they invoked the aid of the Mexican authorities in the search, during which they scoured prisons, gaols, asylums, hospitals, and public and private institutions, without finding Dean Bridgman Connor, or Dr. Cintz, or the institution described by Mrs. Piper. They were brought to a standstill again.

Then Dr. Hodgson held some remarkable "sittings" with Mrs. Piper, as the result of which Mr. Dodge and Dr. Sparhawk were ordered to visit the city of Orizaba, about sixty miles east of Puebla, and were there directed in their search by Mrs. Piper's "controls," who claimed they could see Dr. Sparhawk and Mr. Dodge each day, and communicated to Dr. Hodgson just how near or how far the searchers were from the building in which Connor was confined. Thus Dr. Hodgson directed the search in Orizaba, from Burlington, a distance of four thousand miles. To account for the shifting of operations from Puebla to Orizaba, the "control" explains that the two cities were so near together that it was impossible to define them. This explanation was quite as thin as the explanation offered in the case of Tuxedo and Puebla, for the two cities were sixty miles apart. Mr. Philpott observes:—

Dr. Hodgson was naturally a little excited about this time, as well he might be, for here was his great medium displaying a new and more wonderful power than she had ever before displayed—following through her "controls" the movements of two men who were four thousand miles away, and directing their movements with the aid of that other mysterious agency, the telegraph.....if Dean Bridgman Connor could now be found as the result of the information given by Mrs. Piper's "controls" it would be a new revelation to the world, which would revolutionize nearly all that had gone before, and that had been learned through science and speculation. His struggle of years to wrest from nature her greatest secret would be crowned with certain victory, based on clear and convincing evidence. —

He who had started out as a cold-blooded, scientific investigator of psychic phenomena; the man who had investigated the fakirs of India; the man who had been anchored to the rock of evolution on which Herbert Spencer stood, had in the course of time, and largely because of his study of Mrs. Piper, become a believer in the occult, and was confident that through Mrs. Piper he spoke freely with the discarnate spirits of his old friend George Pelham and others, who were now rendering such service as only spirits could possibly render. It was a crucial moment in the career of this persistent investigator.¹

In our next we shall see what kind of success the spiritual sleuths had to Orizaba. W. MANN.

(To be continued.)

The very foundations of modern science and philosophy were laid on ground which was wrested from the church, and every stone was cemented with the blood of martyrs. As the edifice arose, the sharpshooters of faith attacked the builders at every point, and they still continue their old practice, although their missiles can hardly reach the towering heights where their enemies are now at work.—G. W. Foote.

¹ Philpott, *The Quest for Dean Bridgman Connor*, p. 25.

¹ Philpott, *The Quest for Dean Bridgman Connor*, pp. 48-49.

The Claws of the Church.

When insolence raises its ugly head from amidst the crowd of skirted men who live on ignorance and credulity, when the kept priests of a rotten system turn on the very foundation of their security and ease, when events have shattered belief in a God deserving the hatred and derision of mankind, then has the time come to speak out. A professed follower of a carpenter, Dean Inge, has joined the slanderer's chorus of the workmen. These workmen, lately "gallant lads," in a war as far back as two years ago, eternity of time as it were, to newspaper readers who forget what they read yesterday, these workmen are slandered in a paper called the "Evening Standard" in the following words: "The lazy miner who extorts his thousand a year from the householders of England, and the bricklayer who battens on the rates, and does about two and a half hours of honest work in the day." This Solomon of London, God's executor, sitting in judgment on those made in the image of their maker, is at once a sign and a portent. To Freethinkers who know the breed it is nothing new; to Labour Leaders who think that the aim of Labour and Christianity is identical, it may come as a revelation of the true attitude of the black coated wasters who are carried about in the rich man's pocket.

In the minds of many there still exists the fallacy that the function of big business is to provide "work." It is nothing of the kind. Furthermore, if workmen have no voice in the making of a system of industry, who shall censure their behaviour? Again, bricklayers, under a system not created by themselves, build beautiful houses and never live in them. Neither does a miner, however industrious, live to enjoy the surfeit of luxury accessible to mine owners. And the incentive to work this precious system, the victims of which are subject to the accusations of this Dean whose stock in trade is wind, the incentive, we repeat, is starvation. Capitalistic abuse must be at a low ebb when the friends of the poor are called in, or come uninvited. Fifty thousand of the Dean's tribe could not, would not, or dared not fight. Napoleon put this lot, in his time, with the women and camels. Fifty thousand in the present do not work or produce anything of value; their influence on culture can be estimated by the fact that the population's favourite song is "Where do flies go in the Winter-time," and a murder case excites more interest than the Lambeth Conference. By their fruits we know them. If a servant of the Lord's function is to save souls, what business has he in economics? Let Labour note well these Christian barriers of privilege, and thank the Dean for letting the cat out of the bag. If half the energy expended on the miraculous birth had been used for a solution of Labour troubles, the old man of the sea, then it might be possible for men to glory in their work, and not have these yelpings from one supposed to be full of Christian la-ave—and above an elementary understanding of a system, the logical outcome of which is war. The respective values of priests and workmen may be judged by the consequences of each refraining from work. Let the former strike for an increase or decrease in pay and the world would be treated to a good laugh—a thing it badly needs. Dean Inge's brother-in-trade, General Booth, is ranged alongside with the exploiters of man-

kind. He complains of the worker being work-shy. An answer to him is found in Lord Haig's appeal for work for 19,000 ex-Service men. On his own gutter level of argument, if men already in work work harder, then we can expect an increase in the number for whom Lord Haig appeals. Obsession with blood and fire does not appear to make for clear thinking in economics; General Booth and Dean Inge only supply poultices to the effects of a system—agreed to by them, and deriving income from that system, and they are, what all Freethinkers know them to be, bulwarks of things as they are. The moral for Labour is obvious.

Some day, when Labour has gathered in its ranks, architects, technicians, intelligent men who find no joy in serving the present system, it will send all people who make wars to fight them. Priests, politicians, statesmen who encourage those who betray their friends, editors who pose on omnibuses, these will compose the army, and no one will be interested in the casualty list. Labour, by that time, will have erected a statue to Dean Inge for his injudicious remarks in a paper reflecting no one's views but the vicious, who seek to keep things as they are. With the Bible as a handbook of slavery, and slave morality, who is surprised that the priests of the system forget themselves, and, whilst posing as savers of souls, are the whips of bodies? We do not envy the "class" praise that will be showered on the Dean for his outspokenness—it is fashionable to abuse workers—who saved the empire, presumably, for Lord Haig's appeal. We trust the Dean sleeps well o' nights, we trust that the Lord is proud of him, we thank him for telling others who did not know, that he, like his Church, is an enemy of the people, and that his excursion in economics is a pitiful example of intellect run amok. After all, his business is with Heaven, not with—no—this earth.

WILLIAM REPTON.

"The Unknown."

"SOMEBODY challenge this rubbish!" cried an excited Radical at a Conservative meeting that we once attended. The "darkening of counsel"—sometimes wilful, sometimes the result merely of foggy thinking, in the present controversy in the "Daily Mirror" on the effect of war upon faith provokes one to the same exclamation.

It is all along of Mr. Maugham's play, "The Unknown," for which, by-the-bye, our bright little contemporary arranged a special matinée, inviting to it "over three hundred ministers of nearly every denomination." Nothing much seems to come of it so far. We are still, like the Scholar Gipsy, "waiting for the spark from heaven to fall." But one would have thought that even the organisers of a "silly season" controversy would have realised that the last persons to judge fairly of matters of faith are those whose interests are vested in faith. One doesn't go to a butcher for an opinion on vegetarianism.

Nor does it seem to have occurred to any of the contributors, lay or clerical, that "ministers of all denominations" are themselves the most industrious destroyers of faith—of other people's faith, that is to say—through the agency of missions. The

Papuan, placing food before his idols, "believes" quite as fervidly as any Christian of them all. Yet these last support gigantic organisations for the express purpose of telling the Papuan that he is wrong. It must follow, then, that faith is not of itself commendable. There are faiths and faiths, it seems. Will some one kindly tell us in what consists the distinction between a "right" faith and a "wrong" "faith?"

But Mr. Chesterton is of the symposium. He is an important because surely he is not a prejudiced witness. Let us see what he has to say.

He observes first, quite rightly, that the problem is raised as much by a toothache as by the recent war. (*En passant*, our old friend Macaulay said much the same thing some few years ago.) The man who says that the war has shaken his faith confesses that he has only just begun to think. An evil is an evil, whether it be great or small, and as such irreconcilable with the works of a Being reputed at once all-powerful and all-loving. Those good people who before the war contrived to believe in the goodness of God, in spite of earthquakes, cyclones, famines and other things which "shrieked against their creed," can with perfect consistency continue to do so, war or no war. It is only one evil amongst many.

But earthquakes were far, clergymen numerous, and thinkers few; the result being that the problem was never fairly stated, and the mass of people were content to accept the assurances of professional expositors who told them that it was all right, and who talked sublimely, if vaguely, of "some mysterious Purpose"—with a big P.

The war, however, came home to all of us. There was no getting away from *that*. In other words, the problem is now fairly stated. Even the most unthinking to some extent can "envisage" it, as our French friends would say, and it seems, from laments over the decay of faith, that the moment they do so, they are led to reject the current religious beliefs. This tends to confirm what some of us all along suspected, namely, that the foundations of faith are laid in ignorance.

Mr. Chesterton, however, goes on to say, "If, as I believe, evil is consistent with the goodness of God, it is consistent with a war quite as much as with a headache." Evil may be consistent with the goodness of God; but if so, it is inconsistent with his omnipotence—an essentially divine quality, we have always been given to understand. The only conclusion that we can come to is, that God is not up to his work. A remark such as is quoted above, is hardly calculated to increase our confidence, however it may affect our "faith" in God. It is a little disturbing to reflect that the universe is in the charge of a being, well-meaning enough, it seems, but as hopelessly inefficient as Phaeton himself. Would "G. K. C." like to travel in a train driven by an incapable driver? And would he derive much comfort from the assurance that the ensuing accident was "consistent," as indeed it might be, "with the goodness of the driver?"

There is no escape from Mill's dilemma, that God is either not all-powerful, or he is not all-loving, and we once heard a learned and ingenuous "Gresham lecturer" confess as much—to the no small perturbation of his pious hearers.

H. L.

Acid Drops.

The Rev. Mr. Burgess, of Old Radford, is evidently alarmed at the spread of Atheism and Freethinking, and, preaching in All Souls' Church, Nottingham, he said he was ready to meet any person in public debate on the subject he was discussing. Mr. Burgess is looking for trouble, and we have no doubt but that he will find it before he is much older. From the summary of the sermon published in the *Nottingham Journal* we do not think that Mr. Burgess is one who is likely to give a Freethinker much trouble. When a man says, with an air of saying something that is unanswerable, that no man can prove that God does not exist because his work exists and is everywhere around us, he strikes us as having to go a long way yet before he has even a passable acquaintance with the case for Atheism. Perhaps some of our Nottingham friends will keep us informed of this gentleman's progress in the demolition of Atheism. We have no doubt but that the local Freethinkers will see that he is well supplied with material for discussion.

Many a true word appears in a misprint. Following the sermon preached at Cardiff by Canon Barnes to the British Association, the worthy Canon was interviewed by the *Daily News*. In the course of the interview the Canon stated that there were certain indisputable truths of the Christian religion; but, owing to a misprint, this was rendered as "indefensible truths."

"The new Bishop of Hereford and his family will take up their residence at the Palace, Hereford." This is how the right reverend fathers-in-God take up their crosses and follow their Saviour.

In a churchyard in the Bayswater Road local policemen have raised goodly crops of vegetables. As the ground is consecrated, the cabbages and potatoes ought to share in the consecration.

We print in another part of this issue a letter from Sir Walter Strickland which repeats a point we have frequently insisted on in connection with the state of English culture. We agree with him that the fact of it being necessary to expose the pretensions of such a belief as Spiritualism is in itself a serious reflection on our civilization. But the same remark also applies to the need for dealing with the whole Christian superstition. That it should be needful to argue that the stories which go to make up the Christian creed are not true challenges the whole claim of the people to be called civilized. These beliefs are not civilized, and nothing can make them so. They belong to what Tylor so well called "Primitive Culture," and until we Freethinkers insist on treating them as such we shall never persuade Christians that in encouraging their prevalence they are perpetuating savagery.

It is for this reason precisely that we have so often protested against the mock homage paid by "respectable" Freethinkers to Christian beliefs. So long as we approach a consideration of Christian doctrines with the same "respectful" air that we assume when we discuss a scientific problem or a vexed question in sociology, so long are we helping to hide from the believer the real nature of his beliefs, and encouraging in him a sense of their importance. How can we expect a Christian to think of his beliefs as what they really are so long as we assure him that they are of extreme importance, and confess that we no longer believe in a God with an air of melancholy, as though we realize that we have lost something that would be extremely valuable if we could only go on believing in it. The only sound policy is to make the Christian realize what these beliefs are to really educated people. If we would have the Christian give up his beliefs, we must divest them of their air of sacredness and importance. Make him realize that his own belief in prayer, in the divinity of Jesus, in miracles, in the sacrament, and in the other ingredients of his faith are not a whit better than similar beliefs which flourish among savages, and which

in their pure form any civilized man or woman would be ashamed to believe in. It is high time that all Freethinkers gave up paying lip homage to religion. Until they do so, Freethought will never assume its right position in the country. The remedy lies in our own hands if we will only take it.

The late J. E. Brigg, of Huddersfield, formerly Vicar of Hepworth, left £10,498; the Rev. R. B. Forrester, of Colnacott, Fairford, Glos., left £57,471; the Rev. A. D. Purefoy, of Chapelized, Dublin, left £9,033; Canon Hudson, of Crosby-on-Edon, Cumberland, left £30,620. All these Christian gentlemen avoided the blessings of poverty, and it is unpleasant to reflect where they are spending eternity.

A Chicago saloon-bar keeper, named Peter Hell, applied to the Court for authorisation to change his name to Hall. He declared that people made fun of his name, and his patrons used to say, "Let's go to Hell for a drink."

In connection with the meetings of the North Wales Methodist Association, a series of sermons, lasting from six o'clock in the morning until six in the evening, were delivered at Carnarvon. The Methodists are at least methodical in their madness.

Auckland Castle, the episcopal palace, is to let, as the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have decided to make money out of it. It must not be assumed that the Bishop of Durham is near the workhouse, for he still enjoys the modest income of £7,000 annually. In the good old days, however, the Prince Bishop roped in £30,000; but that was in the ages of Faith.

The discussion of Canon Barnes' sermon is still going on in various papers, and should remind us of what a deal there is yet to do before we can honestly claim that even the crudest and most ignorant forms of religious belief are dead. The discussions range from the contribution of General Booth, who, as may be expected, champions the belief in the fall of man in its most stupid form, to those who argue that the biblical story is really an allegory of man's awakening to a consciousness of wrongdoing. It is bad enough that such a belief as the fall of man should to-day be the subject of discussion by educated people, but it is much worse to find its retention advocated on grounds that only escape the charge of ignorance by incurring that of dishonesty. We are not here concerned with whether the later form of the doctrine is better than the earlier one or not. The obvious truth is that by the fall of man all Christians for centuries understood a certain thing. All the Churches, without a single exception, were at one in this, and their whole doctrine was built upon it. And to say that it must now be understood in a quite different sense is to say substantially that it is not true, and that the Churches have been teaching a lie. That is the contention of a man like General Booth, and, crude and ignorant as is his theology, it is at least honest when compared with that of better educated Christians.

The controversy thus serves to illustrate what we have said above when dealing with Sir Walter Strickland's letter. Hardly ever does Christianity fail to induce a form of mental crookedness that is more or less injurious to intellectual integrity. It makes people ask, not, is a thing true, but in what way can we make it true so as to agree with the faith. The result is a series of tricks, evasions, and duplicities that justify the description of the Christian Church as "The Great Lying Church." In the best of characters it blinds to the claims of truth where religious interests are concerned, and in the worst it becomes downright and deliberate lying. And even when we are not dealing directly with religious issues, we still have to deal with the evil influence of Christianity on the life of the race.

A sentence of four months' imprisonment was passed on the Rev. F. Nepean at Littledean, Gloucestershire, for

improperly assaulting a seven-year-old boy. As the offender was a clergyman there is no moral to draw from the case.

Over 200 lives were lost, 370 houses destroyed, and 500 persons rendered homeless and starving as a result of a tidal wave which swept over the island of Saghalien, north Japan. "He doeth all things well."

The Rev. T. Haworth, of St. Leonards-on-Sea, died during a service at St. Saviour's Church. Had he been a Freethinker there would have been an impressive moral to this happening.

Literature has given us many delightful portraits of the ideal parson, but the plain fact surpasses imagination. At Littledean (Glos.) Petty Sessions the Rev. F. N. Gantillon was sentenced to four months' hard labour for indecently assaulting a seven years' old boy. At Bath, the Rev. J. H. Barlow, a Bristol clergyman, was remanded on a charge of assaulting a woman in a picture theatre.

The latest news of the "starving" clergy is interesting. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishop of London, and a number of other clergy have been holiday-making in Scotland.

It is quite amusing to find the *Star* commenting in a lordly way on "journalistic honour" in connection with the offer of the Russians to give the *Daily Herald* the sum of £75,000. As though, with very rare exceptions, journalistic honour is not a matter of so much per column. Why, there is not even honour in connection with the letters which papers like the *Daily News* and the *Telegraph* are publishing on the silly season correspondence that is running through their columns. For these letters undergo, obviously, a very careful selection, so that the public may get the idea that the trend of opinion runs in a desired direction. It is an insidious way of misleading public opinion. Papers that allow themselves to be suborned in favour of one of the greatest falsehoods that the world knows have small cause to talk of journalistic honour. In face of the fact that there is hardly a paper in Britain that dares to speak the truth about religion for fear of injuring its circulation the expression makes one smile.

The *Daily Mirror* recently published a thrilling photograph of the Rev. A. Eglinton standing at his study window, gun in hand, "waiting," as the *Mirror* put it, "to pot a cat." This particular Vicar, who smokes a pipe just like an ordinary man, states that his duties include "inspector of drains, window examiner, goat driver, cat shooter, and couple disturber." Well, these are difficult days for religion, and the clergy are being forced to prove that a man of God may be useful as well as holy! It is possible, of course, even to-day that humanitarian Atheists will object to the "cat shooting," but humanitarian sentiment is extremely rare. The Church produces men who positively revel in a good day's shooting. Christ never said nothin' 'bout magpies.

The shop assistants in Weston-super-Mare are demanding better conditions of employment, and if what they say is correct it is about time they got it. At a meeting recently held in the Town Hall, Councillor Rendell, who presided, said he regretted to find that the majority of those against whom complaints were made were connected with and took a prominent part in various churches in the town. We are not at all surprised, and we fancy that the same will be found to hold good elsewhere. It is not so much that their religion tells them to act in the manner condemned by Councillor Rendell as it is that religious activities form a cloak for action which without the aid of religion many people would not commit. Religion, in short, by providing a number of fictitious moralities, enables a man to outrage real moralities with impunity so far as his own conscience is concerned. It makes rascality easier by giving to certain religious performances the character of things of supreme importance.

Our Sustentation Fund.

FROM the list of subscriptions published below it is quite evident that our friends are less diffident in giving than I was in asking. But in truth, while I opened the fund with the greatest reluctance, I had never any doubt as to the result. My concern has been to ask as seldom and to keep the loss as low as possible. But in the whole of the trying times through which we have passed, and are passing, every appeal has been met with a prompt and generous response, which—strange as it may sound to some—made me more anxious than ever to try and do away with the need for further help of that kind. Unfortunately, circumstances are too strong at the moment, and very many of those who have sent have expressed surprise that the loss is not very much greater. Well, it might easily have been that, and I may as well say plainly that it has only been kept where it is by my doing two men's work in order that not an unnecessary shilling should be spent. When the paper is self-supporting, I shall indulge myself in getting more help at the work. Meanwhile I can only say that if the Freethought fight is a hard one, the loyal friendships it calls forth are compensating features of the struggle.

It may be noted that some few of the subscriptions acknowledged come from places as far distant as Africa and the West Indies. These friends were so anxious to be in the first list that they sent on their donations weeks before the Fund was even announced. And from many of the subscribers have come letters which I shall always regard as a stimulus to renewed exertions. Mr. W. B. Columbine writes:—

I have the pleasure to enclose cheque for ten guineas for your Sustentation Fund with my heartfelt wishes for the success of your gallant efforts to place the *Freethinker* on a sound and self-supporting basis. The wonder is not that you have to make another appeal, but that you can carry on the paper without asking for a great deal more assistance. In these most difficult times the least all Freethinkers can do is to give you freely the support which you require.

Dr. Meehan McDermott trusts that "all interested in our crusade will welcome the opportunity of evincing their practical sympathy in furthering the cause of Freethought—the dynamic of progress, the real saviour-redeemer of mankind in its Sisyphean task against superstition, ignorance, and prejudice." Mr. F. J. Wood thinks that if, after paying the subscription to the *Freethinker*, the reader does not get more than an added guinea's worth, he is to blame. "D. D. B." is good enough to say, "It is your own self-denial and your own pursuit of truth that draws my contribution." Mr. J. Sumner says:—

To have kept the Freethought flag flying through the troublous times of the past six years is a great feat. To have done so at all would have been an achievement, but to have carried it unharmed is something of which you may well be proud. In the quieter years ahead it will certainly redound to your credit, as indeed it does to-day.

"C. W. B.," enclosing cheque, thinks:—

This is not the time to bandy fine words, to weave garlands and festoons around the *Freethinker*, or to throw bouquets to it. Let us one and all show our appreciation of the Editor, whose indomitable courage has kept the paper alive during this seething unrest. Shall the Sustentation Fund go on till the £1,000 mark is reached? Let the subscribers answer.

Mr. T. Robertson writes:—

I have much pleasure in sending £5 towards the Sustentation Fund. You have done well in keeping the deficit within such small compass; to paraphrase

a well-known quotation, "These are times when to lost little is to gain much" so far as serious journalism is concerned. I trust that the response to your appeal will be as generous as your work in connection with the *Freethinker* has been unstinted.

Mr. A. W. Davis, in sending cheque, thanks us for "keeping the old paper going under so many difficulties," and wishes it was "a more profitable business to yourself." Well, it might be better, but I scarcely think that anyone concerned with that kind of profit would take on editing a Freethought paper and running a Freethought campaign. Our great concern now is to get through till more settled times are with us.

We received with peculiar pleasure the following from a representative of one of a very old and exceptionally united family of Freethinkers, the head of which must be now well in the nineties, and who has the gratification of seeing his great-grandchildren growing up around him, and bidding fair to follow in the path of mental freedom. The letter comes from Mr. E. D. Side, who says:—

I am pleased you decided to tell the readers of the *Freethinker* of the loss on the year caused by the unforeseen rise in cost of paper and wages, and to allow them to join in making the deficit good. We here are pleased to add our mite to help, and I will take this opportunity of congratulating you on the continued high position of the *Freethinker*. It is tip-top. With our kindest regards and special greetings from father.

Mr. George Scott says: "The financial resources of most of your readers leave a good deal to be desired, but we must not let the *Freethinker* go under. Nor can we allow you to bear all the burden. You have more than enough to carry." Mr. G. Brady hopes "the response will be worthy the splendid object in view and your own laborious task." Messrs. Lawrence and Jacobs think "the fact that the *Freethinker* has to appeal to its readers for help while the gutter Press thrives should spur them on to greater efforts in the cause." Mr. H. Irving hopes that the Freethinkers of Britain and abroad will lighten the load we are bearing in quick time. Other letters will be dealt with in our next issue.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

C. W. B., £20; Dr. P. M. McDermott, £10 10s.; J. M. Gimson, £10; W. B. Columbine, £10 10s.; T. Robertson, £5 Mrs. C. M. Renton, £2; Mrs. Fallow, 5s.; J. Sweet, 6s.; Mrs. Siger, 5s.; J. Lauder (Transvaal), £1; G. F. Dixon, £3 3s.; J. Davie, £5; T. F. Dant, 10s.; C. D. Weston, 10s. 6d.; S. H. Mayes, 2s.; J. Pendlebury, £5; J. Sumner, £5 5s.; J. E. Wood, £1 1s.; G. R. Hawker, 10s.; A. J. V. Templeman, £1; D. D. B., £3 3s.; W. Mather, £2; J. (Swansea), £2 2s.; C. F. Hall, £2 2s.; Mrs. F. Burns, £1 1s.; A. R. Wykes and Sons, 15s.; J. W. Bishop, £2; A. W. Davis, £5 5s.; Mrs. A. Robertson, £1; B. Godfree, £1; R. B. Fowler, 5s.; W. H. Knight, 10s.; S. Clowes, 7s.; R. Wood, 10s.; J. H. Gartrell, 10s.; J. S. Buckle, £1; W. Ainsley, 10s.; D. S. MacDougall, 10s.; T. A. Mathews, £1; R. H. Side, £2 10s.; E. D. Side, £2 10s.; Miss Ada Harris, 5s.; R. Crumm, 10s.; G. Scott, 10s.; G. Brady, £5; Lawrence and Jacob, £1 10s.; H. Irving, 10s.; "Libra," 10s.; R. Brown, £3; H. Purdy, 10s.; A. Hawkyard, £2 2s.; G. B. H. McCluskey, £2 2s.; J. Blackhall, 5s.; T. T. Tradeston, 2s. 6d.; M. Barnard, 10s.; J. E. Cockroft, 5s.; P. M., 2s.; A. G. Ham, 2s. 6d.; G. Saunders, £1; J. Robertson, £1; W. J. Lamb, £2 10s.; Thoth, £2; A. Pinnock, £2; J. B. Middleton, £5; J. Weeks, 2s. 6d.; "An Interested Reader," £1; F. W. Langridge, 10s. Total, £147 6s.

To Correspondents.

J. R. WILLIAMS.—Thanks for pamphlets. Such twaddle is an insult to give to men outside a lunatic asylum. We wonder that sailors and soldiers, when they are given such tracts, don't feel it as an insult, and tell the donors what they think of them. When they do so, their distribution will cease. But they are a brilliant illustration of the low level of intelligence that goes to the making of the religious tract. They are much too silly for comment.

MRS. F. BURNS.—We note your wish that the subscription list will go forward "by leaps and bounds." The good wishes of friends such as yourself are much appreciated.

J. (Swansea).—Many thanks. We hope to be seeing you soon. You are quite correct in seeing the results of our work in the concessions made by the churches. They never move till they are pushed, and then move no farther than they can help.

T. NEUMAN.—The confusion arises from the acquisition of scientific knowledge, with an inadequate appreciation of the philosophy of science and of scientific method. The ether and the atom were never more than hypothetical existences, designed to enable us to describe the processes of our experience.—When people treat these hypothetical existences in the same way that the savage does the gods that he creates, confusion is certain to result. And one result is that the Freethinker who mistakes the nature of such categories as "ether," "atom," or "matter" plays right into the hands of the religionist with a better understanding of the philosophy of science. One is then reminded of the Eastern prayer, "Oh, God, save me from my friends; my enemies I can look after myself."

LIBRA.—We appreciate the motive which prompts the advice to "take it a little easier," and we should have no objection to act upon it. But the work must be done, and we are not at present in a position to afford help without making extra calls upon our friends, and that we are very loth to do. Thanks all the same for solicitude.

E. G. STAFFORD and A. W. DAVIS.—Letters received, and shall appear next week. Crowded out of this issue.

W. T. FENN.—Many thanks for cuttings. If Theists were in the habit of using their critical faculty on the events that are daily occurring their belief would soon be a thing of the past.

PETER WHYTE (Vancouver).—We are much obliged for cutting, but you do not give the name of the paper. That should always be sent for purpose of reference. The statement of the magistrate is infamous, and, if he states the law correctly, that, too, is infamous. In that case the sooner the law is altered the better.

L. M.—Mr. Cohen had intended writing one or two articles on the Pilgrim Father myth, but other things have taken up his time. However, there is time to deal with the matter later. But it is really amusing to find the Pilgrims treated as champions of religious liberty, and as having laid the foundations of the American States. They were as intolerant as could well be, and some of the ugliest aspects of American life may be traced to their influence.

W. L. ROWE (Johannesburg).—Quite all right. We are glad you appreciate the paper so much. We have many readers in South Africa, and ought to have many more.

M. BARNARD.—A most interesting experience. Thanks for compliment.

C.—There is no need to apologize for inability to contribute to our Sustentation Fund. We are well aware that all cannot in this matter act as they would wish. And in helping to get new subscribers you are giving help of the most valuable kind. Another thousand on our circulation would place us in a position of security. And they ought to be obtained.

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

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Foreign and Colonial.—One year, 15s.; half year, 7s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 9d.

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Cohen commences his winter's lecturing on Sunday next (September 26). He will lecture in the evening in the Elysium, Swansea, and in the afternoon he has arranged to break new ground at Llanelly. We hope that all our friends in the district will do their best to see that these opening meetings are, in point of numbers, a success. The rest will then depend upon the lecturer. The lecture at Llanelly will be in the Athenæum Hall, and will commence at 3 o'clock.

We gave last week an account of the extent to which the extra cost of producing the *Freethinker* had advanced since the beginning of the war. That copy of the paper was hardly in the hands of its readers before we had notice that in consequence of increased wages the cost of machining the *Freethinker* would be advanced by £1 per week—another increase of £52 per year. Paper makers have also just got another increase in wages, so we may expect another advance there shortly. And we understand there is to be another advance in the wages of compositors before the end of the month. So it goes on, first in one direction, then in another. A continuous fight with difficulties, one no sooner overcome than another arises. If we were easily disheartened we should have thrown up the sponge long since.

Those of our readers who follow ecclesiastical matters will remember the bother over the Pope's "Ne Temere" decree, which denied the validity of marriages contracted otherwise than according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church. In New Zealand, Roman Catholics have been declaring all such marriages to be "illegitimate," and the New Zealand Legislative Council now proposes adding a clause to the Marriage Act, making it a penal offence to so act. We hope that this clause will be added to the Act, and as we are not unacquainted with parsonic arrogance and impudence in this country, it would not be a bad thing if something of the same kind were done here.

We have received a couple of letters regarding the police prosecutions in Hyde Park, for the publication of which we regret we have not the space. Neither of the letters add anything material to what was said in the letter from "E. C. S.," published in our issue for September 5. It does seem to be the fact that the police in Hyde Park, assisted by the Police Court magistrate, are indulging in a series of petty persecutions, and, on the other hand, from all we can gather, Freethinkers there do not always observe enough self-control to avoid playing into the hands of the police. We do not mean that this in any way justifies the police in their conduct, but it does make it more difficult to defeat the bigotry which is evidently in operation. However, the matter is under the consideration of the N. S. S. Executive, and we do not desire to say more on the matter at present.

Every now and again we have to call attention to what looks like an organised effort to place obstacles in the way of this paper reaching those who desire to get it. Some time back we found that in one of the wholesale houses someone, in the interests of Christianity, was engaged in cutting down the weekly orders received, so that newsagents found themselves with several copies short in their weekly parcels. This was at once stopped, and for a time all went well. Now the same thing seems to be taking place, and so far we have been unable to locate the

offender. We hope to do so presently. It is not the fault of the heads of the business, but that of some Christian bigot working, as usual, in the dark.

Now we are earnestly asking for the help of our friends in defeating these tactics. We do not like the weapon of the boycott, but if newsagents do not get the paper when ordered, and get it regularly, Freethinkers should remove their custom elsewhere. If they insist on getting what *they* want, the newsagents will in turn see that the wholesalers supply them properly. And now that postage is again increased, this policy is imperative. In its way, these tactics are a compliment to the *Freethinker*, but compliments may sometimes be oppressive. There is no paper in Britain that the Church dread so much as they do this one. It is clear, direct, uncompromising, and it gets there with all who read it. And it does Christians so much good that for sheer humanity's sake we ought to see that they get as much of it as possible.

Mr. D. Maconnell, whose advertisements are appearing regularly in this paper, says that he has "religiously" patronised every article advertised in the *Freethinker*, and commends the attention of other business men to the matter. He says:—"I consider this working up of a regular advertisement revenue for our paper a most vital matter. I am sure that there is no quicker or better way of meeting the continually growing expenses of its publication. If they will think of the advertisement income of the other papers they read, they ought to see the necessity for having a few more in their own, and a little encouragement will fetch them." All we can say is that "Barkis is willing." We must leave the rest with our readers.

We notice a long and well-written letter in the *Llanclly Star* from Mr. R. Neft, dealing with a number of the points at issue between Freethinkers and Christians, which should have the effect of calling the attention of the latter to questions that they they will never hear discussed from the pulpits. Too much work in this direction cannot be done, and correspondence in the local Press is a capital method at the present time of advancing our propaganda. Judging by the letter before us, the local Christians have caught a tartar in the person of Mr. Neft. We hope to see him more active in the work in the future.

"Onward, Christian Soldiers!"

II.

(Concluded from p. 587.)

Nietzsche was a pagan philosopher. With the keen eye of a seer and a prophet, he glanced down the ages. He saw with delight evolving man reach towards the joyous Dionysian ideal, and then apply to himself the discipline demanded by Apollo, the god of measure. The human spirit was then free and creative, moulding man in noble forms. Man was powerful enough to play with life, and his exuberance found vent in such varied and marvellous art that never again has he been able to "capture that first fine rapture." But that glorious dawn of human power was quickly over-cast and its promise extinguished by the murky atmosphere of low ideals embodied in Christianity. It has been said that the humble man of the Christian ideal would be considered a vicious and contemptible person by Aristotle, who put forward the man of great spirit as the man of virtue. The key of Nietzsche's philosophy lies in his insistence on the necessity of "a transvaluation of values." He poured vitriolic contempt on the "modern European, this ludicrous species," who wants to attain the "universal green-

meadow happiness of the herd, together with security, safety, comfort and alleviation of life for everyone." He forestalled Meredith in his denunciation of peace as "Our lullaby word for decay"—but neither poet nor philosopher meant warfare in its physical sense.

"Behold the life at ease ; it drifts.
The sharpened life commands its course.
She winnows, winnows roughly ; sifts,
To dip her chosen in her source :
Contention is the vital force,
Whence pluck they brain, her prize of gifts,
Sky of the senses ! on which height,
Not disconnected, yet released,
They see how spirit comes to light,
Through conquest of the inner beast,
Which measure tames to movement sane,
In harmony with what is fair.
Never is earth mis-read by brain."

Nietzsche regarded "contention" as the "vital force" because it was an indispensable condition in the evolution of the Super-man who was the goal of his teaching. To attain that aim, the "slave" virtues of Christianity must give way to nobler conceptions of morality. At present man sinks down to the level of an unworthy environment, and exalts the qualities of "resignation" and "humility" which unfit him for anything higher. He does not *dare*, and is content with self-preservation. But "Man is a something that must be surpassed," and the most intellectual men find their happiness not in comfort, but in effort and warfare, in "the feeling that power increases, and resistance is overcome."

From such philosophy only the intellectually dishonest could argue that any glorification of physical war could be framed. The most superficial observer of the effects of modern warfare cannot fail to note that the finest and strongest are eliminated, the aged and weak being exempted from service. How can "Super-man," that is, a perfect humanity, be evolved out of such a process? How has it been possible to couple the German thinker with the war, when its results flatly contradict the end for which he strove?

The explanation, of course, lies along these lines. The war is anathema, Nietzsche is anathema, therefore there is a connection between them! Many a witch has been hanged on evidence as slight.

But why do people blindly swallow these fables? Why does the average man still play the ancient game of "Follow my leader"? Why has it been so fatally easy for rulers and their satellites, the priests, to hoodwink the peoples? For them, in every country—including that of the victors—life has been rendered difficult by reason of the war. Extension of territory or financial juggling has brought no benefit to the vast majority. What narcotic has been administered to them to induce them to yield up their very life-blood with but few and muffled protests?

The answer is supplied by Dr. Oscar Levy, in a recent issue of the "New Age." "This," he declares, "was a war amongst Christians—a war of the 'Gott-mit-uns' against the Onward-Christian-Soldiers"—a war with which an Anti-Christian philosopher, a clean-minded pagan, a supernatural thinker, like Friedrich Nietzsche, could not possibly have had any connection." He attributes to the low mental atmosphere created and maintained by religion, the moral fanaticism which makes war possible. "The parties concerned," he says, "considered themselves snow-white angels, appointed by

Providence to fight for Right, Justice, Liberty, Culture, Morality, in order to curb the Powers of Might, of Evil, of Darkness, of Brute force, of Militarism and Navalism. They sought this war to make the world "safe for Democracy," to make it "the last of wars," to establish hereafter that Millennium of peace and Paradise of brotherhood—the League of Nations. But before all that could be accomplished, it was necessary that the "sinner" (that is, the loser) should "repent," "expiate his crime," prove to the world that a "change of mind" had actually taken place within his black and "devilish" heart. Surely there is a theological smell about all this extraordinary and mutual recrimination, a smell of a by-gone age, an age that at least, we thought to be by-gone—of the Middle Ages and its squabbles between Church and Heretics? Surely there is a mediæval root in all this extraordinary hatred in practice, and in all this high-falutin' love in theory? Has a passionate abuse, such as we have witnessed, has an envenomed struggle such as we have observed, ever been experienced outside the Wars of Religion?"

What exalts man above the rest of the animal kingdom except the development of his reasoning power? But War needs bestial men to perform its inhuman behests. The "god-like reason" must be deadened. And what can better serve that purpose than mental inoculation with the lymph of religion? When this is persistently applied throughout the ages, then the militarist finds plastic material to hand. Christianity is a creed which has survived only by repressing the free play of the intellect in mankind. It has inculcated the slave virtues of blind obedience, humility and distrust of self. It castrated man intellectually, reducing him to the level of a mental eunuch. Grovelling before his god he was taught to abdicate the last shred of manliness in begging forgiveness for his sinful nature. Centuries on centuries of such systematic self-depreciation have sapped his masculinity. Where, amongst the timid deformed souls of to-day, is to be found one worthy to walk with the ancient Greeks? Man has cringed on his knees so long that he has almost forgotten how to stand upright. Even those who boast of having freed themselves from theological bonds, still move heavily, their Dionysian joy in life having been seared by the cramping, distorting influence of a false and cruel creed. This it is which has benumbed men's intellects, bewildered their conception of life, and destroyed their clarity of thought. In other words, the Church has bound men's minds, and has thus delivered their bodies over to militarism.

It was fitting, then, that the Church which has done its best to render the peoples impotent to analyse the causes of their helplessness and misery, should seek further to discredit and besmirch the man who would show them the truth, and thus set them free. But it seems now that the pious priests, who have never hesitated to lie "for the glory of God" and their own advancement, have over-shot the mark. As Dr. Oscar Levy points out, the war has proved the old values of the Christian faith to be utterly defective and destructive. Should a nobler conception of values prevail, then Nietzsche will be honoured as their apostle, while his traducers will sink into utter oblivion.

FRANCES PREWETT.

Correspondence.

WHAT IS ATHEISM?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In my former letter I protested against Mr. Wells' use of the word "Atheism" as synonymous with depravity. Mr. Wells, in his reply, makes no real attempt to justify his preposterous misuse of a term which is quite clearly understood by the great majority of intelligent men (outside the profession of theology) as standing for an attitude towards the universe. Mr. Wells asks me if I believe that "simply by disbelieving a man can achieve all the virtues." Disbelieving in what? Conduct, whether it be good, bad, or indifferent, is, I should say, based partly on disbelief and partly on belief. I, for instance, may disbelieve utterly in prayer, and believe profoundly in work. When we wish to describe a man who is non-theistic in his attitude towards the universe, we have a word to express this doctrine—to wit, Atheism. When we indict a man on the ground of morals—one who has in his heart hate, greed, or cruelty—we can express our condemnation in words which leave no shadow of doubt as to their import. Why then, I ask, should Mr. Wells—following the example of the least reputable kind of theologian—drag in the word Atheist, thereby confusing the issue, and causing the heart of the obscurantist to rejoice? Doubtless the Pope's idea of Atheism impels him to associate it with vice and vileness. The Duke of Rutland used to have a feeling very much akin to this about Socialism when he roundly asserted that Socialism was "undiluted Atheism [Atheism again]!, theft, and immorality" (vide *New Worlds for Old*, by H. G. Wells). We look for these things from Popes and Dukes, but something far different from Mr. H. G. Wells.

HERBERT ARNISON.

AFTER ALL, TO CALL A SPADE A SPADE IS BEST OF ALL.

SIR,—Your "Acid Drops" of this number (September 5, 1920) are particularly vigorous. I must, however, tell you that your series of articles on Spiritualism ought to fill the interior of a patriotic Englishman with despair. Your paper is addressed to more or less cultured classes, which calls itself the "educated English classes," so far as there is anything of the kind. But I must observe frankly that there is not a civilized country in the world where such a series of articles is necessary for the enlightenment of its relatively civilized class—not in the cradle of civilization, the Buddhist, Moslem, nor even the Mohammedon worlds! Not anywhere.

In your twelfth "Acid Drop" (page 568) you try to excuse English stupidity by throwing the blame on Christianity. But in the same breath you admit that these blockheads still read H. G. Wells and C. K. Chesterton. But to pass over this, you write: "It is not without justice that we have been called by 'angry' foreigners—why the depreciative epithet 'angry'?—the most stupid people in Europe. We are not naturally so, but we happen to have a form of religion in this country that would demoralise anything or anybody."

In the first place, English Christianity has been accepted and modified by the English brainwork—itsself, as Shakespeare proved, held, and taught, the quintessence of European cretinism and perverse stupidity. Indeed, what the English call their educated classes accept their self-modified superstition in a way the intelligence of no other, by contrast sane, European nation does its own. This happens because England is an isolated hyperborean country, with a bad, raw, foggy climate and a very low cranial index. Consequently the effluvium of their muddle-headed brainwork is such a moral and intellectual "lues" that anyone with a spark of natural reason and imagination, and wishes to keep them sound and useful, is forced to avoid any sort of close contact with the English, as a moral and mental contamination, worse than the pest and cholera are physically. This is the plain unvarnished truth.

W. W. STRICKLAND.

Genoa, September 5, 1920.

MORE "NEW THEOLOGY."

SIR,—Obviously we are in for a great controversy on the desirability of bringing Christian beliefs into line with

modern science. I am wondering how long it will take for the more "enlightened" views to filter down to the Scripture teaching in the schools? I suggest that members of education authorities, especially "Labour" members, should propose that, until the all-important controversy is settled, the religious instruction in public elementary schools may be suspended, and the syllabus for such teaching be revised in accordance with "modern science." The children would not suffer very much—certainly it would be a relief to know that the innocence of young children was no longer being insulted by their being taught to repeat the words, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

May I take this opportunity of referring once more to the attitude of Labour leaders on the question of the infamous Fisher proposals, on which I wrote in the *Freethinker* a couple of months ago? The silence on the question of Labour leaders continues—no mention of the proposals was made at the Labour Party Conference at Scarborough.

Under any circumstances, readers of the *Freethinker* in the various Labour constituencies should request Labour members and candidates to deliver discussion lectures on the subject of the proposals, so that their position may be made quite clear.

Mr. Arthur Henderson is now back at his post, having recovered from his recent illness. He, as a powerful leader in the world of Labour and Nonconformity, should be asked for a definite pronouncement on the proposals, such a pronouncement to be made in his constituency, and also to the "Brotherhood," of which organization he is president.

It is also exceedingly important that the following question should be answered by Labour leaders:—

In the consultations between Mr. Fisher and representatives of the various points of view concerned, was Labour represented? If so, by whom? And were any guarantees given that Labour would support legislation based on the proposals?

M. BRIDGES ADAMS.

WOMEN AS SAVIOURS.

SIR,—I trust you will kindly allow me space to reply to the numerous criticisms in your last issue on my article, "Women as Saviours." C. Harpur took exception to my assertion that the fully conscious woman would stand on the deep instincts of her own nature, and he traces inherited instincts to fear of the gods. But I beg to point out that the maternal instinct is anterior to the creation of any gods, and is a fundamental instinct even in the animal world. As Lester Ward says:—

Virtue relates to function, and signifies a course of conduct advantageous to the race and the general scheme. The virtue of the female animal is absolute, for virtue does not consist, as many suppose, in refusal, but in selection. It is refusal of the unfit and of all at improper times and places. This definition of virtue applies to human beings, even the most civilized, as well as to animals. The female animal or the human female in the gynæocratic state would perish before she surrenders her virtue.

Again, in the face of phallic worship and sacred prostitution, Mr. Harpur's derivation of the instinct against sex-pleasure appears irrelevant.

I still maintain that Nature cannot be cheated, in the sense that there are broad permanent elements in woman's nature which cannot be defied with impunity. Woman is maternal, and hence does not hold relations without thought or feeling of results, except in the child phasis of her development or in the state of perversion to which man, when circumstances may favour him, may reduce her. I am sure that my critics will agree with me that it is highly immoral to make use of another human being for selfish purposes, yet what more flagrant example of this could there be than the degradation of woman's supreme maternal function to man's sensual gratification?

Far from despising sex, I believe that it provides the organic basis which is necessary for the idealism which transforms individual lives and creates art. It gives life to the divinest affections and noblest capacities for thought. "Y. C." is therefore mistaken in assuming that the woman of the future will "fight down the sex life to the last extremity." On the contrary, in spiritualising sex, she preserves its finest elements, so that it enriches, broadens, and swells the volume of life.

Mr. Harpur considers my ideals are the microbes of the world's chief disease; but Freethought will have no message for woman if it sneers at her deepest instincts and regards her aspirations after ideal motherhood as "the world's chief disease!"

FRANCES PREWETT.

SIR,—Miss Prewett must excuse me if I confess her article with the above title made me smile, and my only reason for offering a few comments on it is because of the intimate connection existing between Neo-Malthusianism and Freethought.

It seems extraordinary that so many women, directly they write on any sex question, feel it incumbent upon themselves to describe men as full of brutal passions, always requiring "short cuts" to be gratified, while women—dear innocent angels that they are—are not merely full of the highest-souled aspirations, but are really unwilling victims of the aforementioned brutal passions.

How familiar are these accents! Ever so many years ago, that delightful Christian humorist, St. Paul, and his merry band of early Christian Fathers—those jolly Christians, as Mr. Chesterton would say—wasted a good deal of time on much the same question of sex. They felt certain, just as she does, that continence was a beautiful ideal, but they claimed woman was the Evil One, the terrible tempter, and man the poor, unwilling, tempted one. Their excursions into temptation "stunts" are really funny.

It was the Suffragettes, I think, who turned the tables on these happy old gentlemen, and in their lurid and exceedingly outspoken articles on sex—mostly written by young unmarried girls—we men were made to feel what hopeless scoundrels we were, and most of us also discovered that we were the proud possessors of all sorts of brutal lusts and passions we never dreamt of before. The war put a stop to that sort of thing for the time, but a careful reader of Miss Prewett's articles—she has, of course, a perfect right to fully express her views—will have noticed a hankering for giving the readers of this paper something of what she feels about poor, unfortunate man.

She says: "Both prophylactics and contraceptives, whatever may be urged in their justification, are primarily inventions of man in order to satisfy his passions without incurring any of the consequences." Apart from the fact that women gain far more than men from the use of contraceptives in the matter of "consequences," one would really like to know who are the inventors? I don't know myself, but I do know the names (and something of the lives) of the men who spent a good deal of their time in advocating Neo-Malthusianism. For instance, there are Richard Carlile, Robert Dale Owen, Drs. George and Charles Drysdale, Charles Bradlaugh, George William Foote, John M. Robertson, Arnold Bennett—a pretty hefty lot of names, I think. Now does Miss Prewett wish us to believe that these men went about advocating "short cuts" to satisfy man's brutal passions? Will she tell us?

Miss Prewett must really come to see that neither man nor woman alone could possibly save the world. Together they might, and, in my opinion, are really doing so. Let Miss Prewett confine her share to converting, say, Catholic women to Freethought views, and if she does want to criticize Neo-Malthusianism let her get hold of at least first-hand information.

H. CUTNER.

SIR,—In her article on birth control, Frances Prewett says of Malthus that "few now demand his premise concerning the geometrical rate of increase of man as compared with the arithmetical rate of increase of foodstuffs." Alas, she is right; yet, such figures as are available show that while the world's inhabitants, up to 1914, were still trying to increase their numbers at a rate of over 2 per cent. a year, they had only been increasing their food supply at a rate of about 1/2 per cent. a year. But surely she is wrong if she believes that under a Socialist régime the rate at which the world's food supply is increased could be raised from 1/2 per cent. a year to over 2 per cent.—as would be necessary in order to eliminate poverty without the aid of family limitation.

However, she favours family limitation—but, like the Churches, by abstention! Shades of Place, Carlile, the Mills, the Drysdales, and Bradlaugh! Is it fair to say that contraceptives were "primarily inventions of man in

order to satisfy his passions without incurring any of the consequences" ? Was not man chiefly concerned about the sufferings of woman? He had religious exhortation to satisfy his passions without regard for the consequences to women, and incurred the condemnation of the Churches when he practised contraception. It is deplorable that a Freethinking woman should ignore that women also have passions. The statement that "the use of contraceptives will tend to increase sexual indulgence" suggests that she rather deprecates sexual indulgence, as the Churches have done; and this perhaps explains why she regards contraceptives as involving "degradation, a coarsening of the finer nature." Has she observed "degradation" and "coarsening of the finer nature" in the thoughtful couples who are admittedly limiting their families by contraception? Frances Prewett would undo what has been one of the most valuable achievements of Freethinkers, namely, the liberation of sex from the degradation of the Churches.

B. DUNLOP, M.B.

The Charitable Dean.

Dean Inge wrote yesterday in the *Evening Standard* a charming and scholarly reference to "the lazy miner who extorts his thousand a year from the householders of England, and the bricklayer who battens on the rates, and does about two and a half hours of honest work in the day." . . . The average wage of the adult miner is, according to Sir Robert Horne himself, £4 11s. 2d. a week. . . . Equivalent to a pre-war income of about a hundred a year. . . . The Dean gets a salary of two thousand a year.—*Daily Herald*, August 26, 1920.

The total death-roll of the mines from 1910 is 13,580. The average for nine years is 1,407 deaths per year.

An inspector of mines, after the Whitehaven explosion, declared that "practically every risk which exists in mines could be eliminated if cost were no object; but there comes a point at which a stop must be made if the colliery is to be run at a profit."—Cited *Daily Herald*, August 27, 1920.

THE Dean sat by the fire
In leisure, as Deans can—
Musing in righteous anger
On the rich working man.

He thought of how he battened
On Bishop, Dean, and Peer—
Extorting from the public.
Thousands of pounds a year.

And in the glowing embers
He read the Bricklayer's Doom—
Of how his greed would lead him
To Hell's Eternal Gloom.

He saw his grand piano,
And costly furniture;
And watched him eat rich viands
Like any epicure.

He saw the wealthy Miner
In slothful ease recline
Upon a cushioned divan
In a luxurious mine.

He thought of his own pittance—
Two thousand pounds a year;
And of the millions squandered
In whippets, and in beer.

The Dean sat by the fire
According to God's plan;
And wrote a cultured sermon
On the vile working man.

The Miner's Wife, she waited
All night at the pit-head;
And in the early morning
They carried home her dead.

The Miner's widow has no time
To waste upon her soul;
And in the fire she only sees
The Blood upon the coal.

PERCY ALLOTT.

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.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Stratford Engineers' Institute, 167 Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7, Mr. A. D. McLaren, "Jesus Christ: Myth or History?"

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6, Mr. Thresh, a Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6, A Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15, Mr. F. Shaller, A Lecture.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

GLASGOW BRANCH N. S. S. (Committee Room, 83 Ingram Street): 12 noon, Arrangements for Lectures and Social. Get your tickets for October 8.

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44, HAZLEWOOD, DUMBRECK.

Tickets should be secured at once.

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