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Views and Opinions.

The Moral of War.

Mr. Norman Angell must be, one would think, a sadly justified man. Some years before the war he wrote a book called *The Great Illusion*. It dealt with the obsolete ideas that lay at the root of war, and pointed out that these ideas, however applicable they once may have been, had lost all rational justification to-day. He did not say that wars were impossible, nor that they would not occur. What he insisted on was that they were in no sense of the word a paying proposition, neither morally, intellectually, nor financially. With regard to the last aspect he pointed out that it was impossible in the present state of the world to make the loser pay the cost of a war. You might exact an indemnity, but that would be cutting off your nose to avenge your face. The loser lost, but so did the winner. This last argument appealed with some force to a people nourished on Christianity, even though the moral and intellectual aspects of the case fell comparatively flat, and *The Great Illusion* began to make its existence felt. Then came the war, and newspaper men—whom one must charitably assume never read anything worth reading, and think still less—began to make a butt of Mr. Angell. He was pictured as saying that war would not occur, which he never did say, the war itself was pointed to as a disproof of his theories, and our journalists and politicians, who delight in telling the people—in a roundabout way—that they are the easiest gulled fools on the face of the earth, whispered darkly that Mr. Angell was probably being fed with German gold—Bolshevik gold had not then come into fashion—and so it was assumed he had received his quietus.

* * *

The Fruits of Victory.

But the war came to an end. And the victors set about reaping the fruits of victory. They said they would collect an indemnity, and so they may. But whether the indemnity is worth the collecting is another question. If at the time of the armistice the Allies had decided on another policy than the one adopted, and we had been able to reduce our bill for the fighting forces to, say one hundred millions annually, we should by this time have been nearly three hundred millions in pocket, which is, quite clearly, more than we shall ever be able to get out of Germany.

We collect, but the cost of collecting, direct and indirect, outweighs all we get. So it happens that what Mr. Angell said would happen has come to pass. The victor loses, financially, quite as much as the vanquished, and there is in addition the fact that we have all combined to fill the world with the spirit of war, and thus have a bill to pay in moral and intellectual damage, which each nation must settle itself. We have created a number of new and small nationalities and have so helped to bring into existence new opportunities of warfare. For in order to keep in the fashion the first move of these new born nationalities is to get an army. That is the hall mark of their independence. And having got each its army, the next move is to look round for someone to fight, or what is as good, to look round for someone ready to fight them, for it would be too stupid for the average militarist to demand an army unless there was a probability of its being used. What has happened is exactly what we were warned would happen, and worse still, so far as one can see, no large numbers of people appear to have learned the lesson they should have learned.

* * *

Patriotism—True and False.

But Mr. Angell has returned to the attack, and in a new book, *The Fruits of Victory*, he again offers advice to the peoples of the world—which may or may not be taken. He says:—

The Political Reformation in Europe will come by questioning the whole philosophy of patriotism, the morality or the validity, in terms of human well-being, of a principle like that of “my country right or wrong”; by questioning whether a people really benefit by enlarging the frontiers of their State; whether “greatness” in a nation particularly matters; whether the man of the small State is not in all the great human values the equal of the man of the great Empire; whether we have not loyalties to other things as well as to our State; whether we do not in our demand for national sovereignty ignore international obligations without which the nations can have neither security nor freedom.

One does not need to be a prophet to say that the first thing that will be said of that message is that it is anti-patriotic. And whether that is a reproach or not will entirely depend upon the meaning one attaches to patriotism. Or, if it be said that patriotism can only mean one thing, namely, love of one’s country, that only effects a verbal change in the question. When am I really and intelligently loving my country? Does it consist in an intelligent study of the conditions that make one’s fellow countrymen better and happier, or in a mere blind hatred of outsiders? Is the maxim England before all, or France before all, or America before all, intellectually and morally and financially more respectable than Germany before all? Is the man who shouts loudest about “Patriotism” motivated by a genuine love of his fellows at home, or by hatred of the other fellow abroad? Is his patriotism moving on the level of primitive tribalism, or on that of an enlightened civilization? These are questions worthy of serious consideration, and their answer determines the

course of civilization and the welfare of *our* country—whichever we may be.

* * *

Man and the Herd.

Let us put it that primarily the feeling of patriotism rests upon that of allegiance to the group. And it may further be taken that loyalty to the group is one of the conditions of social survival. Again, so far as a small, isolated, self-supporting group is concerned it may go its way without being in the least concerned over the well-being of other groups, and may even hate the outsider with all the energy of the modern noisy type of patriot without the welfare of the group being injured or its development vitally impaired. So might two men behave living on adjacent islands but having no relations with each other. But place the two men on one small island, situate them so that they cannot escape one another's society, imagine them dependent upon each other's labour for some degree of their comfort, and a consideration of each other's welfare becomes active. Is the situation in the least degree different if for individuals we substitute nations? It is one of the inescapable facts of the situation that there is not a single nation of any size or importance in the world to which all other nations are not more or less linked and with whose welfare they are not vitally concerned. When the war commenced we pointed out that it was not so much a European war or even a world war as it was civil war. And it was civil war because it was the various parts of what had become from sheer force of circumstances one huge organism that was in conflict. And if that be granted it follows that the intelligent patriot, the real well-doer to his country, is not the man who is filled with the ideal of placing his own country over all, and who, during periods of conflict, advertises his "patriotism" in rabid outbursts of hatred, but the one who sees that the welfare of his own group can to-day be achieved only through the co-operation of others. The nation is still there as a centre of local culture, but if it is to flourish as a nation it can only be by learning to take its place as an organ of the world-wide organism of humanity.

* * *

False Values.

It is one of the curses of the situation that the Christian nations, with their barely concealed world-wide policy of piracy and exploitation, have created a quite wrong standard of value. They have perpetuated the value of huge possessions, of vast wealth, of gigantic fighting machines, and they have forced these things upon the world as the only things in virtue of which a nation is to be called "great." Before the war Germany was admittedly one of the "Great Powers" of Europe. Why? It was not meant that every German was a better man or woman than any inhabitant of Sweden or Holland or Switzerland. No, it was simply that Germany possessed a huge fighting machine, and held much territory. But Germany divested of its monarchy, of its huge army and growing navy—they have at least won those benefits from the war, and so far are the only European nation that has derived any benefit from it—will be a better nation than it was as the danger spot of Europe. Yet, it seems likely, certainly if her enemies have their way, that she will be counted as one of the smaller Powers. So we have the anomaly that the better Germany will be the third rate power, while the worse Germany was cheerfully acclaimed the greater one! We have to revalue our values if we are going to make the world a place that is really worth living in. We must learn to think of the nation that is made up of great men and women rather than of the nation that counts itself great only because it does more trade, or owns more territory, or has a larger and better equipped army

than its neighbour. The "Patriot" whose patriotism consists largely of foaming at the mouth during a brief period of war—but who is not above taking advantage of the war to fill his pocket at the expense of his fellow countrymen—will give place to the genuine and enlightened patriotism of the man who is willing to give to his fellows during times of peace in such a way as to make war impossible.

* * *

Humanity as an Organism.

Nearly thirty years ago in the chapter of his *Study of Sociology* dealing with the "Bias of Patriotism," Spencer rightly traced the intense patriotic feeling of the anti-outsider to an exaggerated egotism, and he looked forward to a time when "the decreasing antagonisms of societies" would lead to a more enlightened and a more beneficial manifestation of the patriotic sentiment. We must lift our patriotism from the scalp hunting level of the savage to the more enlightened level of the informed mind of to-day. It is not loving your country less to hate the foreigner less, it may only be that you are loving more intelligently. It is not being less patriotic to insist that one's own country cannot be great while it pins its faith to the methods of the past and glorifies a repetition of the actions of the past, it is merely translating patriotism in terms of the conditions of present day betterment. States are not of necessity great because they are large, nor do they live because of their military strength. Athens was one of the smallest of cities, belonging to a state that was never large, but it lived long after the huge states of Persia and Babylonia had died. In the evolution of life it was never size but efficiency that told, and efficiency to-day is not to be found in the semi-barbaric figure of the soldier, but in the ideas of the thinker and in the sentiments generated by a rationalized social life. There is no nation in the world that to-day can become great or continue great by trampling on others, or by ignoring others, or by denying others. The growth of humanity has brought all parts of the world into a more intimate relationship which we must recognize or perish. And to-day the choice is sharply before us. We may continue the attempt to rule the world of to-day with the ideas of three or four centuries ago. That way lies certain ruin. We may still have virility enough to win a war, but lack the intelligence and the courage to conquer during peace. The day when good can come of warring nationalities is past. The old passions are still there, and are still powerful; what is required is intelligence enough to lift them to a higher level. And if that cannot be done, then the outlook is, indeed, black.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

"Creative Christianity."

CREATION is defined as the act of creating or causing to exist, and specifically the act of bringing the Universe into existence. Consequently, the adjective creative signifies having the power to create or to bring into being. More specifically still, by creation is usually understood the act of bringing into existence something that did not exist before. It is in this sense that theology has generally employed the term. The physical Universe leapt into being, out of nothing, in response to the creative fiat. One definition of the word is: "Production without use of pre-existent material," and this is in full harmony with Locke's use of the term, "When a new particle of matter doth begin to exist, in *rerum natura*, which had before no being; this we call creation." Consequently, again, when anything is described as creative, the meaning is

that it possesses the power to make or produce something entirely new, such as a particle of matter, quality, or attribute which previously was unknown and presumably non-existent. Professor Bergson published a book in 1907 entitled, *Creative Evolution*, in which the central contention is that consciousness is the motive principle of the evolutionary process, whereas, in reality, consciousness is only one of its numerous products. Strictly speaking, evolution is in no sense creative, all its products being not new *things*, but simply new *forms* of pre-existing matter. The most wonderful and complex of all evolutionary products is the human brain; but it is a scientific truism that the brain does not contain a single particle of new matter. All the ingredients in this marvellous substance have always been in existence, the only recognizable difference being one of combination. Living matter is nothing but a compound, what men of science call a colloidal compound, made up of a few very simple elements, such as carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, always in association with phosphorus. All these elements exist in non-living matter, the only new thing in living matter being their combination. As the Preacher truly said long ago, "There is no new thing under the sun."

A few weeks ago, under the auspices of the World's Evangelical Alliance, a three days' conference on "Creative Christianity" was held in Westminster Chapel. Several thousands of interested people attended the meetings, but so far as the published reports are concerned, the creativeness of Christianity was conspicuous only by its absence. All the speakers were extremely conservative theologians. The first session was devoted to a discussion of "Science and the Bible," the principal speaker being the aged Dean of Canterbury, Dr. Wace, who has always been distinguished for his severe orthodoxy. From such a divine no new and startling statement was to be expected. His performance is described as remarkable for a man of eighty-four, but in no report is it represented as sparkling with originality. His argument was that there is no real discrepancy between science and the Bible; but it did not occur to him to admit that his own interpretation of the Creation story in Genesis had been forced upon him by the combined discoveries of the sciences of geology and astronomy. In his famous debate with Professor Huxley Mr. Gladstone strictly adhered to the literal interpretation, and it was in connection with that debate that the late Professor Henry Drummond astonished the Christian world by contending that the story was to be taken as a poem or an allegory, a view necessitated by the indisputable fact that, interpreted literally, the account was not true. Dean Wace regards the first three chapters of Genesis as a poetical and imaginative sketch simply because science had demonstrated their unhistoricity, and for the same reason he was led to substitute "evolution, if you will," for the orthodox notion of sudden and spasmodic action. His central position was that the Bible and science appealed to two important faculties of the human mind, faith and reason, and since these were one in their Divine origin, it inevitably followed that any apparent disagreement or collision between them must be due to temporary misunderstanding. He maintained further, that the misunderstanding was already diminishing, but he omitted to point out that it was diminishing merely owing to the increasing concession made by the theologians. Men of science make no concessions whatever, but the divines, driven by science, are continually yielding ground which was looked upon by their fathers as absolutely indispensable.

Mr. D. M. Pantton, B.A., dealt with the doctrine of the Fall. Being an orthodox man, addressing an orthodox audience in an eminently orthodox chapel, Mr. Pantton characterized Canon Barnes's repudiation

of this doctrine as "destructive of the whole scheme of redemption." Then he stated the doctrine thus:—

Sin is terribly reproductive, as physiology proves. When God made Adam he made all men, for the race is not an aggregate of isolated, independent units, but a community of organic and dependent generations. So that the introduction of sin anywhere is the introduction of sin everywhere. Upon this organic Fall God builds the whole scheme of redemption. The helpless Fall by the sin of one man is countered by the helpless salvation wrought by a Man as lonely and unique.

Such is the doctrine of the Fall as taught by the orthodox Church in all ages, and without it the doctrine of redemption through Christ would be utterly absurd. And yet, it is not its essential connection with redemption that forms the supreme reason for its advocacy. According to the report in the *Christian World* for June 23, Mr. Pantton said that "to deny the Fall is to impute to God the origin of sin and to open the gates to Gnosticism"; but in this he was fully mistaken. To deny the Fall is to deny the reality of sin in its theological sense. But, in any case, if sin exists, its origin can be imputed to no one but God. What the theologians aver is that Adam fell because he willed to fall; but why did he will to fall? Because God had endowed him with a free will, that is to say, with a will to choose evil rather than good, an imperfect will. If, then, man fell because he willed to fall, does it not necessarily follow that God alone was to blame for his fall, because he had bestowed upon him a corrupt and sinful will? Science teaches that there is no such thing as freedom of will, and that man invariably acts in conformity to his character. What he *does* is determined by what he *is*; and if there was an Adam, what he *did* was the outcome of what he *was*, as he came from his Maker's hand.

Many other speeches were delivered by well-known divines. Prebendary A. W. Gough's subject was "Scepticism and Immorality," but unfortunately his address was not reported beyond the observation in the *Christian World* that he insisted upon dealing with scepticism and immorality in the realm of emotion. The Rev. R. C. Gillie (President of the National Free Church Council) spoke in his own eloquent manner on "Liberalism and Theology," his main point being that "Liberal divines sometimes dim the Gospel and sometimes do not proclaim it, and sometimes we wonder if they have it." Of course, men of Mr. Gillie's way of thinking never dim the Gospel, and having it they faithfully proclaim it. He quoted the following saying by the Principal of an advanced college in America: "Twenty years ago our chief task was to widen the minds of students whose views were too narrow. Now, our main business is to stabilize those whose religious convictions are too loose and uncertain." Mr. Gillie, being a Presbyterian, is a vigorous opponent of Liberalism in theology, declaring that the time has come when the liberalizing movement should pause. He said:—

There has been enough of reviewing of doctrines and the limitation of Divine truth. Let us go forward now and proclaim the mastery of God's transforming love.

In reality, the three days' conference was organized for the glorification of orthodoxy, or, as was stated, for the reaffirmation of Fundamental Truths. In Liberalism, what orthodox divines regard as fundamental truths are either ignored or formally rejected. But on the advertised subject of "Creative Christianity" not a single word was uttered. Why? Possibly because the appointed speakers were conscious of the fact that Christianity is in no real sense creative. What has it ever created? In the past the pulpit proudly pointed to European civilization as a glorious creation of the Christian religion; but what did its civilization ever do

for the real good of Europe, and where is it to-day? The ruling factor in European life throughout the ages has been militarism, and the war, whose ostensible object was the destruction of militarism, only succeeded in securing for it a new lease of life. Christianity won its way in Europe at the point of the sword, and the sword is still its chief weapon both of attack and defence. Christianity has never done for Europe what Buddhism once did for India, and what Confucianism has permanently done for China. No, creativeness is not an attribute of the Christian religion. This is a fact recognized by some divines, like the Dean of St. Paul's, and the recognition of it should impel them to become the proclaimers of the glorious Gospel of reason and common-sense. J. T. LLOYD.

Ancient Lights.

The creed of Christendom is gradually melting away, like a northern iceberg into southern seas.

—G. W. Foote.

The things that are sacred to the generation that is passing are not necessarily sacred to the generation whose day is now.

—General Booth.

MUCH is said of the output of books, of the glut of the literary market; but with all the activity of writers there is one department of literature which shows a falling off. During the past fifty years a steady and continuous decline has taken place in the production of religious books. To what is this decline due? There are several reasons; the first, and the most potent, being the growing indifference of the reading public to religion. The tide of religion is now at the ebb, and we only hear:—

Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night wind, down the vast edges drear,
And naked shingles of the world.

In his day, Macaulay noted the singular periodic manner in which the British public took up questions of religion and morality. John Bull no longer remembers that he has a soul to save. Indeed, he is indifferent as to whether he has a soul or not. Meanwhile, he reads novels, light literature, and newspapers, especially the latter. Another reason is the lower mentality of the clergy themselves. There are no longer any great ecclesiastics, and it certainly cannot be said that the Churches show intellect in the production of religious books. Not for present-day clergymen are the rolling harmonies of Jeremy Taylor, the subtle cadences of Milton, the chastened utterances of Newman. They cannot even echo Baxter or Bunyan. There is not an original idea in their books. Everything is second-hand and threadbare, and the paucity and poverty of the prose emphasizes the emptiness of their heads. Yet another cause of the decline of religious literature is the diffusion of Freethought. Ordinary men and women are no longer content to be led blindly by the parson. The force of Puritanism has spent itself, it no longer inspires, but it merely irritates.

The decline began a half century ago. About that time there was a real and unmistakable interest in devotional literature. The Rev. J. R. Macduff rivalled the foremost novelists in popularity. The sale of his works was to be reckoned in hundreds of thousands of copies. He was, in fact, the Dickens of the Religious World. For years Dean Goulburn's *Thoughts on Personal Religion* had an annual sale of many thousands, and Bishop Oxenden's works were equally popular. Newman Hall's publications ran into a sale that present-day theological writers never dream of. Spurgeon's sermons sold like hot rolls, and were preached, without acknowledgment, from many pulpits. Dr. Joseph Parker had hosts of admirers who bought his books eagerly. In looking through the

old publishers' catalogues one is surprised at the number of works of a devotional nature. Familiar as household words a generation or so ago, how many of these are known even by name to the present generation? The Victorian era was a serious one, and was, indeed, a golden age for religious books.

Not only was there a steady and constant demand for the works of individual authors, but for such libraries as *The Biblical Cabinet*, *Sacred Classics*, *The Christian Family Library*, and many another series. The taste for such stodgy reading has gone for ever. Nor is it to be supposed that fresh life can be given to works like Gladstone's *Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, which served a temporary purpose, and, having served it, has passed from men's minds. In the many volumes on Victorian literature which have appeared, no mention is made of numberless religious or devotional books, "thick as leaves in Valombrosa," which were once thought indispensable in tens of thousands of homes. The circumstance is highly significant, and illustrates with startling clearness the changed attitude of the reading public towards religious literature.

The real meaning of this enormous change is that the Christian superstition is crumbling. Everything eventually crumbles which is not true. Never was there so little religion, never so much Secularism, as at the present time. Never have men attended places of worship so little; never have they attended hospital and charity meetings so assiduously. Christianity is in the melting-pot, and Secularism is slowly permeating everywhere. The Christian religion no longer satisfies, for no faith can satisfy which is found out. Men, nowadays, no longer accept upon mere trust the religious misbeliefs of their remote and ignorant ancestors. Over the pulpits of the fast emptying churches is inscribed, "To the Glory of God." That is the voice of the past. Secularism sounds the vibrant and triumphant note of the future: "To the Service of Man." Based on fables, supported by brute force, trading on ignorance, the Christian religion at length finds the conscience of the race rising above and beyond it. The voice of reason has been a still, small voice, sometimes almost inaudible, though never quite stilled, but now it is swelling into a sound like the sea, which will overwhelm the chanting of the priests.

MIMNERMUS.

The Myth of Jesus.

II.

(Continued from page 422.)

Doubts as to the reliability of our authorities have recently increased to such an extent that for about six years the view that Jesus never really lived has gained an ever-growing number of supporters. It is no use to ignore it, or to frame resolutions against it in meetings of non-theologians. It is little use merely to say in a vague and general way that the figure of Jesus as portrayed in the Gospels could not possibly have been invented. In the case of the fourth Gospel, a School of Theology of a seriously scientific character does not itself make this contention; and, since it finds very much even in the first three Gospels that is a product of later myth-making, it may easily seem that the advance would not be so very great if the whole record of Jesus' life were referred to the domain of myth.—Professor Paul Schmiedel, "Jesus in Modern Criticism," 1907, pp. 12-13.

To measure the progress of Freethought during the last half century we have only to compare the changed standpoint with regard to Jesus. Fifty years ago, to doubt of his existence was flat blasphemy. Those courageous people who did it openly did so in imminent danger of personal assault. But now eminent Christian theologians openly declare their doubts upon the subject and no one raises any objection.

Dr. Percy Gardner, in his *A Historic View of the New Testament*, 1904, p. 74, observes:—

The more closely we examine the documents of early Christianity the more fully do we acquiesce in the dictum of Dr. Edersheim that the materials for a life of Jesus, in any objective sense, do not exist. It will probably always remain impossible to set forth even a brief narrative of the Founder's life which history can accept as demonstrated fact. Even the chronological skeleton of such a life cannot be sketched with certainty. And the outlines of events in the life are so hidden by the colouring of emotion and purpose, so distorted by the working of the Christian enthusiasm, that they cannot be made out.

The learned Professor goes on to remark that although doubtless this has been a loss to the historian it is really a gain to religion, as "It has set every Christian theologian free from bondage to the mere letter of the Christian history," which, in plain English, means that he is now at liberty to choose just what suits him and reject all that modern science and ethics find unacceptable.

Dr. Paul Schmiedel, the eminent Swiss theologian, tells us plainly in his *Jesus in Modern Criticism*, 1907, pp. 85-6 (the italics are his own):—

My inmost religious convictions would suffer no harm, even if I now felt obliged to conclude that *Jesus never lived*.....Nor would my religious convictions be disturbed if, in view of Jesus' claim to Messianic rank, I felt bound to regard him as a *visionary*, or as having some other character of which I could in no case approve. I am not bound by his statements about himself.....My religion, moreover, does not require me to find in Jesus an *absolutely perfect model*, and it would not trouble me if I found another person who excelled him, as, indeed, in certain respects, some have already done.....Nor do I ask whether in Jesus' faith and ethical system *what he had to offer was new*.

Fancy a Christian theologian expounding such sentiments fifty years ago!

Professor Benjamin Smith, who himself denies the historical existence of Jesus, observes that the gravity of the situation for the old fashioned views,—

is attested not only in numerous reviews, but still more in the ominous appearance of such articles as Macintosh's in the *American Journal of Theology*, 1911, pp. 362-72, "Is Belief in the Historicity of Jesus Indispensable to Christian Faith?" and of similar discussions by such as Bousset, Troeltsch, Hermann. In spite of all protestations, the meaning of such strictures seems quite unmistakable. Critics are inquiring if it be "indispensable" only because they begin to suspect it may prove indefensible. They are preparing cautiously, not, indeed, to surrender—Oh no! perish the thought, never for an instant could that be dreamed of—but merely to evacuate overnight the citadel hitherto deemed impregnable.¹

All of which is borne out by the fact that a learned Canon of the Church, the late Dr. Cheyne, can speak calmly "of the possibility of a Babylonian connection for the Christ myth of parts of the New Testament,"² without raising a murmur of dissent. And further, the same Church dignitary proceeds:—

"Ah, Father, but he knew he would rise again," said a sufferer to the Father who bade him have patience from the example of Jesus. And that was the case, doubtless, with all the suffering gods of antiquity; they knew that they would rise again to divine majesty, and achieve that great result for their human worshippers which was the object of their incarnation and their death.³

When a Canon of the Church can off-handedly speak of the Christ-myth of the New Testament, retail a joke

on the subject, and class the story of Jesus along with the mythical stories of the suffering gods of antiquity, it must be confessed that we have travelled some distance from the standpoint of fifty years ago. Not that there were wanting acute and courageous men who held the mythical view of Jesus fifty years ago; but these were looked upon as cranks, or wicked persons, who were endeavouring to undermine the popular faith by far-fetched and irresponsible theories, easily refuted by Christian scholarship, and who could safely be ignored. To-day the positions are reversed, and, among the educated, it is the defenders of the historical Jesus who find themselves ignored.

A typical instance of the Christian defence was that offered some years ago by the late Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, who offered to produce two hundred witnesses to the resurrection Christ. But as these witnesses were all living at the present time they could hardly have much value as evidence for a supposed historical event said to have happened nearly nineteen centuries ago. His offer only provoked a smile at his childish simplicity.

Christianity takes its name from that of its supposed founder Jesus Christ, but, as most people know, Christ is not a proper name at all. Christ is only the Greek translation of the Hebrew word Messiah. The Jewish prophets had foretold the coming of this Messiah, or Saviour, who would deliver the Jews from their enemies, crush the Gentiles and make the Jews rulers of the world. When the Greeks came to translate the word they used the word Christ, which means the Anointed One.

The Jews have always repudiated the Christian's claim that Jesus was the Messiah foretold by their prophets. Their Messiah was to appear as a victorious king ruling upon the earth, not like the Gospel Jesus, who declared that his kingdom was not of this world, and bade his followers look forward to a future world. As a learned Rabbi observes:—

The Jewish nation has been and is still blamed for rejecting Jesus of Nazareth as a Messiah. They have been called a stubborn people, who would always maltreat its benefactors and best friends. False, thrice false! The Jews were, as they are still, wide awake, and knew well how to distinguish a chimera from a reality. While they remained indifferent to idealistic dreamers as Jesus and Theudas may have been, they arose as one man when the person appeared who had all the qualifications of a Messiah. They placed at Bar Kochba's disposal an army of not less than half a million of well equipped soldiers. They heeded strictly his orders. There was not the least discord in their ranks, and during five years more than two millions of Jews sacrificed their lives for him and his cause. Does such devotion indicate blindness or stubbornness? Alas! Bar Kochba was not successful; his cause did not triumph. The hero was, therefore, degraded to a rebel, and the last glorious struggle of our nation was stigmatized as a rebellion.⁴

But to return to the name of the reputed founder of Christianity. Christ is not a proper name, it is a title. Jesus is not a Hebrew name, it is the Greek translation of the Hebrew name Joshua. So that instead of reading "Jesus Christ," we should read "Joshua, the Messiah." As the Rev. Dr. Giles remarks:—

It will also be remembered by those who attach reverence to the name of Jesus that it is nothing more than the Greek form of Joshua, and has derived its sacred character from being limited in its present use to our Lord alone.⁵

The same writer also observes:—

Of all the Hebrew names which have been translated into Greek or Latin, none has undergone a more

¹ W. B. Smith, *Eccle Deus*, 1912, p. 328.

² T. K. Cheyne, *The Mines of Isaiah Re-explored*, 1912, p. 27.

³ Canon Cheyne, *The Mines of Isaiah Re-explored*, pp. 56-7.

⁴ Rabbi Solomon Schindler, *Messianic Expectations*, p. 70.

⁵ Giles, *Apostolical Records*, p. 164.

thorough change than Joshua. Wherever it occurs in either of the classic languages, it is rendered Jesus.*

During the earliest period of Christianity the word Christ was generally written Chrest, but of this in our next.

W. MANN.

(To be Continued.)

The Indispensability of Consciousness.

A GOOD deal has been written as to whether consciousness is a necessity in the economy of animal life, or something which could be dispensed with without in any way affecting animal behaviour.

The muscles get their impulses from nerve and brain, and mind, without their co-operation, cannot stimulate a single muscular fibre to action. Why, then, should there be any need of mind? What use is it? Is not the animal organism a complete automaton—a self-determining machine—with its different nerves bringing impulses from all parts of the body to the spinal-cord and the brain, which reply along the efferent nerves, and immediately the muscles obey the orders given them.

Besides these reflex actions in which the organism responds to external stimuli, most, if not all, of the changes and activities which take place within the body are of the nature of chemical or physical reactions. Some are rhythmic as well as automatic, like the beat of the heart and the action of the lungs. Some resemble the action of a flushing tank; others are exactly timed to conditions, like the slide valve of a steam engine. For example, as soon as food enters the mouth, the stomach, or the intestines, digestive fluids are immediately poured into the alimentary tract; while others, again, are of the explosive type, like the charge of a gun or a shell—a release of pent up energy. All katabolic action is certainly of this order. And, by the bye, are not feeling and thought obviously the accompaniments of such katabolism?

Now, it is highly probable that such reactions make up all the changes of which the process of "living" consists; and nowhere, under normal conditions, is consciousness in evidence. It intrudes itself only when something is out of gear. It is not awakened even by the heart beat, despite the greatness of its contracting force in overcoming the resistance offered by the boggy mass of the capillaries. Apparently there is no gap left anywhere which calls for the intervention of consciousness. The animal looks like being a complete automaton; so that nature, on this view, evolved a thing which is wholly unnecessary. And since evil, in all its forms of suffering and agony, has no existence apart from consciousness, Nature has proved itself to be a fiend at heart in having made the animal automaton *sentient*—a sufferer—without the least need of it, if the hypothesis be true, that it could live its life just the same without it.

But can we grant the "if"? I trow not. In the above account there is a missing link, a causal gap, and one of such cardinal importance that the whole chain is worthless without it. Had Nature provided that food should be poured into the mouth of every living creature as it wanted it, just as the "hopper" feeds the mill with grain, then surely consciousness would not be wanted as in the vegetable kingdom. But, alas, is it so? What Nature has done is to provide the mill itself with a motor system in the form of muscles, to go in *search* of the "grain" and feed itself.

It is here at the very beginning of the vital process where mind comes in. Providing the organism with

a muscular system for self-movement—that is, making it an automobile—brought with it the necessity of also providing a driver, a chauffeur, to control and direct its movements. Indeed, so essential is mind to the living machine, both as feeling and intellect, that we have on several occasions used the phrase "mind and muscle," to emphasize the fact that they are indissoluble correlates in all sentient creatures; and I trust it will need but little reflection on the part of anyone to realize this obvious truism.

I invite the reader to put to himself the question: Does the finding of the particular substance which every creature must have in order to enable it to continue to live belong to any of the reactions—rebound, lever, or trigger type—instanced above? The absurdity of the question will suffice as an answer. The *finding* is not the effect of a reaction at all. It is the response of the mind to one sense-impression out of a multitude. The "finding" is not physical, but mental; it is the act of recognizing or identifying the mental image which the dint of infinite repetitions in the life history of the species has made familiar in consciousness by being the very means of its perpetuation. Recognition, be it in discovering an eatable or in avoiding the fate of being eaten, is the mind's premier "instrument" in the great struggle of existence. It gives to a chance encounter the same effect as a pre-determined mechanical device—a fact to which it owes its predominant importance amid the functions of mind, and which makes it the primary constituent of knowledge.

Fear plays a more important part in determining the movements of animals than even the impulse of hunger, for partial or imaginary recognitions awaken it. A horse will shy at a paper as readily and as impetuously as at the sight of a lion. To this mental factor is due the fact that the movements of sentient creatures are characterized by a spontaneity which we usually associate with the notion of "free-will"—that perpetual change of direction which makes the path of a fly or a swallow during any instant never an exact repetition of a previous one.

To contend that it is not the sense of hunger but the reaction due to the defect of nutrition in the system that sends the wolf to roam through forest and meadow, the hen to scratch on the dung heap, the mole to burrow the soil, the swallow to sweep through the air, and the cat to watch with the immobility and stillness of death, is a theory too inconsistent with the teachings of mechanical science even to be discussed as a problem of dynamics. And so is the contention that the cat seizes and devours the mouse not from the mental act of recognition, but because the radiant energy represented by its retinal image of the mouse in whatever position and in whatever degree of light it happens to be, is always the exact amount of energy to set its muscular system in motion, and is, moreover, the only one object whose image will represent that amount! A person who can discuss such a contention with a straight face should find no difficulty in believing the story of Jonah and the whale.

The possibility of recognition is implied in the searching; it is that which gives meaning to the search. The creature is seeking for something which it will recognize when it comes into view. Mind in virtue of this capacity performs one of Nature's premier miracles, *viz.*, to make behaviour purposive, though full of contingency, to make chance subservient to an end as definitely as if it were designed by crank and cam in the structure of a machine.

Mind or consciousness is Nature's telephone exchange. The feelings give the "calls" and the intellect, with its six attendants—the senses—connect them up with the called-for muscle or set of muscles, with the result that the creature continues to live. And knowledge is simply a name for its states when it

* *Ibid.*, p. 160.

fulfils its "exchange" duties—those life-preserving functions for which it was awakened and evolved.

How neural and psychic processes are causally "geared" together we cannot explain. Cause and effect simply implies a redistribution of physical energy. But feeling and thought are extra-physical and non-material. How we should love to know why consciousness is associated only with living substance, and also why it is fully awakened within it only when that substance reaches the highly organized state of the animal brain, and yet from the nature of knowledge man has little hopes of ever knowing it, as the explanation is probably to be found in the nature of ultimate substance. But this inability to explain casts no shadow of a doubt upon the fact itself; there is not in the whole contents of consciousness a relation more obvious and absolute.

KERIDON.

Acid Drops.

"The greatest article he has ever penned" is the announcement that preceded Mr. Bottomley's article in his new Sunday paper, and one can only attribute it to a great man's modesty which has led him to under estimate his previous effusions. For even of Mr. Bottomley one would not like to say anything so severe as to assert that his article on "The Faith Within us All" is the greatest he has written. It would be too condemnatory of his life's work. Mr. Bottomley's theme is that of immortality, or rather, future existence, and candidly, it is about as empty an article on the subject as I have come across for some time. The belief in a future life is, he says, a "universal instinct," and he uses the word "instinct" deliberately "because it is more concerned with the heart than the head," which is quite the most wonderful definition of instinct that I have yet read. Mr. Bottomley disclaims any desire to uproot "any of my readers' faith, cherished from childhood—learnt, indeed, at a mother's knee" (the printer has omitted a request for tears at this point), but is satisfied that all religions agree in their fundamentals, and that if there be a future life "where every worthy action and thought in this world bears its fruit, then, under a just Providence, all will be well." (More tears.) This is not a caricature, but a faithful summary of the main portion of the "greatest article he has ever penned."

Mr. Bottomley does not believe in Spiritualism, but "At the same time I know that for a certain period at any rate after physical death, and given the necessary element of mutual affinity, the personality of the departed remains intact, and able to manifest itself to those left behind." It is good to meet one who knows so much, and the editor ought to reap his reward in sales among Spiritualists and ordinary Christians. There is nothing like pleasing all sorts when one is running a paper. After the spirit has been in touch with us for some time it "flies" to the "sea of immortality which flows all round the world." And that "is the conclusion to which much reflection has brought me." Pity the time was wasted on reaching a conclusion that any half mentally baked local preacher could have so easily supplied him with.

Mr. Bottomley explains that his subject is essentially a Sunday one. And that makes one wonder whether he really believes that people spend their Sundays in thinking about a future life. We are all aware of Mr. Bottomley's simplicity of character, but we hardly gave him credit for so complete a detachment from the affairs of this world as this expression implies. Now if one could only persuade him to forsake his cloister-like retirement and spend a little time, say at a race meeting, or a stockbroker's gathering, he would find that the future life is the one thing about which people think but little and desire least. And I feel sure that the readers of the *Sunday Illustrated*, with its "Sundayish atmosphere" would much prefer a safe tip for the next big race than this information about the next world. But perhaps Mr. Bottomley feels that if a paper is to play to the religious

folk in this country, it must have something silly about it, and his article is a lesson in the art of "How to get there."

On the occasion of a recent application for the use of the Town Hall, Sandown (I. O. W.), in which to hold a missionary meeting, Councillor Lowe said that he had no sympathy with these missionary movements or with converting the blacks. He did not know what harm they did. They occasionally eat a missionary or two, but they had as much right to their beliefs as anyone else. There was not half as much wickedness among blacks as there is in this country. We should imagine that Councillor Lowe will not be very popular among the Sandown clergy. Perhaps the needs of the blacks might be met if the missionaries were sent out already tinned.

There were five men summoned the other day at Lambeth Police Court for using "noisy instruments" for the purpose of calling people together. The summons was taken out under the Police Act of 1849. The residents complained that they had no peace while this religious service was going on, and it was impossible to put young children to bed. There can be no doubt that these noisy religious meetings, when accompanied by a blaring brass band, are a nuisance, and householders have a right to be protected against such a genuine annoyance. The magistrate dismissed the summons against one defendant and adjourned the others. Now, if it had been a Freethought meeting, we wonder—?

Providence has playful moments. A telegram from Tokyo, Japan, states that the rivers have overflowed. Twenty-two villages are under water, hundreds of houses have been destroyed, and two hundred persons have been drowned. Thousands are lacking food and shelter.

An evening paper congratulates the Prime Minister on "his fairness in the appointment of bishops." This will be hard reading for innocent Church people who imagine that bishops are appointed by the Holy Ghost.

The third reading of the Deceased Wife's Sister's Marriage Act Amendment Bill, the object of which is to legalize marriage with a deceased brother's widow, produced the usual opposition from the clergy. The Bishop of Coventry said he was astonished that Parliament should compel the clergy to break Church law by celebrating marriages forbidden by the Church. We sympathize with the Bishop in his astonishment. It must be hard to realize that common or garden Members of Parliament are able to dictate to the most low servants of the Most High God.

A newspaper editor, writing on the appointment of the Rev. Dr. Donaldson to the bishopric of Salisbury, referred to the new bishop as "formerly a poor curate at Bethnal Green." Like so much of the so-called clerical poverty, the small stipend is so often a stepping-stone to higher and better paid jobs.

The Bishop of St. Albans says that every young parson should do five or ten years overseas. We quite agree with that, and not to be outdone in generosity we would give him another five or ten years out of the country on our own account. In fact, we would send him overseas altogether. It might lead to trouble with the Colonies, but one must take risks in this world if any good is to be done.

Compliments from the other side are rare, so we feel that we ought to record the remarks of *Light*, one of the Spiritualist organs, on our recent comments on communications with the dead. Naturally, it agrees with us in our opinion that there is too much talk of fraud as being able to explain all that occurs in connection with Spiritualism, and says that our "attitude is fair and sensible." Our contributors will also be pleased to learn that in the opinion of *Light* the *Freethinker* is "run by capable minds of penetrating intelligence." That is an

opinion we have ourselves held for some time, but have been too modest to say so. But we will not dispute it when said by others. We should like to see a larger number of the public impressed with the same truth. It would make our task much easier.

Naturally, *Light* concludes that the intelligence of the *Freethinker* "has not yet penetrated to the reality of our truth," which is a courteous way of telling us that we have yet much to learn. That may be quite true, but we hardly think that our learning will lead us to accept the theories which *Light* champions. The truth lies, as we have so often remarked, in quite another direction, and the Spiritualistic explanation is to us exactly on a level with the animistic explanation of insanity and epilepsy, of abnormal mental states that were for so long given and accepted by the general world. Mr. Cohen intends writing two or three articles on this subject in the near future, and then he will indicate what he regards as the true line of explanation. And we feel that we shall then be running the risk of our contemporary forming quite a different opinion of the intelligence of at least one member of the *Freethinker* staff.

It is difficult to guess the advertiser's estimate of the *Daily Herald* readers. They are asked if they know their catechism. Most of us, the advertisement states, can answer the first question: Who made you? But it is the last question that is evidently the reason for sending fivepence for the catechism of Christian Doctrine as taught in the Catholic schools. To slaves—a comfortable religion; why organize and "get together" to better the lot of God's handiwork—who are the blasphemers?

Chance played a curious trick on the notice boards of a Norbury Chapel. One bill announced the calling up of the reserves, the other had the text "Prepare to meet thy God."

We are not surprised to find even the *Church Times* expressing its dissent from a recent decision of the High Courts. According to that ruling, any person whom the Home Secretary considers to be assisting in this country the cause of disorder in Ireland may be seized, transported to Ireland and interned. There is no public statement of the offence, no trial, simply an official order. By that method it is possible to imprison anyone who is at all offensive to the government, and where these official objections do not exist a country is either in a bad way, or it possesses a perfect government and a perfect people. As that is the state of the law, who should like someone to inform us what is the precise value of British liberties at the moment.

The *Church Times* says we seem to be drifting back to those mediæval days when the Church was the only friend of liberty. Our historical researches fail to provide us with any evidence as to when those days were, but it does seem as though there is not very much to choose between the parson and the present day politician when it comes to a question of liberty. And ultimately, as we have so often said, it is a question for the general public. A public with a genuine regard for freedom would never tolerate such laws and such a government for long. But we have been so demoralized by the war, with its complete disregard for the principle of personal liberty, that it is to-day largely a question of in whose hands lies the power of suppression. A people who are made slaves and kept slaves, are fit only to be slaves, and that is the end of the whole question.

Quite a pathetic appeal to publishers by the secretaries of some of our learned associations has been made for them to reduce the price of their publications. They point out, and with justification, that the present high price of books is really a tax on learning and an obstacle to the spread of knowledge. We cordially sympathize with the appeal and the feelings that prompt it. We know well what it is to look at the notices of new books, and then to stop there owing to the price at which they are published. It requires someone with a pretty liberal income to be

able to get the new books that one simply ought to get if they are to keep their information on matters up-to-date. All the same, we do not see any prospect in the price of books being lower in the immediate future, so we suppose we shall have to go on looking and longing. Good books in England always were published at too high a price, and the war, and winning it, has simply developed a policy that was quite bad enough before we set out to bring peace to Europe.

A suit of armour was sold at Sotheby's Sale Room, London, recently for £25,000. Rather a high price to pay in a country which professes to worship a pauper-god, and to believe in the blessings of poverty.

According to a contemporary, Dean Inge is "two-faced." Curious! Why doesn't the reverend gentleman use the other one.

Nearly all London's suburban newspapers are indebted to the various local churches for a considerable supply of "copy." But even in Suburbia, the native home of English middle-class intelligence, the foundations of the Protestant faith are very shaky. From the *Streatham News* (July 1) we learn that in West Streatham a special effort is being made by Anglicans, Baptists, and Wesleyans to foster a spirit of reunion and to increase the congregations. After prayer-meetings to be held every Sunday evening, the members will proceed in a body to "one of the streets in the parish for the singing of hymns and the giving of an invitation to church." The necessity of artificial stimulus of this kind to lead the masses back to the faith, is a striking comment on the theory of a "religious instinct" ever craving satisfaction. If religion, officially buttressed by the State, taught in the national schools, and supported by enforced Sunday observance, cannot hold its own against Secularism, where would it be in fair and open competition?

South African papers just to hand contain a full account of the affair of the "Israelites," about which notices have been occurring in the English papers. The sect was founded by a negro who styled himself the prophet Enoch. He started a Church called "One God and the Saints of Christ." He and his followers were in the habit of visiting annually a place called Bullhock in order to celebrate what they called their "Passover." But gradually the number that remained behind grew, and the *Johannesburg Star* declares that they practically annexed the common and built a village of about 350 houses. This was called "holy ground," and strangers were forbidden to enter. It seems that attempts were made to get the natives to return to their homes, but they refused. In the end a force of about 850 men, with artillery and machine guns, were sent out to eject them. The prophet and his followers said that they were obeying the commands of Jehovah and if the soldiers attacked Jehovah would protect them. Being Christians the soldiers and their officers knew the value of Jehovah's protection in the face of machine guns and rifles, and the attack was ordered. The natives were armed only with swords and spears and knives, but being sincere Christians they did apparently believe that Jehovah would protect them and advanced fearlessly to the attack. There were, as a result, over 100 killed and about 200 wounded. There were two or three casualties among the soldiers and police. "It was a glorious victory."

The whole affair is a pitiful example of a happening as a result of taking our barbaric religion to a people who are not on our level of culture. With ourselves there is no great likelihood of its being taken seriously. With the native races the consequence is the faith in the superstitions they have been trained in is broken, and they take another which has not the social and tribal restraints at work to prevent it being harmful. And when mischief results there is the military power of the believers in Jesus at hand. It is a pity that the Christian whites cannot leave the natives alone with their own superstitions. The blacks gave a fine exhibition of religious faith, and the whites showed to them how little religion really mattered.

To Correspondents.

Those Subscribers who receive their copy of the "Freethinker" in a GREEN WRAPPER will please take it that the renewal of their subscription is due. They will also oblige, if they do not want us to continue sending the paper, by notifying us to that effect.

A. B. CUTTILL.—It is against our rule to give the names and addresses of anyone without their express permission, but we can invite Freethinkers to meet at a given address if it is supplied. We are sending you some leaflets for distribution, and also a copy of *Determinism*. If you could get a good hall Mr. Cohen would pay the town a visit during the autumn.

W. E. GARDNER (Port Elizabeth).—Your suggestion for the outside of the *Freethinker* is quite a good one, but it would mean putting a cover on and that would add considerably to the expense. And we cannot do that so long as the paper is losing money in its present style. The quotation "The devil was sick, the devil a saint would be, the devil was well, the devil a saint was he," has been attributed to various persons, and we cannot say with whom it originated. There are also, as you note, several wordings of it. It certainly dates from the sixteenth century, if not earlier.

F. MACDONALD (South Africa).—The affair with the prophet Enoch and his followers is only one of the evil effects which the carrying of Christianity to native races has. These people have not reached the stage of organized hypocrisy such as has been achieved by the Christians of Europe, with the result that when they do accept Christianity they are likely to carry it out in all its native barbarity. In a way they exhibit then what Christianity really is when untouched by civilized thought.

HOWELL S. ENGLAND.—Have sent you on the papers. By all means send on the cuttings, they are nearly always of interest.

"UNORTHODOX."—Your letter appeared in last issue, but we think that this particular correspondence has now run to a sufficient length. It has a tendency to endless repetition. And the whole thing is rather old-fashioned.

R. KENNEDY.—We could give you a list of books on the subject, but, generally, the Buddhist Society, 19 Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C., would be able to advise you more thoroughly. *Buddhism, Its History and Literature*, by Rhys Davids (Putnam's and Sons,) would probably give you what you require.

R. ELMES.—Thanks for getting us new subscribers. That is a very real help. We have set our minds on making the *Freethinker* pay its way, and with the help of our readers we hope to make it do so. It has never yet done this, but we see no reason why it should not. And when it does get to that stage we shall be able to venture in directions that we dare not attempt at present.

L. GAIR.—We hope that things will turn out as you anticipate. Thanks, we are quite well, but holidays are more easily talked about and thought about than secured. Perhaps later.

DR. S. GRIERSON writes: "Many thanks for your excellent edition of Volney's *Ruins*. It is a book that all Freethinkers have heard of, but few of the present generation have read. I hope it is the forerunner of many reprints of the early Freethought classics. These forbears of ours had a magnificent grip of the position." We are pleased to find the *Ruins* so much appreciated, and shall certainly follow it with other reprints so soon as we are able to manage it.

H. CUYNER.—We have received your letter in reply to "Unorthodox," but regret having to hold it over till next week. Then we must apply the editorial closure, as there seems little headway being made, and we have so much other matter waiting for insertion.

H. L. VOIGHT.—We note that the editor of the *Thanet Gazette* has decided to close the discussion in which you have been taking the lead. We wish you had managed to get hold of better opponents, but in this matter one must take what comes. The more sensible ones prefer to keep their mouths shut. Mr. Arthur Cook's essay on the Bible is about as poor a thing as we have seen for a long time. It belongs to the juvenile period of the Salvation Army.

A. J. MARRIOTT.—Crowded out. We are afraid you took our remarks too literally.

J. FOTHERGILL.—Received. Mr. Cohen is writing you in the course of a few days.

G. HUNT.—The condemnation of Socialism was contained in one of the Evangelicals issued by Pope Leo XIII, but we cannot at the moment give you the date.

ROBERT ARCH.—Received. Hope to use next week.

The "Freethinker" is supplied to the trade on sale or return. Any difficulty in securing copies should be at once reported to the office.

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

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

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

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

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

All Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed "London, City and Midland Bank, Clerkenwell Branch."

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

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

The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office to any part of the world, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—

The United Kingdom.—One year, 17s. 6d.; half year, 8s. 9d.; three months, 4s. 6d.

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

Sugar Plums.

We are issuing this week a book which we are sure our readers will welcome and read with pleasure. Mr. Whitehead is a newcomer in our ranks, but he is a beginner in neither speaking nor writing. In his new work, *Jesus Christ: God, Man, or Myth?* he subjects the New Testament character to a very searching and careful examination, concluding with a chapter on Jesus as a Socialist. We do not expect Christians to welcome so drastic a criticism, but we have no doubt as to its reception among Freethinkers. Mr. Whitehead writes well and clearly. His remarks are always to the point, and he has a good command of his material. We do not think we need say more as to our opinion of the work. The fact that the Pioneer Press has published it is in itself an indication that in our opinion the book is one that is calculated to do service to the movement. It is published in two styles. There is one edition on good paper, and well printed, with neat coloured wrapper, which is sold at 2s. (postage 2d.), and another edition, printed on superior paper, well bound in cloth, at 3s. 6d. (postage 3d). Nothing would please us better than to see both editions sold out by Christmas.

Mr. Whitehead has finished his successful operations in South Wales and is now lecturing in Leeds and district. He will remain there during the latter part of next week, being due back in London on July 16.

Mr. W. Bradburn writes calling our attention to the fact that in Kensal Green Cemetery there is a monument erected by Mr. J. W. Corfield "To the brave men and women who have generously given their time and means to improve the conditions and enlarge the happiness of all classes of society." The monument bears a long list of names, and includes those of Robert Owen, Julian Hibbert, Frances Wright, Francis Place, Charles Bradlaugh, W. M. W. Call, Thomas Paine, Henry Hetherington, W. J. Fox, G. J. Holyoake, Thomas Wooler, Richard Carlile, and many other Freethinkers. That is quite a pleasant reminder to the world that we owe much of what we ought to prize the most to these brave men and women who have lived and suffered in the name of Freethought.

We have received from The Truth Publishing Company, New York, a copy of *The Tyranny of God*, by Joseph Lewis. This small book of 122 pages is a general indictment of the God-idea and the "duties" and practices associated with it. Throughout the author lays special

stress on the permanent mental and moral injury done to the child by dogmatic teaching about the supernatural. "Is it any wonder that we grow up to be serfs and slaves? Before we are able to know or understand the very rudest fundamentals of life, our entire mental machinery is corrupted by unshakable fears and dedicated to the vilest and most sickening submission."

The Bethnal Green Branch has been holding its meetings in Victoria Park in the afternoons at 3.15. It has now been decided to hold them in the evenings at 6.15 instead. Will all East End Freethinkers please note the alteration in time. The Secretary of the Branch earnestly requests the attendance and co-operation of all local Freethinkers in making these meetings a success. We sincerely hope that they will do so.

Most of our readers will remember the case of Mr. Hunt, to which we have several times made reference. Mr. Hunt, it will be remembered, wrote for some Communist literature that was advertised in our columns. Only that, and nothing more. But the police obtained possession of his letter, sent it to the colliery where he was employed as under-manager, and he was promptly discharged for daring to wish to read some pamphlets on Communism. The consequence is that Mr. Hunt finds himself "on the rocks," and a Fund to help him over his present difficulties has been opened. A letter on the matter appears in another column. Mr. D. Macconnell, of New Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire, is taking charge of the Fund, and all subscriptions should be sent to him. Mr. Hunt's case appears to be a hard one, and we wish the Fund success.

Another Gospel.

It is not generally known that Judas Iscariot hanged himself on a fig-tree. The first of the four Gospels merely says he hanged himself. Nor is it generally known that, after his death, his spirit lay on the earth, and looked up, and saw his body, that is, Judas saw himself, swinging by a rope from a branch of a fig-tree. The new and remarkable Gospel from which I am quoting (it was published a few years ago) relates how the ghost of Judas the Traitor was blown to and fro for several days, and how it beheld many agitating scenes—Mary, the mother of Jesus, weeping as she walked along a street in Jerusalem; the sepulchre of the crucified Messiah, guarded by soldiers; Peter prostrate on the ground, lamenting his denial of his Master, and so on.

From the same source comes the story of blind old Eliakim, a man who dwelt in a wretched little hut near the Dung Gate of Jerusalem. He heard a mob passing and managed to grope his way after the noisy crowd, and, though shoved about and buffeted, he succeeded in getting near enough to the Governor's palace to enable him to hear Pontius Pilate condemn Jesus to death. He stumbled along the road to Golgotha, and by listening to the people's shouts and conversation he understood that the "King of the Jews" had been nailed to the Cross just as Jesus was about to breathe his last breath. I will give the closing verses of the narrative:—

The old man implored, "Rabbi! Just give me one glance. They tell me that one look from you is enough. So many years have passed since I saw the light. Rabbi, compassionate me!"

Then the face of the Sufferer turned bluish, the eyes gleamed, the bloody head leaned upon the breast.

And the story goes that this was the only petition to which the Compassionate One had ever been deaf.

So Eliakim came too late.

Quite a different type of episode is that of Jesse, the son of Melchi. Ninety years of age, grey haired, yet with red cheeks, bright eyes, and a cheery smile, Jesse was one of the most popular citizens of Jerusalem. He

was kindness itself. Everyday he fed the doves that fluttered on his house-top, and, when he appeared among the sheep on the pastures, the whole flock followed him with joyous bleating. If the City council condemned any offending Jew to a harsh punishment, the voice of Jesse, the son of Melchi, was unfailingly raised in a plea of mercy. Such was the universal respect in which the aged citizen was held, that the council usually granted such requests. While he was thus spending his last years in works of philanthropy, he heard that Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth, was preaching to the people in the Temple. Unlike the other Pharisees Jesse listened with much appreciation to the young Nazarene, and was half inclined to become a disciple. But, all of a sudden, Jesus dropped out a remark that implied a reproach to the time-honoured Law of Moses:—

You have heard that it has been said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." But I say unto you, "That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

Now, this deliberate censure of the venerable Scriptures—the Divine Word—deeply offended Jesse. Tender though his heart was, his intellect was so trained to pay the utmost servile obeisance to Holy Writ, that he now agreed with the Pharisees who demanded the arrest of the Nazarene. Seized with sudden illness as he caressed the doves on his house-tops one morning, he died, murmuring to his friends: "Arrest!—the Scriptures!—Tooth for tooth."

These (says this extra Gospel) were the last words of the marvellously benevolent man.

I may not occupy space with the recital of other passages from this singular volume, though some readers might like to hear how Satan joined in the proceedings of the city council; how Gamaliel, Habakkuk, and Avrum, three honourable Rabbis, argued with Jesus in the synagogue of Nazareth; and so on. But at this point I pause.

I shall, of course, be asked where I get these stories from, and I had better explain straightway.

The book which I have named "Another Gospel," and from which I have extracted a few illustrations of contents and style, is, in fact, the entire invention of a very talented Polish author named Niemojewski. He issued the tales under the title of *Legends*, and the work was translated into Esperanto in 1911. I lately came across a copy, and, being able to read Esperanto, I examined the so-called "legends" with interest, and concluded that Niemojewski's creative gift approaches very near to genius. If my comments come under the eye of any Esperantist I strongly counsel him to consult this extraordinary volume.¹

Our clever Polish writer, though obviously humanist in outlook, treats the personality of Jesus with respect. His legends fit easily into the environment and atmosphere of the New Testament. They are as readable and picturesque, to say the least, as the four Gospels of the popular Bible. They present us with miracles, and with examples of the Nazarene Prophet's preternatural insight. When a group of men tramp along the street of Nazareth, and the dust clears away for us to see the Prophet in their midst, he is thus described:—

The Rabbi had distinction of face and figure. As he gazed forward, there was in his countenance an air of equanimity and thoughtfulness. A blond, crisp beard hung on his neck. His locks, powdered with dust from the road, flowed upon the shoulders. Gravity and nobility radiated from his person. He wore a bright vest girdled. Large blue eyes beamed sincerity, and yet intimated a certain singular quality impossible to denote in words.

Such is the courteous and deferential manner in which

¹ It is sold at the Esperanto headquarters at 17 Hart Street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

Niemojewski deals with the divine hero of the Catholic faith. Nevertheless, he is all the time, of set literary purpose, inventing fresh Christian legends. I could easily imagine that a Persian or Hindu reader, knowing nothing of Biblical criticism, might read the four Gospels and this other Gospel by Niemojewski and accept the five books as the productions of Christian disciples.

For my part, I believe the four Gospels of the New Testament were put together by writers who handled popular traditions as consciously and freely as the modern Polish author. I do not think they entertained any intention to (as we might say) deceive. They wanted to edify the people, just as Dickens, or Defoe, or Bunyan, or Nathaniel Hawthorne wished to edify. That an immense and complicated Church and theological system would arise on the basis of these lively tales they did not dream, though, no doubt, the fourth Evangelist ("John") was more of a doctrine maker than his comrade-authors. Could "Mark," for example, ever have had the least idea that his Jesus would evolve into the divine personage around whom the scholastic system of St. Thomas Aquinas was to be erected in a colossal pile?

I am very well aware that unpleasant priestly types have, from time to time, turned the Christian faith into a vested interest and made fat incomes out of the Evangel. But I cannot subscribe to the opinion that the early Christian Evangelists were any more tainted with fraudulent motive than our modern friend Niemojewski. They wrote to please, instruct, admonish and console. They were artists. They composed miracles with pleasure, just as Mozart created melodies, or Turner painted, with pleasure. I half suspect they would have torn up their Gospel parchments if they could have foreseen that on top of their legends Calvin would construct his dreadful creed, or the Scots plant dull and deadly Catechisms.

F. J. GOULD.

Book Chat.

The greatest disseminator of ideas in the eighteenth century once reminded us that "all the known world, excepting only savage nations, is governed by books." We are as pleased as we are surprised to note that this remark of Voltaire's figures as one of the epigraphs on the title-page of the catalogue of *The Labour Publishing Company, Ltd.* (6 Tavistock Square, W.C. 1). It indicates, we take it, that our Socialist and Communist friends are coming to see the immense importance of ideas in the development of social groups. The Marxian materialistic conception of history has had a long run, and it is natural that there should be a reaction towards an idealism which lays stress on the urge from above. We do not live by bread alone, but by the ideas that reach us by way of the written word. The company, we are told, has been formed to publish and distribute the writings, not only of *The Labour Research Department*, but also of the great authors in this country and abroad of our own and of earlier days. Trade unionists and labour men and women are urged, by a number of more or less important people, to do all they can to help the new venture. The number of books issued and in preparation is not large, but they are particularly attractive, and Freethinkers, who do not as a rule need to be urged to study, will find them pre-eminently worthy of their attention. We have a few of these publications before us, and a note or two of critical observation will indicate what the reader may expect to find. If he wants a mass of well digested and admirably arranged information on Labour questions throughout the world prepared by experts and exponents of Labour policy, he cannot do better than buy *The Labour International Hand-book* (12s. 6d. net). Then there are special and cheap editions of the historic works of J. L. and Barbara Hammond, *The Village Labourer* (3s. net), and *The Town Labourer* (4s. 6d. net). These are books which no serious student of social history can afford to neglect. He will also find in Mr. F. E. Green's *The Tyranny of the Country-*

side (3s. and 5s. net) a movingly pathetic picture of the condition of the agricultural labourer of to-day. Mr. Green is our modern counterpart of Cobbett, with all the vigour and courage of the older writer, and a sense of artistry peculiarly his own.

Pamphlets are, of course, the small arms of all soldiers of revolt, and our Labour friends have naturally not forgotten to provide the reader with this form of weapon. We have before us an informative study of *Communism* by Eden and Cedar Paul (6d.); a discussion of the *Control of Industry* by Margaret I. Cole (6d.), and an exposition of the *Policy of Guild Socialism* (6d.). There is also a booklet on *The Two Internationals* by R. Palme Dutt (1s. 6d.), which, in its ninety pages, brings together the main facts and documents relating to these two important groups. We heartily wish our friends the success they deserve in their efforts to broaden the outlook of the average man and woman, for if Labour is in the near future to become a power in the land it will be likely to use its power more wisely if it is balanced by knowledge and meditation.

The Soviet regime in Russia is, even now, pretty much of a legend for the newspaper-reading Englishman in spite of the more or less sympathetic impressions of Mrs. Snowden and Mr. Wells. He still regards the great figures of this world-shaking movement as ogres, and blood-thirsty tyrants, and day by day his antipathies are supported by cock-and-bull stories invented in the purlieus of Fleet Street! Quite the best picture of the very human side of the leaders in the Russia of to-day is that given by the ingenuous Communist Mrs. Clare Sheridan in *Russian Portraits* (Jonathan Cape, 10s. 6d. net). Mrs. Sheridan is an English aristocrat, and a sculptor of some ability. She managed, more or less clandestinely, to get over to Russia in 1920 for the purpose of doing portrait busts of Lenin, Trotsky and others. The illustrations in her books reveal not only the strength, but also the humanity, the idealism of these masters of revolt. Her notes of conversations, scenes, and doings have a freshness which we look for in vain in the bourgeois impressions of Mr. Wells. It is curious to find in the aristocratic artist an unashamed sympathy with the proletariat. It serves to illustrate our theory that the middle-class is a stumbling block in the way of progress.

Mrs. Sheridan was much surprised to find that her friends did not believe in God, that they resented the idea of a supreme ruler as a form of tyranny for which they had no use. But she saw nothing of that intolerance of religion, and sacrilegious treatment of sacred things which we have been taught to regard as characteristic of Atheistic Bolshevism. She reminds us that Napoleon stabled his horses in the beautiful church of St. Basil, and notes that her friends had done nothing as bad as that. She also tells us in her charmingly ingenuous way that she was not aware, before she went to Russia, that idealism and unselfishness could go hand in hand with Atheism. It was worth the journey to learn that, although the history of our movement would have brought the facts home to her with a clearness equally startling. "We are idealistic materialists," Litvinov remarked to her, and these Atheists who are creating a new world prove their tolerance of religious thought by keeping the churches open to all. But they do a little quiet propaganda work by placing tablets here and there bearing the inscription, "Religion is the opiate of the people." Mrs. Sheridan confesses that she could never quite understand the spirit of this placarding of an opinion. She would have had no difficulty in understanding it if she had remembered that religious sentimentalists have always looked with complacency upon the miseries of the labouring class as a discipline placed by God for the salvation of the labourer's immortal soul, or to use Crabbe's final word upon the misery portrayed in his poems, "Man must endure—let us submit and pray."

The *agent provocateur*, or political spy, used to be regarded as a hateful product of the Russian Imperial regime. He is now well established in democratic America, and, strange to say, some of our friends tell us

that they have knocked up against him even here in England. The filthy habits of the beast and the corruption in which he flourishes are depicted for us in a new and powerful story by Mr. Upton Sinclair, *The Spy* (Werner Laurie, 3s. 6d. net). It is one of the best bits of propaganda we have seen, and it is something still better, a good yarn. We do not forget that Mr. Sinclair is an artist as well as a "muck-raking" idealist.

GEORGE UNDERWOOD.

How I Became a Freethinker.

I WAS brought up "religious" and the earliest days of youth found me alternatively "good" and "sorry that I wasn't good," constantly haunted with the fear that everything I did of an original nature was fearfully wicked. At the age of nineteen I not only led classes of young men in Bible reading and delivered bombastic ideas regarding what my friends should do to "serve Jesus," but seriously considered becoming a red-hot evangelist and "serving the master." (When I think of it to-day I thank my stars I found sanity before I became hopeless.)

I shall never forget the memorable night of my awakening. I went with two Christian friends to hear a very eloquent preacher who came to Aldershot with a "message from God." I confess he was of the handsome and attractive type of parson, with long intellectual hair and a delivery savouring of honey, butter and milk (the heavenly variety). His grandiose manner for once failed to appeal to me. Somehow during the service I underwent a change never before experienced. Whether it was the weather, his excessive oratory, or the instinctive voice of long choked reason I know not, but gradually I realized I was a fool, a sentimental, canting fool full of flabby ideas without foundation.

When the preacher said: "Let all those who realize the power and efficiency of the blood of Jesus Christ stand and testify," I not only remained seated but drew forth the queerest of sounds from my religious friends around. They gazed upon me with a new expression; I feel now that if I had seen nothing but their horror-stricken faces I should have turned my back on religion, I was mentally beyond the pale at once. I was a heathen, a back-slider, worse still—a doubter. After the service I remember the parson accosted me and asked if I cared to come to a private room and discuss the matter with him, he "felt I was a Christian very near the Light but my vision was blurred."

I remember his exuberant emotion and his vague explanations.

"Why do you let the question of the Virgin Birth puzzle you?" he said, "we are not to question these things, the Master commands us to follow him and that implies complete faith. You have only to trust in the blood of our blessed Lord. Why don't you, brother?"

In spite of my protesting that he had explained nothing, that I felt I wanted certain points cleared up, he continued a vague jargon which I had so often used myself, but which I now saw to be pure moonshine and the essence of parrot talk. Finally, with great effort, he made it a matter of prayer—and after ten minutes of the same indefinite twaddle (only with his eyes closed and mine uncommonly wide open) I found I was right and he was wrong.

With his hands on my shoulder he said triumphantly, "Now, brother, don't you see the Light and God's great love?"

I replied candidly, "No, I certainly don't."

Then dramatically to me, and with the same expression as I had noted on all my so-called friends' faces, "I can do *nothing* for you—you a Christian and an active servant of God, who deliberately reject the Gospel."

Can I describe the feeling on leaving that church? I felt I had left several tons of mental and emotional opium behind. Every Christian scowl that met me in the porch helped further to clear my vision. The whispers and crafty glances from many an avowed friend told me the truth about religion—that it was a mental dope of the vilest kind.

But I was free—I had the greatest of all gifts—an open, progressive mind, ready to face every fact free of traditional drags and chimeras. And, after the manner

of the "testifying Salvationist," I can say I want nothing better and can serve no grander master than Truth, follow no finer banner than that of suffering Humanity.

But I shall always remember the blind organist friend, who, when he heard of my sudden unbelief, exclaimed: "The wretch, the scoundrel, he never could have been saved, he will come to the gutter, a fit place for doubters."

And this was the man whose blindness and sweet voice evoked my pity—so much that I maintained him for ten weeks!

Thank the stars I am a Freethinker!

E. P.

Freethought in South Wales.

(June 27—July 3)

THE third week in Wales has been even more successful than the others. The audiences have been on a colossal scale, the excitement has been intense.

On the Tuesday I should have spoken upon the usual pitch in Ferndale, but two policemen informed me a local resident had objected. Upon enquiry I learned this gentleman did not object to the Salvation Army on the same pitch, but that, as a fat policeman seriously informed me, was "because they are doing the people some good." The altercation collected a crowd and when ordered to move I invited the crowd to follow me to the Common. It did so and we picked up hundreds en route, until at length, seated upon the grass, quite 1,000 were gathered to hear the message. An exciting but quite orderly meeting followed, and at the end the audience literally fought to buy our literature, until my stock was exhausted; I returned to Ferndale on Saturday evening and gathered a crowd almost twice as big as before. A local clergyman—quite the biggest ass I have yet met—continually interrupted after failing to get his backers to drown my voice in song, until even the crowd rebelled and howled at him to stop it. When my address was over I invited him to have ten minutes. I dealt faithfully with his very lame contribution. This gentleman, who had won an M.A., tried his luck for ten minutes without advancing his cause very materially. I said the requisite words in reply and the outcome was his acceptance of our challenge to a public debate which will be fixed up later. Nearly two pounds' worth of literature was sold and a Branch was formed, and judging by the numerous applications for forms it should be an extremely successful one.

On the Thursday I addressed a most attentive meeting at Abercynon, a quiet little village where Freethought is little known. Interest and appreciation was displayed by a good audience and I was invited to return. We shall get a Branch here with a little more support. A good supply of leaflets was distributed and many books and pamphlets sold.

The other four meetings of the week were held at Pontypridd. Large crowds assembled on the Common and increased in numbers as the week progressed. It had been asked, seriously: "Whom shall we believe in: Lloyd George or God Almighty?" I replied: "Put your trust in neither God *nor* the Devil, but trust yourselves." On the second evening, however, about a score of banners, upon which were inscribed texts, most of them dealing with my future home in a place devoted to heat, surrounded the meeting. Upon one I noticed in large letters, "Jesus Christ or George Whitehead, which: choose now!" The Premier has been evidently abandoned as a candidate for the heavy-weight championship of the Universe and I am now regarded by Wales as the most formidable defender of mundane claims against the heavenly attack. I hereby thank Welsh Nonconformity for its timely recognition of my influence! In becoming modesty let me assure them I will try to deserve it!

The two Sunday meetings at Pontypridd beggar description. A Doctor of Theology behaved like a hooligan, several shillings' worth of literature was stolen and flung into the crowd by his supporters, but audiences composed of many thousands of people for the most part expressed disappointment of these tactics and heard our message with appreciation, which upon my next visit will deepen into conversion. And the next meetings in Pontypridd will need no advertising! After the evening meeting thousands followed me to the station without, however, attempting to molest me. Most of them were quite appreciative.

Over six pounds' worth of literature was sold during the week besides the supply that was stolen.

Altogether, my three weeks in Wales has been the most strenuous, exciting, and successful of my platform experience. And still another man in Pontypridd wishes to debate.

GEORGE WHITEHEAD.

Correspondence.

ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND CHRISTIANITY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Never did Christ speak a truer word than when he said, "I came not to bring peace into the world, but a sword." It is nearly two thousand years since the Christian religion was founded, and the history of the nations professing it is one of warfare, bloodshed, and violence. Christianity does not lend itself to ideals of nationality, empire, and conquest. What a hypocritical farce and humbug it is for a nation to profess Christianity and not to practise it. It is like a man professing teetotalism and wearing the blue ribbon while he drinks wines, beers, and spirits.

If Christianity has brought the nations professing it to no better pass than the recent great war, the present civil war, and industrial strife, there is not much to be said for Christianity, and it is time it were relegated to the scrap heap, and some reasonable and natural religion such as sun-worship put in its place.

England and Ireland are professedly Christian nations, but neither of them is practising the precepts and principles of Christianity, or behaving in a Christ-like manner one towards the other. Irish Christians are shooting English Christians and burning homes and shops and public buildings, and English Christians are retaliating by shooting and hanging Irish Christians, and burning their homes and carrying out reprisals on men, women, children and unborn babes.

If Christ could appear in the House of Commons to-day, it is easy to imagine what counsel he would give as to reprisals, but his counsel would not be listened to; he would be told to mind his own business and not to interfere in politics. Not a Member of the House, in fact, would believe him to be Christ, whether he appeared in his ancient Eastern garb or in the top hat and frock coat of present day conventionality; he would be considered some escaped lunatic and would be taken in charge by the police and turned out.

And so these Christians go on shooting and hanging each other, and burning each other's homes, under the cloak of Christianity. Well might Jews, Mahomedans, Buddhists, Hindus and "Heathens" look on and say, ironically—"See how these Christians love one another!"

A. W. MALCOLMSON.

PATHOLOGICAL PIETY.

SIR,—In the remote place where I am writing, several hundred miles north of the Arctic Circle—where the shining of the sun at midnight, well above the horizon is a commonplace—I am unusually interested in the excellent article in the *Freethinker* of June 5, entitled "Pathological Piety"; the article is of great value, and I venture to believe that your readers will value a direct proof, from my own personal experience, that this awful self-torture is by no means merely an ancient or bygone act of religious devotion; I think it is of sufficient value to make this really sickening truth known, to write this letter, for, as I say, my knowledge is absolute, accurate, and beyond question. I mention two cases.

First, in the great Uspenski cathedral in the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, on May 22, 1912, English date, I saw an elderly woman in religious ecstasy repeatedly throw herself on the pavement of the cathedral, and beat her head on it, shrieking and screaming the religious exercises prevailing at the time; a small number of the congregation surrounded the woman, forming a sort of barrier, looking on with active but not excited interest, nor did they lend any aid or influence in the way of quietening or calming the woman; their influence was plainly in the other direction, they encouraged her.

The second case was of a much more pronounced and unequivocal character; it was at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in Jerusalem, where I have made such a careful and thorough study of the antics of Christians, that I have actually made twelve distinct visits there in twelve different years, sometimes remaining there for weeks at a time for that purpose, going all the way from America each time.

What I narrate occurred about March, 1908, it was just in front of the Calvary chapel (the "Mount Calvary" of the Bible). A long-haired devotee, rather crazy looking, was fiercely tearing the garments that covered his chest, and was violently drawing a knife across his ribs. He had a wild, agonized expression, about what one would expect to see under the circumstances, and sufficient blood was drawn to make a distinct pool at his feet; perhaps sixty priests, monks, and devotees surrounded him, and not only did not discourage him, but very actively encouraged him by gesture, word and mumbled prayer. I may say, that such events do not seem to be very common in Jerusalem at present, although the one I narrate caused really no excitement. I mentioned it that same evening to several of my Christian acquaintances in Jerusalem, and their replies all showed it to be a "common-place." One reply shows the attitude of all: "Oh, yes! one of those crazy devotees!"

But I noted, and ask your readers to again note, that no evidence whatever showed the devotee to be any crazier than those who surrounded him, except a wholesome regard for the integrity of their own skins. No act, or word, showed any disapproval of the devotees conduct, nor any sympathy or pity for his suffering. Their attitude, I translate—and I studied this matter with the greatest care—to have said: "Keep on, brother, good man, God sees, and will reward; let not transient pain prevent your beautiful act of faith."

PHILIP G. PEABODY.

THE W. H. HUNT AFFAIR.

SIR,—I have read with interest your various recent comments on the calamity which befel Mr. Hunt through supporting an advertisement which appeared in these columns. Mr. Hunt lost not only his employment but his home. To get a dwelling place at all he has had to buy a house, and every penny of the savings of years has vanished. He has an invalid wife and seven children. Every wage-earner of the family is unemployed at present, and Mr. Hunt has no prospect whatever of employment for himself. He and his are faced with literal destitution, and it seems only right that we, his fellow Freethinkers, should show our sincere sympathy in some tangible, practical form. Mr. Hunt is a stranger to me, but, as all his personal friends have had their incomes stopped by the labour crisis, I propose taking it upon myself to raise a subscription amongst *Freethinker* readers for Mr. Hunt's benefit. The amount to be aimed at should preferably be a sufficient sum to start him in business, but, failing this, we can surely amongst us find enough to keep him going until some business reader of the *Freethinker* can offer him suitable service. The chance of securing a servant of his proved integrity and mental capacity, with the additional recommendation of being a Freethinker, is an opportunity not often available.

If you, Sir, will permit publication of this appeal, I shall myself take charge of donations to the W. H. Hunt Sympathy Fund at this address, and will send acknowledgments to every contribution to each individual subscriber. I shall also be delighted to put into touch with Mr. Hunt any gentleman wishing to offer him employment. I open the Fund with a personal contribution of one sovereign, regretting that in present circumstances it cannot be more, and hoping that at least twenty amongst us will be found able and willing to give twenty times as much, individually. All ought to give what they can, and the smallest sum will be as thankfully accepted as the greatest. I specially appeal to every individual Branch Secretary to bring this Fund to the notice of their members. Collective donations would be most convenient, and I suggest that collections be made at all Meetings and Lectures, both outdoor and indoor.

D. MACCONNELL.
New Street, Bakewell.

"THE UNDERWORLD."

SIR,—When I read in J. Effel's reply that he was an author, a well trained heavy-weight, a ring-craft expert and a man of dignified intelligence to boot, I was forcefully reminded of Charles Dickens' "Josiah Bounderby, of Coketown." I was also amazed, unconvinced, yet all attention to see if I could find any reason to alter my first impressions. But I was disappointed. He had even mistaken my honesty for "swank," and quibbled over such a trifle as Walsh, which ought to have been written Welsh, instead of admitting that he had made the mistake of *generalizing* when he ought to have *particularized* in his attempt to deal with the *Underworld*.

However, he is too disdainful to discuss the matter further, and I am glad, for the man who can love abuse—when thrown at others—and at the same time threaten to put me "through it" for having dared to throw abuse at him, is of little importance. And here, so far as I am concerned, J. Effel, author, well trained heavy-weight, etc., and I, must part company. A. LANGLEY.

[Several letters are held over till next week.—Editor.]

Obituary.

New Manchester Branch.—It is with deep regret I have to record the death of Mrs. Mary Ramsden, of 32 Chilworth Street, Rusholme, Manchester, which occurred on June 29 after a serious illness. Deceased was in her 70th year and had been a staunch supporter of the old Branch for many years. She became acquainted with Freethought in Sydney, Australia, over 38 years ago, where she heard Mr. Charles Bright speak on several occasions. The body was laid to rest on Saturday afternoon, July 2, in Hyde Road Cemetery, where Mr. F. E. Monks, the Branch President, read a Secular Burial Service.—HAROLD I. BAYFORD.

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 post card.

LONDON.

INDOOR.

METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Johnson's Dancing Academy, 241 Marylebone Road, near Edgware Road): 7.30, Debate: "Communism," Affirmative, Councillor Isaacs, Negative, Mr. Yeates.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C. 2): 11, S. K. Ratcliffe, "Plain Facts About Prohibition."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.15, Mr. A. D. McLaren, "Freethought, Destructive and Constructive."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Regent's Park): 6, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, A Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15 and 6.15, Mr. J. B. Johnson, Lectures.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

LEEDS BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Square, Leeds): 8, Mr. George Whitehead, A Lecture.

BOOTS AND SHOES.—Gentlemen, we strongly recommend to you for high days and holidays our 241X Boot. Really high grade in workmanship and material and a smart model, in sizes and half sizes, and the price is only 23/6. Ladies, for a smart Shoe at a moderate figure, try our No. 511 Glacé Gibson, with Patent Toecap and Cable Stitched Welt, at 20/-, in sizes and half sizes. A Shoe we have sold for years, and which has made us many customers. It is a comfortable fitting Shoe for any ordinary foot, but for those requiring extra width our No. 34 Shoe, at 24/-, is unexcelled for ease combined with smart appearance. Unsuitable goods exchanged, or money refunded. Cash to accompany orders. Postage is free.—MACCONNELL AND MABE, New Street, Bakewell.

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