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Views and Opinions.

Atheism and Medicine.

Several centuries ago there was a saying current that where three doctors were one could find two Atheists. If the saying was not arithmetically correct, there was enough truth in it to justify its existence. For historically and actually the medical profession carried with it a prejudice against Christianity. It was a profession which the Church had discouraged, except so far as it was in the hands, or under the control of, priests, and in the case of surgery it had deliberately forbidden its practice. The surgeon was one who, as one of the great Christian fathers said, inhumanly pried into the mysteries of the body, and to disturb a mystery has always been repugnant to the genuinely religious mind. Moreover, the medical profession carried with it other suggestions of heresy or disbelief. It was the Mohammedan world which gave Christian Europe its first glimpse of scientific medicine; for several centuries the only doctors of repute were Jews, the study of surgery and medicine went some distance towards training the mind in habits of exact thinking, and familiarized it with the principle of causation. And at a time when Christianity was not the amorphous thing that it now is, and Christians were in not quite such a mental fog as to what their religion was as they now are, all the above circumstances made for Freethinking among medical men. Hence the saying, Out of three doctors two Atheists. Perhaps it was not always exactly true, but one would like to pay the medical profession the compliment of believing it to be so.

* * *

Advice to Beginners.

It was probably to remove what he considered a slur on the profession that Sir Thomas Browne, in the middle of the seventeenth century, enriched English literature with his famous *Religio Medici*. It was a fine contribution to letters, if not to theology, and since then there have been many medical men who have tried their hands at the same kind of apology, with no more success than had Browne, but without giving their readers cause to thank them for what they have written. The latest of these attempts to rescue medical men from the charge of Freethinking—at least so far as one section of the book is concerned—occurs in a work on *Medical Conduct and Practice* by

Dr. W. G. A. Robertson, a man, one gathers from his list of appointments and degrees, of some eminence in his profession. The book is intended as a guide to young medical men just starting practice, and is chiefly concerned with the art of getting on. It contains a great deal of commonplace advice, which one might think a man of ordinary intelligence would scarcely need, and there is a section on religion, also governed, apparently, by the same consideration. Dr. Robertson is, I assume, a religious man, although one can never be quite sure, for where caution in expressing opinions is urged, one can never be quite certain as to how far those who urge it are themselves practising their own precept. That is something which the religious man seldom appreciates. And yet it is elementary in its simplicity. If one is to keep one's opinions to oneself for fear of offending others, how can one be certain that he is really hearing the truth concerning anyone's belief? The consequence of the advice, if carried generally into practice, would be universal dissimulation and distrust. It is placing hypocrisy on a platform of principle. If a man tells me that if I do not believe in religion I ought to keep my opinions to myself, how can I be certain that he is not himself acting on the same principle?

* * *

The Art of Getting On.

Dr. Robertson says it is a "curious fact" that a large proportion of medical students begin to treat their early religious beliefs lightly during their first years of study.

This change in their mental attitude is very largely due to their superficial study of biology, and to the idea that the wonderful and progressive rise in plants and animals from simple structure and function to those of complicated structure and function is in conflict with Biblical truth. They imagine that this so-called evolution upsets revealed religion and that the materialistic attitude is the only logical form of thought.

Later, he says, when they are brought into contact with disease and death this phase passes off to a large extent. We may, therefore, take it—

as true that medical men on the whole are a religious body of men. You do not find many Atheists amongst those who are brought frequently into contact with persons at the crises of their lives. Materialists are found amongst those who evolve systems of social amelioration in the privacy of their studies and then proclaim them on the platforms of Freethinkers.

Well, it is quite evident from this that in Dr. Robertson's opinion the knowledge that young medical men acquire serves to weaken their attachment to religion—we may pass over the stupidities about so-called evolution and biblical truth—but that afterwards, when they come into close contact with life, their avowal of Freethinking opinions weakens. Why? Dr. Robertson would probably reply, because they reach a more healthy, and a saner state of mind. Maybe; but, on the other hand, it may be for other reasons. Take, for instance, the following. The young medical man is informed, "On entering the sick room, you ought to shake hands with the patient

and with any other relative who may be introduced to you. It is sufficient to bow to the nurse, but very injudicious to take no notice of her, as well as being very impolite; to make a good impression on her may pave the way to your acquisition of future patients, as she often has very great influence." So, the reason why you need not shake hands with the nurse, but must with every relative is solely a question of securing customers in the future. That kind of calculation is quite characteristic of the religious type of mind, and it may account for the fact that a great many medical men, as also others who are not medical men, prefer to keep their opinions on religion to themselves, and to lead people to believe that they accept the barbarous ideas that survive in the current religion. It is not a very lofty attitude, but it pays. And to the Christian ethic of profit and loss that is everything.

* * *

Church and Character.

There is much the same "worldly" note running through all Dr. Robertson's advice on religious matters, and the same absence of recognition that a man owes a certain duty to himself in intellectual matters whether he believes in religion or not. We are told that in most villages the clergyman and the doctor are looked up to as the two leading men, and the doctor should therefore associate himself with the clergyman as much as possible and attend "God's House" as frequently as possible. And then follows the sanctimoniously impertinent remark, "No man was ever the worse for attending church, and beware of the man who says that he is as good as any church-goer, though he never enters a church door. He may be so, but the odds are all against him." But suppose the doctor happens to be sufficiently well-informed to understand the real nature of Christianity and does not believe it to be true! What then? In that case we suppose Dr. Robertson would bring in his general counsel that a doctor must treat his patients'—or possible patients'—opinions with "respect," which means in practice that he must keep his own opinions in abeyance, and practise a dissimulation which to one who does not believe in "our holy services" is far worse than shaking hands with a nurse or losing patients. And does Dr. Robertson seriously think that the level of conduct achieved by the average church-goer is of so lofty a kind as to set him definitely above the non-church-goer? It is almost impossible to think that Dr. Robertson knows so little of life, or that his powers of observation are of so poor a character as to really believe this. I cannot pass criticism on Dr. Robertson's abilities as a medical man, but he is obviously quite unfitted to lecture men on the conduct of life—except in the art of acquiring business.

* * *

Parents and Children.

We find another illuminating piece of advice as to the bringing up of children:—

Then as to the bringing up of your children. Even if you have no religious convictions yourself, never on any account allow the want of them to influence your conduct towards your offspring. Do not deny them the advantage of religious training and precept. Should your children at maturer age follow your example, you will at least have less on your conscience, in that you did not prevent them knowing about God. What if you were wrong, that Christianity were true! What would your feelings be then to have defrauded your children of what should be common—happiness in this life and assurance for the next.

Really, it is a long while since I read, from an educated man who was not a clergyman, advice that was so hopelessly wrong, so positively immoral, or that so clearly disclosed the intellectual weakness of Christianity. A man who does not believe in Christianity himself is to hide his opinions from his children, to play the part of

a hypocrite and a liar towards them, to teach them what he believes to be a lie, because he may be wrong. But the "maybe" clearly cuts both ways. The Christian also may be wrong. And so the net value of the advice is that you must teach your children something that may be wrong—and which you believe to be wrong—in order to prevent their learning something which may be right, and which you believe to be right. As one who does not believe in "our holy services" I venture to opine that it is the first duty of a man to have his children taught what he believes to be true, and to see that they accept it because they believe it to be true, and to hold it no longer than they believe it to be true. And I say very definitely that children who, so long as they are trained on that principle, are brought up believing in something that their after years prove to be altogether wrong, will grow up better men and women than if they had been taught, on the contrary principle, the most demonstrable of truths. It is a pity that Dr. Robertson has not, apparently, a working acquaintance with the value of scientific method as an instrument of mental culture.

How Not To Do It. * * *

I quite agree with Dr. Robertson that it is to the financial interest of medical men to keep their dissent from the current creed to themselves. But I am pleased to say that I know many medical men up and down the country who do not do so. Not being Christians they do place some value upon mental integrity, and are not without that degree of self-respect which prevents their giving even covert support to what they believe to be a lie. There are many Freethinkers in the medical profession, and a large proportion of them near the top of the professional tree. That all of them do not publicly voice their Freethought is to be regretted, but for that dissimulation Christianity is responsible. That religion has always preferred a hypocrite to a brave, truth speaking man, and it has done its best to encourage the prevalence of the former at the expense of the latter. The Churches have always said to the people, "If you believe our religion to be a lie, we shall not mind it so much if you don't say so. We can tolerate an unbeliever who is also a liar, but we will not have one who is determined to speak the truth." Perhaps it thought that in a world of believers such a man would lead too lonely an existence. And the joke of it all is that in the teeth of Dr. Robertson's advice one cannot be sure that I am criticizing a Christian. He may not believe in Christianity at all. He may be only practising what he preaches. He may be professing Christianity because he wants to be on the safe side. He may be teaching his children what he believes to be false because he does not want to stand in the way of their getting on. That is the worst of advice such as that given by Dr. Robertson. It robs human intercourse of all security, just as it divests life of its finest quality.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Reader, the heaven-inspired melodious Singer; loftiest Serene Highness; nay thy own amber-locked, snow-and-rosebloom Maiden, worthy to glide sylphlike almost on air, whom thou lovest, worshippest as a divine Presence, which, indeed, symbolically taken, she is—has descended like thyself, from the same hair-mantled, flint-hurling, Aboriginal Anthropophagus! Out of the eater cometh forth meat; out of the strong cometh forth sweetness. What changes are wrought, not by Time, yet in Time! For not Mankind only, but all that Mankind does or beholds, is in continual growth, re-gensis, and self-perfecting vitality.—*Carlyle*.

A true religion, concerning all men in all times and in all places, should of necessity be eternal, universal, and evident. Not one has these three characteristics. Thus they are thrice proven false.—*Diderot*.

The Abandonment of God's Omnipotence.

OMNIPOTENCE, according to the dictionaries, means "unlimited and universal power, especially infinite power as a Divine attribute; almightiness; hence a being of unlimited power; God; strictly applicable to God only." That is a literally accurate definition. The theologians assure us that it is wrong to ascribe to God any predicated characteristic of finite beings; and without a doubt such a doctrine is thoroughly Biblical. In the Old Testament Jehovah is represented as claiming almightiness, and it was as God almighty that his people worshipped him. In the Book of Daniel (iv. 34, 35) we learn that, in comparison with him, "all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing," for "he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" In Rev. (i. 8) he is made to describe himself as "the Alpha and the Omega, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty." Such is the orthodox dogma promulgated by the Church in all ages. The Bible states it without the slightest qualification; but the theologians of later times, realizing its fundamental unbelievability, introduce subtle limitations. Aquinas, the greatest of the schoolmen, says that "Omnipotence is the power to do whatever does not involve a contradiction." Clearly, there are things which God cannot do; but according to that erudite logician, we should never say "God cannot do it," but "It cannot be done." Naturally, therefore, God cannot do that which in the nature of things is impossible. His power is limited, we are told, by his own ordinances and gifts. He cannot prevent a man from doing wrong, or compel him to be good, because he has conferred upon him the priceless but perilous gift of freedom. Without this boon of freedom man could never have become a person, with personal privileges and responsibilities; he would have been a blind, unmoral automaton. This is a theological incongruity of the worst kind. The following is Principal Garvie's version of it:—

Freedom involves the possibility of evil as well as good. The will that chooses trust can also choose distrust. The heart that loves can also hate. Holiness is by the rejection of sin. How could there be any moral and religious communion of God and man without freedom, and how freedom without the possibility of sin? Had God excluded the possibility of sin in man's freedom in the making of the world, even his omnipotence could not have given any moral or religious value to man, and through him to the world. Which is better: a world without sin because without personality, or a world with sin in which personal relations of man to God are possible? Can there be any doubt about the answer from any standpoint in which moral and religious values are recognized at all? And it is only from such a standpoint that sin is a problem at all (*Handbook of Christian Apologetics*, pp. 149-150).

A more fallacious reasoning never appeared in print. Does the Principal deny personality to God? If not, is he not bound to admit that personality carries with it freedom, and that there is no freedom without the possibility of sin? Does not the argument about man and his personality apply equally to God and his personality? If God is a free personality there must inhere in him the possibility of sin. And yet all the theologians are agreed in predicting impeccability of the Divine Being. Surely this is an illogical limitation of omnipotence.

Let us now turn to the practical aspect of our subject. It is in the practical realm that theology displays the illogicality and absurdity of its conclusions. Goodness is a Divine attribute, as well as omnipotence.

It is affirmed by orthodox believers that God is infinitely good, as well as infinitely powerful. The problem by which such disciples are confronted is, how to account for the atrociously bad conditions of life in the world on the assumption that God is wise, good, and powerful. This is the most serious and perplexing question that the theologian is called upon to face, and he has never succeeded in satisfactorily composing it. The fact that stares us in the face continually is the existence, in a more or less triumphant form, of many evils, which darken and embitter life, and engender the spirit of despair in human hearts. If God is wise and good and omnipotent, why are they permitted to prevail? John Stuart Mill, in his well-known essay on Theism denies the omnipotence, but faintly holds on to the goodness, but is quite certain that either the one or the other, and possibly both, must be surrendered. Commenting on this Principal Garvie observes:—

The Christian faith maintains both. The Christian would have no assurance of salvation did he not believe in God's goodness; and he could not maintain the certainty of his salvation had he any doubts of God's power (*Ibid.*, p. 145).

But the Principal omits to refer at all to the most awkward factors in the problem. Speaking of God as the supreme Contriver Mill says:—

We are not even compelled to suppose that the contrivances were always the best possible. If we venture to judge them as we judge the works of human artificers, we find abundant defects. The human body, for example, is one of the most striking instances of artful and ingenious contrivance which Nature offers, but we may well ask whether so complicated a machine could not have been made to last longer, and not to get so easily and frequently out of order. We may ask why the human race should have been so constituted as to grovel in wretchedness and degradation for countless ages before a small portion of it was enabled to lift itself into the very imperfect state of intelligence, goodness, and happiness which we enjoy (*Three Essays on Religion*, pp. 181-2).

The Essay on Theism, the last of the three, was written between 1868 and 1870, that is, between nine and eleven years after the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. Now, it is well-known that in this Essay Mill discusses all the usual arguments of natural theology for the Divine existence, and pronounces them futile; but he was doubtful as to the cogency of the argument from design. Principal Garvie ignores this fact, and allows his readers to infer that to the distinguished Essayist the argument was final, whereas he regarded it as possessing provisional value only, on the ground that as yet it had not been disproved, but in the sure conviction that if science accepted Darwin's theory of descent as sane and sound Theism would be wholly discredited. The rational assumption is that if Mill had lived long enough to witness the magnificent triumph of Darwinism he would have become as convinced and enthusiastic an Atheist as Bradlaugh or Foote.

With very few illustrious exceptions the theologians are all advocates of the limitations of omnipotence. The Rev. Bernard J. Snell, minister of the Brixton Independent Church, recently preached an exceedingly vivacious sermon in which he waxed enthusiastically self-assertive in emotional defence of human Free-willism as the only factor in the Universe that limits God's power and enables man, if he feels inclined, to defy his Maker to his everlasting face. On this point Mr. Snell is quite right, but his argument is rotten to the core. Admitting that in all natural processes a power is at work which is to us indistinguishable from omnipotence, he says of the Creator:—

He has made us living souls, free-agents, endowed with power as none other of his creatures are—to

think, to will, to love. Almightyness risked that. He has made us of one substance with himself. That means that unlike the rest of his creation we are not amenable to coercion, only to persuasion. No tyrannous threats of omnipotence can bludgeon us into obedience, for we are spirits. We can say to God himself, "No." "Doubtless, God could extinguish us. Yes, but the Creator, to use that wonderful phrase of Shakespeare's, and put into the lips of Malvolio, 'the Creator thinks nobly of the soul.' Doubtless, God could extinguish me, but he cannot come into my soul without my leave."

That is the height of dogmatism, unsupported by a single scrap of evidence. What does Mr. Snell know about the substance of Deity, and by what authority does he assert that we are made of the same substance? Assuming that God exists and is a substantial being, does it not inevitably follow that if he made us of one substance with himself we would be, like himself, incapable of committing crime or sin, or of being tyrannized over by evil forces? It is an unforgivable insult to God, if God there be, to represent him as the Creator of the Devil, and of beings in his own image and after his likeness, whose ruin the Devil brought about. Such a theory, invented in order to exonerate the Creator from the charge of being the author of evil, in reality makes the charge all the more horribly true. Does it not stand to reason that a healthy child, born of good and healthy parents, does not need to be coerced to a noble way of life? He takes to it naturally, and it never occurs to him to pursue the opposite way. But God begets children and they all go astray. The first man sins and falls, and the whole race sins and falls in him.

We vehemently repudiate such a humiliating and degrading theory of man's origin. We disbelieve in both the Creator and the created. We look upon man as the most complex and refined of all the animals. He has ascended from below, not descended from above. He is an animal run to brains, and though moods of tiger and of ape still survive in him, by reason of his superior mentality, he has the command of lofty ideas which blossom into governing and inspiring ideals. We are a slowly rising, not a fallen race. Mr. Snell speaks of God's supreme purpose, his purpose of grace, that runs through creation; but he forgets that the argument from design has completely broken down. Science sees signs of purpose for the first time in human beings whose growing intelligence is revealing to them new paths of life, and whose evolving social instinct is yielding them increasingly the rich joy of social service.

J. T. LLOYD.

A Pioneer Pilgrim's Progress.

As if day had cloven the skies
At dreaming midnight o'er the western wave,
Men started, staggering with a glad surprise,
Under the lightning of thine unfamiliar eyes.
—Shelley, "Ode to Liberty."

OVER thirty years ago there appeared a book of poetry called *Towards Democracy*, which placed its author definitely among the forces of progress. It was the voice of a new era. Young and enthusiastic men treasured the volume, and older men looked eagerly for other works from the same wise pen. Edward Carpenter, the author, was then in the very prime of life. He is seventy-seven years old now, and his significance in modern literature and thought is enormous. In the autumn of his days came a volume of autobiography, *My Days and Dreams*, which told in beautiful language the life-story of a very remarkable man, of noble simplicity and heroic modesty.

This book tells the story of a veritable pilgrim's progress, and is romantic in the extreme. Born at Brighton, of middle-class parents of ample means,

Carpenter was educated at Cambridge University, becoming tenth Wrangler and a Fellow of his college. The Established Church attracted him, and he took orders under the famous Frederick Denison Maurice, the friend of Tennyson, and one of the most broad-minded priests who ever wore a cassock, but even he could not keep Carpenter in the Church. For the young curate was reading other things than the Prayer Book and the *Christian Year*. He was absorbing Shelley's passionate lyrics of Liberty, and soon he was to become a disciple of Walt Whitman. In such company the young priest was bound to look beyond the narrow confines of the Church and the moment, and to scan far horizons and the unalterable stars.

Such a fine spirit as that of Edward Carpenter's was bound to rebel at being "cribb'd, cabin'd, and confin'd," within a Church which has ever regarded Progress with jealous eyes. The horrors of slavery, the brutal treatment of prisoners, and other inhuman outrages, were never denounced by the clergy until laymen cried shame upon them. The bishops almost invariably voted in the House of Lords against reforms. They voted against the Bill for abolishing the death penalty for stealing property of the value of five shillings. The Roman Catholic Disabilities and the Jewish Disabilities Repeal Bills met with their determined opposition. They resisted the motion for the admission of Nonconformists to the Universities, and also the rights of Dissenters to bury their own dead in their own manner. Owing to the obstinacy of the bishops the United Kingdom remained for very many years the one civilized State where marriage with a deceased wife's sister was illegal, and Englishmen and Scotsmen were long refused the same freedom as their kinsmen across the seas. What sixteen centuries of the rule of the bishops had done for the people of England has been told in unforgettable language by Joseph Arch, the first agricultural labourer who became a member of Parliament:—

First up walked the squire to the communion rails; the farmers went up next; then up went the tradesmen, the shopkeepers, the wheelwright and the blacksmith, and then, the very last of all, went the poor agricultural labourers. They walked up by themselves, nobody else knelt with them; it was as if they were unclean—and at that sight the iron entered into my heart and remained fast embedded there. I said to myself, "If that's what goes on—never for me!"

In much the same spirit of righteous indignation young Carpenter abandoned the Church, and became a University Extension Lecturer, and wrote *Towards Democracy*, in which he brought something of the spacious spirit of Whitman into English literature. "If I am not level with the lowest, I am nothing," he said humbly and sincerely. Nor was it an idle boast, for he actually gave away the greater part of the fortune he had inherited from his father, and during the succeeding thirty years he was one of the people. He worked with labourers, mechanics, and other toilers, and took to open-air speaking, a trying and thankless task for a cultured and sensitive man. He even tried to make a living out of his garden, and carried his own produce to market and stood beside his own stall to sell it. He made sandals, and in the intervals of a busy career he wrote beautiful books.

Carpenter's real and lasting influence is in his books, for he is a modern of the moderns, and the pioneer of many freedoms. He is so far ahead of the times that he is still outside the region of extensive popularity, and his truly amazing power of detachment from his own age is only saved from disaster by his wholehearted faith in the future of humanity.

Critics profess to regard Carpenter as a mere disciple of Whitman. It is true that he entered the literary arena behind the great American, but the differences between the two men are very striking.

Whitman was reared in a republic, and Carpenter in a monarchy. The American served with the army in a long and terrible war, and the Englishman spent years as a curate. Whitman's psychological roots were in the United States, and Carpenter's in Cornwall. The author of *Leaves of Grass* was a self-educated man, and the writer of *England's Ideal* was a brilliant University scholar. Whitman was no great traveller, but Carpenter has visited the principal countries of the world. As we look closely at these two men, we realize more clearly their moral and intellectual differences.

Humanitarian, idealist, dreamer, if you will, Carpenter commands respect. His ideals are noble. He believes that when men and women are equally free to follow their best impulses; when idleness and vicious luxury on the one hand, and oppressive labour and the dread of starvation on the other, are alike unknown; when the standard of opinion is set by the wisest and best among us, then Democracy will come into its heritage.

Carpenter has travelled much, but his greatest journey has been from that time when, as a young man, he preached in a surplice, and dallied at tea-parties, until to-day when he is the austere apostle of democracy. We can but admire the high standard of his conduct, and the unselfishness of his life. At a time when commercialism is rampant, his career is an exception so rare as to be scarcely credible. In an age of compromise Edward Carpenter has ever remained faithful to his principles; in an age of ostentation and hypocrisy he has cared only for simplicity.

MIMNERMUS.

Shaker Celibacy and Religion.

II.

(Continued from page 583.)

FIRE with the enthusiasm of the new light she had received, Ann Lee sallied forth into the street to "witness for the truth." She became a notorious character on the streets, the butt of rough lads and lassies of her native town, until the prosy old constable seized her as a nuisance and the parish magistrate committed her to jail.

As indicating the intensity of her erotic conflict and its morbid agonies, we may quote her own story of her own baptism into the new faith. Of this Ann Lee said of her followers¹:—

I love the day when I first received the Gospel. I call it my birthday. I cried to God, without intermission, for three days and three nights, that He would give true desires. And when I received a gift of God [was this an "innocent" psychic orgasm?] I did not go away and forget it, and travel no further; but I stood faithful, day and night, warring against all sin, and praying to God for deliverance from the very nature of sin. And other persons need not expect to find power over sin without the same labour and travail of soul.

I felt such a sense of my sins that I was willing to confess them before the whole world. I confessed my sins to my elders, one by one, and repented of them in the same manner. [In the light of later evidence this need for repetition seems to be the product of exhibitionism.] When my elders reproved me, I felt determined not to be reproved for the same thing, but to labour to overcome the evil for myself.

Of course for such persons there is but one great evil, one sin, namely, sexual desire and its gratification. Not having overcome her passions there was frequent need for renewed resolutions. Having a psychologic inhibition against normal gratification, she must make

a virtue of her deprivation, which will be commensurate with the sorrows thereof.

Soon after I set out to travel in the way of God, I laboured a-nights in the work of God. Sometimes I went to bed and slept; but in the morning, if I could not feel that sense of the work of God that I did before I slept, I would labour all night. This I did many nights, and in daytime I put my hands to work, and my heart to God; and when I felt weary and in need of rest, I laboured for the power of God, and the refreshing operations thereof would release me, so that I felt able to go to my work again.

A psychologic orgasmic explosion relieves the tension just as the procreation relieves a distressing repression. This relief was as necessary to the organism as its "spiritual" interpretation was necessary to neutralize the feeling of guilt and of shame.

Many times, when I was about my work, I have felt my soul overwhelmed with sorrow. [The erotic conflict with its reproachful repression and indulgence and with their resultant feeling of inferiority.] I used to work as long as I could keep it concealed, and then would go out of sight lest any one should pity me with that pity which was not of God. In my travail and tribulation my sufferings were so great that my flesh consumed upon my bones, bloody sweat pressed through the pores of my skin, and I became as helpless as an infant. [These passages indicate the extreme morbidity of her sexuomoralistic conflict.] And when I was brought through [by a psychological orgasm] and born into the spiritual kingdom, I was like an infant just born into the natural world. They see colours and objects but they do not know what they see. It was so with me; but before I was twenty-four hours old, I saw and knew what I saw.

Is not this once again the description of a very depressing erotic suppression followed by an explosion, a psychological orgasm? Or is it really spiritual enjoyment of the superhuman?

This spiritual struggle was a long drawn combat in the realm of the inferiority-superiority conflict which nearly always accompanies shameful sexual emotions and indulgences. It kept her enmeshed, body and soul, for nine years, before a crisis was reached and a satisfactory neutralizer found for her guilt and her shame. Her first jail experience precipitated the solution to her conflicting mental state. In the words of her followers:—

the ultimate fruit of the labour and suffering of soul that Ann passed through was to purify and fitly prepare her for becoming a temple in whom the same Christ Spirit that had made a first appearance to Jesus at his baptism by John in the Jordan (the river of Judgment), at which time he received the anointing which constituted him Jesus Christ, could make a second appearing.

Some sort of identification with the absolute is always an available refuge, a soothing though phantasmal compensation, for the victims of erotic depression and its resultant feeling of inferiority. Many if not most of hystericals avail themselves of it. I believe that all mysticism is a means of supreme exaltation, needed to neutralize a feeling of inferiority which is founded upon erotic emotional disturbances. Morbid depressions and great emotional egotism are but different aspects of the same emotional disequilibrium. At least, this is my tentative generalization based upon all the evidence that has come to me during extensive investigation. Let us return to Ann Lee.

Meanwhile—

she spent much time in earnest and incessant cries to God to show her the foundation of man's loss, what it was, and wherein it consisted; and how the way of salvation could be discovered and eventually opened to mankind in the state they were then in, and how the great work of redemption was to be accomplished.

¹ All quotations not otherwise credited are from Ann Lee's biography by Evans.

Her hallucinations, visions, ecstasies and dreams, "divine manifestations" as they were called, she promptly communicated to the little society founded by the Wardleys and this "tended greatly to enlighten the minds and strengthen the faith of the members, and to increase and confirm the testimony." Those who have the more intense conflicts tend to invent theories and a technic for acquiring compensatory experiences of superhuman affiliation and exaltation. The lesser hysterics appropriate these experiences of others to like ends, but with a fervour that is diluted because the lesser abnormality precludes the more complete and obsessing "spirituality." These lesser hysterics become mere followers and support the discoverers and their similarly afflicted apostles or priesthood. So the lesser hystericals also secure their lesser compensations by being content to shine by a reflected light. They secure salvation by proxy.

While Mother Ann was lying in Old Bailey prison, on the Irwell in Manchester, on account of her testimony against "fleshy lusts, which war against the soul," she felt a light shining upon her and Jesus Christ appeared to her in open vision, and revealed to her "the most astonishing views and divine manifestations of truth, in which she had a perfect and clear sight of the 'mystery of iniquity,' the root and foundation of all human depravity, and of the very act of transgression committed by Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden." Thus Jesus becomes the heavenly bridegroom of many, many orthodox saints.² Thus a psychological inhibition against the enjoyments of a normal sexual life with her husband would impel Ann Lee toward finding a compensation in a phantasmal lover, at once an idealized father—an elder brother—and a husband. So a psychoerotic interest in Jesus supplies sinless satisfaction and a seeming solution for the moralistic conflict.

"Thus it was made plain to her understanding how and in what manner all mankind were lost from God," states Evans in his biography of Ann Lee,³—

and that a complete cross against the lusts of generation, added to a full and explicit confession, before witnesses, of all the sins committed under its influence was the only possible effectual remedy and means of salvation; and also that absolute death [psychological inhibition] to the [normal] generative or propagative life itself (in even its most innocent, uncorrupted state) was the preliminary state to the quickening and resurrection of the hidden spiritual life of God in the soul.....

Ann Lee went to prison a meek, though noisy follower of Jane Wardley. While there she found Christ in a more intimate relationship to her than ever before; in fact, she claimed that He became one with her in form and spirit, a pretension which Jane Wardley did not quite dare to make for herself. The result was that when Ann Lee came out of prison the six or seven followers to whom she told her story lifted her to the rank of Mother, in place of the tailor's wife, the founder of the sect and former leader. Thus her spiritual ministry as Mother dates from her first prison experience. Upon her release the shaking and dancing, the singing and shouting by which the meetings of the little group of adherents obtained or manifested "the gift of the Holy Spirit," increased in fervour and fury.⁴ There was an abundance of prophesying and of speaking in unknown tongues. "From that time" (1770), states the biography,—

Mother Ann by the immediate revelation of Christ,

² C. Ida, "Heavenly Bridegrooms," introduction by Theo. Schroeder. Reprinted from *Alienist and Neurologist*, 1915 to 1917.

³ Evans, p. 128.

⁴ For a detailed description of similar manifestations in negro revival meetings, see my *Revivals, Sex, and Holy Ghost*, *J. of Abnormal Psych.*, xiv. 34-37, April-July, 1919.

bore an open testimony against all lustful gratifications, as the source and foundation of human corruption and misery. She testified in the most plain and pointed manner that no soul could follow Christ in the regeneration while living in the works of natural generation.

A so-called "spiritual" relief for repressed longing was still all right, and perhaps the very essence of regeneration.

THEODORE SCHROEDER.

(From *The New York Medical Journal*, June, 1921.)

(To be Continued.)

A Devil's Nursery.

THOUGHTFUL readers of classical history will have noted that, while the gods of Greece enchanted by their beauty, those of Rome alarmed by their terrors. Plutarch said that they were indignant if one presumed to so much as sneeze.

Worship, consequently, was a necessary precaution, an insurance against divine risks. Gradually, the gods of Rome became discredited, largely, and perhaps chiefly, by ethical considerations.

Civilized, honourable, and intelligent citizens began to view with disgust and contempt the alleged lives of the gods, and to ask themselves whether it were possible to believe in the traditional and priestly account of deities who indulged in base and criminal actions, such as any noble and high-minded man amongst themselves would be ashamed of.

In like manner it would seem that if Christians find that their religion imputes to their God a line of conduct so irrational, a policy so inequitable and shocking that every humane and honourable man would shrink from it, eventually, in their minds a revulsion will take place of such strength and energy that it will break down the habitual reverence and awe with which they have been accustomed to regard him, and they will attain to an unshakeable conviction that what is so ethically monstrous cannot possibly be, as they fondly imagined, Divine.

Point is given to the above reflections by a letter which Dr. Fort Newton, late of the City Temple, received from a former member of his congregation during the war. It is quoted in the *Atlantic Monthly* for August, and reads as follows:—

SOMEWHERE IN HELL.

July 16.....

Dear Preacher,

The luck is all on your side: you still believe in things. Good for you. It is topping if you can do it. But war is such a devil's nursery.

I got knocked over, but am up and at it again. I'm tough. They started toughening me the first day. My bayonet instructor was an ex-pug, just the man to develop one's innate chivalry. They hung out the hunting, and gave me a big send-off when we came out here to scatter the Hun's guts.

Forgive me writing so. I know you will forgive me, but who will forgive God? Not I.....not I! This war makes me hate God! I don't know whether He is the God of battles and enjoys the show, as he is said to have done long ago.....if so there are smoking holocausts enough to please Him in No Man's Land.

But, anyway, He let it happen! OMNIPOTENT! and He let it happen! OMNISCIENT! knew it in advance, and let it happen. I hate Him! You are kinder to me than God has been. Good-bye.

This poignant human document reveals in all its stark and hideous nakedness the ghastliness of war, and shows the utter revulsion of feeling which must have been shared by millions beside the writer. Like a lightning flash the conviction came that the omnipotent, omniscient deity he had been taught to believe and worship was unworthy of his trust and love.

He had let it happen! That was enough.

One, who possessing the power to prevent it, preferred to "let it happen," was worthy only of hatred and contempt.

Poor, pitiful soldier boy, obeying in silence—

Yours not to reason why,
Yours but to do and die,

whilst your inmost soul is in the grip of terrors both of mind and body. You speak truly. WAR is the Devil's nursery.

BERNARD MOORE.

Acid Drops.

The new-President of the British Association made a vigorous protest against the use of poison gas in war, and also against what he called "the prostitution of science" in utilizing its discoveries for purposes of destruction. The protest was necessary, but we are not very sanguine of it having any very great effect. There is not the least doubt but that in the war which so many of our militarists are getting ready for chemical warfare will be one of its recognized features, and it will be remembered that some time since Professor Soddy protested against the government giving a commission to scientific men to experiment in this very direction. And if war comes there will be the usual forgetfulness of the beautiful moral things said during peace time, and the same declaration that it is everybody's duty to drop every other consideration except the one obeying blindly the government that is carrying on the war. That is the way that wars are made and fought. Preparations based on ignorance are succeeded by appeals to blind fear when the preparations have brought their inevitable consequences.

Even though there were an agreement come to that chemical materials should not be used during war, we are not very sanguine that it would have any effect. Nations show a very elastic mind in repudiating and in getting round agreements when it suits their interests to do so. And even though agreements are not always broken with the straightforward cynicism with which Germany broke hers, there is not a country in the world whose history is not plentifully besprinkled with broken or repudiated agreements—either in the spirit or in the letter. And one may reasonably question whether, after all, there is a greater prostitution in using our knowledge to kill by means of poison gas than with aeroplane bombs, or torpedoes, or even with big guns. It is wholly a question of means, and it requires a rather fine ethical sense—as fine as that which protected the conscience of the mediæval Churchman against the shedding of blood by condemning the heretic to the stake—to discriminate between the ethical value of using science to kill in the one way and not in the other. The only distinction between the two plans is that one is old and the other is new, and there is a protest against doing a bad thing in a new way even as the protest is made when a good thing is attempted.

To put the matter quite plainly, but quite accurately, the outcry against poison gas strikes us as sheer cant. Every time an enemy discovers a new method of killing there is the same cry raised. And once it has been uttered, those against whom it has been used try to go one better in the same direction. It is not inhuman to drop bombs. There is nothing wrong in a blockade which condemns women and children, aged people and sick to starvation; it is quite correct to kill and maim whenever possible, and the more that can be killed in a given time the better. But poison gas is an outrage on civilization. Nevertheless, all are busily engaged in seeing who can get the deadliest form for the next war. We repeat, it is sheer cant. The only intelligent and honest crusade is that against war. The more the brutality of war is glossed over the greater the harm. Do away with that, and also the glitter with which we surround war, and it will soon disappear.

What scientific men should do is to protest, and effectively protest, against any government that will empty its coffers on scientific research so long as the end is weapons or means of destruction, and close its purse

when the object is pure research in the interests of the enlightenment and the betterment of society. As we have so often said, it is the villainy and the stupidity of war that has to be brought home to the people, not merely to divert their attention from the essential issue by setting them denouncing one way of killing, and thus advocate another as though that were a tremendous advance. If the Germans had never used an ounce of poison gas the general effect of the war on civilization would have been about the same. It is hatred of war as an institution, contempt of militarism as a survival of pure savagery that is required. And when the world generally recognizes it as a piece of stupid and untamable savagery it will be very near the day of its disappearance.

Safety, as our Roman Catholic friends urge so persistently, is a necessary ingredient in every religious system that hopes to develop true to type. Dislike of originality is stronger in religion than anywhere else, and that is why the average man, steeped in the social conventions of his class, needs generations to shake off mental servitude. He looks favourably upon organized Christianity because he believes that the moral sanctions of its creed have helped to produce himself. And he is right. The stories of dying infidels and their last hours all have their basis in this essentially Christian ideal of safety. Such stories, if true, would only make a self-respecting man of character heartily ashamed of his creed.

The Bishop of Birmingham and the Rev. G. N. Whittingham have issued a manifesto against Modern Communism which they declare to be "based on a crude and iconoclastic materialism. Between it and religion there can be neither truce nor compromise." The handful of Christian Socialists ought to be delighted with this clerical outburst.

There are quick-change artistes in the Church as well as on the stage. The Rev. J. S. Twigge, formerly rector of Ormside, Westmoreland, who was converted to the Roman Catholic faith last September, has now been reconverted to Anglicanism. The penitent priest was received back by the Bishop of Liverpool.

Providence has a high-sniffing contempt of the so-called sacred calling of the clergy. Burglars broke into the Vicarage at Romford, taking, among other articles, a set of false teeth.

Mr. Charles Low writes what he calls "Cigarette Papers" for that erudite Sunday Paper the *People*. And he is thoughtful enough to note that they are intended for after dinner use, which is a time on Sunday in most of the houses where the *People* is taken in (one may assume) which is devoted to going to sleep. So Mr. Lowe writes for the benefit of his after dinner readers, "that the 'great Anarchist crimes of the last century,' that the 'real assassins of those who sit in high places.....are the tub-orators who are allowed to preach Atheism and Anarchy at every street corner.'" It would be quite interesting to know how Mr. Lowe connects Atheism with assassination, but we would not put his intellect to so severe a strain as to ask him to write on the subject. But is it really necessary, even when writing for a Sunday newspaper to pen such unadulterated balderdash as Mr. Lowe's? Of course, Mr. Lowe might plead in defence that he plainly directed that what he wrote should be read after a Sunday dinner, when people are full of food and sleepy, and therefore not likely to think much about what they are reading. But suppose they happen to ignore the instructions and read it before dinner? What *will* they think of Mr. Lowe's intelligence? Mr. Lowe might also plead in defence that a man must live, and that when he writes for a Sunday newspaper he must write in a Sundayish way. Still, there should be other ways of getting a living for a man of energy. Anyway, we sympathize with Mr. Lowe. Had we turned to ordinary journalism we might have ended in the same way.

The King, in acknowledging the Address from the Convocation of Canterbury, urges union among Christians, and trusts that the Church will be able to supply with a

fuller measure of authority the moral and spiritual needs of the community. The Anglicans, seething with dissension in their own ranks, combined with the Free Churches, which are once more re-stating the fundamentals of their faith, present a pretty picture of unity. The general sentiment underlying the King's letter closely resembles that expressed by his cousin, the ex-Kaiser, in a speech which the latter made to the Beuron monks just before the outbreak of war. Church and monarchy are really parts of a single organization, and each considers itself the head office and the other only a branch establishment.

Canon Sheppard, whose death was recently reported, was sub-dean of the Chapels Royal, and also sub-almoner to the King. Edward VII and Queen Alexandra were especially attached to him, and he was a great favourite of the Duke of Cambridge. These facts represent what our pressmen call "news" and are sufficient text for a column of the usual drivel. Whether the newspapers themselves take it quite as seriously as they offer it to their readers, is another question. It is not a bad thing to be reminded that we still have official almoners in England, whose duty consists in distributing the royal bounty. The Hereditary Grand Almoner distributes the coronation medals, and the Lord High Almoner gives "a silver penny apiece to as many poor persons as the sovereign is years of age."

The Rev. C. L. Drawbridge, of the Christian Evidence Society, has been writing to the religious Press regarding books and pamphlets which "a certain Atheistic society" is said to have sent to senior boys at public schools. He asks for the names of the recipients in order that counter-acting literature may be forwarded. From what we have seen of C. E. publications in defence of their creed, we are inclined to hope that Mr. Drawbridge will flood the public schools with them. But whether many of the *alumni* of these schools will, in the immediate future, become ardent supporters of any "Atheistic society" seems to us to be open to discussion.

The Roman Catholic journals make a special point of noting their successes in winning converts from the dis-integrating Protestant bodies, usually the Anglicans. Their own losses do not count, at any rate as a feature of interest to the general reader. But the rapid change of the Rev. J. S. Twigge from Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism and back again in less than twelve months, indicates a variety of religious experience worth recording. Those bent on making voyages of spiritual discovery should take warning from Mr. Twigge and his adventures. Even in an organization that offers the most militant of faiths, membership can only be acquired by payment of the full price.

We are a bit puzzled by a remark of the Chaplain in Chief of the Air Forces made during the Memorial Service to the crew of the wrecked airship. He consoled the mourners by telling them that they have been taken because "God wanted (them) for himself, could ill spare them longer.....even now they have entered on a sphere of usefulness and activity far greater, far grander than they could have known on earth." Now, does the Chaplain mean that God wrecked the airship in order to get the men he wanted? If he does not mean that then his remarks are quite nonsensical. And what is the grander service for which God specially wanted flying men? Is there a heavenly flying service, and did God want a number of experienced flyers to carry messages round heaven? Something like that seems inevitable if we are not to conclude that the Chaplain in Chief was silly. Perhaps someone will get him to explain what on earth he does mean. We give it up!

Many members of the Austrian and Hungarian nobility, beggared by the war, have taken to business to repair their broken fortunes. A society paper tearfully remarks that these former holders of many titles are now shop-keepers, tailors, clerks, and manicurists. There is, however, nothing novel in such transformations of fortune. According to the Christian tradition Almighty God once

worked as a carpenter for a living, and the proprietor of that business was afterwards sold for thirty shillings.

The *Daily Telegraph* in a recent article on "Church and People" admits that the Anglicans have lost a great deal of their power and influence of late years, but their ideal is a "great and sacred one." Here we have one of those well-balanced statements which reveal Fleet Street as the veritable Mecca of English public opinion. "A National Church," we are told, "represents the conscience of the community." The place of conscience in contemporary Anglicanism and its spiritual guides might be made the subject of an interesting study in ethics—one which Samuel Butler, the author of *The Way of All Flesh*, would have handled entertainingly. We doubt, however, whether even Butler has ever done full justice to the conscience of the modern English journalist. The editor's vocation to-day brings him into contact with a good many different consciences, and if he sifted all of them too carefully it might have sinister effects on his own. The result would be disastrous to public opinion.

Probably only a few of our readers ever see the *Queen*. It is one of those publications which should be found in every home in England that is truly representative of the middle class mind. It is full of the doughty deeds of royalty, duchesses, and marchionesses, past, present, and future. It believes, no doubt, that our nobility should be specially prayed for; but it is also seriously concerned about "the sons and daughters of the English Church in their temporary exile on the Continent." It urges the establishment of more Continental chaplaincies. Our English home life used to be contrasted sharply with the moral conditions prevailing elsewhere in Europe; but this note, so flattering to our own standards, has not been much in evidence of late. In the present dearth of candidates for holy orders, and with the whole Anglican body at home in the melting pot, the demand for more chaplaincies abroad will not inspire much enthusiasm in England. Neither will anything else associated with the Establishment.

We hear much nowadays of the higher education of woman and of her increasing participation in the national life, and as the female population is in a majority of about two millions it may become a formidable proposition to any cause or movement. Will the cult of titles and other survivals from a by-gone age strengthen woman's independence of character or raise her ideals? Probably not, nor is it intended that it should do so. But though women have always been a considerable factor in maintaining both creed and court, an out-an-out Freethinker among them is not now the rarity that it used to be.

According to Dean Inge "a clergyman is expected to believe, or at least to profess, a variety of opinions, relating to strictly scientific facts, which all educated men know to be absurd." Yet the dean appears to regret that Christianity never conquered Northern Europe spiritually. We are confronted with the task of "constructing for the first time a type of Christianity which is in conformity with the genius of our nation." Dr. Temple, relating his experiences of the Blackpool Mission, seems somewhat surprised at the number of attendants who, though "not attached to any religious organization, are genuinely interested to hear what the spokesmen of Christianity have to say." These utterances are dated September, 1921. They contrast strangely with the claim that the whole of our modern civilization, particularly in its moral and "spiritual" outlook, rests upon a Christian foundation.

Mr. G. K. Chesterton, writing in the *Illustrated London News* recently, said that people do not go to church because they have not yet realized that theology is a science. That reason would not apply to Mr. Chesterton; but his own science does not seem to give him the peace of mind one would expect in a theologian of his calibre. He assures us that he regards Darwinism as being "as dead as Calvinism." It is about a quarter of a century since he first slew Darwinism, but he goes back at least once annually to have a good look at the corpse.

C. Cohen's Lecture Engagements

September 25, Newcastle-on-Tyne; September 26, New Herrington; September 28, Greenside; September 29, Chopwell; October 2, South Shields; October 9, Manchester; October 16, Glasgow; October 23, South Place, London; October 30, Birmingham; November 6, Swansea; November 13, Leicester; December 4, Friars Hall, London; December 11, Birmingham; December 18, Golders Green.

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. E. POWELL (Durban).—We have noted your change of address. We are pleased to know that you and your wife enjoy the *Freethinker* so much. Hope you will continue to do so. Mr. Hudson will be glad to know that his recommending the *Freethinker* to you has been the cause of so much pleasure. We have used the cuttings.

CAPTAIN J. LATHAM.—Received and sent on. Pleased to hear from you, and hope that you are well.

A. J. MARRIOTT.—A translation of Michelet's *French Revolution* was, we think, translated some years ago and appeared in Bohn's Library. We fancy the *History of France* has also been translated. We are glad to have your appreciation of the Volney. It will be followed by others so soon as we find ourselves able to produce them. It is want of means, not want of will, that is the obstacle. Still, we shall do what we intend in time.

PANTEG.—Thanks for cuttings. Always useful.

RETA (Rochdale).—Certainly Mr. Cohen will come down and deliver a lecture if a suitable hall can be found. But you must write soon if you wish him to come this side of the new year. He has kept one or two dates vacant in case of emergency, but he may have to fill them soon.

MRS. SHARER.—It is quite impossible to give a categorical answer to your question. One would have to be intimately acquainted with all the circumstances, and almost invariably in such matters there are some little details omitted that would put quite a different complexion on the matter.

W. O. POSTER.—The address of the League for the Taxation of Land Values is 376-7 Strand, W.C. The Secretary, Mr. F. Verinder, will gladly send you any information you require.

"IGNARUS."—We are properly depressed. After reading your card we are convinced that we know nothing about anything and are destitute of the capacity of understanding things in the right way. The only glimpse of consolation is that some of our readers haven't yet found us out.

R. CRANK.—Your lecture notice did not reach us till Wednesday, and we go to press the day previous. Please make it a rule of sending lecture notices on a postcard. The bare information you desire making public is enough.

W. J.—We quite agree with what you say, but it does not do to show oneself too eager.

C. F. BUDGE.—The form of affirmation should be ready in all courts, and you are entitled to demand that it shall be provided. The N. S. S. is issuing a pamphlet containing full information on that and other matters of interest to Freethinkers. It will be on sale early next month.

H. L. EVANS.—We hereby convey your thanks to those friends in Wales who have been sending you out the *Freethinker*. Pleased you enjoy the paper so much. Other books are being sent.

T. A. BATTEN.—Letter received. Thanks for all you are doing on behalf of the *Freethinker*. Our regards to Mr. Courlander.

"FREETHINKER" SUSTENTATION FUND.—Mrs. L. Lucken (Auckland), Lt.

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.

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

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.

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Sugar Plums.

Next Sunday (September 25) Mr. Cohen will lecture twice in Newcastle-on-Tyne. It is some years since there were lectures in the city, owing to inability to secure a hall—even now only a small one is obtainable, but it is hoped to do better in the future. We have not the full address of the hall, but hope to get that in time for next week's issue. Admission will be free, but there will be some reserved seats at 1s. Tea will also be provided at the Socialist Café for visitors from a distance. The time of the meetings will be 3 and 7 o'clock. Those friends who desire tickets in advance, or can help with the distribution, will oblige by writing to the Secretary of the Newcastle Branch at 107 Morley Street, Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

We hope to issue Mr. Cohen's new book, *A Grammar of Freethought*, early in October. The book will run to about 250 pages, and will be published at five shillings. The work is being issued by the Secular Society, Limited, and will, we think, be found useful to Freethinkers, and instructive to such Christians as happen to read it. It aims at dealing with fundamental questions from the standpoint of a scientific Freethought, and ranges over a field that is not covered by any one volume that is now before the readers of advanced literature. The Pioneer Press hopes to issue several other works between now and the end of the year. We do not intend to permit the stream of ammunition to run dry if we can avoid it.

The Rev. A. A. Lee, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, took for his text the other day one of the Pioneer leaflets on *What is the Use of the Clergy?* He paid it a compliment by saying that it was written with "considerable force of language," but, he added, with "bitterness of spirit." And we really do not think it deserves that. From our point of view it is written with much moderation, particularly when we think of what it might have been. Against the criticism that the clergy represent a survival from primitive savagery, Mr. Lee replies, so do we all. But there is one very important distinction in the two cases. In every other matter we do at least try to put the savage behind us; in religion it is the savage that is consecrated and perpetuated. The doctor is the descendant of the medicine man. Just so. The primitive priest is the primitive medicine man curing supernaturally derived diseases with supernatural cures. But in course of time, the doctor, with his scientific study of disease, develops and establishes himself apart from the priest. It is the priest that continues the tradition; and thus, while the doctor may have descended from the medicine man, it is the parson who represents him disguised in a modern dress. That is a very vital distinction. Meanwhile, we note that Mr. Lee quite failed to answer a very important question put in the leaflet. This was, "What is there that is done by any clergyman in the country that he could not do equally well in his capacity as an ordinary citizen?" That question Mr. Lee leaves untouched.

Mr. George Whitehead will speak this evening (18th) at 6.30 in the Public Hall (over Free Library), Dickenson Road, Rusholme. A Palatine Road car from Manchester (2d.) stops at the Hall. The programme of outdoor evening meetings will be announced at Sunday's meeting.

The Myth of Jesus.

X.

(Continued from page 582.)

The peculiar character of Osiris, his coming upon earth for the benefit of mankind, with the title of "Manifester of Good" and "Revealer of Truth"; his being put to death by the malice of the Evil One; his burial and resurrection, and his becoming Judge of the Dead, are most interesting features of the Egyptian religion. This was the great mystery; and this myth and his worship were of the earliest times and universal in Egypt.—*Sir Gardner Wilkinson, "Ancient Egyptians," Vol. I., p. 331.*

THE writings of the New Testament, apparently so simple and ingenuous on the surface, are really among the most difficult to understand in their inward significance as apart from the meanings we read into them. In the first place they are translations from the Greek, and a translation from Greek into English is rarely attained with exact fidelity to the real meaning; that is why Greek scholars tell you that if you wish to enjoy the ancient Greek authors you must read them in Greek. Another difficulty is the fact that languages change; the meaning of many English words has changed during the last two or three hundred years. For instance, the word "miscreant" at one time meant merely a misbeliever, to-day it means a villain.

If we want to understand the meaning of the New Testament writings we must find out the meaning the writers themselves attached to them. To take an example, when a clergyman reads to his congregation the words of Paul, "Behold, I show you a mystery," it is certain that his hearers do not understand the word "mystery" in the sense in which Paul used it, or in which those to whom it was addressed understood it. To Paul and those to whom he addressed it meant an allusion to the sacred pagan Mysteries, and not to something weird and inexplicable as the word "mystery" does to us.

How, then, it will be asked, are we to discover the real meaning of the writings in the New Testament? The reply is, by studying the writings of the same age. Until lately all the material we have had for this purpose have been the writings of the Greek classical period, which have descended to us, and the inscriptions upon ancient buildings and monuments, very valuable so far as they went, although the Greek of the classics is not quite the Greek of the Levantines of the cities and towns figuring in Paul's missionary travels, to whom it was really a foreign language, although they used it for all literary and commercial purposes; it was the ancient *Lingua Franca* of these people.

"Had we," says Deismann—

a discreetly prepared synonymic of the religious expressions of early Christianity—of which there is as yet, one may say, a complete want—we should then have a defence against the widely current mechanical method of the so-called Biblical Theology of the New Testament.¹

We do not know what Deismann—who is a professor of Theology—means by a "discreetly prepared" work of that description, but an accurate and truthfully compiled work of that kind would be even more eagerly welcomed by the Rationalist and Freethinker than by the Theologian.

Within the last hundred years we have discovered a new source of information in the Greek papyrus documents which have been unearthed from the tombs and rubbish heaps of ancient Egypt where they have been buried for two thousand years. They consist of petitions and rescripts, letters, accounts, receipts, magical formulæ, incantations, etc., of not much use to the historian, they are to the philologist of the highest importance because they give an understanding of the

language. That is why these ancient documents, which most people would return to the rubbish heaps from which they were retrieved, are eagerly studied by the learned, and many books written to elucidate their contents.

What we want to know is, the precise meanings the writers of the New Testament attached to such expressions as "The Lord," "The Son of Man," "The Son of God," and many other expressions scattered throughout these writings. As we have seen, the general ideas about the cross and crucifixion are radically wrong. Professor Benjamin Smith says of the expression "Son of Man":—

The question concerning the "Son of Man" and the flock of cognate ideas and problems is one of the most obscure and intricate hieroglyphs that have ever puzzled the investigator. It seems hardly proper to broach such a deep-rooted and wide-branching theme unless in its own special volume. It is enough at this point to state the fact of which the proof is reserved, that all the meridians of evidence converge on the propositions that both the systematic application of the term to Jesus in the Gospels and the systematic non-application in the other New Testament scriptures, as well as the extra-canonical witness, Jewish, pagan, apocryphal, show that the term, however derived, denoted not a mere man, a magnetic rabbi, but a heavenly and divine Being, who might, indeed, appear, like Zeus or even Jehovah, clothed in the garment of humanity, but is entirely misunderstood when conceived as a man, the son of Joseph and Mary.²

The article on the "Son of Man" occupies eighteen closely printed, double column pages in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*. Hertlein has written a closely reasoned monograph upon the same subject, to cite only two, and there are many others.

When all the titles and phrases have been exhaustively studied we shall be in a better position to understand the beginning of Christianity. Take again the title of Lord, or "the Lord" ascribed to Jesus in the New Testament. In Matthew xxi. 2 we read that Jesus told two of the disciples to go into a village and take an ass and a colt and say, "The Lord hath need of them," and we constantly find the disciples addressing Jesus as the "Lord." Now the title "The Lord" in the mouth of a Jew meant Jehovah, who is spoken of throughout the Old Testament as "The Lord." Is it likely that Jews would apply the sacred name used for God to a man of flesh and blood, born and bred among themselves? But there is more in it than that; in some of the early Christian literature the title Lord is more often used than that of Jesus, and in all probability many of these compositions are really Jewish documents to which the name of Jesus has been added afterwards. In others, like the Apology of Apollonius, the title "Christ," and "our Saviour" is used exclusively, the name of Jesus being omitted altogether.

When the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* was first discovered by Bryennios, in 1873, at Constantinople, it was at once claimed as an authentic work of the Apostles of Jesus, but now it is admitted to have been originally a purely Jewish work, the twelve apostles being apostles sent out by the Jewish Church to the Jews who were dispersed over the world. This *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* was taken over by the Christians, added to and altered, to make it suit their own purposes, and from this sprang the myth that Jesus had twelve Apostles.

W. MANN.

(To be Concluded.)

To know what you prefer, instead of humbly saying Amen to what the world tells you you ought to prefer, is to have kept your soul alive.—Stevenson.

¹ Adolf Deismann, *Bible Studies*, p. 104.

² W. B. Smith, *Ecce Deus*, p. 271, note.

Pages From Fontenelle.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN PARACELSUS AND MOLIERE.

On the Nature of Comedy.

Molière.—I should be charmed with you Paracelsus, if it were only for your name. I should have taken you for a Greek or a Roman, and no one would imagine for a moment that Paracelsus was an Helvetician philosopher.

Paracelsus.—I have made my name as illustrious as it is fine sounding. My works are a great help to those who would enter into the search of nature, especially to those who would rise to the knowledge of spirits, and denizens of the elements.

Molière.—I can, without difficulty, conceive that those are the true sciences. To know men that we see around us every day is nothing at all, this knowledge is open to every man; but to know spirits that we cannot see is quite another thing.

Paracelsus.—There is no doubt of it. I determined with utmost precision their nature, their actions, their inclinations, their different orders, and what power they had in the universe.

Molière.—How happy you must have been to possess all this wisdom! For it stands to reason that you must have known everything that relates to man, and yet many people have not been able to get as far as that.

Paracelsus.—Oh! the most insignificant of philosophers could compass that sort of knowledge.

Molière.—I agree with you. There is nothing then to puzzle you in the nature of the human soul, its functions, its relation to the body.

Paracelsus.—Candidly, there must ever remain some difficulties in these matters; but in any case we know as much about them as philosophy can learn.

Molière.—Then you do not know anything more about it?

Paracelsus.—No. Is it not enough?

Molière.—Enough? Why, it is nothing at all. And then you skip over men whom you do not know to get to the spirits.

Paracelsus.—In spiritual existences there is something that whets our natural curiosity.

Molière.—I grant it; but it is excusable to show a concern for them only when you have nothing more to learn about mankind. It will be said that the human mind has exhausted all the sources of knowledge when it is found to occupy itself with matters which may have no objective reality, and which it can put on one side at pleasure. Moreover, there is no doubt that it can find quite enough material for its energy in very real objects if it wishes to do so.

Paracelsus.—The mind naturally neglects the very simple sciences and takes up with those that are mysterious. These alone are the sciences upon which it can exercise the whole of its activity.

Molière.—So much worse for the mind; what you say is wholly to its discredit. It is faced by the truth, but because it is simple it is not recognized at all. The mind takes up with mysteries which it knows to be absurd just because they are mysteries. I am certain that if the majority of men saw the order of the universe for what it is, observing in it neither the virtues of numbers, the properties of planets, nor the catastrophes connected with certain periods or certain revolutions, they could not help but exclaim, in the face of this wonderful order, "What! is it nothing more than this?"

Paracelsus.—You ridicule mysteries which you are unable to penetrate, and which are reserved for great minds.

Molière.—I have much more respect for those who do not understand these mysteries than I have for

those who do understand them; but, unfortunately, nature has not made men capable of a profound ignorance of these matters.

Paracelsus.—But you who decide with so much authority on the subject, what was your profession when you were on earth?

Molière.—A very different one from yours. You studied the virtues of spiritual beings. I studied the foolish actions of mankind.

Paracelsus.—An admirable occupation! Do we not all know that men are always doing foolish things?

Molière.—Certainly we do, but in the gross and confusedly; when you come to concrete and distinct examples you are surprised by the extent of the science.

Paracelsus.—And what use did you make of it in the end?

Molière.—I got together in a certain place the biggest crowd of people possible, and I made them see that they were all fools.

Paracelsus.—You must have used awful tirades to persuade them to believe that.

Molière.—Nothing easier. I convicted them of foolishness without using a single eloquent phrase or deeply thought-out argument. What they did was so ridiculous that you had only to do the same things in front of them and they doubled up with laughter.

Paracelsus.—Now I know what you mean. You wrote comedies. For my part I cannot see what pleasure people find in comedies. You go to a theatre to laugh at the manners there represented; why not laugh at the manners themselves?

Molière.—For this reason; in order to laugh at the doings of men you must be, to a certain extent at least, outside them, and the play puts you, as it were, at a distance from them. It gives you the whole of life as a spectacle, as if you had no part in it.

Paracelsus.—But very soon you return to the whole of life which you have seen held up to derision and become once more a part of it.

Molière.—Undoubtedly. Only the other day, for my amusement, I wrote a fable on this very subject. Once upon a time there was a gosling who took to flying with all the awkwardness associated with that species of bird when it tries to fly, and while in the air, at no great height I can assure you, only a few feet from the ground, the clumsy fellow rained insults on the inhabitants of the farmyard. "Wretched animals, I see you beneath me. You cannot soar through the heavens." These jibes were cut short, and the gosling tumbled plump into the farmyard.

Paracelsus.—To what purpose, then, are the reflections of your comic writers, seeing that they are to be compared to the flight of this gosling; and seeing that at the very moment we tumble back into the common absurdities of life?

Molière.—There is a great deal of good in this laughing at ourselves. It has been made easy for us so that we may not be the victims of self-deception. How often does it happen that when a party of us do a thing fervently and impressively another party comes along and scoffs derisively, and sometimes it happens that yet another party will hold them both up to ridicule? May it not be said that man is made up of corresponding pieces that fit into each other?

Paracelsus.—I cannot see in that any really adequate exercise for his mind. A few insignificant thoughts, a few amusing remarks, often enough ill-based, do not call for very much praise; on the other hand, what a strenuous exercise of thought is needed to deal with loftier subjects.

Molière.—Well you must return to your spirits, and I will keep to my fools. However, although I have never dealt with any matters except those patent to everyone, I may predict that my comedies will outlast your sublime works. All things are subject to change of fashion; the creations of a man's mind are not above

the destiny of the clothes he wears. I have seen I know not how many books and species of writing buried with their authors, just as in the same way among certain peoples they bury with the dead man the things he had found most precious when he was living. I know perfectly well that revolutions in the empire of letters are possible; but with all that I warrant you that my plays will last. I know why, for he who would paint for all time, must paint fools.

Englished by GEORGE UNDERWOOD.

Free Thoughts on Freethought.

Is there any theory, philosophy, or creed, is there any system or culture, any formulated method able to meet and satisfy each separate item of this agitated pool of human life?
—Richard Jefferies.

THERE is something intensely pathetic in the way in which the religious mind clings fearfully to the old shibboleths and the alarm with which it greets the arrival of any new truth. When the late Rev. Joseph Wood, a Birmingham Unitarian minister, was once lecturing on the necessity for a revised version of the Bible, an old man in his audience rose up and in a quavering voice said that he had been converted and based all his hopes of eternal life on the authority of *one* biblical text, and if in the new version that text did not appear the revisers would have robbed him of his only comfort and his only hope. "The pity of it, Iago!"

Today, after half a century of vigorous Freethought propaganda there is still much fluttering in ecclesiastical dovecotes when new truths of an anti-Christian nature are brought to light. Before the withering fire of rational criticism and scientific research the hosts of the Lord have been compelled to retreat step by step. But there still remains a great deal to do before we can safely arrange the disposition of our army of occupation and think about collecting the indemnity, for after having taken a hundred steps away from old dogmas and towards the truth, the True Believer shudders at the request to take one more. He is still unable to understand that just as the infidelity of the past has become the orthodoxy of the present, so may the heterodoxy of to-day become the enlightened religion of to-morrow.

We of the Freethought movement are usually depicted as a sinister band of mental revolutionaries whose aim—if, indeed, we have any aim at all—is to tear down the glittering edifice of Christianity, uproot the time honoured usages so dear to the human heart, and trample ruthlessly underfoot all man's higher instincts and all the great traditions of the past. And herein is displayed another characteristic of the religious mind. It is not sufficient for the Freethinker to point out that the Christian's faith is founded on an error, that his religion is untrue and that he is hugging a delusion—and this would be sufficient to cause any man whose mind was not satiated with Old Testament morality to renounce such a faith without any further "guarantees"—but the latter must needs ask for another dream to replace the shattered one! "Have you anything to put in its place?" he asks.

Now, in glancing over the short but heroic history of the Freethought movement, in looking back for inspiration to such stalwarts as Paine, Ingersoll, Holyoake, Bradlaugh, Foote, and a host of others, is it conceivable that we stand for a system of negations? Is it conceivable that we, as an organization, exist for the sole purpose of "proving our neighbour wrong?" But before one can construct a programme of reform acceptable to the world, or at least that portion of the world—the thinking portion—to whom programmes of reform are acceptable, one must understand a little of

the forces at work; more than this, one must know how to mould those forces, and enlist them in the great cause of human progress. This the great religions of the world have failed to do. Instead of swimming with the tide of human evolution they have erected a barrier of dogmas and sought to stem the onrush of natural forces, and when they were swept irresistibly backwards by the currents they have gone farther downstream, set up their barrier as before, and tried to deceive themselves that their position was still impregnable.

Looking around us, what do we find? We find that this "agitated pool of human life" is composed of individuals whose tastes, desires, and interests are so wide, so diverse, and so conflicting as to stagger the heart of the most optimistic reformer. They seem to have only one thing in common, and that a dull dead apathy towards the small bands of advanced thinkers who, under different banners bearing their utopian formulas, are seeking human welfare and upliftment.

Who, then, in the face of this awful and complex thing will dare to formulate a creed, or compress into a few "articles of faith" for their guidance all the wisdom of the ages? Who shall "justly assume to prescribe the ways in which, through all succeeding generations, a great idea shall realize itself in practice?" But this is just what the great religions of the world have sought to do. Take Christianity. Christians tell us that their religion is our only refuge and that Christ is our only saviour, that only in Him are we made whole. But the modification of Christian doctrine in the face of hostile criticism, the splitting up into different sects, all clamouring that theirs is the only way, gives it the lie, and proves that for any sect or any religion—however great and however influential—to claim that *theirs* is the only way is a piece of theological presumption. Evolution has beaten revelation in the past and will do so again.

In his amazing propagandist novel, *The Dawn of All*, Robert Hugh Benson, with characteristic ingenuity, and by steadily ignoring the mighty forces at work in human nature which in the past have made havoc of his Church's machinations, and will do so still more in the future, constructs for us a Catholic Utopia. Needless to say, the Inquisition is again to be very much in evidence! Contrast Father Benson's Utopia with that of William Morris or Edward Bellamy; after struggling with the dismal nightmare of the former the lofty conception of the latter writers seems to bear the fragrance of flowers in May, or "the wind on the heath, brother." How true it is that "when one man only in the world is permitted to think, and the rest are compelled to agree with him, Unity should be as easy of attainment as it is worthless when attained."¹

Freethought, then, aims at securing for everybody the fullest possible freedom of thought and speech. For faith in God it would substitute faith in oneself and faith in MAN, for the service of God service of poor struggling humanity. It would educate all so that each one of us might maintain "towards all creatures a bounteous friendly feeling."

With increased knowledge would come increased understanding, and with that, increased sympathy with the struggles and aspirations of our neighbours. It aims at granting everyone the facilities and opportunities for individual development *on their own lines*, realizing that no dogmatic creed can satisfy the cravings of us all. Instead of preaching Sin, and punishing the victims of a tainted heredity or unjust social conditions, it would set to work on lines of determinism and alter and improve those bad conditions and prevent the defilement and pollution of life at its source. The breath of Freethought is Liberty, and "the price of

¹ Dr. Wylie, *Papacy*.

liberty is eternal vigilance." The old creeds are too vindictive, too cruel, they lack breadth and an understanding of human nature. Freethought seeks to destroy them and use their ruins as stepping stones to Higher Things.

VINCENT J. HANDS.

Gems From Heine's "Travel-Pictures."

Brevity is not the whole soul of wit; for the charm and the interplay and even the ambiguity of words play a most important part in the effect produced. Hence the difficulty of translating a bright sally is the same as the difficulty of rendering verse into a foreign tongue, where the literal meaning often appears minus the spirit of the original. But the following samples chosen almost at random from Heine's *Reisebilder* will give some idea of the weapon wielded by that famous fighter in his war against the "Dark Forces" of the world.

Often, when I have seen a poor, sweating, lame creak of a horse pulling a wagon full of Göttingen students, I have said to myself: Oh, poor brute, without doubt your forefathers in Paradise have eaten forbidden hay!

Immortality! Beautiful thought! who first found you? Was it a burgher of Nuremberg, who, with his white night-cap on his head and white clay pipe in his mouth, sat before his door on a warm summer evening and pondered right comfortably: "Now it would be lovely if I could thus vegetate through all eternity, without my pipe or my life-breath ever going out!"

The market is small, and in the middle stands a fountain, the water of which falls into a great metal beaker. No one knows whence this beaker came. Some say, the Devil once left it in the market on a dark night. In those days, people were still stupid, and the Devil was stupid, and so they made each other presents.

The children saw that I was a stranger, and greeted me in a friendly way. One of the boys told me they had just been having Religious Instruction, and showed me the Royal Hanoverian Catechism, wherein they were to be examined. This book was badly printed; and it gave me a painful shock to see that the multiplication table (which collides so notably with the doctrine of the Trinity) had been printed on the back cover of the book, whereby the poor children might so early be betrayed into sinful doubts.

There is a large iron cross on the top of the Ilsestein. I advise anyone who stands there to look to his footing; for when I stood there, lost in thought, I suddenly saw the mountains standing on their heads, and the green trees flying in the air, and I would certainly have plunged to the earth if I had not in my utmost need clung to the iron cross. That I did such a thing may, in the circumstances, be forgiven me.

I have not described their church. I cannot well do this as I have not been in it. God knows that I am a good Christian and am often on the point of visiting His house, but somehow I am always fatally hindered. Sometimes it is a gossip, who holds me fast upon the way; or if I get so far as the porch, a jocular mood will take hold of me, and then I would hold it sinful to pass inside.

How miserable he looked when I saw him last! He consisted merely of intellect and poultices, and was studying away day and night, as if he feared that the worms might find one idea too few in his head.

I have more luck in writing than in lotteries (I would it were otherwise!) and that is God's doing. For he denies to the pious poets and hymn-writers all literary fame, so that they may not turn their eyes on their fellow creatures and forget those heavenly quarters ready prepared for them by the angels; and he allows all the fame to us profane, sinful, mocking writers out of pure Divine Mercy, so that the poor soul, once created, may have here

at least a little taste of the joy which is denied it above. For example, Goethe and the Tractwriters.

I am so happy when I think that all these fools can be made use of in my writings. The Lord has blessed me, the crop of fools is unusually plentiful this year, and like a good farmer I consume only some of them and set a store by for the future.

Truly, there are things in heaven and earth that not only our philosophers but even our commonest thickheads do not understand.

There were almost more soldiers than priests; but nowadays many bayonets are needed for the maintenance of religion, and when the blessing is heard, the pregnant roll of the cannon must accompany it in the distance.

A fat millionaire—did I say fat? It were easier for a camel to enter the kingdom of heaven than for that rich man to pass through the eye of a needle!

Translated by H. TRUCKELL.

Correspondence.

"HANDS OFF THE PRAYER BOOK."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The other day a short article by a "Churchman" appeared in the *Daily Mail* praising the contents of the *Church of England Prayer Book*, and finishing off by saying, "hands off the Prayer Book." It is well to remind him and others that the Prayer Book contains some very uncharitable (almost outrageous) and absurd statements, in which members of the Church of England and especially the clergy are expected to believe. The following are some of the "inspired" cursings of David (the "sweet Psalmist of old") as given from Psalm cix. in the Prayer Book. David, in cursing certain people, would like to see those cursings extended to their widows and children. Here are some of the words of his prayer:—

Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand. When sentence is given upon him let him be condemned, and let his prayer be turned into sin. Let his days be few, and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be vagabonds and beg their bread, let them seek it also out of desolate places. Let the extortioner consume all that he hath, and let the stranger spoil his labour. Let there be no man to pity him, nor to have compassion upon his fatherless children. Let his posterity be destroyed, and in the next generation let his name be clean put out. Let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be done away. Let them always be before the Lord, that he may root out the memorial of them from off the earth.....Let it thus happen from the Lord unto mine enemies, and to those that speak evil against my soul.

In Psalm cxxxvii. as given in the Prayer Book are the words, "blessed shall he be that taketh thy children and throweth them against the stones." And in Psalm lxxviii. in the Prayer Book David says, "that thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and that the tongue of thy dogs may be red through the same." These imprecatory Psalms are appointed to be read in the Church of England.

The Athanasian Creed in the Prayer Book also contains most absurd and uncharitable statements. I have not room here, and I know you could not afford me the space, to give them all, but the following are a few of them.

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. Which faith, except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity. Neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost.....The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.....There are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated, but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.

After a lot more absurd statements, it ends off by saying, "this is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved." If these words are true, about one third of the human race cannot be saved, but will be eternally damned. This creed is still to be found in the *Church of England Prayer Book*, latest edition, published in the reign of our present king, George V. In Article 8 of the Thirty-Nine Articles at end of Prayer Book, it says the Athanasian Creed among others ought to be believed, as it can be proved from Scripture.

Borough Street, Brighton.

M. ROGERS.

"THE MYTH OF JESUS."

SIR,—Your contributor, Mr. W. Mann, quotes Dr. Edward Carpenter as an authority for the view that "the difficulties in the way of regarding the Gospel story (of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus) as true, are enormous," and then he gives a quotation from Dr. Carpenter's work, *Pagan and Christian Creeds*, in support of it. Why he should do this I fail to see. I have read the Gospel accounts and consider there was plenty of time for the whole transaction, especially in view of the fact that the enemies of Christ considered the matter urgent, judging by their actions. The last supper began at even, for "when the even was come He sat down with the twelve." He could have been prisoner by midnight in the High Priest's palace and time to spare before being judged by Pilate. Dr. Carpenter speaks of the long and painful journey to Golgotha; but a work I possess says it was "about 150 cubits from the Damascus Gate" (about seventy-five yards), but how far from Pilate's judgment hall, of course, I cannot say. (Does Dr. Carpenter know?) I presume he has some inside information that justifies his statement "that the whole story is physically impossible." I think that if a matter of about three hours more than Dr. Carpenter gives could be justifiably added to the time, the whole thing would be easy of accomplishment. Does Mr. Mann agree? And, if so, why make it "physically impossible"? Is it not possible that Dr. Carpenter is wrong?

"UNORTHODOX."

Report of Leeds Lecturing Tour.

September 2 to September 9.

THE second week's meetings in Leeds were uniformly successful. Seven were held and all were well attended by very keen and interested listeners, some of whom were present during the whole series. A local Mormon accepted a challenge to debate, but as he refused to discuss the claims of Christianity as interpreted by himself or anybody else, I refused to waste time debating the claims of the policy of the Church of Saints which he was desirous of expounding. We were promised by another platform opponent, who had succeeded in saying nothing at some length, that he knew of a champion who was invincible. The said champion, in response to our invitation conveyed through his herald, next evening entered the lists. He proved to be one of Charlie Chaplain's many theological rivals and unconsciously imparted that element of humour so apposite in any man who attempts to justify the case for Christianity. He came, he spoke, we laughed—all of us!

The local Communists were holding meetings on several of these evenings, but we made an arrangement whereby clashing was avoided, both speaking to the same crowds under, of course, distinct chairmen. Practically the whole of the twelve meetings held on the occasion of this second visit were devoted to a systematic exposition of Evolution in special relation to Christianity. I tried it as an experiment, and the whole of our following in Leeds, in addition to many outside our movement, testified to its complete success. Large attentive crowds turned up night after night, listened, questioned and purchased our literature, and remained discussing the points raised long after the meetings terminated. The comrades supported me quite satisfactorily, Messrs. Davies, Roberts and Youngman and Miss Levison, the Secretary, being especially to the fore. I have also to thank Mr. Youngman, as on the previous occasion, for his very kind hospitality.

GEORGE WHITEHEAD.

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.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C. 2): 11, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., "Labour and the League of Nations."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.15, Mr. E. Burke, A Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Regent's Park): 6, Mr. A. D. McLaren, "The Higher Criticism."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, A Lecture.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

LEEDS BRANCH N. S. S. (19 Lowerhead Row, Leeds): 6.30, Members' Meeting; 7, Mr. Lew Davis, "Can a Socialist be a Christian?"

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Rusholme Public Hall, over Free Library, Dickenson Road, Rusholme): 6.30, George Whitehead, A Lecture.

SOUTH SHIELDS BRANCH N. S. S. (3 Thompson Street, Tyne Dock): 6.30, Final arrangements for Mr. Cohen's lecture campaign. Will all members and friends please attend, and assist in making this venture a success.

PROPAGANDIST LEAFLETS. 2. *Bible and Teetotalism*, J. M. Wheeler; 3. *Principles of Secularism*, C. Watts; 4. *Where Are Your Hospitals?* R. Ingersoll; 5. *Because the Bible Tells Me So*, W. P. Ball; 6. *Why Be Good?* G. W. Foote; 7. *Advice to Parents*, Ingersoll; *The Parson's Creed*. Often the means of arresting attention and making new members. Price 1s. per hundred, post free 1s. 2d.

THREE NEW LEAFLETS.

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BOOKS ON EVOLUTION.

Professor Osborn, *The Origin and Evolution of Life*, 1918. As new, published at 25s., for 15s.; Professor Loeb, *The Mechanistic Conception of Life*, 1912. Clean copy, 7s.; Professor Lull and others, *Evolution of the Earth and its Inhabitants*, 1919. As new, 7s. 6d.; Professor Bosc, *Response in the Living and Non-Living*, 1902. Clean copy, 8s.; Turnbull, *The Life of Matter*, 1919. As new, 6s.; J. A. S. Watson, *Evolution*, 1915. Profusely illustrated, as new, 5s.; Charlton Bastian, *The Evolution of Life*, 1907. Secondhand, 5s. 6d.; Butler Burke, *The Origin of Life*, 1906. Secondhand, 5s. 6d.; Harnsworth's *Popular Science*, seven vols. complete. Clean good copy, £1; Lewes, *Problems of Life and Mind*, 1874, 6s.; Lewes, *Physical Basis of Mind*, 1877. Loose in cover, 5s. All post free.—W. M., 21 Smestow Street, Wolverhampton.

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