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*Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums,  
Letters to the Editor, etc.*

## Views and Opinions

### War and the Clergy

THE other day a friend called my attention to a paragraph in the *Evening Standard* concerning the Rural Dean of Lewes. Since then two other readers (among those who help so much by forwarding items of news that I might otherwise miss) have sent me copies of the same item. The Dean, it appears, not placing enough faith in the protective power of turning one cheek when the other is smitten, has joined the Local Defence Volunteers. The Dean has some good religious precedents for this action. At the outbreak of the war of 1914 the late Bishop of London called it a day of God, and many other leading clergymen hailed the war as the beginning of a new birth for the Christian Church. Clergymen might also be found in plenty before that war who regarded the military life as a fine school for the development of character, and in the earlier days of the Church the Bishops, who were feudal lords as well as Bishops of Christ, were not averse to leading soldiers into battle, although many being mindful of the ecclesiastical rule that a priest must not shed blood, were armed only with maces. We are quite sure that those who received a crack on the head with a spiked iron mace would be duly appreciative of the benefit of getting their skulls cracked instead of having a sword plunged into their stomachs.

But the Rural Dean has been blamed for joining the forces, and he has hit back "right lustily." In reply to criticisms he said:—

If Hitler wins he will not have any use for my profession. Therefore my first task is to make sure he does not win. I am prepared to shoulder a gun. If Hitler lands any troops in England and I can kill twelve of them, I will die happy.

That is quite straightforward, far more so than is usual where many clergymen are concerned. These other parsons have been as quick in action as the

Dean, but not so honest in their declarations. They too recognized that the conquest of Britain might mean the end of them. But they also thought they saw the opportunities for profiteering (religiously) out of the situation. So they had a week of continuous prayer before Munich, and the reply was that Hitler secured a huge quantity of armaments, gained a much improved position, and conquered Poland. Then, thinking perhaps that the Lord was annoyed by a whole week's bombardment of heaven, our clergy tried a single day of prayer; this time by order of the King, under the probable impression that if God wouldn't pay attention to the clergy he might to King George. But that day of prayer was followed by the desertion of the King of Belgium, and the first decisive step towards the conquest of the French armies. So one more day of prayer was tried, and again came the prompt reply in the overrunning of France by German troops, and the beginning of the attack on Britain. Never before had the answers to prayer been so prompt and so disastrous—to us. To use a classic phrase, heaven had missed the bus. And the clergy who can never resist the temptation to make capital out of human misfortune have, for the time, had to content themselves with preaching that this is a fight for Christian civilization. One lie more or less never has troubled the Christian clergy very much, and as they still have power and influence, that lie has been assiduously circulated in the press and by a great many public speakers. But no one has yet explained where is the Christian civilization for which we are fighting, nor how comes it that hundreds of thousands of those who have joined the forces are opponents to Christianity, to say nothing of the number of religions that are represented in the British forces. The clergy agree with St. Paul, "If my lie hath abounded to the greater glory of God why am I then judged a sinner?" We give it up. Where there are so many sinners corruption almost takes on the air of purity.

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### The Dean and his Dozen

To us the striking thing about the Dean of Lewes' delivery is its straightforwardness. He says he wants to defeat Hitler because Hitler threatens his profession. That, by the way, is too parochial in its wording. Hitler does not threaten the religious profession. He himself is profoundly religious, in conviction, in temper and in methods. He believes God has selected him for the work of putting Germany on top of the world, as so many religious people in this country believe that God gave us the British Empire, and that we showed our profound faith in "Him" when we accepted the "burden." Hitler believes that God is behind him, as the Dean believes God is behind him. I find no greater difficulty in believing one than the other. Hitler has also laid it down that the children of Germany must be taught to believe in the German God, that they must not read anything

that would weaken faith in that God, and that punishment must be meted out to those who attempt to disturb the plans of God. And Hitler has also bred a generation that for sheer religious fanaticism reminds one of some of the scenes that one meets with in a study of religious crusades.

The Dean himself is not quite free from this religious taint. He will be satisfied, he says, with killing twelve Germans. He is not particular which twelve, any twelve will do, for by a curious calculation the life of a Rural Dean is equal to exactly twelve Germans. But even though the twelve Germans he kills are as innocent of the war as are so many of our own young men who have paid the utmost price in their attempt to defeat Hitlerism, they will do. The Dean is as indiscriminate as to the guilt of those whom he kills as was the papal Prelate, who in the case of the massacre of the Albigensian heretics, when asked how would the godly be distinguished from the ungodly, replied, "Kill all, God will know his own." We appreciate the straightforwardness of the Rural Dean. It is at least preferable to the attitude of those who daily tell the lie that "we" are fighting for the preservation of Christian civilization. Ask the members of the Indian Congress, who have just decided to help Britain in the war, if they are fighting for Christian civilization. I wonder whether our Archbishop would dare to repeat that statement at a mass meeting of Hindoos and Mohammedans in India? They might remind him that European civilization was never so low as when the Christian Church was supreme, and that it was not until the power of the Christian Church was broken that European civilization renewed its interrupted course of development.

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#### A Religious Hang-Over

One of the readers who sent me the cutting thought it was very bad for a clergyman to talk in the way the Rural Dean did. I see nothing at all strange about it. My correspondent thinking differently suggests to me only one of those religious "hang-overs" about which I have written more than once. We have vestigial mental forms as well as vestigial structures, and among these, I think, is the feeling that a parson is different from other people and ought to show a better level of character. No one, nowadays, with any education believes a priest to be better intellectually than other people, rather the reverse. If now and again one does come across a clergyman who possesses a keen intelligence on ordinary matters there is surprise, even with many who look up to him in matters of religion. But the majority of the clergy plod on, official authorities on what awaits us in heaven or hell, but otherwise of no earthly use.

Still the feeling that the clergy *ought* to be better than ordinary folk persists. Why? I do not think the explanation is very difficult. The clergyman's calling is a "sacred" one, and he is a "sacred" or "holy" man. But "sacred" and "holy" are interchangeable terms. They refer to the gods, or to something in close connexion with them. But, as Robertson Smith pointed out over sixty years ago, neither has the slightest connexion with "morality or purity of life." The priest, from the primitive medicine-man down to the modern Archbishop, is a "sacred" person, and he is venerated solely because he represents the gods.

With the development of society, a weakening of the "sacred" takes place, but the medicine-man remains, still impressing ordinary people, and clings to his post and his privileges with all the tenacity of a retired government official whose only excuse for receiving a good pension is that he once drew a large salary. But throughout, the feeling that the priest is

not an ordinary man, lingers. As the gods are prayed to now because they are assumed to have done something once upon a time, so the aura of a superior person lingers round the priest because he was once believed to stand between man and his gods.

But as I have never looked at the priest as any more than a very ordinary person endowed with a prestige that like a potato has its better part underground, so I have never expected from him a higher or better display of morality than I look for in any other group of people. Of course there would be certain features with him that would be stronger or weaker with other social classes, just as street-begging and picking pockets are less developed among the aristocracy and city financiers than among the "lower classes," a weakness made good by other methods of achieving the same ends. Further than that I have never been able to detect, nor did I expect to find, a higher level of conduct among priests than among other people.

But the assumption that the priest *ought* to be better than others remains. And man is full of these references to his early state. You see he has a rudimentary tail at one end of his spinal column, and a mass of primitive tendencies at the other by way of providing a balance.

CHAPMAN COHEN

### Lovable Charles Lamb

Lamb's graceful and lovely nature can hardly find expression without giving pleasure to others.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

JUST as Doctor Johnson is the best known of English writers, so is Charles Lamb the most lovable. Despite his own quaint jest that he wrote for antiquity, he becomes every year a more popular writer with posterity. "A fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy," it could hardly be otherwise, for so much that he writes awakens a sense of personal affection in the reader. Writing of youth, of death, of familiar faces, of homely things, he keeps marvellously close to life, and retains the human interest. It was, we feel, just so with us in Childhood, at School, in this glad or sad experience. This power, together with the humanist temperament of getting at the heart of things, makes him keenly alive to life.

As a man, Charles Lamb was well worth knowing. What would it not be worth to have had a few hours of his company? In his merry humour, or in his more serious vein, it was all one. Suppose we could have dined with him that day when the dish was the sucking pig that Farmer Collier had sent him, and heard the good wishes wafted to the giver:—

May your granaries be full, and your rats empty, and your chickens plump, and your envious neighbours lean, and your labourers busy, and you as idle and as happy as the days are long.

Or imagine we had been present when the stately and eloquent Coleridge asked him, "Charles, did you ever hear me preach?" and he replied in his amusing way, "I never heard you do anything else." Or what if we had taken a hand at whist when Martin Burney was his partner, and he called out, "Martin, if dirt were trumps, what a hand you'd have." Or, better still, had we been with him that memorable Saturday night when he brought home the folio volume of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays that he had coveted for many weeks, while he saved the price of it, and he could not think of going to bed till the loose leaves had been pasted in neatly, and he had read his favourite passages. Or, best of all, had we been

among those to whom his door was open on the famous Wednesday evenings in the Inner Temple Lane. Wordsworth was one of the number when he was in London, and Coleridge, Haydon, Hazlitt, Barry Cornwall, and Talfourd. Surrounded by such a galaxy of genius, it must have been a rich memory, an abiding delight, to have been with Lamb at times like these. It must have been a festal evening such as those ever-memorable nights at Frederick the Great's palace when the nimble wit of Voltaire challenged the best brains of Europe, or those suppers at the "Mermaid" when rare Ben Jonson exchanged jests with the smiling Shakespeare, and the brilliant Elizabethan wits made the night merry with their jokes.

The austere and cynical Thomas Carlyle was one of the very few men of note who entirely mis-understood Lamb. Carlyle's seriousness, his Puritanism, his dogmatism, shut the door of sympathy. When the two met the atmosphere was electric. On one occasion, while they were waiting for their host, Carlyle looked out of the window, watching the flight of some pigeons. Lamb, hurt, perhaps, at his silence, went up to him, and asked: "Mr. Carlyle, are you a poulterer?" Another time, as they were together in the hall, preparing to leave a party after the Chelsea Sage had monopolized the conversation, Lamb handed Carlyle his wideawake hat with the jesting remark: "Is this your turban?" Accordingly, we find the irascible philosopher writing in his journal: "Charles Lamb, I sincerely believe to be in some considerable degree insane! A more pitiful, rickety, gasping, staggering tomfool I do not know." Carlyle was as completely wrong with regard to Lamb as he was utterly in error concerning Henri Heine, Voltaire, and Herbert Spencer. It was, however, Carlyle's pleasant way. Did he not refer to a very prominent fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, as "that little ape called Keble"? Lamb's jests were good, and often contained shrewd observation, as in his ironic expression of regret that the Royalists did not hang the poet Milton, for then we might have laughed at them.

Other men of genius who knew Lamb well realized his real worth. They saw the good nature under the uncouth exterior. Lamb earned his own living, paid his own way, was the helper, not the helped; a man who was beholden to no one, a shrewd man, capable of advice, strong in counsel. He was ever ready both with sympathy and help, generous and unselfish. He had pensioners on his bounty, among whom were an old teacher of his own, and a cripple whose only claim was that he was recommended by his friend, Southey. Barry Cornwall tells a characteristic story. He was in Lamb's company one day, in ill health and low spirits, which Lamb thought due to want of money. Turning suddenly, Lamb said: "My dear boy. I have a quantity of useless things, including a hundred pounds in my desk, that I don't know what to do with. Take it."

Lamb was a hero, modest and unobtrusive. There was a taint of insanity in the family, and, for that reason, Lamb never married. What this meant to his sensitive nature may be guessed from the pathetic pages of his beautiful essay, entitled *Dream Children*. His own sister, Mary, killed their mother in a fit of frenzy. A few weeks' restraint restored her to her right mind, but the dreadful disease recurred at intervals ever afterwards, and a retreat was provided in a private asylum. There was warning of their coming, and a friend has related how he met the brother and sister at such a time, walking hand-in-hand across the fields to the asylum, both in tears.

Lamb was a Deist, as were Paine and Voltaire. He did not accept a divine Revelation, or embrace the

deity of Christ. His conversation, and even his personal letters, reveal his flippancy with regard to theological matters. Recall his saucy question to the pious, and astonished, Coleridge as to how many angels could dance on the point of a needle. And remember his amusing references to a very small church situated not far from Hastings, which he said he wanted to take home in his pocket as a souvenir. Hazlitt, who knew him well, has paid a fine tribute to his memory. He says Lamb was "the most delightful, the most provoking, the most witty and sensible of men. He always made the best pun and the best remark in the course of the evening."

Lamb is best known by his *Essays of Elia*, of their kind the most delightful and popular in the language, by his poem, *The Old Familiar Faces*, and his letters. Indeed, few writers have achieved such a reputation with so small an outfit. If he waged an unequal war against fate, he was, at least, a happy warrior! When his own turn came he yielded up his broken, but not dishonoured, sword of fate to the conqueror with a brave and a humble heart.

What good is like to this,  
To do worthy the writing, and to write  
Worthy the reading and the world's delight.

MIMNERMUS

## The Romantic Career of Columbus

THE long-delayed triumph and subsequent downfall of Christopher Columbus, vividly illustrate the uncertainty of fortune's favours. A vast array of writings, penned in many tongues, relating to this theme, has long existed, and during recent decades, many other works concerning Columbus, his voyages and adventures, have been added to the imposing list. Among these, there has now appeared a brilliant and scholarly study by Salvador De Madariaga. This volume *Christopher Columbus* (Hodder, 1939) is elaborately illustrated and attractively bound: its three maps delineating the geographical concepts and the paths of the four voyages of the discoverer, being especially instructive.

Enormous research has been undertaken in order to ascertain his antecedents as well as the veracity of the navigator's assertions. And Madariaga inquires: "Who was this mysterious man whose single spirit changed the course of history, deflected a mighty nation from its natural path, doubled the size of man's physical world, widened his mental horizon beyond the wildest expectations of the age, created, in fact, the setting of that bold humanistic conception, lured by which man, the super-monkey, has since then dreamt himself to be an undergod?"

A contemporary of Columbus depicts him as a man of majestic mien, prematurely gray, the sign of strenuous sea-faring life. He was outwardly pious, frequently confessed his sins, and prayed at all canonical times. But he was ever a man of mystery, and the period and place of his birth, and the details of his earlier life, after four centuries of inquiry and examination, are still in the realms of conjecture.

Columbus declared that his whole life had been spent at sea. Yet, he displayed a fair knowledge of Latin and possessed considerable information concerning cosmography. Why, if he was, as he claimed to be, a native of Genoa, did he never speak Italian and how came he to converse in Spanish with a pronounced Portuguese accent? Moreover, as Madariaga queries: "If he was as good a Christian as he was keen to show himself in his devotions, why was he so fond of the company of Moors and Jews, and why

had he become entangled in a love affair with a Córdoban girl, of whom he had a bastard just as if he were a Castillian Grandee or a Portuguese Archbishop?"

Many other questions remain, including the reasons why, in an age of discovery, the pundits, priests and pedants nearly all derided Columbus' contention that uncharted islands might be reached, and the extremities of a continent discovered by crossing the Atlantic. Also, it might be asked: why Ferdinand and Isabel ultimately accepted as a practical enterprize the suggested voyage of discovery, encumbered as it was, with all the extraordinary stipulations insisted upon by a man wearing worn shoes and wrapped in a threadbare cloak? For the price to be paid for a successful undertaking was by no means inconsiderable.

After a painstaking survey of all the available evidence, Madariaga concludes that Columbus or Colón, as he prefers to call him, read Italian, but did not write it. For his correspondence with his Genoese relatives and friends, he used Spanish only, while he made his acquaintance with Latin before he came to Spain. It is also inferred that Colón's Italian was crude, and his culture language Spanish. "Now," concludes Madariaga, "there is only one reasonable way of explaining this fact: the Colombo family were Spanish Jews settled in Genoa, who, following the traditions of their race, had remained faithful to the language of their country of origin."

Colón (Columbus) arrived in Portugal in 1476. He was convinced that the earth is a sphere, although he thought it much smaller than it really is. Consequently, he considered a journey to India over the Atlantic as a comparatively easy achievement. Colón's scheme was submitted to King John of Portugal, who long procrastinated, and finally rejected the proposal.

In high displeasure, yet still inspired by the most sanguine dreams of his coming greatness, Colón migrated to Spain. According to his contemporary, Las Casas, Colón desired to undertake the discovery of lands abounding in the precious metals, pearls, precious stones and dense populations. He would reach India, the immense island of Cimpango and the magnificent realms of the Grand Khan.

Madariaga compares Colón with Don Quixote, inasmuch as the former demanded as payment for the fulfilment of his promise that he must be created a Knight wearing golden spurs. "This Genoese sailor," remarks the satirical Madariaga, "eking out a meagre life by drawing maps, but carrying his head high, as one in whose head high dreams are housed wants as his first condition of discovering the Indies the right to wear golden spurs! . . . And then 'that he should have the right to call himself Don Cristóbal Colón and his successors also.' Here again we can see Don Quixote nod assent, for we know how carefully he pondered over what his name should be and how by his great deeds he made the title *Don* world-famous."

So exalted were his claims, that Colón actually requested that the title of Grand Admiral of the Ocean Sea should be his. His prerogatives also included monetary rights such as "the tenth of all the income accruing to the King" from Colón's discovery of gold, silver, spices and other rich possessions. In addition, he desired to defray one-eighth of the expenses of every voyage and to take in return one-eighth of the profits.

The advisers of the Portuguese Crown apparently, regarded Colón as a visionary and vain-glorious fool, inflamed by a faith in imaginary continents and islands derived from the seeming fantasies of Marco Polo. Thus spurned in Portugal, whose monarch might perhaps despatch an expedition of his own, Colón turned his steps towards Spain. There, if his

Jewish extraction may be credited, he could in his mind's eye see "the fires of religious fanaticism consuming his kith and kin, the flames through which he was to walk to victory: fire was meeting fire."

The King and Queen of Spain twice rejected the plan Colón laid before them, and he turned away in despair. His thoughts were directed towards France and England, but a journey to either country was impossible to a penniless man. But despite the royal refusal, three influential friends—Desa, Cabrero and Santangel, all Jewish converts to the Catholic creed—espoused his cause after his departure from Granada. Santangel was one of the leading Crown officials, and apparently his advocacy of Colón's project persuaded Queen Isabel to recall him. "Colón," states Madariaga, "was crossing the Bridge of Pinos, about eight miles out of Granada, when a Queen's *Alguazil* overtook his 'beast' with a swifter horse. He hesitated for a while, for as long as he thought of the *Alguazil* as coming from the Queen; then he realized the *Alguazil* came from the Lord, and he returned to Santa Fé—and to immortality."

Colón was an illustrious mariner, but a poor manager of men. After his first voyage to the Indies, his return to Spain was signalized by an outburst of congratulatory enthusiasm. But the lustre of his first triumph was dimmed when, on reaching his destination in his second voyage, he found that the Spanish colony he had hoped to establish in the New World had been exterminated by the natives. Moreover, food-stuffs were needed for the newly arrived sailors and settlers, and while waiting for the sown crops to ripen, farm animals and other catables must be sent from Spain until sufficient could be furnished in the recently discovered islands. Colón soon realized that precious stones and metals were far less abundant than he had imagined. So he suggests that a well-balanced commerce might be instituted if caravels laden with cattle were exported from Spain, to return to Europe with cargoes of Indian slaves which would lavishly recompense the Crown.

There were those who doubted whether all this trouble and expense was worth while. As our author observes: "The splendid conquests—Mexico, Peru, were to be achieved in the next reign. What had the Crown gained by his discovery? Antonio de Torres brought them news of a disastrous past, of a depressing present, of a disquieting future." No longer arrayed as the resplendent Admiral, Colón anchored in Cadiz in the garb of a Franciscan friar with grizzled hair, uncombed beard and humble mien. He was aware of his envious enemies, but he still felt certain of the continued favour of the royal couple. Indeed, he succeeded in securing the confirmation of all his privileges and emoluments, while preparations were made for a further voyage to the West.

In a brilliant chapter, Madariaga describes Colón's third adventure and its mournful sequel. Spaniards settled in the Indies had, in his absence, established an independent domain. They piously preached native protection while subjecting the aborigines to harsh treatment. The native women proved metal most attractive; the men were set to hard labour, while their lordly masters looked on. When he arrived, Colón was received as a meddling intruder, and he and his brethren were derided as apostate Israelites. "We know that the Admiral was attacked as a *Converso*," writes Madariaga, "because he says so himself in a sentence, the very obscurity of which is most suggestive; for Colón starts defending himself against the accusation before he has let out that he has been accused." But despite Colón's denial, the Spanish colony remained convinced of his Judaic ancestry. And it is significant that this charge was made at a

time when the Spanish Inquisition was busily burning alive converted, and allegedly backsliding, Jews.

Trouble increased, so Bobadilla was sent from Spain to administer justice in the new dominions and his intervention was bitterly resented by Colón. Bobadilla brushed aside the Admiral's objections and, as the latter refused to give way, he and his brother, Don Diego Colón were arrested and confined in chains. Also, when Colón's other brother, Don Bartholomé arrived he was subjected to the same fate.

Ultimately, Colón landed in Cadiz after a melancholy voyage throughout which he had remained in fetters. "These irons," it is said, "had become his pride, his glory, his most prized possession. He had them always with him and wished them to be buried with him." He was determined to make them the instruments of his restoration to authority.

When the Spanish monarchs became aware of Colón's incarceration they were astounded, and ordered his speedy deliverance. He was furnished with funds to enable him to repair to Court in a manner befitting his dignity. But it is urged that, although Bobadilla was unduly harsh, he had no alternative save severe measures in dealing with the visionary and imperious Colón and his rebellious brothers. At times half-demented with his meditations concerning prophecy, Colón was nevertheless enabled to embark on a fourth voyage, while three of his most inveterate enemies perished in a storm at sea, when he himself cast anchor off Jamaica in July, 1503.

This proved Colón's valedictory voyage, for he never sailed again, save in delirium at the time of his approaching death. There also appears some suggestion that Colón was preparing to return to the faith of his forefathers when he passed away at Valladolid in May, 1506.

T. F. PALMER

## This Vile Body

THE entire collection of antique creeds seems hopelessly divided on one or other item of belief. Perhaps the silliest of all these ridiculous and largely hypocritical pretensions is the oft recited but seldom believed clause: "I believe in the Resurrection of the body."

The Mosaic Law is quite definite about the horrors of having any contact with corpses (Lev. xxi. 11) "He that touches a dead body is unclean" (Num. xix. 11). As these sensible restrictions prohibited the bodies of circumcized believers who were dead being touched by circumcized believers still alive, there can be no point in Paul's teaching that a man's body somehow becomes incorruptible when he is circumcized (if that is what is implied by Colossians Chapter 2.) All the ascertainable facts are against that supposition.

Indeed there is a large religious literature which takes for granted that man's body—even the bodies of the most pious—must be described as "our vile body" (Phil. iii. 21), and there have been many Saints of God whose only quarrel with themselves was that the Soul or Spirit of man was continuously "cribb'd, cabin'd and confined" to the body.

R. L. Stevenson—author of some admirable fiction—told in the poorest of all his stories of a perfectly "good" man, Dr. Jekyll, whose wicked body—under the nom de plume of Mr. Hyde—performed ghastly tragedies, R.L.S. once acknowledged that this was his idea of illustrating the Seventh Chapter of Romans. And it is this horrible body of man which Christian Creeds insist shall return to life—some day.

Father Vincent McNabb's pamphlet *The Resurrec-*

*tion of the Body*, has reached its eighteenth Edition—a success which it merits by being a straightforward defence of a most illogical chimerical dream. He defends what is an authoritative doctrine of the Church of England and other credal Protestant Churches, no less than it is part of Father McNabb's own religious profession.

The dogma is comprehensively stated in a decision of the Lateran Council of A.D. 1215:—

The only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ, who will come at the end of time to judge the living and the dead, and to reward each according to their deeds, both the reprobate and the elect; all of whom will rise with their own proper bodies which they now bear, so that they may receive according to their deeds, whether good or evil.

The date 1215 is a little late in the day. Ages have passed since Moses and his successors—or supplanters—had told mankind all about the vileness of the body, and Jesus and Paul and the Very Earliest Fathers had proved their case. But it is a date in the Dark Ages when science and observation were not allowed to tell any truth which conflicted with doctrines suited to Church needs.

Father McNabb—with admirable frankness—admits that "the doctrine is an object of Faith," and that "natural reason can neither prove nor disprove it." But after so naïve an admission it seems jejune to devote sixteen pages of small print to "proving" something which "natural reason cannot prove." We wonder why anybody should worry about unnatural reason. If there are any "reasons" let us hear them. If a reason is valid, it is a "good" reason so far as truth is concerned.

When anyone says that "reason cannot disprove" a statement, it depends on the nature of the statement. If "X" says that the Cenotaph will be destroyed on or before this day week, we need wait only a few days to decide beyond doubt whether X's prediction is proved or disproved. But if "X" says the event he predicts will take place on or after "the end of time," it is nonsense to talk about reason being unable to prove or disprove a statement which reason cannot concern itself with. "The end of time" is the Lateran date of this bodily resurrection. "The end of time" is as good a definition of NEVER as we are likely to get.

That the doctrine of bodily resurrection—very differently expressed—is extremely ancient, we admit. But only in the form of continuity. It was really immortality, the absence of death, not death followed by resurrection.\* Gods and post mortem life, with Heavens and Hells—to say nothing of Purgatories are inventions of a sophisticated theology.

It is all very well for Dr. Inge to say, "The hope of immortality has no necessary connexion with religion" (*Truth and Falsehood in Religion* p. 164). Dr. Inge is one of many Modernist Churchmen who try to distinguish between the vulgar simplicity of belief in bodily resurrection and the high-brow school who say a man has "passed over" when they only mean that he is dead. Death is only a "sleep" to these, but the sleep is a precious long one. We even hear the franker or less cautious ones call it the "eternal" sleep. Really a man who sleeps for all eternity might just as well be called dead. He is as dead as a door-nail.

Dr. Inge's Church says, "I believe in the resurrection of the body," in the creed which is recited by every Anglican priest or curate at every service. Father McNabb defends it, The Modernist Anglican only SAYS he "believes" it.

\* See Chapman Cohen's, *The Other Side of Death*, Chapter ix.

We need not cavil over Mark xii. 43, where Jesus seriously diminishes the continuity of habit as between the living and the dead. He says, for instance, that:—

When they shall rise again from the dead they neither marry nor are given in marriage.

This very disagreeable law of life after resurrection is probably only one of the unpleasantnesses invented by enthusiasts for Monastic and convent life. To most of us it is a hint of the sort of after-life which popes and priests have in mind when they say they believe in bodily resurrection.

Difficulties inherent in the idea itself have forced reasoners to discard so illogical a belief, but most believers thoroughly understand that the Supernatural is also the Unnatural. Every housewife knows only too well that the current "supercharges" she has to endure are no IMPROVEMENT on the old "charges."

The difficulties referred to include the familiar one of identification. The parent who dies at 35 when his child is 10. Who will agree to accept an old gentleman at 85 as the son who was 10 when he left him a healthy youngster? Again, just as Faith-healers can cure every disease but cannot restore a lost leg, so we find difficulty in accepting our legless daughter when she comes to us with the usual number of limbs—in heaven—or anywhere else.

Instead of facing these and countless other difficulties, many so-called "believers" sublimate their creed into some kind of a "spirit survival." Some even talk about a "spiritual body"—much as the famous Hollywood magnate is said to have told a Star that "a verbal agreement is not worth the paper it's written on." A "glorified body." The resurrection of a "glorified" body is exactly the same as the resurrection of NO-BODY.

The Catholic Church has attempted to assist God in the difficult position He must be in to resurrect people whose bodies have been burnt and the ashes scattered to the winds. That Church has denounced Cremation as a "Mortal Sin"; the most hygienic form of funeral condemned by the most ignorant of superstitions.

Protestants need not least. Modernists have no superiority of teaching about what happens after death. Moreover, Father McNabb is right if he thinks that resurrection MUST be PHYSICAL resurrection. There is no other resurrection imaginable. We remember Charles Bradlaugh being confronted with a very persistent Spiritualist who "saw" the ghost of a dear friend "haunting" the presence of the great Atheist. "He was a soldier," said the Medium, "I know that because he wears a red coat." "And brass buttons?" asked the impatient Atheist. "Yes," said the Medium. "You have proved too much," said Bradlaugh, "You have seen the spirit of some brass buttons as well as the spirit of a dead man."

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH

Trust him little who praises all, him less who censures all, and him least who is indifferent about all.—*Lavater*.

It is very often more necessary to conceal Contempt than Resentment, the former being never forgiven, but the latter sometimes forgot.—*Chesterfield*.

The Church's official theology, and portions of the Prayer Book which enshrine that theology, are out of date in a number of ways and need reformation. Terrible doctrines, such as that of everlasting torment, the depravity of human nature, the Divine demand for an expiatory atonement, have been discredited and abandoned.

Rev. H. D. A. Major.

## The Great God Ghu

AMERICAN tabernacles are tilting at the latest and most offensive joss to decorate the American scene. The newcomer is no less a person than the Magnificent and Omnipotent Ghu-Ghu (pronounced Goo-Goo), described by his enthusiastic followers as, "The Greatest God Wot Ever Woz!" It seems that Ghu-Ghu is grabbing the kids. Worse, he is a copy-cat.

Orthodoxy's tirade against this fresh and astonishingly frank rival is now rising crescendo, one loud and holy trumpeting sounding from the region of San Diego, Calif., where the Danielle Publishers have issued at a dollar a seemly tome entitled *Crucifying Christ in our Colleges*. The gist of the book is that American collegians are not of the little flock, and are so far on the way to hell that their hair already is smouldering.

This Ghu-Ghu, like his more antiquated competitors, had a miraculous birth. He was conceived, in a period of inebriation, by a "chosen" New Yorker. Whether this bibulous gentleman leaned to extremes in ridicule, or whether he was strongly in favour of "faith—and no foolin'" will never be known. Ghu-Ghu, having been born, flatly refused to be buried. He, or it, entered the fertile missionary fields of America's colleges and gained himself a vociferous following.

The cult threatens to spread to this side of the Atlantic. From strenuous efforts to "convert" the writer, the following information has been gained:—

Ghu-Ghu was born of "The One And Only True Spirit" (Four Roses Whisky). His leading representative, now titled, "The Most Venerable His Oili-ness the Pip," has power to appoint bishops and other princes of the church as he sees fit. Qualification for a bishopric is "firm and bigoted belief in Ghu, coupled with expertness in the sonorous enunciation of pious piffle."

The church of Ghu-Ghu, it is said, "specializes in doing forgiving of any sort." It is thinking of issuing "forms to clients" complete with dotted line for the customer's particular "sin," and headed—believe it or not—RUSH ME FORGIVENESS AS PER YOUR SPECIAL OFFER.

Dispensation is invariably granted if you are a "true believer" ready to assist Ghu on any and every occasion. (You help Ghu—Ghu help you). They are considering the issue of a businesslike tariff: "To forgiving a burp (belch) while discussing an overdraft, one dime. To forgiving a first adultery, one dollar; second, two dollars; third, five dollars. To forgiving a momentary doubt about the actuality of Ghu, two bits." And so on. Two bits are twenty-five cents.

Vials of "Oily Water" are for sale to Ghuists, also quantities of "genuine, certified, and miraculously potent relics," raked from city scrap-heaps. All of which suggests that the wildest of American youth are having "a great time" with this ruthless parody of the Roman Catholic faith. The more moderate of us may deplore such extremism—but even that is characteristic of the faith that is being parodied.

ERIC FRANK RUSSELL

The unscrupulousness of the priestly character is almost proverbial. The man who wants to make a square deal—neither to do nor to be done—would rather deal with profane Esau than with pious Jacob. Hence the widespread opinion that religion and conduct have not much to do with each other.—*Dean Inge*.

## Swedenborg and Transmigration

In my school years I was deeply impressed by Bacon's essay *Of Truth*. He made me feel that "There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious." And since then when any statement of mine has been questioned I have never felt happy until the truth has been established.

Recent events have caused me to consult several authorities, every one of whom I find supports me. I will quote here only two of these authorities. (1) *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14th Ed., p. 331—"A modified form of it (Metempsychosis) was adopted by Swedenborg." The 8 Vol. Ed. of the *Heavenly Arcana* is also mentioned.

(2) Emerson's *Representative Men*: the gist of his essay on Swedenborg I have abbreviated, in the following, in the forlorn hope that my two foemen may become worthy of my steel!

An artist of striking individuality is a great man. On some of his fellows he acts as a stimulant, urging them forward to further discovery. Others of his fellows, his light being too strong for their weak eyes, fall down and worship him.

This act of worship, and its divisions, has rendered possible the rule of tyrants. Lovers of power know, that without its aid they could not reign.

The ledger of the Recording Angel must be an interesting book. Its credit balances are said to be very small, while its Debit balances, even of some of the greatest men the world has yet seen, are thought, by many, to be very large.

I have wished often that I could have a glance at Swedenborg's account. But, Pardon's the word for all! Knowing the man, who could condemn him?

He was an epileptic. A morbid creature with an introverted mind, his illumination began, 1743, when he was fifty-four years of age. After eight years of this illumination, he wrote very learnedly on finance! At the diet of 1751, Count Hopken informs us that "the most solid memorial on finance were from his pen. "Grande fortune, grande servitude!"

From men of genius he cribbed all the leading ideas unfolded in some 25 of the 50 octavos he gave to the world. He can lay no claim to originality.

Where oft Devotion's tranced glow  
Can such a glimpse on Heaven bestow.

(Scott)

It terrifies the tenement of clay; drives a man mad; or gives a violent bias which taints his judgment.

He considered himself an abnormal, highly privileged person, able to converse with angels and spirits.

His theological bias ruined his interpretation of nature.

"His religion," says Emerson, "is a mere form for him, and is of universal application. . . . The immense and sandy diffusiveness of his theological writings, is like the prairies or the desert, and their incongruities are like the last delirium. The vice of Swedenborg's mind is its theological determination. Nothing with him has the liberality of universal wisdom. We are always in Church."

Swedenborg and Behmen both failed by attaching themselves to the Christian symbol, instead of the moral sentiment, which carries innumerable christianities, humanities, divinities, in its bosom. . . . His revelations destroy their credit by running into detail. . . . The secret of heaven is kept from age to age. No imprudent, no sociable angel ever dropt an early syllable to answer the longings of saints, the fears of mortals. . . . His angels are all country parsons. . . . His Hells—nobody ever had such science of filth and corruption."

Behmen shows himself a much greater man than Swedenborg when he tells us:—

In some sort, love is greater than God.

Behmen may be as mystically narrow and incommunicable as Swedenborg, but he is healthy and human, he attracts while Swedenborg paralyses and repels.

Metempsychosis, which is the old mythology of the Greeks—collected in Ovid—and in the Indian Transmigration—is *objective* or really takes place in bodies by

alien will—in Swedenborg's mind has a more philosophical character; says Emerson, it is *subjective*, or depends entirely on the thought of the person.

Much may be read into Swedenborg. No really definite meaning can be given to many of his pronouncements. He was conscious of this duality of meaning which he said even applied to Scripture.

The student, of unbiassed mind, in search of truth, will class Swedenborg's writings with "The revelations of devout and learned"; but like Whitman, Swedenborg is large, he contains multitudes! He can be all things to all students. Seek and ye shall find what you're looking for.

As is your type of mind  
So is your sort of search.—(Browning)

For many centuries yet will the writings of men and women like Mohammed, Swedenborg, Joanna Southcott, and Joseph Smith find followers.

Rationality is, probably, the last phase of human development.

GEORGE WALLACE

## Acid Drops

It will be remembered that it was a Roman Catholic Bishop at Liverpool who said that it would be better for children to be bombed in Liverpool, rather than run the risk of contamination by Protestants in Wales. It was also some of the Roman Catholic leaders who protested against the children of the Spanish governmental supporters being sent to Britain to escape being bombed and machine-gunned by Italians and Germans. In all cases it is the Church first, and the present Pope has not had the manliness openly to denounce Mussolini the jackal, bully and brute, for his entering into the war. All he can do is to weep crocodile tears over the wickedness of mankind. It is the Church, first, second, and all the time. In spirit and in practice this is Fascism pure and simple. The worst features of Fascism, the imposition of blind obedience on Catholics, the denial of liberty of speech, the training of children so that they can hear nothing but Roman Catholicism. The question of whether Roman Catholicism with unfettered power is more or less harmful than Fascism has no point. Both are based on essentially the same principles. That one works in the name of the State and the other in the name of the Church is unimportant to anyone—save Roman Catholics and Fascists.

So we are not surprised to find that Roman Catholic leaders are rather dubious about supporting Britain in the present war, Cardinal Dougherty, of Philadelphia (U.S.A.) advises his American followers to "mind our own business and not become catspaws." He says countries in Europe have turned their backs on God and are being chastised, but, according to the *Catholic Herald*, "that does not mean that better people will take their place." He says that present conditions should not "depress our people." Another writer in the *Herald* quotes, with strong disapproval, the following from the *Evening Standard*:—

On the Nazi side lie the forces which threaten black tyranny to all nations. On our side of the barricade lie the forces which hold the prospect, not of a return to the old world of pre-1940, but of a new world in which Russia, like ourselves, may secure settled peace.

But the Catholic Church would sooner have the world perish than see a country have settled peace which has officially declared itself to be against religion. From a Church which plunged the world into the thousand years of retrogression and religious brutality one could expect nothing else. We should never forget that Fascism will never be dead in principle so long as the Roman Church exists.

God's agent, the Pope, has taken every precaution to protect himself against air-raids. This defence does not consist of prayers and relics, but of bomb-proof dugouts.

So we are not astonished to find that the annual pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Margaret of Scotland was postponed. These god-protected people wilt quite as rapidly as the ungodly, and if a raid is probable an Anderson shelter is preferable to a cathedral.

Alfred Loisy, the great ex-Catholic theologian, died on June 1, at Caffonds in France. He was, perhaps, the greatest of contemporary theologians, his modernistic views being responsible for his excommunication by the Pope. Loisy had little use for the credulous faith of his fellow believers, and his published works made havoc with the "history" of the Gospels. He never gave up his vague belief in a "teacher" named Jesus around whom, in his opinion, the Gospels were written by pious all-believing followers, who filled up the lacunæ with myths and legends. At any other time but this, his death would have received notices all over the world, and appreciations from all who rank devotion to truth and great scholarship as desirable qualities in a world of conflicting ideals.

But his rejection of the Christian mythology was complete. Here are his own words, as quoted in the *Church Times*, "I regard the personal incarnation of God as philosophical mythology. Christ holds a less position in my religion than in that of liberal Protestants." One day we may confidently anticipate one of the evidences of the undeveloped state of the mentality of the twentieth century will be that they could solemnly discuss on the basis of even probable happenings the fantastically absurd primitive story of god-men executed so that the sins of man might be forgiven. Hitler and his gang are not the only uncivilized minds with which we have to deal.

We are having in the present war an illustration of the social evil of the persistence in power of such primitive ideas as are imbedded in the Christian religion. The deification of the State is not a bit more ridiculous or more harmful than the deification of the Church. The professional grovelling for forgiveness for sins we may never have committed, the distortion of moral values in the foolish and lying declaration that we are all sinners is permitting the lives of young men to be ended because we older ones have offended against God, the distortion of history and life by religious ideas, all have their reaction in the backwardness and incoherence of our social life. It is many years ago since Sir James Frazer warned us, as a consequence of his gigantic survey of the savage ideas that dominate life as a whole, that European civilization was threatened by this persistence of the primitive. And now we have a demonstration of his forecast. But we still have a powerful Church in this country that can solemnly in times of national danger call upon us to behave as our primitive ancestors, when just a stage or two removed from the animal world behaved, and insisting that nothing but a complete conscious return to that stage of life will save civilization. Hitler and his gang could offer no greater threat to the security of civilization than would be manifested if this complete revival of religion took place.

The Book of Psalms is recommended by the Rev. Copland Simmons, M.A.: "Take a course in the Psalms," says he, "to lift you out of your depression." Those who take the preacher's advice will perhaps be like the man who was recommended a certain brand of sherry to cure his gout. He wrote his friend later saying: "I much prefer the gout." David—the alleged "psalmist" was not only the vilest of kings and worst of Sadists, he was also—if he wrote the psalms attributed to him—the most depressed of pessimists. He was "the man after God's own heart"—in God's worst moods. The suggested "course of psalms" would land in a lunatic asylum anybody not gifted with a sense of humour. Of course we acquit Mr. Simmons of any such sense, so perhaps he had better steer clear of those psalms on which the Germans have based their humourless Hymn of Hate. Why not try the *Song of Solomon*—it is by no means dull, and is distinctly funny in parts.

Dr. Matthews, in a recent talk on "Superstition and Religion," tried hard to persuade his hearers that true religion, by which he meant only his own version of Christianity, was not only *not* superstitious, but was actually the greatest enemy of superstition. One of his illustrations was that of "touching wood." It appears that if you "touched wood" in the ordinary way, that was genuine superstition; but if at the time of "touching wood" you thought that it was the wood of the True Cross you were touching, this was not only *not* superstition, but you were actually proving how great and true your Faith was. Whether Dr. Matthews really believes that this solemn and touching illustration of the difference between true Religion and gross Superstition got home to his hearers we have no means of knowing; but one would dearly like to have the opinion of Dr. Inge on the question—and also what he thinks of his successor.

But we must do Dr. Matthews justice. He did not tell his hearers that the way to win the war was to grovel on one's knees. He admitted that it could only be won by the will of the people—through courage and work. Nothing about religion, or prayer, or through God's good will. That at least shows some progress; Dr. Matthews must be congratulated. But what does the Archbishop of Canterbury say?

Bishop Walter Carey has written a series of articles in the *Church Times* for Service men and ordinary folk. Perhaps "ordinary folk" may be able to stand him for a while, but surely the "Service men" have enough troubles without having Bishop Carey. In any case he need not treat them as though they were incurable idiots. For instance he says that men must ask themselves, Jesus said he was God's son. If he wasn't, what was he? Jesus said he would rise from the dead. If he didn't what converted the apostles? And so on. We imagine that the service man, with any intelligence might reply that there is no evidence that any such person ever lived. And, if he did and called himself the son of God, such religious extravagances are very common in the history of the world. We have only the legend of the wonderful "turn over" of the apostles, and the belief of a man that he would rise from the dead is not the slightest evidence that he did so, nor is the belief of certain people that he did, worth, as evidence, the value of a row of pins. But is there any need for Bishop Carey to treat men in the service in this fashion. Does he think they are children or fools?

This is the way the *Church Times* sums up the present situation with regard to fundamental Christian beliefs. It is a summary made in a recent orthodox work, and states the present position very well, as it appears to a real Christian:—

Fifth Columnists have prepared the way. First they have insinuated that the manner of His Coming into the world was no different from that of any other man—that belief in the Virgin birth is immaterial, that the manner of His death need not be thought of as different from that of other men—that His Body, as our own will, saw corruption, and that it is not important to believe in the Empty Tomb. A Christianity has been taught which omits the doctrine of Redemption, and has been popularized by a hymn book expurgated of all reference to salvation through the precious Blood.

The way was thus prepared for the conception of the Hero Christ, the summit of human development, the supreme example of moral excellence; "plain undogmatic Christianity" was the acclaimed ideal. The result has been a conventional respect for "the historic Christ," combined with freedom to disagree with Him.

That is not a bad summary of the way in which present-day Christians have tried to ward off the attack on the Christian superstition. But the summary is incomplete inasmuch as the Christian story has been completely exploded by its affiliation to primitive beliefs from which the educated mind has for long dissociated itself. The substitution of pseudo-ethical Christianity is of no use. We agree with the *Church Times* on this, and when that journal faces the whole of the facts we shall think the more of both its courage and its honesty.

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# THE FREETHINKER

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L. MASON.—We do not see any better policy for the present than to sit tight and keep smiling. Things are never made better by moaning, although it may give some people relief to indulge in it. Generally it means gratifying one's own feelings at the expense of others.

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## Sugar Plums

We see that the Government is being pressed to allow arrangements to be made whereby "parents with means" will be allowed to send their children to Canada and maintain them at their own expense. It will be a disgrace to the country if any such arrangement is permitted. If the children can be sent away out of danger that should be done, but to make special arrangements for "parents with means" will inevitably lead to a selection being made, and children whose parents are without "means" finding themselves among the last batch, or not able to go at all. The sending of children to Canada should be open to all on equal terms. Parents with means should be compelled to pay the British Government whatever expenses are incurred by us. The Canadians have offered us hospitality, they have not asked to have their country turned into a profit-making boarding-house, and should be guarded against insult from "parents with means." Parentage is not a question of financial or social status. It is time that we thought of Britain as Britain and not as constituted of certain families or classes, with the rest of the population as mere ciphers used to make the total look impressive.

G.B. writes in the *Stockport Express* of June 20:—

As an old soldier who has attended thousands of compulsory military church parades in all parts of the world in peace and war, I always had a feeling of resentment at being compelled to attend such parades. I know of no other Army that carries a Chaplain's Corps—certainly our French friends see to it that their young clergy are conscripted. It was quite common to meet French soldiers who in civilian life were priests. I should be ashamed to dodge my duty to defend Christian civilization against the hordes of pagans, atheists, etc.

## SPECIAL

WITH a view to meeting circumstances that may arise with a prolongation of the war, we should be greatly helped if each subscriber to the *Freethinker* would be good enough to send us his, or her, name and address. We refer only to those who procure their copies through newsagents. Those who order direct from the office have their addresses already on our books.

The circumstances we have in view may never arise, but it is well to be prepared for all kinds of difficulties. We have, so well as we can, guarded the future of the paper in many directions, and this suggestion represents the last contingency of which we can think—at the moment.

All that is required is just a name and an address on a postcard or in a letter. We shall know to what it refers. Our readers have assisted us so willingly, and in so many directions, that we do not hesitate to ask this further help.

CHAPMAN COHEN

The persistence of this compulsory religious parade which forces men to obey orders, so far as the parade is concerned, to an act of gross hypocrisy, is a fine commentary upon a war for freedom. It is high time it was abolished.

When we first visited South Wales, for lecturing purposes, we heard a great deal of Dr. William Price, who had recently died. Dr. Price was born in 1800, and died in 1893, so that his birth covered the whole of the nineteenth century, less seven years. The father of William Price was an ordained minister of the Church of England, but the son seems at a very early age to have thrown off the family religion, and if not a declared unbeliever was certainly entitled to the name of "*Freethinker*." He had a great knowledge of Druidism, and tried to revive a kind of nature worship of which Druidism formed the core. Religion, he said, was due to man's fear of the unknown, and his dislike of the clergy was intense. Of the clergy he said "they are paid to teach that the world of thieves and oppressors, of landlords and coal-owners is a just world. . . . Man is greater than God, for man created God in his own image." Such sentiments in the early part of the nineteenth century must alone have made him a marked man.

Price took a London medical degree, and showed himself, for the times, as heretical in medicine as he was in other directions. Orthodox medicine, he said, attacked the symptoms of disease without paying any attention to the causes. He declared, roundly, that the people were suffering from the mistakes of the profession. He was probably one of the earliest of the Nature Cure advocates. Vegetarianism was another heresy of his. Later he took part in the Chartist movement and narrowly escaped arrest. He avoided this by adopting the disguise of a woman, and was actually assisted from a Welsh port on to a vessel sailing from Liverpool by a Police-Inspector who had in his pocket a warrant for Price's arrest. Escaping to Paris he paid several visits to Heine, who was greatly interested in Price's exposition of Druidism. This was Price's pet subject. He became quite an authority, and claimed to be the last of the Druid priests.

It was this that led to his becoming a pioneer of cremation. In spite of the opposition of the police he persisted in cremating the body of his child, using some two and a half tons of coal in the process. Indicated for this, his trial aroused world-wide attention, Price conducting his own defence dressed in the full regalia of a Druid priest. Justice Stephens tried the case and acquitted Price on the

ruling that "a person who burns a dead body does not commit a criminal act, unless he does it in such a manner as to amount to a public nuisance at common law." In the case of his own body Price made elaborate preparations. There was to be two tons of coal and one "core" of wood used. The ashes were to be scattered, "thus helping the grass to grow and the flowers to bloom." The cremation of the lusty old heretic, after a battle with established customs and opinions in many directions, took place on January 31, 1893. People were still talking about Price and his opinions when we visited Wales soon after that date. A brief sketch of Price has just been issued by W. G. Poyle, Charing Cross Road, at 6d. But it would seem that a more elaborate study is deserved. Anyway, it is good to have something in permanent form of a very remarkable man. The title of the booklet is *A Welsh Heretic*; author, T. Islwyn Nicholas.

One of the scandals of this war period is certainly the unashamed manner in which the B.B.C.'s religious campaign is exploiting the fear and credulity of sections of the British public in the interests of religion.

On Sunday, July 7, the Birmingham Branch N.S.S. will have another of its popular rambles. Members and friends of the movement wishing to attend are asked to meet at the Dudley Zoo entrance, by the station at 3 p.m. A ramble and an exchange of ideas among kindred spirits is a very enjoyable way of spending a Sunday half-day in summer weather.

## Devils all Around

THE Devil goeth about like a roaring lion, we have been told by those who specialize in Devils. "Why doesn't God kill Debbil?" asked Man Friday and paused for a reply. Zoroastrianism considered existence as we know it to be the result of a fight between a Personification of Good and Evil Principles; a fight always going on. There have been, indeed, Christian Heresies that were sensible enough to consider that a game of Pull Devil Pull Baker was eternally in progress. This was a pretty justifiable inference if the existence of a supernatural world was admitted. An omnipotent God, an omniscient God, an All loving God, who refuses to apply the Half Nelson to his rival, is not understandable. The game of Pull Devil Pull Baker may be *heresy*, but there are points about it which get rid of a major absurdity.

The Bible is full of Devils. When we got the New Dispensation there the Devil was in the midst of it. The Second Person of the Trinity was carted about in the air by the Devil. Devils filled the atmosphere in the time of Jesus, and entered into human beings by way of the mouth, nose and ears. Not only that, but entered into pigs, dogs, beetles and flies. Jesus did much of his excellent work rooting out the devils from human beings—and, we are told, swine.

Not only that but devils entered into inanimate objects. Holy Church took Water and exorcised the devils from it; they took Salt and exorcised the devils from it. Then they mixed the two, threw in an extra blessing and we had HOLY WATER. Good stuff this Holy Water!

Christianity took a long time to make headway. But when through Constantine it came to strength and found itself able to impress itself upon multitudes of men and women, then the Devil and his offspring came into their own. If one peruses Coulton's *Five Centuries of Religion* one can obtain a correct idea of the extent to which a belief in devils was prevalent. The specks of dust lit up by a sunbeam in a dark room were less in number than the demons of the air. And it was the saint who was the particular victim of

the devil. When the Holy Man went to Church devils would swing on his eyebrows, and the weight would force the saint to close his eyes; another would make a noise like unto a snore. The result would be that the pious person would appear to be asleep and his control over the less pious would be lessened. Very, very, very subtle were our devils in their methods.

All the popular ailments were caused by devils. Headaches, colds, indigestion, meant that the devils were on the rampage. Eructations signified that the devils were making their exit. Sleep was risky, as an open mouth made the successful entrance of a devil easy. In the shape of midges, and larger and more repulsive objects, they walked into the mouths of human beings—and then came trouble.

What was the remedy? Plenty of Signs of the Cross, plenty of devotional exercises. *Benedicite* became the favourite expletive. At the sound, the devil turned and fled. At the sign of the Cross, the devils wilted. But if in spite of all one's gymnastics, one became chronically troubled with "wind," then the exorcist was called in. Holy Church had a special position for the exorcist. This gentleman knew exactly what to do and what to say. Three times to the right, three times to the left; three here, three there; a Salvo of correctly timed *Benedicites*, and the devils were out—the eructations ceased. A suitable cash remembrance of the services rendered finished the transaction.

Devils, devils, everywhere! The Fathers were keen Devil Hunters. Their special religious gifts were instrumental in keeping the devilish army at bay. The Slogan in those days was Have you a Headache, Have you Colic, Have you a Rheum? Come to Exorcist Ernest. He will do it while you wait. Blessed be the name of the Lord!

Demons to right of them, demons to left of them, volleyed and thundered. God was in his Heaven; all was right with the Devils. Take the Sacraments. Recite the Creeds. Inhale the Incense. It will make you all the more prone to receive demonical visitations. The more visitations, the more exorcisms, the more visits to Holy Church; still more holiness, still more visitations, still more indigestion, still more flatulence. A vicious circle indeed!

Theology and Demonology are of the same coinage. Gods and Devils grow happily together in the same type of brain. If nowadays a man goes to the chemist for a soda-mint when he has digestive trouble and does not say *Benedicite*, it is a most regrettable sign. It shows that Christian values are going. It shows that a vile thing called Science is making its presence felt in spite of simple faith and simple ignorance. It is this vile disposition to depart from the beliefs of our fathers which is responsible for bombs on Paris, bombs on Spain, bombs on Abyssinia!

To give up the belief in Devils is to give up Christianity. So thought Wesley. Wesley did not see as many devils around him as were obvious in the Ages of Faith, but he saw many. He allowed a little logic to enter his mind; but not too much. He might have gone much further, but the facts held him back. He saw Jesus in the clutch of the Devil careering through the air, and the two chatting with each other on the top of Popocatepetl. He saw the devilled porkers scampering into the sea at the behest of the Second Person of the Trinity. He might have gone further, but Jesus who taught him when he prayed to say Deliver Me from the Evil One, extinguished any hope of further free-minded hikes into the lands where logic takes you. Too clearly he saw TO GIVE UP DEMONOLOGY WAS TO GIVE UP THE BIBLE.

Back, back, we are commanded, to Christian Values. Beware of the scientific method, beware of

the man who tries to build you a good house, beware of the man who tries to determine what is good and suitable food, beware of the man who maps out for men and women a reasonable hygiene; beware of the man who speaks of *cause and effect*. Traitors all! Traitors to the Holy Christian Church. Traitors to the Blood and the Body! Traitors to Piety, Devotion, Anæsthesia. Rejectors of the Vision Splendid—Jesus and the Devil chatting on the top of a high mountain and Jesus scoring a verbal triumph. And the Devil in the presence of Omnipotence left alive to try his wiles for yet another day! Hard luck!

T. H. ELSTON

## Mr. H. Belloc and the "Norm"

In the Roman Catholic weekly, *The Universe*, for May 31, Mr. Hilaire Belloc had an article entitled "Civilization Passing from National War to Social War." It began with the statement, "Every war is a religious war," which was explained to mean this: "At the root of every conflict between human communities, the matter at issue is the different object of worship held by either party, and the different way in which each conceives human life to be arranged." "Thus," went on Mr. Belloc, "to-day, with modern men, the object of worship is the Nation"; but he went on to add that there is also "a certain ideal of social justice, heretical, and therefore poisonous, but which is sincerely held and arouses passionate devotion"; namely, Communism. This ideal, and the conflicts arising from it, are causing the world to pass into the phase less of national wars than of social conflicts over ideologies.

There is a good deal of truth in that thesis of Belloc's, though, characteristically, he tends to exaggerate it. The last part of his article, however, calls for special examination, for it endeavours to point out to us where to find the remedy for the problems thus confronting us. He says:—

The world is fortunate in possessing at such a moment the *Norm* of the Catholic Church in its midst. The Catholic Church presents a certain code of morals and of conduct which, if it be sufficiently adhered to, can prevent both the social evils which more and more threaten us with universal conflict and the false Communist doctrine to which larger and larger numbers are beginning to look for social salvation. It is the *certitude* and the proclaimed Divine Authority of the Church which to-day alone stand between the world and chaos: therefore, the position and the claim of the Faith must necessarily grow more and more apparent to the world as a whole as our time proceeds. No one else has an answer to the main questions which preoccupy the soul of man: "What am I? Whence came I? Whither do I go?"

At first sight this suggestion—that the rule ("norm") by which all the social problems of the world are to be judged, is the Roman Catholic Church—will seem merely absurd and even impudent in the eyes of people who regard that organization as not merely only a religious denomination, but also as a very narrow and out-of-date one. Nevertheless, the fact must be recognized that there are large numbers of people who believe that Church to be the organ of Divine revelation, and other large numbers who look on it as at least full of "the wisdom of the centuries." Therefore let us take Belloc's thesis seriously, and analyse it.

In the first place, the Roman Catholic Church is not the only religious body which might put forward such a claim. Any such body, which has a systematized

code of doctrine and an ancient history, might do so. Judaism, for example. In his very interesting book, *Judaism as Creed and Life* (London, Macmillans, 1903, pp. 150, 156, 157), the Rev. Morris Joseph said: "Israel has been chosen by God to be a consecrated race—a race distinguished by holiness of life and by the possession of the purest religious truth. . . . It is in no arrogant temper that we claim to be the chosen people. . . . But Israel has not been chosen solely for his own spiritual and moral advantage. . . . Great truths and ideals he has, but he has them in trust for the world." This is just as plausible a claim as that of "Rome"—indeed, more so, seeing that Judaism is the more ancient. A race holding aloft the torch of pure truth for the whole world. This is as logical as the conception advocated by Belloc. Then, again, there is Islam, the religion of Mohammed. As Sale, in the "Introductory Discourse" to his translation of the Koran, said (§4): "The fundamental position on which Mohammed erected the superstructure of his religion was that from the beginning to the end of the world there has been, and ever will be, only one orthodox belief. . . . Under pretext that this eternal religion was in his time corrupted, and professed in its purity by no one sect of men, Mohammed pretended to be a prophet sent by God to reform those abuses that had crept into it, and to reduce it to its primitive simplicity."

In short, "the world is fortunate in possessing" (to adapt Belloc's words) "the *Norm* of Islam in its midst"—or of Judaism, or, indeed, of any ancient and systematized code which likes to make the claim. That is the first weakness of Belloc's theory: it can be adopted by so many different claimants, and who is to decide amongst them?

Secondly, *facts do not confirm* Belloc's conception of the Roman Church as a body which "presents a certain code of morals and conduct which, if it be sufficiently adhered to, can prevent the social conflicts which more and more threaten us." Here we can apply the test of plain, ascertainable historic facts. If the Roman Church has such a beneficent influence, it should have been able to exercise it during its centuries of power. Did it do so? When the Protestant Reformation broke out in the sixteenth century, the Roman Church had enjoyed ages of such power as no religious body had ever before held: power so great that it did not seem an absurdity for Pope Boniface VIII., in 1302, in his Bull *Unam Sanctam*, to say that "the two swords, spiritual and temporal, are then in the Church's power; the first to be wielded (*exercendus*) by the Church, the other *for* the Church; the first by the priests, the other by kings and soldiers, but at the beck and permission of the priest (*ad nutum et patientiam sacerdotis*" see Addis and Arnold's *Catholic Dictionary*, ed. 1917, p. 833).

Surely, if the Roman Church is the *Norm*, alone able "to stand between the world and chaos," it ought to have done so in its days of power: but did it? What its long reign ultimately led to was that (to quote Froude's *History of England*, Vol. I., p. 506) by the sixteenth century; "there was the same weariness of unreality, the same craving for a higher life. . . . At such times the minds of men are like a train of gunpowder, the isolated grains of which have no relation to each other, and no effect on each other, while they remain unignited; but let a spark kindle but one of them and they shoot into instant union in a common explosion. Such a spark was kindled in Germany, at Wittenberg, on the 31st of October, 1517 [by Luther]." And—in case it may be replied that Froude was "a red-hot Protestant," and therefore prejudiced—we may quote another, and more recent, writer, who put it even more strongly:—

The official organization of the Catholic Church had been thrown suddenly into disarray. It had been caught, as they used to say of sailing ships, by a squall "all standing." It was morally very weak. There had been gross and universal corruption, there had been for so long a growing scepticism and indifference that the power of the clerical organization to reform itself was numbed and atrophied. Attack from without was therefore easy, rapid and explosive; reform from within was apparently impossible; the complicated machinery was ill-kept and incapable of rapid readjustment. Under so violent a strain the gear jammed. And the Papacy, which controlled all, was in the worst case of all.

The writer of these words was Hilaire Belloc himself, on p. 218 of his book, *How the Reformation Happened* (London, Cape, 1928): a book originally published as a series of articles in *The Universe*. Moreover, Belloc was equally strong on pp. 7-8 of another book (*Wolsey*, London, Cassell, 1930):—

This universal organization of the Church, or rather the Church itself, its officers (that is, its priesthood and hierarchy), its routine methods had sunk during the last two generations into an increasingly diseased condition. Its rules had become mechanical, the clergy, especially in the higher ranks, were worldly and their lives often scandalous. Against this state of affairs men had been protesting and had by Wolsey's time began to clamour.

Can it be maintained seriously that a Church, whose rule in the days of its power led to those results, is "the Norm . . . between the world and chaos"? Perhaps, however, Mr. Belloc might reply that he had carefully added that the Church is *effectively* such a Norm only "if its code of morals and conduct be *sufficiently adhered to*." Such a plea, however, is of no avail. Mr. Belloc himself admits that "the Papacy . . . was in the worst case of all," and that "the Church itself" was at fault.

In reality, the doctrine of the Roman Church has none of the characteristics of a serene, impartial Norm. It is, on the contrary, very one-sided. It claims special privileges, in the State, for its clergy, and looks with favour on the repression of dissenting views; it has an Index of Forbidden Books, which, if effective, would fatally impede education and culture; it is ultra-conservative. In short, it is narrow, intolerant and very "sectarian." It has none of the qualifications to be a Norm.

We do not want organized "Norms" at all, but free, open-minded progress by individual enquiry and effort. Experience, not authority, is the truest teacher.

J. W. PONYER

## The Character of a Sea-Chaplain by Ned Ward (1707)

A SEA-CHAPLAIN is one that in his junior Days was brought up in the Fear of the Lord; but the University reasoned it out of him at last, and he has oft-times thanked his good Stars for it.

It is his Happiness, he believes, that he stayed not to take any deep Root at the College, for then he might unfortunately have grown up to be a Pedant, and por'd himself into Stupidity.

He has improved his Sense wonderfully, since he came to be a Fellow-Commoner in the Navy, insomuch that no Man living can impose a Fallacy upon his Understanding, in any Element that comes within the Verge of the Cock-Room; nay, such is the Strength of his Intellects, and so admirable his Penetration, that he shall spy out Wild-Fowl, when they are, as it were, in the Clouds to all besides, and smell out Roast-meat

a good League off, or better; but though he be really a Person of singular Taste, and nice of Sense, he never has the Vanity to be thought so.

He is seldom oppressed with the Drudgery of Prayer; once a Day were an intolerable Burden, that would lie heavier upon his Stomach than rusty Pork or Burgoo.

He is a Preacher, tho' he never once came within a Pulpit; he holds forth, according to the true primitive Way; I don't mean in a Tub, but a much surer Footing; for standing upon the firm Deck, he hangs his Nose and Arms over the Back of a Chair, and so falls to splitting his Text most methodically; but the plain Truth is, it is ready split to his Hands; for he is so orthodox a Parson as to offer you no Sermon, but what has passed the Test of the Press, and has perhaps the Fist of a Bishop too, to warrant it sound Ware.

A dozen or two of these are his whole Stock; and therefore, to prevent a too nauseous Tautology, he every Year, if he can, removes into a fresh Ship, among new Parishioners, and seldom does there fail of his own Tribe, ready to change with him upon the very same Motive.

He is one shall make a Text point as many Ways as the Compass, and never wants a Pocket full of them, to comfort his Heart with upon any carnal Occasion.

Tho' he speaks more Truths than an Oracle, yet he seldom says as he thinks; his Nose and his Tongue are Dissenters to each other, and very rarely jump in the Colours of Good and Evil; by the one you may hear, that nothing is so precious as the Word of the Lord, and by the other you may both see and feel, that a good Bottle, in his Senses, is ten times more valuable than the Bible. The plain Truth is, he is much better at composing a Bowl of Punch than a Sermon.

He seldom molests a poor dying Soul with his Visits, because he wisely considers, that a Sailor is a Man of no Ceremony; he verily creates far more Peace of Conscience to the Ship's Company by his Practice than his preaching; for he is the great Exemplar they walk by.

There's as great a Difference betwixt him and a reverend Divine, as betwixt a Quack Doctor and a learned Physician; and he will never shew it more than when you offer to tell him so; for he will be readier to confute you with his Fists than any other Proofs whatever.

He reckons a sober Chaplain in the Navy to be a downright Nonconformist, and thinks himself obliged in Conscience to keep aloof from him to avoid being tainted with so damnable a Heresy.

He's an equal Enemy to Popery and Calvinism, and manifests it thoroughly in his Zeal for a Sirloin in Lent, and mine'd Pyes at Christmas.

There's no Hell to him like living eternally on salt Provisions; Fire and Brimstone is but a Fool to it.

Of all Ceremonies, he likes well that of a Cushion in Praying; yet, to show his Excess of Loyalty, he will drink the King's Health on his Knees without one.

He drinks and prays with much the like Fervour. He turns up his Glass and the Whites of his Eyes together, and in the Sincerity of his Heart drinks it off most canonically.

He abominates all Slurring upon friendly Society, and had much rather chuse to drink twice, than be once suspected of baulking his Neighbour.

To shew his abundant Humility, he will sometimes drink Flip with the Midshipmen; and to prevent the Fall of a weak Brother, he will oft be so charitable as to drink for him.

He fulfils that Axiom to a Tittle, Simile simili gaudet; for no man that is merely human, can be more conversant with spiritual Matters, than he is; nay, so

elevated a Creature is he, that scarce can he suffer any Soul in his Presence, vilely to commix them with such Things as savours not thereof.

He never gives any open Symptoms of being disaffected to the Government, and yet he is certainly unalterably devoted to the French Interest; for tho' he pretends to love the King and the Church mighty well, yet he loves Bordeaux Wine and Brandy much better.

He reckons it a great Condescension to admit Sir — into his Company; but for Belch, he drinks it as he takes the Oaths, upon mere Necessity.

You shall hear him oft-times hold forth in his Cups, according as the Spirit of Wine gives him Utterance; but you shall seldom or never find him reel along in the Paths of Righteousness; for when he gets in for it, he throws off his Gown and Hypocrisy together, and becomes the Bell-wether of the Flock, to run them pall-mall into the Pinfolds of the Devil.

But for him the Ship's Crew would be passable good Christians, whereas his exemplary Presence makes them often call his Words to account, and too often doubt his Sunday-Labour a Sham, and himself a sacred What-ye-call-'em.

A harden'd Atheist he is not, for a great Storm will make him unfeignedly fearful, and then the poor Rogue looks aghast like a Pick-pocket taken in the Fact, or a old Bawd at the Day of Judgment, without having the comfortable Prospect of one Mountain to fall on his Head. Hence it comes that he sometimes backslides to the quacking Sect, in spite of his Gown and Godliness.

He wears his Prunella-Gown as cheerfully as he does his Honesty; there's somewhat in the Wind, to be sure, when he puts on either; and truly why should a Man rub out good things, without a solid Consideration for it?

(To be concluded)

## Religion and Sex

(A Short History of Sex Worship, by H. Cutner, Watts & Co., 8s. 6d.)

DURING the century, roughly ending with the eighteenth seventies, there were a considerable number of books published dealing with the part played by ceremonies and beliefs that had an obvious reference to sex. These were not scientific studies so much as collections of historic data. Hardly any religion could be touched without finding traces of such ceremonies, and the analogues between ancient religious beliefs and the Christian religion in this field were easily found, and were very often strongly accentuated. Most of these works were taboo to the Christian Churches for this reason. They threw a much needed light on Christian symbols, and practices and ceremonies, and if some of these analogues were not so clear as some writers were inclined to believe, the main thesis was demonstrated to most unprejudiced readers. To say that this feature of the Christian religion was concealed by the Christian Church would not be quite accurate, since the Church was as unaware of the origin and significance of its own practices as the average man is of the nature of vestigial survival in his own body. And quite naturally any attempt to connect survivals of primitive beliefs and practices with Christianity was resisted strenuously.

The development of modern anthropology brought confirmation of what had been written, but with a wider and a genuinely scientific application and explanation. It relieved religious customs and beliefs of the charge of being based on eroticism, but substituted a fundamental and more deadly reason for so many Christian symbols and practices having a very clear reference to phallic practices. Eroticism does come into religion, but not at the

beginning, but as religion approaches its end. We recall a statement by the celebrated Abbe Dubois, who some 150 years ago spent many years of his life as a missionary in India. Dealing with the phenomenon of Temple Prostitution, a practice touched on by Mr. Cutner, the Abbe says that so far as he was able to gather the practice had no ill-effect whatever on morals. The immoral effect came only when people began to lose their faith owing largely to the influence of Christian missionaries. It was due to the influence of anthropology that the question of religious customs connected with sex were absorbed by the larger factor of fertility. Scientific investigators were thus able to find the explanation of the lesser factor by merging it in a much wider one.

Marxism apart, fertility is one of the fundamental needs of all forms of life, and in that stage of human society where mankind believes that every thing is dependent upon mysterious personal forces, or at any rate upon forces, the nature of which man has not the power accurately to understand or control, he has only one form of behaviour. He labours to get the food, but he has to leave the rest with the gods. Even to-day we have a relic of this primitive attitude in the religious saying that while man sows it is God who gives the increase. In this respect the attitude of the praying Christian is not far removed from that of the primitive savage. The language is more flowery, the performance is more elaborate, but the essential attitude is the same.

These elaborate fertility rites cover the whole life of primitive humanity: the food man grows, the rain and sunshine on which he is dependent, the increase of the cattle or other forms of life on which he lives, and also upon the increase of his own kind. A great many of these fertility practices are little better than sheer magic. There is the rain-dance, a form of mimetic magic, which seeks to get rain by imitating its fall, the sexual association of male and female in order to induce the earth to be fruitful, and later the veneration of female and male sexual organs. The complications of these fertility rites become more confused, and often less obvious, as more scientific ideas begin to develop. And in the end we have what one may call the final stage such as presented to us in the Christian religion, where men and women in Church are surrounded with any number of remnants of fertility worship, without knowing their real significance. We have it in the common practice in which the bride and bridgroom walk from Church under an arch of swords, or other implements. An analogue of this is found in the still widespread practice of women who wish to bear children crawling through a hole in a stone, or through some similar passage at a certain hour of the day. This is plainly a mimicking of a child's passage into the world, a mixture of magic and religion. A great many, if not all, the "sexual" ceremonies still to be traced in "civilized" religion are, as Frazer says, part of the belief that growth of vegetation might be promoted by religio-magical practices.

I should not, by the way, agree with those who hold that Temple Prostitution owes its origin to a fertility rite. This I am inclined to trace to primitive fear of the sexual functions of woman, and the desire to protect the male from its dangers. It is noticeable that it is the virgin, not the matron, who goes to the Temple for the performance of this religious duty.

But one cannot delve very deep into human history without coming into contact with survivals of these fertility practices. They hold the key to many historic problems. They have their survivals in folk-lore and village games as well as in Church ornamentation and beliefs. Miss Murray, in her interesting *Witchcraft in Western Europe*, and in her later work, *The God of the Witches*, gives reasons for believing that the belief in witches, which is still powerfully alive in many parts of the world, is actually a survival of some of the old fertility cults that at one time almost challenged the authority of the Church.

As we have said, there is not a religion in the world that has not its implications of the worship of fertility. And, naturally, such a hotch-potch of primitive superstitions, pseudo-philosophical speculations and distorted ethical teachings as Christianity is a museum for the informed and inquisitive mind. To a large number of

these Mr. Cutner has called attention, as well as their relation with other religions. Mr. Cutner's book ranges over a wide region, and it contains much information that is not easy to get in one volume nowadays. We hope what we have said will serve as a kind of introduction to an interesting and informative work. It would not be easy to get another volume of recent years that would cover the same ground in so compact a space.

QUONDAM

### THE BIBLE

I have been very strong on the Bible for the last three months. On the evening of the day I left Delhi, February 14, I met a young English officer among the ruins where I had camped, who had once been a great Freethinker, very quarrelsome and a bit of a duellist—detestable company in fact, but he had been converted as the result of a duel in which he had killed one of his friends, and was now one of the most fanatical Christians I have ever met.

This young fellow informed me most charitably that if I did not change my ways I should go straight to hell, and in order to show me the right way, for he justly supposed me to be a Catholic, as most of us are in France—he presented me, whether I would or not, with an English Bible, a sort of cube consisting of 1,800 two-column pages in the finest print, not a word of the Holy Scriptures is missing.

Everything is faithfully rendered without disguise or veil of any sort. I have read a few chapters at random in order to test it, and I know now why the Pope forbids his flock to read this book. I would do as much in his place for boys and women at least, for I have never read a more improper book. I love to watch the beautiful, modest Englishwoman turn scarlet with annoyance when asked if they have read Lord Byron's Don Juan, or a complete text of Shakespeare. You know that Don Juan is a very free and licentious poem, but never gross.

Shakespeare, for his part, is sometimes coarse, but always in an amusing way; you never find cold-blooded filth in him.

Well, these prudes who purse up their lips at Lord Byron's amatory tone and Shakespeare's broad jests, go to their mass and church and read these horrors and abominations in their Holy Bible, translated into good English and simply full of gross expressions.

An English girl who has read her Bible has certainly nothing to learn from Byron or Shakespeare. What disgusting hypocrisy!

If you or I were to take a manuscript of our own composition, resembling the Bible, to a Paris printer, a respectable printer with an establishment of his own, he would certainly refuse to print it.

Some starveling printer might venture upon it, but there is no doubt that, unless it were published clandestinely, the authors, printers and distributors of the said work, would be prosecuted by the authorities for an "outrage upon morality," and justly so, too.

Edifying reading indeed, this tissue of obscenities! Decidedly the Pope is right, and I believe, as one of them did, that the most robust faith in Christianity would be shaken by reading the Bible, for that book is dangerous not only to morality, but to faith.

"Certainly," this Pope used to say, "the Holy Roman Church prohibits the reading of the Scriptures. How is it to be hoped that Christians would remain Christians after reading that book."

From "Letters from India (1820-1832),  
by Victor Jaquemont.

I say quite deliberately that the Christian religion, as organized in its churches, has been and still is the principal enemy of moral progress in the world.

Bertrand Russell

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

### LONDON

#### INDOOR

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, Professor Denis Saurat—"Blake's Message to the Present Day."

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BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. R. H. Rosetti.  
KINGSTON-ON-THAMES BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Place): 6.30, Mr. E. Saphin.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond): 11.30, Mr. L. Ebury. Parliament Hill Fields, 3.30, Mr. L. Ebury. South Hill Park, 7.30, Monday, Mr. L. Ebury. Highbury Corner, 7.30, Friday, Mr. W. G. Fraser.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH (Brockwell Park): 6.30, Sunday, Mrs. N. B. Buxton. Rushcroft Road, opposite Brixton Town Hall, 8.0, Tuesday, Mr. J. Barker. Liverpool Grove, Walworth Road, 8.0, Friday, Mr. F. A. Ridley.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 7.30, Thursday, Mr. E. C. Saphin and supporting speakers. Sunday, 3.0, until dusk, various speakers.

### COUNTRY

#### OUTDOOR

ACCINGTON: 7.0, Sunday, Mr. J. Clayton.  
BLYTH (The Fountain) 7.0, Monday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.  
BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Exchange Steps): 7.30, June 20 to July 5. Car Park, 7.0, June 30, Mr. G. Whitehead.  
CHESTER-LE-STREET (The Bridge): 8.0, Friday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

DARLINGTON (Market Steps): 7.0, Sunday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

EDINBURGH BRANCH N.S.S. (Mound): 7.30, Mr. Smithies. A Lecture.

NORTH SHIELDS (Harbour View): 7.0, Wednesday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

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