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Views and Opinions.

War Again.

War and peace is everybody's concern, and never more so than at the present moment. After the gigantic fiasco of the Peace Treaty, which while it might have inaugurated a season of peaceful recuperation did nothing but sow the seeds of future wars, the only chance for European civilization was, and is, by some means to stave off conflict till the nations have time to recover some measure of sanity. And now in a moment a new conflict is with us, this time between Italy and Greece. We are not writing because we have any admiration for Christian Greece as against Christian Italy. Indeed it may be the case that the allegations of Signor Mussolini are correct. It has been pointed out more than once in these columns that in the conflicts between the Greeks, the Turks, and the Balkan peoples it was often the case that murders were engineered in order that they might be charged to the account of the Turks. And as the Turk was a Mohammedan it was easy work to get the tales swallowed in this country. The Greeks may have been playing this old game, or the Albanians may have been playing it on the Greeks. The important thing is that Italy's megalomaniacal ruler has ordered Greece to grovel in the dust, before being tried and convicted of the offences alleged, or there will be war. And already Corfu has been bombarded, a number of civilians killed, and the place occupied. This Mussolini explains is not war. The place was bombarded solely because it would not surrender, and it is only occupied because the Greeks will not do as Mussolini wishes. If we remember aright the Germans bombarded Leige only because the Belgians would not surrender, and only went on with the war because the Allies would not do as they asked.

* * *

The Price of Terrorism.

The first thing that strikes us in this fresh attack upon European civilization, and if other countries are dragged in it may well mean the close of that chapter, is that it is a registration of the moral bankruptcy of Europe. For some years Mussolini has been carrying on in Italy a rule which can best be described as Bolshevism inverted. He has carried on a terroristic rule in the name of God and the King by precisely the methods which our yellow press attribute to the Bol-

shevists in Russia. Those who do not agree with him have been imprisoned, or shot, freethought in politics has been suppressed, religion has been re-established in the schools, he has entered into open alliance with the Pope, and he has plainly told the Parliament that only so long as it agrees with him will it be permitted to exist. Naked force has become the ruling factor in social life, and no country in Europe has had the moral courage to tell him that this was wrong, that what could not be approved in Russia must be disapproved in Italy. On the contrary, he has been lauded as Italy's strong man, and the strong man is now trying to live up to his reputation by picking out a country too weak to hit back—and striking hard. The Pope, who has sent several hypocritical letters to the nations talking of his desire for world peace, remains silent in face of a recurrence of the same kind of incident which landed Europe in the "Great War." Mussolini is an ally of the Church, and no one expects the Church to round on its friend. It is true that this friend may succeed in wrecking European civilization, but the Church would not lose by that. The less civilized we become the more Christian we are likely to remain.

* * *

The League of Nations.

Lately we have had several letters in these columns praising and condemning the League of Nations. Of course, the League may now act, and it has indicated that it will. This is clearly a case where the League should act, for its articles—signed by Italy—precisely allow for just the case that has arisen. It stipulates that all disputes between members of the League shall be submitted to it before recourse is had to arms. It is idle for Italy to say that this is a matter which concerns its national honour, and it cannot permit outside interference. Italy is a pledged member of a body which has promised to abide by the judgment of the League. Moreover, if Italy is, or wishes to be a member of a brotherhood of nations, it should remember that in any family there is a duty to the whole as well as a duty to one's self. And personal honour is not denied but asserted and vindicated by permitting the considered interests of the whole to outweigh the transient passions of a unit. Will the League act? Its proper course would be to serve Italy with notice that it had acted contrary to its express undertaking, that it was making the Covenant of the League a "scrap of paper," and that the rest of the League must act up to its undertakings even though Italy defaults. Now we hope that the League will so act, and for the reason we have before given in these columns. The idea of the League of Nations is good. It is an old idea, it was an idea of Thomas Paine's, and we were pleased to see it brought forward. But our fear is in having a League made up of ruling politicians or their mouthpieces. That is giving us the shadow without the substance, continuing the rule of the old diplomatic gang under a new name. But, clearly, the League should act, or dissolve. Italy, as we have said, cannot plead this as something that concerns its honour and therefore cannot submit it to the League. That is the

language of the old swashbuckling duellist. It is also useless to point to the "frenzied enthusiasm" of the Italian people for war with Greece. We know—or ought to know by this time—how these frenzied enthusiasms are worked up, particularly when we are concerned with a country where enthusiasm on the other side is stamped out by imprisonment, burning of offices, forced administration of castor oil, and brutal tooth drawing. What is needed is some strong moral protest by an authoritative body against these "frenzied enthusiasms" on behalf of barbaric methods of settling national differences. Head-hunting should be ruled out definitely.

* * *

What the League Might Be.

We are writing in the early stages of the business, and things may alter at any moment. But our present fear is lest the League should not act as it might act, and that it will so seriously impair its authority in the minds of thoughtful people as to nearly destroy it altogether. But if the League as at present constituted falls short, there is no reason why the idea of a League should be permitted to drop. It could be differently constituted, and it should be formed of men who are not in any way directly connected with groups of governing politicians. Its members might be gathered from men of standing in the various professions, men who have given evidence of their wisdom and their impartiality, and the League should exist as an independent body, giving its judgments on all matters of international difference that came within its scope in the same way in which the judges in an appeal court deliver their verdict. And that decision once given should be enforced by the nations forming the League precisely as the police—and if necessary the military—now enforce the decrees of the Courts. All the better if the only military force existing is one maintained by the contributaries to the League for that special purpose. If that were done, what country could stand against it? We should have less talk of national honour—which so often means no more than the ambition of a handful of politicians or the greed of another class operating upon an ill-educated people, and there would be a greater chance of the emergence of genuinely civilized feelings.

* * *

Lay Down Your Arms.

There are all the elements of another European conflagration in the present situation, and this is only one more enforcement of the inutility of what is called partial disarmament. At present we have not even that, for all the European countries, including the mushroom ones that have sprung up as a consequence of our Peace Treaty, are armed against one another, and are spending to keep pace with one another. But partial disarmament instead of ending war would only make its occurrence cheaper. Making safes of metal instead of wood did not make burglary impossible, it only compelled the burglar to carry files or other implements instead of a saw or a chopper. Altering the number of ships or the size of the army does not prevent war, so long as the ratios remain the same. But suppose that Italy had been without an army or without a battle fleet. It would not have been less sensitive about its national honour, nor would it have been less indignant at the murder of its officials on Greek territory, nor less insistent that the wrongdoers must be brought to justice. Only instead of sending battleships to a practically undefended port, and with the high chivalry encouraged by modern warfare, shooting a number of defenceless civilians from a safe distance, and thus doing murder on *their* side, the Italians would have appealed as sensible and civilized people to a world tribunal to see that justice was

done. If they were intelligently concerned in justice and civilization that would be enough, but nations will never be more concerned in that than they are in plans for national aggrandisement so long as there lies to hand all the materials for making war in response to frenzied enthusiasms that are the outcome of a night. We shall end war when we have come to the point of seeing the nations deliberately and solemnly putting it out of the power of each to wage war. It is disarmament, not partial disarmament that indicates the way out, and it looks as though it is the one thing that can save European civilization. We should then get rid of the large class that fattens on war and rumours of war, of another class whose business it is to wage war, to whom promotion comes through war, and who act as a constant stimulus to the less civilized feelings of the people. And it would be giving a much higher place to the moral influence which one group of people might and should exert upon each other.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Heart and Soul.

THESE terms are in constant use, though few have any definite idea as to what they mean. It is perfectly obvious, however, that neither bears the slightest reference to the physical organ called heart whose function is the circulation of the blood. In the Correspondence of the Rev. Prof. David Smith, D.D., in the *British Weekly* of August 23, "J. A.," of South Africa, writes: "Would you kindly give the explanation of 'heart' in Scripture? Surely the physical heart cannot think, feel, will. The Bible ascribes to 'heart' thoughts, purposes, feelings, but does so also to 'soul.' Consequently heart and soul are, so to say, equivalents, to my mind." Dr. Smith treats this correspondent to a brief disquisition on the meanings the Bible attaches to the terms in question, with which we have no serious fault to find. There is one exegetical point of great importance, however, to which he makes no allusion, namely, that in Genesis i, 20, swarming things, such as fishes and other small creatures which live in water, and also creeping and flying insects, small reptiles, and small quadrupeds are described as being "living souls." As the late Canon Driver points out, "a 'soul' (néphesh) in the psychology of the Hebrews is not peculiar to man; it is the principle of life and sensibility in any animal organism, and is then transferred to the sentient organism itself." Driver adds that Leviticus xxiv, 18, reads in Hebrew thus: "He that striketh the *soul* of a beast," and then "*soul* for *soul*." Dr. Smith admits that both heart and soul are "mere popular notions"; but he goes out of his way to irrelevantly add that neither has a physical seat. If soul means life, does it not of necessity have a physical seat? Does it not inevitably follow that what is called the spiritual in man unavoidably rests on the physical? In fact, apart from the physical there can be no man at all. The disintegration of the body involves the complete disappearance of the soul. Consequently the independent existence of the soul is a sheer chimera however confidently the theologians may assert to the contrary; it is a pure assumption insusceptible of substantiation. Dr. Smith's assertion of the independence of the heart and soul is at once entirely irrelevant to the purpose of his article and absolutely outside the range of proof. The Professor is blinded by the mist of tradition and cannot even do justice to those who differ from him. Take the following sample:—

It is told of an Atheistical astronomer that he once announced: "I have searched the heaven with my telescope, and I have not found God"; and also of a

Materialist physician that he in like manner said that he had probed the human body with his scalpel and anatomized every tissue and fibre, and he had found no soul.

We have often heard about those mythical astrologers and Materialists, but we have never known their names. More than thirty years ago we were at the City Temple, London, and listened to a most dramatic discourse by the late Dr. Parker, who was a born actor as well as a tremendously powerful preacher. We can still see and hear the ineffable sneer on his face and in his voice as he eloquently described the vain search of the poor physician for any trace of the soul as he minutely dissected a human body. The vast audience sat spellbound by the amazing skill of the dramatist and what seemed to be the exceptionally cogent reasoning of the sermon. And yet, calmly looked at in the light of reason, no preaching stunt could have been more laughably absurd. We know several doctors who are avowed Materialists, but not one of them is sufficiently idiotic to dissect a dead body in order to demonstrate the non-existence of the soul. Curiously enough the Professor takes such tall yarns seriously, saying :—

The fallacy in both cases lay in the inveterate disposition of the human mind to construe the spiritual in terms of the material, forgetting that "God is a spirit," and so also are the souls which he has made in his own image; and no more can the soul be discovered by anatomy than the fragrance of a flower by tearing its petals asunder.

Will the Professor kindly tell us what becomes of the fragrance when the rose is dead? Does it survive the rose? Is it not an undeniable fact that both die together? Now, what ghost of an evidence is there that the so-called soul means anything more and other than the state of being alive and that it is the possession of all living beings, from the highest to the lowest? On this point Genesis i, 20 is much nearer the truth than the learned Professor at College Park, Belfast and the same teaching prevails in the Old Testament down to the time of the prophet Ezekiel who (xlvi, 9) speaks of "all soul that swarmeth," of fish, and other sentient things.

Dr. Smith's attempt to prove that neither heart nor soul has a physical seat is absurdly futile. He says :—

No more than the soul has it (the heart) a physical seat. For the heart is merely the organ which circulates the blood, and the brain is the centre of the nervous system.

It is perfectly true that the term heart is used metaphorically in the Bible and in general literature, signifying emotion, affection, hatred, passion, and other feelings; but it by no means follows that employed in this sense it has no physical seat. Why, all the phenomena of human life are the result of nervous activity. According to the teaching of modern science, it is to the nervous system that we are indebted for all our knowledge of Nature, for all impressions and sensations, even for consciousness itself. In his address as President of the British Association at its Dundee meeting in the year 1912, Professor Schafer, the distinguished physiologist, traced the origin and evolution of the nervous system thus :—

Lest he (man) be elated with his physical achievements let him remember that they are but the result of the acquisition by a few cells in a remote ancestor of a slightly greater tendency to react to an external stimulus, so that these cells were brought into closer touch with the outer world; while, on the other hand, by extending beyond the circumscribed area to which their neighbours remained restricted, they gradually acquired a dominating influence over the rest. These dominating cells became nerve-cells, and now not only furnish the means for transmission of impressions from one part of the organism to another, but

in the progress of time become the seat of perception and conscious sensation, of the formation and association of ideas, of memory, volition, and all the manifestations of the mind.

Dr. Smith admits that the above is the popular view held at the present time, and all the argument he can bring against it is its modernity. In ancient times the prevailing notion was that the seat of the understanding was the heart, but he neglects to inform us where is the seat of the heart, while Professor Schafer, who has made this subject his life-study, is convinced that the nervous system, which reaches its climax in the brain, is the seat of all physical and mental activity. Professor Schafer gives expression to what has become, as the outcome of the dissemination of scientific knowledge, the popular notion, but Dr. Smith, ignoring the advance of modern science, clings to the view that "appears in all ancient literature." Even here again the reverend gentleman has allowed his Christian bias to darken his vision. There were Materialists not a few in the ancient world, and they were misrepresented and persecuted then as their modern successors are to-day. In China, India, Persia, Greece and Rome, Materialism played an important part from very early times. As is well-known, in Greece, Materialism was one of the earliest attempts at elaborating a philosophy of the universe. Leucippus, Democritus, Anaxagoras, Theodorus, Diogenes of Apollonia, and Epicurus, were thorough-going Materialists, mostly of the Atomistic school. Most of those great men believed in the soul, but not as a separate, independent, and immaterial entity, but as a finer quality of matter, inherent in all parts of the body, the two being born, living, and dying together. All existence, according to Epicurus, is corporeal; intangibility means non-existence or empty space. If those ancient philosophers could revisit the glimpses of the moon loud would be their assent to and approval of Professor Schafer's saying that all the problems of life are, essentially, problems of matter, as apart from matter life is wholly inconceivable.

Thus we see that Dr. Smith is mistaken in thinking that all ancient literature expressed his view of the spirituality and independence of the soul, and as he himself admits the majority of present day thinkers regard the brain as the seat of all human activity. All accredited psychologists of to-day, such as William McDougall and Boris Sidis, can find absolutely no room or need for the soul-theory. To these the soul "is nothing but superstition." As the heart is the organ for the circulation of the blood, so is the brain the organ of all degrees and varieties of thought and emotion and voluntary action. Dr. Smith concedes that the ancients were unscientific when, meaning "a man of understanding," they spoke of "a man of heart"; but what on earth does he mean when he says that we moderns are equally unscientific when we call him "a man of brains"? Surely he is not so ignorant of scientific teaching on the subject as to imagine that such a charge is true.

Professor Smith accuses Materialists of construing "the spiritual in terms of the material, forgetting that 'God is a spirit'"; but the accusation is false, because we believe in the existence of neither the spiritual nor of a God who is a spirit. Will the Professor be good enough to favour us with a definition of a spirit? We are aware that the Shorter Catechism calls God "a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." The Anglican Articles of Religion inform us that God is "without body, parts, or passions"; that is, scientifically speaking, an utterly impossible being. The Bible declares that "no man hath seen God at any time"; but all the same he is represented as possessing a voice which can be

heard in various ways, though it is a voice which contradicts itself at least a dozen times even between the two covers of the Bible, to say nothing of those who have pretended in all ages to reproduce that voice. We do not *forget* that God is a spirit, because we do not know him at all, and we are equally ignorant of the human soul as a spiritual entity; and we are convinced that Professor Smith fully shares our ignorance. Hearts and souls are figures of speech which owe their origin and evolution to theology or metaphysics, and are, in a scientific age like ours, entirely meaningless.

J. T. LLOYD.

"A Religion to Sweep the Earth."

Oh, threats of hell and hopes of paradise!
One thing at least is certain—this life flies;
One thing is certain, and the rest is lies,
The flower that once has blown for ever dies.

—Omar Khayyam.

FRESH from the triumphs of a lecture tour in the United States, the homeland of so many fancy religions, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the famous novelist, has made a flamboyant statement of the progress of Spiritism. He says that the Church which takes up Spiritism will "sweep the earth," and, assuming the mantle of a prophet, declares that if the Christian Churches refuse to accept the new evangel that Christianity will be dead and buried in a couple of centuries. Indeed, he himself intends to establish in London a church in which Spiritism will be preached every Sunday in the year, and he hopes for crowded houses.

Doyle's new church should flutter the doves of Orthodoxy, for one of the most familiar clerical arguments is that the surgeon's knife cannot find the "soul." In a sense, Spiritism does try to find the "soul" with a knife, that is with material means. It wants to get as good evidence for the existence of John Smith after death as it had for the existence of John Smith before he shuffled off this mortal coil. The supposed "spirit" of the late Mr. Smith is required to prove his existence and presence by making himself audible, by showing that he remembers that his daughter Jemima had heliotrope eyes, or that his aunt Jane had false teeth, or by having his own photograph taken in a short shirt he wore at death.

Now, what is there in Sir Arthur's evidence to convince a sceptical world, or even to carry conviction to the minds of plain men and women. Sir Arthur lays enormous stress on what is known as the Oscar Wilde script, which is supposed to have been transmitted through two mediums, and which is printed at length in the *Occult Review*. Sir Arthur pledges his reputation as a critic that this is Wilde's work, and says that any man who has "the least sense of literary style" will agree with him. And then he adds, "You may forge a man's signature, and you may even forge his style, but you cannot forge the soul behind the style." Doubtless, Sir Arthur really does think that he detects Wilde's hand in this curious business, but criticism has never been a strong point with him. From the days of "Ossian's poems" to our own time, literary history is full of attempts on the part of authors to imitate the work of others. Years ago an unknown scribbler created a whole series of letters supposed to be written by the poet Shelley, an author not easy to imitate. They passed the scrutiny of a famous publisher and his professional reader, and they were actually issued in book form with an introduction from so distinguished an author as Robert Browning. The bubble was pricked by Shelley enthusiasts who discovered that letters were dated from London whilst Shelley was actually in Italy, and that many passages were conveyed from Shelley's own writings. In another instance, John Clare, a Northamptonshire

labourer, wrote a number of poems in the style of eighteenth century writers, and puzzled the critics of his day. The art of parody is one of the commonplaces of literature, and it is quite clear that Sir Arthur, in his zeal as an apostle of a religion, has overlooked the possibility of so obvious a solution.

Sir Arthur imagines that Oscar Wilde is still engaged in writing, and Sir Oliver Lodge, another distinguished Spiritist, has told an astonished world that in the alleged "hereafter" there are "laboratories," "cigars," and "factories." Whilst all these descriptions of a future life seem fantastic, there is one point well worth noting. Life after death is not painted as being horrific, but as a continuation of ordinary life on earth, such as Shelley's sarcastic description of "hell" as a place "very like London."

Apparently, even religious folk now-a-days are getting very much ashamed of the theological theory of heaven and hell. Unconsciously, their ideas are becoming more and more secularized. Their ideas may be childish, but it is gratifying to find that they are more humane. There is an enormous difference between Spiritist views of a future existence and the horrible views of the orthodox Christians. Spurgeon, the most admired minister of his generation, preached and wrote that the majority of mankind were destined to eternal torture in full view of the Christian Deity. That was what Christians believed for two thousand years, and similar barbarous ideas are still preached by the Roman Catholics, by the Church and Salvation Armies, and by itinerant evangelists and missionaries. The conscience of the race is now rising above such barbarities and savageries. For this relief the world should thank the despised Freethinkers, who have ever sought to refute the lies at the lips of the priests.

MIMNERMUS.

Jehovah the Moon-God.

In his very valuable paper on the Astronomy and Astrology of the Babylonians (*Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, Vol. III, p. 207), Professor Sayce thus speaks of the priority of the moon over the sun: "As befitted a nation of astronomers, the moon was considered prior to the sun, and the originator of civilization."

It was not, says Speigel, the sun that first attracted the savage by its sight; it was the night sky with its lights, in contrast to the dark earth. So the moon is a friend to the nomad and shepherd; it gives him bright nights to travel or dark nights for his raids, whereas the sun dries up his water and pasturage. The direct ascendancy of the moon is again indicated in a bilingual hymn (Del. Lesestucke, pl. 16), where the goddess Istar, as the morning star, is thus addressed by the worshipper: "Of thy father the moon-god, and thy brother, the sun," making the moon father of the sun.—*W. St. Chad Boscawen*, "From Under the Dust of Ages," pp. 46-49.

IN the ancient empires of the East, Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, and Persia, we find the supreme gods to have been incarnations of the Sun. So universal was this Sun-worship found to be that some scholars, not unnaturally, have held that Sun-worship was the primitive religion of mankind, preceding all other kinds. Dupuis, in his great work *Origine de Tous les Cultes* (Origin of all Religion), a monument of erudition, published in 1795, sought to prove this view, as did Max Muller in our own time; but the progress of the science of anthropology has led to the discarding of this view, though it leaves untouched the fact of the universal vogue of Sun-worship in the ancient empires of the East.

Archæologists also in their search for and recovery of ancient records have proved that Moon-worship preceded Sun-worship. The population of the ancient empires supported themselves by agriculture, the growth of rice, corn, and other crops. Now in the cultivation of the land, the farmer is guided in all his

operations by the Sun ; the cycle of the year, with its seasons of sowing and harvest, are all governed by the Sun. And really, considering that our very existence depends upon the Sun, its worship is a great deal more reasonable than that of the worship of a great many of the mythical beings who have only existed in the imagination.

But the shepherd precedes the agriculturist, the nomad living in tents, wandering from pasture to pasture with his flocks, as they cleared off the herbage. To the shepherd the most striking object in the sky was not the Sun but the Moon. To him the Moon appeared to be the largest body in the heavens ; he measured his time by it, as many primitive tribes do now ; they speak of a thing happening so many moons ago, meaning months. The primitive shepherd took the twenty-eight days of the Moon's revolution and halved it into fourteen, this again he halved into seven, which being an odd number and indivisible, he adopted as the week. Our seven-day week we owe to Moon-worship. As Professor Margoliouth points out :—

It was the moon, moreover, who was seen to gather around him the glorious hosts of stars on the weird vault of night, whilst the sun had to cross the heavens unattended, and therefore unserved. The mystic influence which the king of night exercised over the imagination of man must have also tended more to religious contemplation than the brighter but less awe-inspiring light of busy day. The sun-god had, therefore, to wait a long time for a position of supremacy in the pantheon of ancient Babylonia. The sun, which was seen to issue every morning "from the darkness of the night," could in primitive times only be regarded as the offspring of the god of night, and the worship accorded to him could therefore, only be secondary and subordinate. It was, in fact, not before the city of Babylon had risen to its supreme pre-eminence in ancient Chaldea that Mero-dach (the god of the rising sun) became the chief deity on the banks of the Euphrates, and even then his priests had to identify him with the god Bel in order to secure for him the position which they desired him to occupy. But in the earlier ages of the world it was not so. Sin (the moon) then always stood before Shamash (the sun), and it was he who as "prince and father of god and men" exercised supreme sway over the destinies of heaven and earth.¹

The same writer cites an ancient hymn to the Moon-god, of which we give the beginning :—

Lord, prince of the gods, who alone in heaven and earth is exalted.....father Nannar, lord of the hosts of heaven—father Nannar, Lord of Uru, prince of the gods.....Lord, thy deity fills the far-off heavens, like the vast sea, with reverential fear !².....

If an ancient moon-worshipper could return to life, and enter one of our churches, he would join heartily in chanting the "Lord's Prayer" : "Our father who art in heaven." For there he was, shining in the heavens, a glorious god. He would also understand the title of "Lord of Hosts," applied to God in the Old Testament, in its true sense, not hosts of men, but lord of the hosts of the stars in the heavens.

In the Bible (Genesis xi, 31) we read that Abraham, the founder from whom the Jews trace their descent, came, with his father Terah, from "Ur of the Chaldees."

Dr. Hugo Radau says :—

This Ur was, as we know now, one of the chief Babylonian cities in early times, it being especially celebrated on account of its temple dedicated to the Moon-god, *i.e.*, to En-Zu or Uru-ki, the first-born of En-lil or Bel. It is generally supposed that Terah together with his son Abraham worshipped or were followers of this very Moon-god, because they stopped

on their way to Canaan in Harran, where there was another Moon-god.³

But there is more evidence than this. Sinai, where Jehovah revealed himself to Moses and delivered into his hands the "Law," was itself connected with Moon-worship. St. Chad Boscawen points out that :—

Another name of the Moon-god was that of Sin..... his name is closely associated with the land of Magan, or the peninsula of Sinai, and there may be, as Professor Sayce has suggested, a connection between the name of the Holy Mountain, and that of the old Semitic Moon-god. In connection with this interesting subject, upon which as yet there is too little evidence, may be noticed that one of the most common epithets of the Moon-god Sin was that of *Bel terite*, "Lord of laws," and is called in the Hymn from Ur, "he who has created law and justice, so that mankind has established law," and again, "the ordainer of the laws of heaven and earth." If Sinai in these remote ages, centuries before the time of Moses, was so closely associated with the "Lord of the laws," may it not throw some light on its selection as the Mountain of the Law by the Mosaic writers.⁴

We read in the Bible that when Moses came down from Mount Sinai, after his interview with Jehovah "the skin of his face shone by reason of his speaking with him" (Exodus xxxiv, 29)- This is one of those numerous cases where the translators have taken advantage of their opportunity, to alter the divine words of God, to make them read more sensible ; for the true translation should read, the skin of Moses's face was found "to send forth horns." Professor Margoliouth—who is an authority on Hebrew—says, "the Hebrew equivalent of 'to shine' cannot be shown to exist..... and clearly denotes nothing else but the shooting forth of a horn or horns."⁵ Michael Angelo, in his great sculpture of Moses, has provided the prophet with a pair of horns.

It seems strange for a man, even a prophet, to be provided with horns. But when we know that horns were a symbol of the Moon-god, through their fancied resemblance to the horns of the crescent moon, and that Moses had been in the presence of the Moon-god, who had bestowed this symbol of divinity upon him, then the matter is quite clear. Mr. Boscawen gives a translation of an ancient hymn to the Moon-god, commencing : "Strong ox, whose horns are mighty." Which is no more foolish than Christians speaking of the "Lamb of God," or the "Blood of the Lamb," only we are accustomed to one and not to the other. They are only symbols in any case.

Among the ancient Babylonians every seventh day was a Sabbath, or sacred day, on which no work was done, and Professor Margoliouth points out that the Jews of the present day observe a religious rite which very strongly reminds one of the moon-cult from which their religion originally sprung. He says :—

At an early date after the appearing of the new moon, or as soon as the renewed crescent is visible with sufficient clearness, the Hebrew prayer-book enjoins on the Israelites to assemble for a religious service in the open, and the ritual which is then observed amounts, to say the least of it, to a devout and joyous salutation of the new-born luminary of night.⁶

He also cites a dictum of the Rabbis, which, he says :—

By its remarkable wording seems to carry us back to the devout worship of Nannah-Sin at Uru and Haran : "He who at the proper time," so goes the saying, "pronounces the benediction on the new moon is as one who welcomes the very presence of the Shekinah, or Divine Glory." No language can

¹ G. Margoliouth, *The Earliest Religion of the Ancient Hebrews*. *Contemporary Review*, October, 1898.

² *Ibid.*

³ Radau, *The Creation-story of Genesis*, I, p. 57.

⁴ Boscawen, *The Bible and the Monument*, pp. 64-65.

⁵ Margoliouth, *Hebrew-Babylonian Affinities*, p. 10.

⁶ *Contemporary Review*, October, 1898.

be clearer and stronger than this, and no argument could offer more conclusive additional evidence in favour of my present contention.⁷

The same writer gives much more evidence connecting Jehovah with Moon-worship, in the two writings we have cited, enough indeed to establish the fact in any unprejudiced mind. So that although Jehovah's career has not been blameless, and indeed at times hardly distinguishable from that of his great adversary the Devil, yet he can point back to an ancestry of the most ancient, besides which our modern gods are mere parvenues.

W. MANN.

Is Major Douglas a Heretic?

FOUR or five years ago an idea was flung into the mind of England and the world which, it is safe to prophesy, is going to create a greater revolution than Cromwell's of 1649, or Washington's of 1783, or the French of 1789, or the Russian of 1917. A small circle of people, of whom I happen to be one, have been intensely interested in it during the short period of its existence. The number of such people is growing in this country and overseas.

I am speaking of Major C. H. Douglas's Social Credit Scheme.¹ Since I left the Anglican Church in 1879, I have adopted many a new idea in the realm of social order and progress, but none more original or more germinal than this. Nevertheless, since it is, in external form, an economic scheme, and aims at providing good food, housing, clothing, transport, etc., for every member of civilized communities, it has bearings that may rightly be called "political," and I do not propose, in these columns, to deal with it in detail. I may be allowed, however, if only in order to kindle the reader's curiosity, to indicate a few of Major Douglas's propositions. For example, he affirms that unemployment, in itself, is not an evil; as machinery and organizing power increasingly tend to save labour, the mass of man-kind ought to reap the benefit (though they do not) in a large access of leisure, or unemployment; the civilized world grows richer every generation, and we already have productive power to meet the material needs of all the people who now suffer poverty; the fault of our present system lies, not in human wickedness, or even the wickedness of this or that social class, but in our badly adapted money system; the benefits of industry should be universally spread by distributing purchasing power (let us call it a minimum income) to every citizen; prices of food, housing, clothing, transport, etc., should be regulated, on recognized business principles, by the public community, and kept within the limit of every man's purchasing power; issue of paper currency (gold being abolished) should be controlled by the community, not by bankers and financiers; and so on. I have no intention whatever to discuss these questions, but it will be admitted that they touch on very vital factors of our everyday life. Nobody will deny that it would be a blessed victory if we could get rid of slums, rags, hunger and the general lowness of physical and mental vigour due to miserable incomes or complete lack of income. Every intelligent man or woman will see how it would transform those problems over which priesthoods and social reformers have moralized for many centuries. It would effect a bigger change than the Day of Judgment, which after all, was only to judge, and not to improve the world.

Very well; but I now come to the central issue, which has a concern for all who study religion from various points of view. Let us assume, if only for

⁷ *Ibid.*

¹ A list of books relating to the scheme can be obtained at "Credit-Power," 70 High Holborn, W.C.1.

argument's sake, that Major Douglas's purpose is benevolent, and his methods sensible. I wish to draw attention to his fundamental conception of Social Credit, or Community Credit. He would base the money, or currency system on the general (national) capacity to produce goods and services, and money would be, not the output of a wild printing press, as in some countries just now, but an accurate reflection of the social industry, ability and organization; it would represent ever-growing assets. How is this justified? By the fact that no machine, no invention, no science, no art, no institution, is, or can be, the entire product of one person's suggestion or genius. No one man, for example, invented the clock; it is the result of many minds and many hands, and many centuries. No one man invented the ordinary loaf of bread; it has developed through the agriculture of thousands of years. So also with the aeroplane, the wireless, the motor-car, the camera, the kinema, the steam engine, the linotype, the gas-stove, the match, the latest plough, the oil-driven ocean liner, the English language,² astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, Freethought itself, etc. Why should I lengthen the catalogue? Instances swarm in the world about us daily. I may now quote Douglas:—

The possibility of meeting the requirements of society for goods and services in a small and decreasing fraction of the man-hours, or time-energy units, which society has at its disposal comes from the improvements in the industrial machine as a whole. If there is one thing more certain than any other in this uncertain world it is that the industrial machine is a *common heritage*, the result of the labours of untold generations of people whose names are for the most part forgotten, but whose efforts have made possible the triumphs of the past hundred years.

And once again:—

All credit-values are derived from the community, regarded as a permanent institution; not merely from the present generation of workers by hand and brain.

I may remark in passing that a French philosopher, for whose views I have tremendous respect, namely, Auguste Comte, taught this fundamental doctrine of the common heritage a hundred years ago.

Now arises the inquiry: Is Major Douglas a heretic?

I have by me an old-fashioned manual of 130 pages, entitled *The Scripture Text Book*. On glancing at the entry "Sin," one sees under it a terrible array of Hebrew and Christian texts, the general purport of which displays the wretched quality of human nature and its unreliability in the achievement of salvation and moral progress. Hence orthodoxy quite logically tells us to ask for Heaven's grace, and that without God we can do nothing. What, then, will orthodoxy say to Major Douglas when he comes forward with a doctrine which traces all social values to the labours of past generations of men and women, and not to divine Providence? The basic element of our life is bread. We are taught by orthodoxy to pray: "Give us this day our daily bread." But the doctrine of the common heritage shows us, not only that our bread is the evolved work of art wrought by the hands of millions of honest farmers and labourers, but that civilization now actually possesses a magnificent store of apparatus and energy, amply sufficient to supply all needs without a whispered syllable of prayer, or a single inclination before an altar. It is a beneficent idea, and revolutionary in the most sane and happy sense. But it spells ruin to the venerable establishments which deal in theological antiques.

F. J. GOULD.

² Even Esperanto (and I am myself an Esperantist) was not a new language; it was distilled, if one may so speak, out of divers European languages by Zamenhof.

Acid Drops.

We do not think it is possible to exaggerate the horror of the earthquake in Japan. The death roll looks like being over 300,000 and after the fire and earthquake there are worse things than death looming behind with a large population homeless, and without food. There are some thousands of English residents in Tokio and Yokohama, and much anxiety is naturally being felt over them. So far we observe that a cablegram has been sent by a member of the Church Missionary Society to say that he is safe. We have no doubt that he will thank God for saving him, without asking himself why the same God did not get busy enough to save the others. Egoism is inseparable from religion.

Now there is no escape here for the Theist. Earthquakes are one of those things which legal and other documents define as an "Act of God." And if there is a God we fail to see in what way it is inaccurate. Man certainly has nothing to do with it save to suffer the consequences of God's arrangements of the cosmos. And he might so easily have prevented a thing so trifling to him as an earthquake. Lately the papers have contained more or less highly coloured accounts of miraculous cures of various forms of disease. There are clearly people who believe these stories to be true. We invite their opinion of a God who can let the forces of Nature loose in such a way as to wipe out over 300,000 people in a few hours. If they can still praise God for his mercy and goodness after that they are past redemption. A world governed by such a God would be a place of almost unspeakable horror.

It hardly seems cricket (or should we say tennis?) for Miss Christabel Pankhurst after working so heroically on behalf of her sisters to obtain the vote for them, to now calmly announce, at three shillings and sixpence per time, that "The Lord Cometh." This Grace Darling of distressed and voteless women receives scant sympathy from a reviewer who states that her interpretation of passages quoted from the Bible show but little knowledge of modern exegesis. If the lady wanted notoriety there was plenty of room for originality. She could have attempted to swim the channel, or taken up gliding—but in her last choice she has entered a field already overcrowded. When the Lord does come we wish him no worse fate than to fall into the hands of a nice Christian landlord who can recite the New Rent Restrictions Act backwards.

It appears, on the authority of the Rev. T. H. Darlow, that there are a thousand and one Bible problems. We daresay that there are also two million and two explanations of these obscurities in a divinely inspired book as much fitted for use in life in the present as a farthing dip would be to illuminate the interior of Crystal Palace.

From the tail end of London motor-buses the Lord is supplicated; "God Save Europe" is the *John Bull* placard. It is to be hoped that the S.O.S. will not be missed, although to us it hardly seems a dignified situation for such an appeal. The writer of the article has evidently given up the problem in despair, and nothing seems left except, in the words of the late Lord Fisher, "to sack the lot" of professional Christians. A query: "What sweetness and light have the placards of *John Bull* given since the beginning of its existence? A bound volume of them would convince a brass monkey of the Fall of Man. After all, if we are in such a plight, we suggest that it is useless insuring its readers.

"I doubt if you ought to introduce politics into religion, but I am quite certain you ought to introduce religion into politics," says Bishop Gore. "It is there, it is there, my child," as the song tells us. Church rates, tithes, blasphemy law, and other pleasantries remind us that the same great ideas animated the Bishop's predecessors.

A Sunday paper refers to Miss Christabel Pankhurst's "evangelistic activities in America." Things ought to be very lively in the Lord's vineyard.

The world does move. Fifty years ago Union Theological Seminary, New York, was an extremely orthodox institution, when its President was Dr. Adams, and among its professors were the scholarly and well-known Schedd, Schaff, Briggs, and Smith. To-day its professors, or most of them, such as Foakes, Jackson, Kersop, Lake, Harry Emerson, Fosdick, and Daniel Fleming, are widely known as liberal theologians, all of whom, especially Dr. Fosdick, who happens to be also minister of a Presbyterian Church, the Fundamentalists are most anxious to silence. If Union Theological Seminary progresses as well during the next fifty years as it has done during the last it will certainly be then the breeder of *valiant Freethinkers, not theologians at all.*

Bishop Gore describes prayer as "an exceedingly active and powerful thing" because "it can change things." Prayer is always addressed to God, whom the Creeds represent as an "unchangeable" being. Assuming his existence prayer cannot change him. The truth is that prayer cannot change anything at all. And those who pray give their case wholly away by introducing the well-known phrase, "If it be thy will." In any case, praying is a waste of time and energy.

One of the surest signs of the decay of the Christian faith is the fact that so few young men offer themselves as candidates for the ministry, and that most of those who do are intellectually feeble. The Vicar of Leeds says that "the shortage of clergy is deplorable." The same complaint comes from Nonconformist Churches also. The truth is that the number of intellectually brilliant young men who believe the Gospel is comparatively very small and steadily becoming smaller.

A Colonial Office report for 1922 on Togoland states that Fetishism is the dominating religion, and even converts to Christianity are still under its influence. Missionaries are also unable to combat polygamy, converts having one official wife, and several round the corner. Togoland seems very like England.

"Doth God care for oxen?" asked Saint Paul. Apparently not! Two cows were killed by lightning at Pantysgallog, Glamorgan. At Bournemouth a man was struck by lightning whilst sheltering with his fifteen-year-old son. So oxen and men share the same fate.

In addition to noticing that De Witt's Pills will cure Ukutyatyamba Kwamatambo, we also see that in the paper *Umteteli Wa Bantu*, Johannesburg, there is a letter from S. J. M. Phaladi, Pietersburg. This gentleman states that the quality of the present evangelists leaves much to be desired. In the question of English exports of this kind we assure S. J. M. Phaladi that the plums at home (see country vicarages, etc.) will only permit us to send the quality South Africa is receiving. When it comes to mothers' meetings or shouting the Gospel in South Africa the former receives the vote.

In a notice by the *Slavonic Review* the following extract may interest our readers:—

Special reference should here be made to Professor Dyboski's views on the Capek plays performed in London. He very aptly remarks that *R.U.R.* is a terrifying vision of a not impossible social future, and the *Insect Play* is an allegorical picture of an only too real international present.

Assuming that Professor Dyboski's opinion is correct, it may account for the loud denunciation of the *Insect Play* by a clergyman within the hearing of one who thoroughly enjoyed the spectacle of two commanders in turn thanking the God of the Ants for victory. But insects seem to

be the cause of much trouble in religious circles; in France, at one time, the name of "blackbeetles" meant anything but those glossy, smooth, crawling "representatives of hell," as Swedenborg might describe them.

In a review of *Essays by Divers Hands* we see it stated that Mr. Alfred Noyes delivers himself as follows:—

The basis of the universe in an ultimate harmony is the first postulate of all thought, all science, all art, all literature. Without it there is nothing left that has the slightest meaning.

It will be noted that this assertion shoulders out of the way all the big and little fishes in the religious sea from archbishops down or up to the illiterate at street corners with harmoniums and oil lamps. Mr. Noyes had better be careful or he will get himself disliked by his patrons if he talks common-sense in this fashion.

The latter remark will also apply to the reviewer in question: "Heresies and even follies are a sign of life," he writes. It may be possible that Atheism, the greatest heresy of all, will ultimately be acknowledged, when the mass of religious teachers can be guaranteed a living outside the lethal chamber called the Church.

The police were forced to use rifles in the fierce religious riots in Simla, India, between Hindoos and Moslems. Besides a large number of casualties, the report adds, many shops were looted. The last touch is delicious.

Followers of the Prince of Peace seem to have an inordinate love of fighting. The annual expenditure of the "fighting" services amounts to £167,000,000 without supplementary estimates. This, be it remembered, is in a year of peace.

We had the malicious pleasure to read a little while ago an article in *Cassell's Weekly* on Godwin's *Caleb Williams*. The writer, a Miss Marjorie Bowen, describes the story as the first "problem novel," because it "raises moral and social questions, and does not, as all novels had hitherto, intend to merely amuse or to instruct on the lines of conventional morality." We refrain from saying what we think of Miss Bowen's English, but if her style is bad, her literary judgment is even worse. Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones* were written, as are all novels, to give us æsthetic pleasure; but the instruction conveyed in them is far removed from the line of conventional morality, as far removed in their way as were *Tristram Shandy* and Amory's *John Bunckle*.

Godwin, the uneducated and ingenuous reader is informed, was the friend of "Tom Paine, Mrs. Inchbold, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb, and married Mary Wallstonecraft"; a sentence which includes one impertinence and two stupid blunders. Then we are told that Godwin was

one of that band of Freethinkers and reformers who were so strong in numbers and spirit at the end of the eighteenth century, and who derived a considerable importance and a sort of energy of despair from the persecutions they suffered and the horror in which they were held; Godwin, a mild man in himself, who had been a Calvinist Minister and then a Grub Street hack, possessed what were then considered extreme political opinions, and in 1793 the trial of Horne Tooke for High Treason provoked him to write a pamphlet entitled *Political Justice*, which at once made him famous and brought him in what was then held a huge sum, one thousand guineas.

We have it from one of our friends that Miss Bowen is a well-known writer of historical fiction. It is quite possible; at least she can get more fictitious history into a small space than any other writer we know, except perhaps Mr. Edmund Gosse. Let us test the accuracy of the information supplied by Miss Bowen to the readers of *Cassell's Weekly*. The trial of Horne Tooke, Hardy, Holcroft and others came on in 1794 not 1793. Godwin

certainly had his share in this important event. It was the moderation, earnestness and legal acumen displayed in his letter to the *Morning Chronicle*, "Remarks on Judge Eyre's Charge to the Jury," that possibly saved the lives of twelve men who, as Hazlitt says, "were marked out as political victims to the moloch of legitimacy." The "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice," as everyone knows who has taken the trouble to read the preface of the first edition was projected in the summer of 1791 and finished by the end of 1792, the preface being dated January, 1793.

It is unreasonable perhaps to expect a popular novelist to worry overmuch about getting her facts correctly. Still she could have asked a literary friend—we take it that all her friends are not novelists—to tell her something about the book. She would then have learnt for the first time that *Political Justice* is not precisely what we should call a pamphlet, without, of course, you can so describe two solid volumes *in quarto*.

The Bishop of Peterborough has been presented with a motor-car. A donkey was good enough for the founder of the Christian religion.

The Roman Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem has established a small university, intended mainly for the Arabs. The great truth that all Protestants are fools, or worse, will be duly inculcated.

A Mormon temple, costing £200,000, has been opened at Cardston, Alberta, Canada. Joe Smith's religion appears to be getting popular.

At a meeting of the Eton Guardians it was stated that there were four inspectors visiting a school where there were only fourteen scholars. Doubtless, the fourteen knew their catechism.

A commercial traveller at Rhyl was fined £2 for using bad language in his residence within the hearing of passers-by. If Londoners were fined in this manner, the war-debt would soon be paid off.

Church Army officers have been touring Cornwall and district, this being the conclusion of a three months' preaching expedition. A delightful way of combining business with pleasure.

How to Help.

There are thousands of men and women who have left the Churches and who do not know of the existence of this journal. Most of them would become subscribers if only its existence were brought to their notice.

We are unable to reach them through the ordinary channels of commercial advertising, and so must rely upon the willingness of our friends to help. This may be given in many ways:

By taking an extra copy and sending it to a likely acquaintance.

By getting your newsagent to take an extra copy and display it.

By lending your own copy to a friend after you have read it.

By leaving a copy in a train, tram or 'bus. It is monstrous that after forty years of existence, and in spite of the labour of love given it by those responsible for its existence, the *Freethinker* should not yet be in a sound financial position. It can be done if all will help. And the paper and the Cause is worthy of all that each can do for it.

The National Secular Society.

THE Funds of the National Secular Society are now legally controlled by Trust Deed, and those who wish to benefit the Society by gift or bequest may do so with complete confidence that any money so received will be properly administered and expended.

The following form of bequest is sufficient for anyone who desires to benefit the Society by will:—

I hereby give and bequeath (*Here insert particulars of legacy*), free of all death duties, to the Trustees of the National Secular Society for all or any of the purposes of the Trust Deed of the said Society, and I direct that a receipt signed by two of the trustees of the said Society shall be a good discharge to my executors for the said legacy.

Any information concerning the Trust Deed and its administration may be had on application.

To Correspondents.

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

A LETTER was recently sent from Westcliffe to "C.E.S.," Manor Park. We are asked to invite "C.E.S." to again write to Westcliffe.

H. LANCASTER.—Thanks for article. It is interesting reading, but the issues raised have already been recently dealt with. It gives one some idea of how terribly backward the "advanced" Christians are when those looked upon as heretics have only reached the point of rejecting the story of Elisha and the she-bears which devoured the children by the order of God because the youngsters had been saucy to his prophet. And yet there are people who tell us that Christianity is dead. One day they may discover to their cost that it is very much alive.

E. HALE.—We should like to publish more of Voltaire, but in the present state of trade we must be careful. And we have more troubles looming ahead.

T. DUNBAR.—Mr. Cohen is writing you. We are much obliged for what you are doing to stir up the newsagents. The boycott must be broken down somehow. There is not a paper in England which has to fight so severely against this cowardly opposition as we have. Freethinkers should refuse to deal with any agent who places obstacles in the way of their getting the paper. It is supplied to the trade on sale or return.

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

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

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

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

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

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

All Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to "The Pioneer Press" and crossed "London, City and Midland Bank, Clerkenwell Branch."

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

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

The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):—
One year 15.; half year, 7. 6d.; three months, 3s. 9d.

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Cohen has put off writing more of his "Views and Opinions" on Christianity and Pain until next week. This week that space is occupied with notes on the outrage on European civilization by Mussolini and his party of Terrorists. Those notes are written just before going to press with this issue (September 4) and the situation may have altered materially by the time the date is reached which this issue of the *Freethinker* bears. The League of Nations may have acted as its real friends would have it act, and Mr. Cohen's suspicions may prove to be ill-founded. In that case no one will be more pleased than the writer to find he is in the wrong. The other comments will stand whatever happens. The issue before the world to-day is plain. If civilization cannot end war, war will end civilization.

The Manchester Branch is reopening its Discussion Circle to-day (September 9). The first meeting will be held at Mr. Mapp's house, 1 Leopold Avenue, West Didsbury, when Mr. Seferian will open a discussion on "A Freethinker's Conception of Materialism." Time, 6.30. On Saturday, September 15, a "Freethought Tea" will be held at Mrs. Ballard's 49 Norway Street, Stretford. The purpose of the tea is to raise funds for the Branch, and for that purpose donations will be acceptable. Mrs. Ballard is giving the tea, and the donations, we presume, should be sent to her on behalf of the Branch.

The Branch commences its lecturing with two meetings in the Pendleton Town Hall which will be addressed by Mr. Cohen on October 7. The subsequent meetings of the Branch will be in the Hall of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, Rusholme Road, Manchester.

Mr. Cohen commences his winter lectures with a meeting in the Birmingham Town Hall on September 23. The Town Hall is a very large building, and we hope that all Freethinkers in Birmingham and district will do what they can to make the meeting well known among their friends.

The Birmingham Branch is doing what it can to help a Freethinker in their district, Mr. T. Shaw, who has fallen upon bad times. Mr. Shaw is selling old books and magazines, and perhaps Freethinkers in the Birmingham district may care to give him a call at 59 Green Lane, Walsall, or at the Yard of 59 Snow Hill any evening from six till eight. If any care to help with gifts of old books and magazines they will be acceptable.

Mr. Whitehead has had a very successful first week at Swansea. The sales of literature have been good, and local friends have rallied well to help. Mr. Whitehead will finish there to-day (September 9). On Monday, September 10, he commences a week's mission at Bristol. This is new ground and we should like all Freethinkers in the district to see that the meetings are as successful as they can be made. From there he will travel to Plymouth, where he will be from September 17 to 30. We have received an appeal from the energetic Branch Secretary, Mr. J. Churchill, asking that friends in the district will give all the help they can and in whatever form they are able to give. The intention is to use the propaganda in the open air as an incentive to a sustained effort during the winter months. There are splendid opportunities in Plymouth for Freethought propaganda and they should be taken full advantage of. Mr. Churchill's address is 2 St. Dunstan's Terrace, Plymouth, and any offers of help will be welcome.

Last week we published a letter from Mr. Mason concerning an incident in connection with Mr. Corrigan's lectures in Finsbury Park. We have now received a letter from Mr. A. W. Martin, which goes over the ground again without adding anything new to the matter. It is

clear there was a wrangle between the two parties, and the letter of Mr. Martin only confirms us in the opinion expressed that it is possible to take the Christian Evidence Society and its speakers too seriously. We know the Christian Evidence Society of old and our strong advice to all Freethought speakers is to leave it severely alone. The Cause will gain nothing in dignity from descending to a wrangle with its speakers, and if it comes to a matter of a "slanging" match there are few Freethought speakers who will be able to hold their own at that game. The better policy is for speakers to get on with their own work, and leave it to those who listen to make up their minds as to which party is better worth attention. That was our own policy when we engaged in open-air work, and we had no cause to regret it.

Meanwhile Mr. Corrigan continues to hold successful meetings in Finsbury Park. He is also holding a series of Tuesday evening meetings at Clapham Old Town. There is considerable questioning at all these meetings, and that may be taken as some indication of the interest aroused.

Forces Against Christianity.

FROM the point of view of the Freethinker, all the instruments of our civilization may be considered as so many forces against Christianity. Education we regard as the primary force, and we observe that as the people become enlightened, they believe less and less in the supernatural; and as Christianity is made up largely of myth and miracle Christianity will have to undergo a complete transformation, or die the death of all discredited systems. In this country the clergy have been uniformly against the education of the masses in the past, or, at all events, against any kind of education that would give them a comprehensive knowledge of the facts of Nature and of Man. But now that every child in the kingdom is bound to attend school from the tender age of five up to fourteen, and some even longer, and receive all the instruction the teachers are capable of imparting and the child is capable of acquiring on various subjects, the educational force becomes stronger every year. Even in the schools in which sectarian instruction is given (the non-provided schools, as they are called) instruction in elementary science is also given, which is in direct conflict with the teaching they receive on the Bible and Christianity, and thus it often happens that the most sceptical minds on matters of religion are those who have received their early education in Church-schools. In the higher elementary and secondary schools a more systematic teaching of science is given, and the teachers are compelled to have a special training in various branches of science in order to qualify themselves to impart accurate knowledge on these subjects.

When we take these facts into consideration, who can doubt that in the course of a few years this knowledge in the minds of the rising generation, if properly directed, will become a mighty force against all forms of superstition? From these, by a natural step, we go to our colleges and universities, and it is safe to assume that in such centres of learning the works of our great scientists, like Darwin and Huxley, as well as such philosophers as Mill and Spencer, are not relegated into the background as they were a quarter of a century ago. If we turn to art, we find that our painters and sculptors are no longer engaged in putting on canvas or working upon marble such Biblical or theological subjects as they did in the past. A very much larger proportion of the work done to-day deals with subjects relating entirely to this world and to this life—the only life of which we have any real knowledge. In the days when Christianity dominated every de-

partment of human activity all the great musicians had no option but to write sacred music, and it was only when they turned their attention towards the theatre and began to write opera, that the great musicians composed delightful melodies to purely secular subjects. Thus Handel, Haydn, and Mendelssohn wrote mainly what is called sacred music, but Mozart, Rossini, Verdi, Gounod, Mayerbeer, Mascagni and Wagner, wrote immortal melodies for the operatic stage.

Although, no doubt, the music of the oratorios of "The Messiah," "The Creation," and "Elijah," will be reproduced at Easter for the delectation of religious folk for many years to come, it is safe to say that, with the decay of faith, the interest in such works will gradually die out; but the great operas of the masters will grow in public favour with the development of the musical tastes of each succeeding generation. Already the oratorio of "Elijah" has been reset and produced as an opera by the Carl Rosa Opera Company, and I have seen it performed for several seasons in succession by the "Old Vic" Opera Company. Well, that is but an indication of the marked change in public taste in musical matters. Then let us consider what a powerful force against Christianity our theatres have become in recent years. Not only do they attract hundreds of thousands of people during the year to witness plays of an entirely secular character, but in many of them the clergy are caricatured in a most grotesque fashion. Some of the plays it is worthy of note are of a distinctly Freethought tendency, and where they do not distinctly attack the Christian religion they undermine the fundamentals of all religions by implication. In London alone, that is to say in the administrative County of London—excluding what is called Greater London—there were, ten years ago, fifty theatres. Some of them are now turned into picture palaces—with a seating capacity of 60,848. Assuming that these theatres are open only thirty weeks in the year, nearly half the population of London must pay them a visit at least once during the year, and some many times during the twelve months. People who patronize theatres do not, as a rule, trouble the churches and chapels over much with their attendance.

Consider, then, the music halls. There are close on fifty of them in the administrative County of London, which are either devoted to variety business or cinema shows and variety combined, and these together have a seating capacity of 68,783. Then think of the vast number of picture palaces that are springing up all over London and the Provinces and the enormous crowd of people that nightly patronize these shows. When we further consider the number of these places that are open on Sundays and the number of theatres and music-halls that are open on that day, under the auspices of the National Sunday League and the Society of Musicians, we are able to understand, in some measure the vast forces the churches and chapels have to contend with, or compete with, in trying to secure the patronage of the people.

These are forces which the Churches cannot ignore and which many of the clergy would like to suppress by law if they could. And now that the workers of London have secured a victory on the London County Council in favour of games in the parks on Sunday, we Freethinkers can understand how the clergy feel when they witness, as a consequence, the gradual diminution of their congregations during the summer months, almost to the vanishing point. How Charles Dickens would have rejoiced over the decision of the L.C.C. in respect to Sunday games. He was in favour of making Sunday a day of general enjoyment; indeed, he was in favour of the people not only playing cricket on Sunday, but running races, or engaging in any

amusement that was conducive to good health and spirit. And he practised what he preached. No wonder that the kill-joys of the Christian faith detested him. Nor must I omit to mention that most of our West End Clubs are open on Sundays and instrumental music is often given for the gratification of the worldly minded and wealthy members of these institutions. Sunday, too, is a great day in all the working men's clubs in London and the Provinces, and I have not only witnessed variety shows on Sunday mornings that would shock the tender susceptibilities of most of the pious members of "The National Free Church Council," but also many dramatic performances of comedy and drama that would, like the speech of the ghost of Hamlet's father, make "their hair stand on end like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

And, finally, the lectures delivered under the auspices of the National Secular Society, the various Ethical Societies, and the Socialistic bodies, must weigh in the balance with the other great forces against Christianity. When the Christians thought that their religion was absolutely true, they were ready and willing to do everything they could to suppress and exterminate any movement that was opposed to it; but as soon as they began to be doubtful about the truth of any part of it, they began to be more tolerant and to relax their persecuting spirit. With the decay of faith the secular forces have gained in strength, and when the masses of the people have the light of Free-thought shed upon their minds, the day of real emancipation from theological thralldom will be at hand.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

The Devil's Chaplain.

(Concluded from page 554.)

CHAPTER FIVE.

TAYLOR took very unkindly to his second imprisonment. He was imprisoned in Horsmonger Lane Gaol, and seems to have been treated with what he deemed to be studied persecution. He was of a highly nervous disposition and resented his treatment with outbursts of passion that troubled greatly his friends.

Writing to him from the Compter, on July 20, 1831, Richard Carlile expressed wise sympathy and protest. The words of Carlile deserve to be remembered for use and instruction to-day by all who suffer in the cause of freedom:—

"My first duty to society is to seek the preservation of your life; your first is to preserve it as far as is in your power. If you die, we shall not fill the chasm for many years if all the genius of England were to unite its efforts.....You say Walter, the gaoler, insults you. That is your fault. It is not in the power of man to insult me. The world could not do it if it were to try. Assault is one thing, but insult is another, and there can only be insult where there is a disposition to court it. Human nature is capable of a dignity that will not leave room for the word insult. Unfortunately you have the temperament that encourages villainy to be insolent. Let us try if reason cannot cure you of this disorder, which to you, at this moment, is as bad and dangerous a plague as the cholera morbus.....It is now with you no time for poetry, for rhapsody, or for jest. You have, and we have for you a serious game to play.....Yours is a glorious situation if you will but fight your battle well. Having gained the necessaries—the physical necessaries of life—you should now make every shot tell among the enemy, and not allow another shot of theirs to reach you.....It has been hitherto your fault to present your weak side to your enemy. You have in you the spirit of a divinity that is invincible. You have the spirit of humanity also

that is weak and to be conquered—now which will you present to your enemies? They are not to be subdued by appeals to their sympathy or by any moral force. You must subdue them by making them afraid. They will beat you at any game that is wrong, they will be powerless if you will avail yourself of your best and fairest means of warfare.....You have everything to conquer, and you must begin your reform at home and first conquer your own self command; patience is not so necessary as a cool methodical warfare.....For the sake of our glorious cause, let nothing come from your pen about the gaol that can be contradicted. You have not been sufficiently careful. It is not a time for a joke; your enemies will call your jokes lies, and to the world at large they are lies. Give your gaol enemies but one real ground of complaint against you, and you give them justification for their worst intentions. I wish I could pour an opiate over your irritability, and say, 'be composed.' You want composure, coolness, dignity, patience, fortitude, for your present situation; but I know it is not to be commanded. You must reason with yourself, and write down laws for your own government in prison. You will do this coolly, and they will keep you cool. Beyond what you print I would have you keep a journal, as you have the taste and application for journal keeping."

Taylor's irritability was aroused by a request he received from the solicitor of Allan Cunningham, the poet, novelist, and sculptor. Taylor published his discourses under the title of *The Devil's Pulpit*. Immediately succeeding this title was the quotation from Cunningham, "*And a bonnie pulpit it is.*" The solicitor requested that the quotation should not be used in this connection. The request was complied with. But what bigotry! What lamentable want of humour! How delightfully proper!

Carlile was released from prison in 1833. He had refused to find either sureties or fine and the Government had surrendered on both points. Carlile's splendid disposition in this matter will appear from the note he sent to Julian Hibbert, upon learning that the latter was contemplating the release of one of the imprisoned shopmen by paying his fine:—

"I think that mischief will be done by any proposition to pay the King a fine in this struggle for the liberty of Press and of speech. I should count that man my enemy who would pay such a fine for me, and set me free against my will. We cannot have too much money; but we can all make a better use of it than to pay fines."

With Robert Taylor Carlile spoke at the Rotunda the Sunday following his release. Both received a tremendous ovation.

Soon afterwards Robert Taylor retired from the public platform entirely. He married a wealthy woman who admired him for his ability and settled with her in Jersey. Here he died on June 5, 1844.

Many stories have been circulated concerning his alleged conversion, but there are only four newspaper references of the time to this interesting suggestion, and they are all traceable to the newspaper, *John Bull*. This journal was similar in tone and veracity to the organ of the same name founded by Mr. Bottomley and flourishing to-day as a medium of mendacity.

It has been suggested also that Robert Taylor, infidel, is identical with a Robert Taylor who was transported for forgery. The interesting thing about this Protestant error is that John Calvin, reformist, was always confounded by his Papist enemies with another John Calvin, renegade, priest and thief. Just as there were two different men called John Calvin, pursuing very different careers, so were there two Robert Taylors. I have all the facts before me as I write, and I would have Taylor's slanderers take to the heart the warning of Quarles: "Give not thy tongue too great a

liberty, lest it take thee prisoner. A word unspoken is like the sword in the scabbard—thine; if vented, thy sword is in another's hand. If thou desire to be wise, be so wise as to hold thy tongue."

The crucial test of the conversion story is this? No Christian apologist ever answered Robert Taylor's smashing indictment of the Christian religion. John Pye Smith, reputed a great scholar, made a mess of the task. Could Robert Taylor, himself, as he lay on June 5, 1844, drawing out his last hours on the death-bed at Jersey have refuted his own case? If so, why has no Divine been equal to the task? If not, how could he have been converted by arguments unequal to the task of convincing him?

Robert Taylor in his retirement never wrote a line to serve the Christian cause. He spoke not a word in its defence. His life's work was the accomplishment of its destruction, and the scholarship and humanity of to-day endorses his iconoclasm of yesterday. It may be said of him that he lived up to his request, when he desired to be known as the man "who loved truth more than he feared death; and hated Christianity more than he loved life." Never was the distinction between Christianity and Truth more forcibly proclaimed. GUY A. ALDRED.

Correspondence.

WAR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The letter of "Y. C.," in issue for August 26, is like an invigorating sea-breeze, and although I am only a minor conspirator in connection with Douglas economics, with your permission I should like to deal with the last paragraph of your correspondent's communication. The answer to the other part is quite simple and easy, and will no doubt be given by Mr. A. W. Coleman.

"Y. C." writes of "the glamour of the Social Credit and Under Consumption brigades." There is no such thing. In fact the movement is as popular as Free-thought, and, unlike the attractive channels of Labour or any other brand of politics, there are no prizes and no careers. What adherents the movement has, it will, like Free-thought, hold for ever. Unlike Christianity there is no element of faith required from a student of Douglas economics. Our gentle and wise Erasmus wrote that humanity has, for every pound of passion only one ounce of reason. To this latter quantity Free-thought and Douglas economics appeal. We cannot think with our heart as many estimable public men try to induce us, and we refuse to introduce an emotional appeal in a problem in mathematics, and this brings me to my point in quoting Douglas economics as a solution to war in my article.

The Englishman's Castle is now speedily being reduced to two furnished rooms—this, Sir, is not written in any spirit of bitterness. Lord Rothermere, who is only a newspaper proprietor, is trying to make our flesh creep with some gibber or other about conscription. For preference, if we must have a Lord, we prefer Lord Grey, whom, when shaken and terrorized by those Greek furies that ride in the vision of statesmen, delivered himself of the six statements we quoted. Lord Rothermere is too late, as is every fool who bases a future war on the data of the last; there will be no time to stand at the back selling Rothermere newspapers, to conscript, Derby scheme, nor stand at the rear bellowing like a bull that is now safely silent. The back will be as much at the front and more so, and only mutual destruction will take place. But, as we wrote, there are many, many, urges to stay the hand that pulls the bolt for the last war to end—Europe.

As it rests with the uneasy ones to blow the Douglas fallacies to bits, we affirm again that an examination and practice of credit reform appears to be the only solution to war, as all other solutions existed before the last war. Perhaps Mr. Lansbury and Mr. Ben Tillett remember sitting in a Fleet Street restaurant in August, 1914, when they bemoaned the fact that the German Socialists had declared in favour of war.

To conclude, and at the same time to apologize for the length of this letter, "Y. C." has set me laughing. "Glamour" is not found in Douglas Economics or Free-thought; if it was, we should be in the position of the Greek orator who knew he had made a mistake when his audience applauded—because we are only appealing to that ounce, and when we are successful the public will take the benefits with scarce a thank you. If an aeroplane during peace time comes to earth, the two occupants are killed and a house burned to the ground, is it not time to anticipate the next war and commend the clergy to pray for the suspension of the law of gravitation? At the same time we require definite information on the value to the public of an expansion of Civil Aviation. But there again we are in conflict with that ounce, and that is what a life-training in Free-thought brings, for which you and the late G. W. Foote are responsible, along with others who accepted the nature of things when the head was placed over the heart, and this means death to superstition of all kinds. WILLIAM REPTON.

"THE PASSING OF THE SOUL."

SIR,—I feel highly honoured by Mr. W. Mann's ample answer of seven paragraphs, and will, with your kind permission, deal with them.

Par. 1.—I did not "claim that all those who reject Christianity for Spiritualism are Freethinkers." Mr. Mann said the "vast majority" of Spiritualists had been Christians. When they rejected Christianity and before they became Spiritualists what were they but Freethinkers? In my view they remain Freethinkers; and most of them would appreciate rather than regret the label.

Par. 2.—Mr. Mann asks my source of information respecting Conan Doyle's earlier satisfaction with Materialism. In his lectures—which have been well reported (and three of which I have attended)—he has been quite explicit on this point; equally so in his *Strand* article (I forget the date). In *The New Revelation* he proclaimed himself a confirmed materialist since 1882. In *Our American Adventure* he writes: "I started from Theistic Materialism, with absolute incredulity as to any life beyond this one," and refers to "my years of struggle against the facts, and my final forced acceptance"; also to times "when I think how long it took to break down my own materialistic prejudices" (pp. 28, 148, italics mine).

Par. 3.—Mr. Mann essays to prove that Conan Doyle was a Theist. He tells us some Materialists "still believe in a creative power. Professor Tyndall did." Quite so: I didn't say Conan Doyle was an Atheist, so whoever Mr. Mann may be here answering it is certainly not me.

Par. 4.—Mr. Mann wishes me to say why men do not profess themselves Materialists when they are such. I should say because the Churches have succeeded in bringing the word into bad odour, associating it with sordid gains and so forth. (This week I find G. K. C. in the *I.L.N.* writing of the "Marxian Materialist.")

Par. 5.—Mr. Mann asks for the precise words of the claim that distaste for a future life is evidence of its non-existence. In his article the Archibald Weir and other quotations immediately followed the statement as to science exploding the myth of a future life. I must regretfully confess that I was misled by this sequence, though, if I may quote my precise words, I said, "If it be that Mr. Mann regards this as" so. He does not. I hope he will accept my apology.

Mr. Mann enlarges upon the futility of missionary enterprise and theological assertion. Being as much anti-missionary and anti-theological as Mr. Mann, I concur. He writes forcibly, but is not here answering me. What would have been here in place is evidence that the craving for a future life leads Freethinkers—ex-Christian or otherwise—to study Spiritualism. He adduces none; and nothing to confirm that "the craving for a future life, where it exists, is due to early training," a boomerang contention in his hands—for Conan Doyle was "brought up in the Roman Catholic faith and was educated at Stonyhurst"; hence should rather be biased against Spiritualism.

Par. 6.—Mr. Mann enquires what there is in Spiritual-

ism to attract besides satisfaction of that craving. I will tell him. *Firstly*, the cardinal fact that the dead appear to and communicate with the living. *Secondly*, the allegation, considered by most as proved, that they watch over us—are as "*Guardian Angels*"—influencing characters and even perhaps partially controlling the "luck" of surviving friends. *Thirdly*, "the deliverances of its mediums," which, though in Mr. Mann's opinion "beneath contempt," are deemed, as to some such, to be *deliverances of high value*. *Fourthly*, the fact that the preponderating testimony of those who have passed beyond favours the doctrine of *Spirit Progression*, whereby the evil in man tends to evanesce.

Par. 7.—Mr. Mann does not despair of seeing me alter my opinions. Might I not with equal force say I do not despair of Mr. Mann? The ranks of Spiritualism are recruited, on his own showing in the "vast majority" of instances from ex-Christians, *i.e.*, Freethinkers who have fought their way out of superstition. Of how many cases does he know of Spiritualists who have reverted to Freethought unblended with Spiritualism? If it comes to the compliment of not despairing, the statistical chances are surely in favour of Mr. Mann's conversion, not of mine.

O. D.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

SIR,—Mr. Leonard Summers classes me among those who are angry with him for "exposing the impotence of the League of Nations." On the contrary, I am delighted that Mr. Summers continues to demonstrate that, *when the facts are stated*, there is no case whatever against the League.

I repeat that the League of Nations stands for conference and settlement by agreement in international disputes. The League is the only guarantee we have that nations will explore every possible alternative before resorting to arms. The League is a long way yet from being a sufficient guarantee of this, but it has already proved the efficacy of its method in the peaceful settlement of several international disputes that, in the absence of the League, would certainly have led to war. I refer particularly to the Aaland Islands dispute between Albania and Yugo-Slavia. These are real beginnings, and they prove that when disputing nations can be brought together at the conference table by a recognized world authority, there is more than a good chance that they can settle their differences without first cutting each other's throats.

No reasonable person would hold that the existence of the League precludes the possibility of future wars. There is unfortunately little hope that we have advanced beyond the era of wars. That we shall have to do so if civilization is to survive is absolutely certain. The League is in a very real sense the one hope of our civilization. As it includes more countries, and as it is supported more and more by informed public opinion in all countries, so we may hope to abandon the doctrine of universal suicide which Mr. Summers advocates with such fervency.

Mr. Porter, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States House of Representatives, did, as Mr. Summers states, criticize the policy of the League of Nations in regard to the Opium Traffic. It so happens, however, that this was nine months ago, before Mr. Porter knew what that policy was. Since then, Mr. Porter has himself sat on the League Commission on the Opium Traffic and has declared himself "most amazed at the wonderful work of the League which no other organization could possibly perform."

Owing to the success of the League's scheme in Austria, the Allies will recover, not only all the money they have put into Austria, but, also Austria's proportion of the War Indemnity. M. Poincare, in his last note to the British Government called particular attention to the significance of the rapid recovery of Austria. It is a fact that the reconstruction of Austria represents the first forward step of European statesmanship since the conclusion of hostilities in 1918. It was the League that made this possible.

Perhaps Mr. Summers does not know that the League of Nations scheme of Mutual Guarantee Treaties to be accompanied by a general reduction of armaments has been most warmly welcomed in France, which regards it

as a practical alternative to the ill-fated Anglo-American Treaty.

It is a tribute to the ingenuity of Mr. Summers and those who think with him that they are able to elude the ever-increasing array of facts which make the case for the League of Nations irresistible.

GLADSTONE MURRAY.

THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In last week's *Freethinker* I notice Mr. Millar says some nice things about the late and the present editor. All the compliments are richly deserved, and Mr. Millar, with true Scotch "canniness," steers his way, remarkably well in his congratulations.

Let me say that I enjoyed the number immensely. It is too bad to make invidious distinctions, but the whole lot were "awfu' guid," as Mr. Millar would doubtless say. Lloyd, Gould, Hands, Aldred, Mason, Summers, Mann. I take off my hat to them all.

Then there is that discussion of the Douglas scheme. I have read Coleman very attentively to get the hang of his arguments. Though one cannot upset them, they seem too good to be true. What does Cutner think about it? If what Coleman says be right, why is the new method not adopted straight away and let us all be happy ever after. Have our orthodox economists gone "dotty"?

"Mimnermus" is amazingly versatile, and his page always forms delightful reading. And your extracts from famous authors always hit the nail on the head. Remy de Gourmont on the word "God" seems a "wholehogger." I have often suggested that "God" either does not exist at all, or else he is everything—embraces the whole of existence—but Remy de Gourmont goes one better, he declares him to be "all that is not." "God" is having a difficult time. He is faring worse than the Shaftesbury conception of Matthew Arnold.

However, I want to thank the editor specially for his illuminating article on Materialism. One cannot help but admire the deft phrases, the lucid exposition of these philosophic subjects. One wonders where the editor got his training. There seems no loophole for an ardent supernaturalist. It is almost unmerciful to refuse to allow the enemy to choose his own battle-ground. It is enough to develop in him suicidal tendencies.

On Sunday I took the precaution of reading Mr. Cohen's article aloud in the bosom of my family. Also Remy de Gourmont's strictures on our ancient friend. The younger generation wants to get the idea of inevitable causation into their minds, and the supernatural idea will eventually vanish. But there is just one query I would like to ask. Are the lexicographers agreed as to this definition of materialism or do Freethinkers employ this meaning merely to suit the exigencies of the time?

ALAN TYNDAL.

PHILOSOPHIES OF LIFE.

SIR,—A friendly discussion on the above subject in the *Freethinker* between the Editor and Mr. W. S. Godfrey prompts me to write for the purpose of gaining information on certain perplexing problems, and, if possible, eliciting from Mr. W. S. Godfrey, or any person competent to throw light on the subject, answers to the following simple questions. What evidence is there that the world had a beginning? Is not all the evidence in the contrary direction—that the universe is of eternal duration, self-existent and self-contained? Is not life a continuous adaptation to ever-changing conditions? Is it possible to conceive of the beginning of matter, the limits of space or the duration of time? Is there any ultimate purpose in Nature other than the existing recurring phenomena—chemical, mechanical and biological? Are not the standards by which we judge phenomena—logic and philosophy, human devices? Can there be a first cause, if human philosophy be true—that every effect must have an antecedent cause? Is not every effect a cause, and all that we can discover is an endless chain of cause and effect? Can anything exist outside of the all-embracing universe? If there be a Creator he must have existed prior to and outside the "Creation." A Creator cannot conceivably be a part of his own handiwork, any more than a man could lift himself up in a bucket, or be his own father. I am not here of my own

will. Knowing what I do as the result of my experience of being here, I should have preferred, if I could have been consulted, not to have been here. How then can I be justly blamed, or punished, if I have not made better use of my opportunities, judged by any possible standard? Is there any evidence of intelligence higher than that of mankind; of goodness better than human goodness; of badness worse than human badness? Is there anything we know about anything knowable that we have not discovered for ourselves? Is not all knowledge the result of observation and experiment, and not a Revelation in the theological or any other sense?

As I do not want to conflict too many elementary questions on any of your contributors at once, and certainly not on the Editor, whose hands, I know, are pretty full at all times, I will defer the remainder of a sheaf of further questions to another occasion.

GEORGE E. QUIRK.

Obituary.

DEATH OF MR. S. H. SWINNY.

The ranks of reformers in London have suffered a notable loss in the death, on August 31, of Mr. S. H. Swinny, President of the London Positivist Society. Mr. Swinny was a very familiar figure at reform meetings in London, and was a staunch supporter of many movements that stood for a measure of social justice or of intellectual reform. His work in these directions was not always obtrusive, but it was sincere and thorough, far more so than many who occupied a larger place in the public eye. In those causes with which this journal is most intimately associated, such as Secular Education and the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws, he was always to be depended on, and his services on the Committee of the Secular Education League were ungrudgingly given and highly valued by his fellow members. A man of wide reading, shrewd observation, genuine culture, and warm sympathies—enlivened and humanized by an Irishman's quick wit—he could talk and write on most subjects in which he was concerned with interest and instruction. Mr. Swinny had been for many years editor of the *Positivist Review*, and his own writings were often the most interesting features of the magazine. The body was cremated at Golder's Green on Tuesday, September 4. Date and time prevented the editor of this journal being present to pay a last mark of respect to one whom he held in the highest regard, but we were there in spirit with what we are sure was a gathering of distinguished men and women to pay a last mark of respect to a brave soldier in the army of human progress. In Mr. Cohen's absence the N.S.S. was represented by Miss Kough and Mr. J. T. Lloyd.

I regret to record the death of Mary Jane Veronica Kernot, the beloved wife of my old friend, Mr. William P. Kernot, of Putney, on August 28, 1923, at the age of seventy-six, and after a happy married life of fifty-eight years. There was romance in her early days. When she was only eight years old she was certified dead by the family doctor and confined in readiness for burial, but just as the undertaker was about to screw down the coffin she clutched his hand and thereby saved herself from being buried alive. Her case was simply one of suspended animation. The Roman Catholics at the church attended by her family thenceforth called her Veronica, the child of miracle. On reaching her twentieth year she was already for all practical purposes a Secularist and gave up attending church, having embraced the Freethought principles of her husband. Many years of travel and sojourn in Spain, Italy, and most other countries in Europe enabled her to see the Christian Churches at close quarters and note how geography alters and modifies the complexion and behaviour of theology and its votaries. She was a member of the old Battersea Branch of the N.S.S. from start to finish of its eventful existence. For her, Secularism was the true philosophy of life. She was a great admirer of Charles Bradlaugh and G. W. Foote, and considered the present Editor of the *Freethinker* one of the most logical reasoners she ever met. I had the pleasure of knowing her for quite forty years, back in the old Walworth days when she and her husband attended the

Secular Hall there in York Street. Her loss is a great sorrow to Mr. Kernot, whose zeal for Freethought is unabated despite his more than eighty years. He mourns the loss of a good and true wife, and we who knew her a sound Secularist, one for whom her home was the true paradise and the doing of good all round, without fear or favour from God or man, the highest known type of religion. Her remains were cremated at Golder's Green on September 3, and the undersigned at her special request read a Secular Service over her remains.—WILLIAM HEAFORD.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.
INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2) : 11, Norman Angell, "The Moral Obligation to be Intelligent."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park) : Near the Fountain) : 6.15, Mr. Burke, a Lecture.

FINSBURY PARK.—11.15, Mr. F. P. Corrigan, a Lecture.

METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY.—Freethought lectures every evening at Marble Arch, Hyde Park, 7 to 10. Lecturers, Mr. G. Baker, Mr. C. H. Keeling, Mr. J. L. Knubley, Mr. L. W. J. Miller, Mr. F. Shaller, Mr. C. E. Saphin. The Discussion Circle meets every Thursday at 8 at the "Laurie Arms," Crawford Place, Edgware Road, W.1.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.—Regent's Park (near the Bandstand) : 6, Mr. F. Shaller, a Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park) : 3, and 6, Mr. F. P. Corrigan will lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Outside Technical Institute, Romford Road, Stratford, E.) : 7, Mr. H. C. White, a Lecture.

COUNTRY.
OUTDOOR.

BRISTOL.—Monday, September 10, Mr. George Whitehead's Mission.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble to Cadder Wilderness. Meet at Bishopbriggs Terminus at 12 o'clock.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S.—Discussion Circle meets at Mrs. Mapp's, 1 Leopold Avenue, West Didsbury, at 6.30 when Mr. Seferian will speak on "A Freethinker's Conception of Materialism."

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Moor, near North Road entrance) : 7, Mr. R. Atkinson, a Lecture.

SWANSEA AND DISTRICT BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. George Whitehead's Mission : Final meetings.

BOOKS FOR SALE.

	s. d.
Havelock, Ellis, <i>Etudes de Psychologie Sexuelle</i> , 4 vols., 1906	25 0
Robertson, G. C., <i>Bismarck</i> , 1918	4 0
Meredith, E. P., <i>The Prophet of Nazareth</i> , 1864	3 0
Carpenter, Ed., <i>Pagan and Christian Creeds</i> , 1920	5 0
Haynes, E. S. P., <i>Religious Persecution</i> , 1904	2 6
Middleton Conyers, <i>A Free Inquiry</i> , 1749	2 0
Birch, W. J., <i>Philosophy and Religion of Shakespeare</i> , 1848	8 0
Hayes, W., <i>Walt Whitman</i> , 1922	2 6
<i>The Indictment of War: An Anthology</i> , 1919	5 0
Morgan, T. C., <i>The Moral Philosophy of Freethought</i>	2 6
Moncure Conway, <i>The Earthward Pilgrimage</i>	1 6
Bjerregaard, <i>Sufism, Omar and Fitzgerald</i>	2 0
Giles, <i>Hebrew, Christian, and Apostolic Records</i> , 3 vols., Bradlaugh's copy with autograph signature and a few notes	10 0
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