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Views and Opinions

Slavery and Christian Myth-Making

THE anniversary of the abolition of slavery in British possessions was not allowed to pass without much junketing, and much praise of Christianity—by Christians. Most of the papers published "leaders" on the subject, and the religious journals surpassed themselves in calling attention to the influence of Christianity in destroying this "un-Christian" institution. Most of those who are led by newspapers know very little of the history of the slave trade, of its development under the highest of Christian auspices, or of the stubborn fight set up by Churches and individual Christians to perpetuate it. Neither are they aware that many of those—such as Wilberforce—while agitating against slavery abroad, actually were among the defenders of a system of child-slavery that was in being in this country, in the interests of the mill-owners of Lancashire and Yorkshire. They could fiercely denounce the slavery abroad, and defend the selling of pauper children to factory owners, exhorting the poor to be content in the state in which they found themselves. So far as the Churches are concerned they have in this anniversary again demonstrated the value of continuous advertising. Those who really wish to get a bird's eye of the whole subject will find it set forth in my *Christianity, Slavery, and Labour*, a book which is in its third edition, and will soon be in a fourth. I do not usually advertise my own books in these notes, but the occasion is a special one, and I cannot deal fully with the subject now.

In addition to the newspaper articles, there have been several banquets, and at these there has been the usual talk of Christian efforts to abolish slavery, but nothing at all said of the fact that but for Christians modern slavery might never have existed. There has been a great deal of talk about Christian teaching, but I note that those who were praising Christianity did not read from the Bible:—

Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids which thou shalt have shall be of the heathen that are round

about you. Of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. . . . And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen for ever.

Nor did they call attention to the command of St. Paul, that slaves were to be obedient to their masters, whether they were good or bad. These were Christian jollifications, and Christians made the most of it. It would have been too cruel for anyone to have disturbed the blowing of Christian trumpets—by Christians—by reminding the banqueters that by a peculiar coincidence Christian countries were only awakened to the anti-Christian nature of slavery when slavery had ceased to be relatively profitable. If anyone had done so most Christians would probably have replied that this was an example of the way in which the Lord profits those who act righteously.

* * *

A Slow Cure

Slavery was officially abolished in British possessions in 1834. But Jesus Christ died—if we follow the official legend—eighteen centuries before, and if we except from this period some four centuries, then the Christian Church had been in existence, and in supreme power, for some fourteen hundred years. One may agree with the historian Finlay:—

It has been very generally asserted that we ought to attribute the change (the extinguishing of slavery) to the influence of the Christian religion. If this be true cavillers might observe that so powerful a cause never in any other case produced its effects so tardily.

When next we feel inclined to complain at the leisurely progress of a House of Commons Committee, let us remember that it took God Almighty eighteen centuries to persuade some Christians that he wished them to revoke his own laws about buying and selling human beings. The Lord doeth all things well, but he taketh his time about it. And the Christian slave who felt that every day was as a thousand years, probably consoled himself with the reflection that to God the scale of measurement was the other way round. Nor ought we to forget that, as was argued by many a Christian defender of slavery, if men and women were brought from Africa to spend their lives as slaves, they at the same time were given the inestimable blessing of the Christian religion. Without slavery, millions of coloured people might have died and never have known that there was such a place as hell awaiting them. The Church has always advised those who feel themselves hardly done by to "count their blessings."

* * *

A Christian System

Most people when they talk of the slave system think of it as a continuation of the slavery of antiquity. But this is quite unjustifiable. The slavery of the Roman world had died out long before the era

of the slave trade, the abolition of which has been celebrated. That slave trade was distinctly a Christian introduction. It took its rise among Christians, it was advocated by Christians, and Christians justified it by appeals to scripture, by Church custom, and by accepted canons of Christian morality. The Church was for centuries the largest of slave-owners, and was the slowest in discarding its human property; for when the Church obtained slaves by gift or purchase, it was forbidden to dispose of them. As H. C. Lea says:—

When the papal Church granted a slave to a monastery, the dread anathema, involving eternal perdition, was pronounced against anyone interfering with the gift; and those who were appointed to take charge of the farms and lands of the Church, were specially instructed that it was part of their duty to pursue and recapture fugitive bondsmen.

There was hardly a Christian who saw anything wrong in the traffic, and if any objection was raised, Christianity, as usual, supplied moralizing texts. The coloured people were descendants of Ham, and upon Ham and his descendants there rested the curse of God. Abyssinia is one of the oldest Christian countries in the world. It is a slave-owning country to-day, and the chief obstacle to its abolition there is religious tradition and Christian opposition. Queen Elizabeth was a partner in the slave trade; she lent her ship the *Jesus* to Hawkins for the traffic, and among the rules that Hawkins drew up for his vessel the two first were to "serve God daily," and "love one another." It must be remembered, also that the slave traffic was not native to Africa. It was introduced by Christians—the Portuguese. In the hundred years ending 1776 English ships carried about three million slaves into Spanish, French, and English colonies. Liverpool alone made as much as a quarter of a million pounds annually from the trade. Full authority for these and other statements will be found in my book on the subject.

* * *

The Bible in America

North America likewise owed the introduction of slavery to the pious British settlers. At any rate, they firmly based it on religious grounds. These pious settlers agreed with the great Bishop Bossuet that "To condemn slavery was to condemn the Holy Ghost," and as early as 1667 the Virginia Assembly decreed that "conversion and baptism should not operate to set a slave free." For sheer brutality the American system of slavery, introduced and upheld by Christians, excelled anything the world has ever seen. Antiquity had its slaves, but at least they were regarded as human beings, and could, and frequently did, secure their freedom, and with their freedom, equality. But freedom for a slave in America was almost impossible. Laws were passed prohibiting a slave to learn to read or write, and punishing any one who tried to educate a slave. Slaves were bred as men to-day breed dogs or horses. Many slave-owners kept what were virtually stud-farms. In the Orthodox Churches in the South, over 600,000 slaves were held by ministers and members. Slaves were bred for the market, and the most prolific slaves were the most desirable, because they fed the market more rapidly. The treatment of slaves may be inferred from the death rate; for although over nine million negroes were imported in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and despite their large birth rate, the number of slaves in America in 1790 was less than 700,000. The policy of the slaveholder, says Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, "was to kill off the negroes by overwork and buy more." An indication of the conditions under which slaves worked may be

gathered from a law passed in Louisiana, which provided that a slave must have at least two-and-a-half hours rest out of each twenty-four.

* * *

How Christianity Helped

In the struggle for the maintenance of the Union—the question of the abolition of slavery only arose afterwards—the Southern Churches threw nearly their whole weight in favour of slavery, and a large number of Northern Churches followed suit, or remained silent. Indeed, when Lloyd Garrison tried to get a hall in Boston, in which to preach against slavery, he was met with refusal after refusal. He at last had a hall placed at his disposal—by Abner Kneeland, who had just served a sentence for blasphemy. Garrison, by the way, complained that in England, and in Scotland particularly, immense pains were taken to stir up ill-feeling against the American Anti-Slavery Society on account of its Infidel character.

Presbytery after Presbytery, and Church meeting after Church meeting passed resolutions protesting against interference with so well-established an institution as slavery. One of these official Church gatherings placed itself in an impregnable (Christian) position when it affirmed,

That in the opinion of this Presbytery, the holding of slaves so far from being a sin in the sight of God is nowhere condemned in his holy word; that it is in accordance with the example, and consistent with the precepts of patriarchs, apostles and prophets.

Another Congress decided "that the example of our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles, in not interfering with the question of slavery . . . is worthy of the imitation of all ministers of the Gospel." These resolutions remind one of the remarks of Lord Thurlow, when speaking against abolition in the House of Lords, "Slavery had flourished in the early ages when men communed with God, to attack its legality is an insidious and heretical attack on the principles of religion." The most striking action of all was perpetrated by the "Young Men's American Bible Association." It issued a special annotated edition of the New Testament as an anti-abolitionist pamphlet.

The mass of the people know very little of history; the majority only read history as it is prepared for them; and those who prepare it take care that it shall teach certain things, whether those things be true or not. So those of us who have noted the tone of many of the comments on the Anniversary of the Emancipation Bill's coming into force are witnessing another stage in the perpetuation of the fiction that the abolition of slavery is a triumph of Christian principles. Modern slavery was created under the auspices of the Christian Church. It reached, under Christian auspices its vilest phase, a phase more brutal, more regardless of human decency than anything the ancient world could offer. It was brought to an end in the face of the bitterest Christian opposition; and if in that conflict some Christians stood for the higher cause, I prefer to attribute it to the better kind of human nature rather than to the credit of a religious system which in operation had provided the most lavish apologies for the vilest slave system the world has ever known.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

SIN AND SORROW

I do not want to be too vehement, but it is anything short of appalling to think of the misery that has been endured by millions of human beings, not because they had done anything inconsistent with human well-being, but because they had transgressed or neglected some by-law of the imaginary Tyrant in the skies.

Dr. John H. Dicitrich on "The Superstitions of Sin."

The Satire of Saltus

"To bear all naked truths,
And to envisage circumstance all calm;
That is the top of sovereignty."—Keats.

"I sit as god, holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all."—Tennyson.

"I WOULD rather have written *Salamambo* than have built the Brooklyn Bridge. It was more difficult, and it will last longer." Edgar Saltus wrote those provocative sentences. He was an author with an enviable reputation on both sides of the Atlantic, and he was an American only in the sense that Henry James was one. There was nothing provincial about Saltus, and in thousands of pages he revealed his cosmopolitan culture and world-wide sympathies. With Thomas Paine he could have said, proudly, "the world is my country." An artist to the finger-tips, Saltus called for recognition as much as D'Annunzio, Maxim, Gorky, and many another for whom so many British altars flamed in worship.

Characteristically, Edgar Saltus began his brilliant literary career with a book on Balzac. It was brief, bright, and saturated with the spirit of the matter. A year later he showed another facet of his genius by writing *The Philosophy of Disenchantment*, a remarkable exposition of the teachings of Schopenhauer, Hartmann, Leopardi, and other thinkers. This work was followed by the brilliant and illuminating *The Anatomy of Negation*, a book which alone would have made the reputation of a lesser writer. The preface note was piquant and personal:—

The accompanying pages are intended to convey a tableau of anti-Theism from Kapila to Leconte de Lisle. The anti-Theistic tendencies of England and America have been treated by other writers. In the present volume, therefore, that branch of the subject is not discussed. To avoid misconception, it may be added that no attempt has been made to prove anything.

Unlike so many philosophic works, the book was a real success, both financial and literary. In a note to a later edition Saltus said:—

In brief, it was the writer's endeavour to divest his reader of one of two idle preoccupations, and to leave him serene in spirit, and of better cheer than before."

All Saltus's books are thought-compelling. As an essayist he stood in the front rank, his *Pomps of Satan* being a work of unflagging interest. Instead of fantasy and the world of dreams, the author gave us American society and the world of reality. Instead of pathos and bathos, we had cynical criticism, and the style was a glory of epigram. The subjects were varied and curious, such as "The Gilded Gang," "Vanity Square," "The Golden Fold," "The Toilet of Venus," and described the foibles and failings of what Thackeray calls "the hupper suckles" of modern American society. There was acid, too, in the criticism. His cutting description, "The Benighted States," as he called the Great Republic of the West, was not a compliment. Nor was his references to the rich folk of New York complimentary, for he drenched them in vitriol:—

Never, perhaps except in the Rome of the Cresars, has there been gathered together in one city a set so rich, so idle, so profoundly uninterested in anything save themselves.

This was the manner in which Edgar Saltus hurled out his gibes and his epigrams. All that easy zest, that curling his tongue round the subject, that freedom from hysteria or enthusiasm, were possible only to a man who simplified his life by dividing it well,

and not by cultivating one side at the expense of another.

As a novelist Saltus justified his reputation. His stories form a collection which almost merits his claim to be an American Balzac. In his work *Mary Magdalene*, he produced the most daring and successful reconquest of antiquity that has been attempted of recent years. In it he reconstructed a Christian legend, just as Gustave Flaubert presented a story of ancient Carthage in his famous *Salamambo*. All Saltus's novels were so provocative as his essays. *Mr. Incoul's Misadventure*, *The Truth About Tristram Varez*, *Eden*, *A Translation in Hearts*, *Madam Sapphira*, to name but a few, form a notable collection which challenged the idols of the circulating libraries, and beat them with pure artistry.

Edgar Saltus was endowed with genius. A poet at heart, he proved his claim in many pages of beautiful prose. We quote the following daring and eloquent passage:—

The Orient is asleep in the ashes of her gods. The star of Ormuzd has burned out in the skies. On the banks of her sacred seas, Greece, hushed for evermore, rests on the divine limbs of her white immortals. In the sepulchre of the pale Nazarene, humanity guards its last divinity. Every promise is unfulfilled. There is no light, save, perchance, in death. One torture more, one more throb of the heart, and after it, nothing. The grave opens, a little flesh falls in, and the weeds of forgetfulness, which soon hide the tomb grow eternally above its vanities, and still the voice of the living, of the just and the unjust, of kings, of felons, and of beasts, will be raised unsilenced, until humanity, unsatisfied as before, and yet impatient for the peace which life has disturbed, is tossed at last, with its shattered globe and forgotten gods, to fertilize the furrows of space where worlds ferment.

A many-sided man of genius, Edgar Saltus relished the picturesque pageant of life. He loved the old-world garden where the poet, Horace, smiled at Ancient Rome; the midnight supper-table where the quizzical Voltaire challenged the best wits of Europe; the lonely chateau of brave old Montaigne; or the beautiful river-haunts of Walt Whitman. Saltus showed Europe that the American can compete successfully with the culture of the admired Continental writers. Philosopher, poet, critic, novelist, and that rarity in our popular world of laborious scribblers, a really fine writer of English, the finest language of the world, Edgar Saltus made his mark in contemporary letters. He gave his life to the oldest of the arts, and Literature, in turn, has crowned his grave with honour.

MIMNERMUS.

The Chronometrist

The summer wind breathes beauty o'er the land,
The summer sun makes wood and meadow smile,
Beneath their bounty men and flowers expand,
Yet man counts life by figures on a dial.
What should the rose of sixty minutes know,
And what of time, the nettle and the dock?
The honeysuckle feels the breezes blow
But does not measure rainfall by the clock.
Man is alone peculiar in this
(And, maybe, this has brought about his Fall),
In fractions he divides fair summer's kiss,
Which should be taken whole, or not at all.
His horology is a soulless craft,
And he who counts by clockwork, damned or daft.

BAVARD SIMMONS.

On the Apocryphal Gospels

I.

THERE is one word which Christians are very fond of using when making absurd claims for their religion. It is the word "canonical." Such and such a sacred book is "canonical," or it is in the "Canon." Doubts as to the authenticity of any incident or miracle in the Bible, or what "Our Lord" said, is settled, so to speak, in the minds of pious people, by declaring that the record is "canonical," and no further discussion ought to be countenanced.

The fact that a very large number of books dealing with the "Canon" of the Bible have been written, proves that Christians have not always been satisfied with the mere assertion, "it is in the Canon." They were written to justify Christian and Jewish claims about the Bible, especially as many other "sacred" books have from time to time been discovered which, though not now considered "canonical," were certainly so regarded by early Christian communities; or, at all events, were certainly considered "sacred."

We can divide the apologists for the canonicity of the Bible into two classes. First, there is the Roman Catholic Church. It has settled the matter for its modern devotees, and particularly for its recent converts, by a resolute appeal to reason and logic. The existence of God is posited—this admits of no dispute whatever. Granting then a God, why should not this God have a Son, who is really himself in human form? This Son founded a Church upon a rock called Peter, who was the first Pope, and who handed down to the Church the holy prerogatives which prove in themselves, Divine power. A Church direct from God must be infallible: it can make no mistake. Out of a mass of writings which followed the establishing of Christianity, the Church selected a certain number which collectively are called the New Testament, and which contain the doings and sayings, not only of "Our Lord," but also of his Blessed Apostles. Catholics consider this reasoning unanswerable, and the fact that so many converts swallow it wholesale is evidence that they, at least, believe it is so. Ask a priest how he proves that "Our Lord" founded a Church, and he sends you at once to the famous passage in Matthew xvi. 18, 19. Ask him how he proves that the record in Matthew is genuine, and he says it is guaranteed by the Church! Thus the Church is guaranteed by Matthew, and Matthew is guaranteed by the Church, and this kind of nonsense is called, not faith or emotion, but *reason*; and if any Catholic questions both the premises and deductions, he is told to swallow what is good for him or get out. Fortunately for the Church, nearly all Roman Catholics joyfully swallow.

The Protestant agrees in the main with the Roman Church, but adds that if anyone compares the sacred writings admitted into the Canon of the New Testament with those left out, he will at once see how divinely-guided was the selection, and how much morally superior the genuine is over the false. But he seems to be tearfully apprehensive lest his brethren-in-Christ should actually make the test. For example, he was very angry indeed, when over a hundred years ago, William Hone decided to publish a number of the non-canonical gospels, epistles, acts, etc., in such a way that a comparison could easily be made. Hone broke up these "apocrypha" into chapters and verses, and printed them just like a Bible is printed. There was quite an outcry, and Hone was furiously attacked for "blasphemously" instituting any comparison between "inspired and

"uninspired" writings. Even two or three generations later, Dr. Salmon in his *Introduction to the New Testament* can hardly conceal his rage at Hone's work. Although William Hone was (and is, for that matter) far better known than Dr. Salmon will ever be, this pious Christian referred to him as "a Mr. Hone." Dr. Salmon, however, knew perfectly well that if the people could read the Apocryphal Gospels without bias—and the way to do this was to present them as the "canonical Gospels" are presented—they would see that except for a very slight difference in literary quality (and even then, this could be challenged) there was absolutely no difference between the credulous minds which composed both sets. The miracles in the "inspired" writings are just as silly as those of the "uninspired" ones. Specimens will be given later.

To revert to the "canon," Christian writers have had an extremely difficult task in showing how it was settled. The truth is, and I am being quite dogmatic about it, *no one knows* how it was settled or why certain books were selected and others rejected. Nobody knows who selected the books of the New Testament, or what qualifications the selectors—if any—had for determining "inspiration." It was Irenæus who first mentions Matthew, Mark, Luke and John somewhere about 180 A.D., but what about it? In his day quite a large number of "sacred" writings by "uncanonical" writers were accepted as being divinely revealed of God by other Christians, and I have yet to be shown why the judgment of Irenæus was any better than theirs.

It is one of the numerous hoaxes perpetrated by the Church, that the Church Fathers were either guided by the Holy Ghost or divinely inspired in some way. Thus when the names of Papias, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Ignatius, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, and others like them are mentioned, it is with the deepest reverence. "Papias says," or "Ignatius writes," or "Origen declares"—and the believer bows down very lowly at the tremendous names, and their far more tremendous pronouncements. Now the plain fact is, that apart from the ability to write—and in their day it was considered a far greater and more wonderful accomplishment than in ours—these Church Fathers were the silliest fools who ever put pen to paper. They believed anything without question. They believed in ghosts and goblins, in myths and miracles, in witches and wizards, in devils and demons. They swallowed everything told them, and such a word as "evidence" was utterly beyond their stupid minds. Who was Papias, for example? Eusebius, who wrote about 320 A.D., says he was the Bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia about 120 A.D. All we know about him is in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, and he is mentioned also by Irenæus. But the plain truth is that nobody knows anything more about Papias than is found in the Church historian's pages, and even his best apologists would find it hard to prove that Eusebius did not lie for "the glory of the Lord" when it suited him. What "Papias said," as reported 200 years later by Eusebius, is of no consequence whatever. It is no *evidence* worth spending a moment over, yet Christian writers on the Canon devote pages to the "testimony" of Papias, a "testimony" once solemnly repeated to me by a famous Rationalist against John M. Robertson's Myth theory.

The amusing part about the whole business is that the apologists not merely give Eusebius' opinion about Papias but, to bolster up this opinion, we are given the opinions of modern writers on the subject, commencing with, let us say, the Rev. Jeremiah Jones (whose work on the Canon is still one of the best), Dr. Lardner, Dr. Lightfoot, Dr. Westcott and a large

number of German believers. If the ability to learn off a long string of names, dates, and events, constitute the qualifications for settling the why and the wherefore of the Canon, then these writers are as good as any others. But no one could possibly claim they were "divinely inspired" or guided by the Holy Ghost; and their pronouncements are really of no more value than any ordinary layman's.

Yet on the strength of all these writers, credulous as Papias is admitted to be, to say nothing of some even worse like Polycarp and Ignatius, modern apologists like Dr. Salmon can write and sincerely believe this kind of thing:—

Now it has become more and more plain that, if it be granted that our Gospels were written by the persons to whom they are ascribed, two of whom were Apostles, men who had personal knowledge of the things which they relate, and whose whole narrative bears the impress of honesty, then the reality of miracles necessarily follows. (Italics mine.)

If there is any difference between the most credulous and ignorant of the Church Fathers and Dr. Salmon, I should like to know it. Because some writing bears the name of an Apostle, or rather, can be proved to have been written by one, miracles actually happened! Why, precisely this kind of reasoning can be applied to the Gospel of James, who was an Apostle; and the evidence that James was its author is just as strong as the evidence that Matthew the "publican" wrote the Gospel which bears his name. If Matthew wrote *Matthew* and James wrote *James*, then miracles really happened! The miracles of the one Gospel must be of equal value to the miracles of the other. Will some Christian tell me the precise difference between the famous five loaves and two fishes miracle, in Matthew, and the miracle of Mary being fed in the Temple by an angel, in James?

This Gospel of James (also called the *Protevangelium*), was undoubtedly considered canonical by the early Church or members of it. Why not? It is written in the same style. It was written by an actual apostle of Jesus. It contains a much more detailed account of Mary and Joseph than those given in other Gospels "inspired" and "uninspired." Indeed, if Mary and Joseph ever lived, some account of their lives must have been transmitted. Joseph plays a sorry part in the "canonical" gospels and snuffs out very early in the narratives. Yet he is considered, in the list of saints, the very greatest of them all, by the Church.

You get in this Gospel the names of the parents of Mary—Joachim and Anna. Why should this not be true, if Mary really lived? Dr. Salmon actually says these names are "invented." Why invented? Did no one know them? Yet he admits that this book, "in point of antiquity, might have got into our Canon." The truth is, its value is just as great as that of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and if it had been admitted into our New Testament, its authority, credibility and authenticity would have been defended with all the scholarship our apologists could have produced.

H. CUTNER.

RELIGION

History, down to the present day, is a melancholy record of the horrors which can attend religion: human sacrifice, and in particular the slaughter of children, cannibalism, sensual orgies, abject superstition, hatred as between races, the maintenance of degrading customs, hysteria, bigotry, can all be laid at its charge. Religion is the last refuge of human savagery.

God or Man

PROFESSOR JAMES H. LEUBA, the American Professor of Psychology, author of those interesting and valuable works *The Psychological Origin and the Nature of Religion* (1909), *The Beliefs in God and Immortality* (1916), and *The Psychology of Religious Mysticism* (1925) has just published an equally valuable companion volume, under the title *God or Man* (Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d.), the subtitle being "A Study of the Value of God to Man."

The book consists of a study of the effect which religious beliefs have had upon the history of mankind. Beginning with a short account of the natural origin of the belief in spirits, a future life, and the existence of God, Leuba shows how primitive man was condemned, by his ignorance of natural causes, to a spontaneous and unavoidable personification of the irresistible powers of Nature. Leuba asks:—

How is the savage to account for the movement and the influence, alleged or real, of the celestial bodies? How is he to understand the gathering of the clouds, the rumbling of the thunder, the lightning, the downpour of the rain? He cannot explain storms as the mechanical outcome of certain physical factors; there is for him only one plausible explanation: storms are the doings of mysterious, man-like or animal-like and surpassingly powerful beings. (J. H. Leuba: *God or Man*. p. 33.)

So again, with the belief in spirits and a future life. When the dead relatives and friends appear to the savage in his dreams, he naturally flies to the conclusion that they still exist somewhere, and have returned to visit him. When he sees his reflection in the water, and his shadow on the land, he concludes that this shadowy unsubstantial thing is his "other self" which will leave his body and continue to exist when he dies.

This belief in a continued existence of the spirit after death is very far from being a source of comfort and consolation to primitive man. He would be much happier without it, it is a continual source of anxiety and terror. As Leuba observes: "Ghosts are regarded by all savages as mischief-makers, causes of sickness, death, and poverty; and the majority of the ceremonies connected with death and burial aim at preventing the ghost from returning to the living, or at warding off his nefarious activities." (p. 62.) This is due to "an instinctive apprehension of the mysterious; the unknown is feared. And fear breeds antipathy; for one cannot like that which keeps one continually in a state of fearful suspense." Far from it being a question of depriving him of the consolations of a future existence, for which the Christian so indignantly, or tearfully, pleads, it would be a great advantage to the savage if he could divest himself of all these superstitions, for as Leuba remarks:—

There is no indication that he desires a future life; whether he likes it or not, the ghost exists and has to be taken into account. His own future concerns him but little; it is with the ghosts of others that he is concerned, and that mainly, under an apprehension of the harm they may do him. These features indicate that we are here in the presence not of a creation of desire, but of a belief imposed, as it were, from without, in some such way as the belief in the existence of the physical world. (p. 64.)

Many people, says Leuba, find great satisfaction in the idea that religion is an instinct, that it is innate in every child born; but this claim "cannot possibly be admitted. Man learns to think of, and to believe in superhuman beings; and he learns to worship them in various ways." Hence the anxiety of the

Churches to keep, and extend, religious teaching in the schools. They know perfectly well that religious ideas have to be taught, and are not innate.

Two chapters of the book are devoted to a consideration of the "Evils done by the Christian Religion." One of the worst of these is the intolerance engendered by religious belief, and of which the history of Christianity provides a multitude of terrible examples. This is not due, like immorality, to the "weakness of the flesh." Some of the worst persecutors have been men of purist lives, so far as morals are concerned, and whose only aim in torturing and burning heretics, has been to please God, and save souls from eternal punishment.

Every religion, says Leuba, which claims that it is the only true religion, and necessary to salvation:—

sows, unavoidably, the seed of intolerance. Where is the man who, convinced that a certain set of beliefs is the condition of escaping eternal misery and gaining eternal happiness, will look with composure upon a neighbour who rejects these views? It is not in human nature to hold that the most precious thing conceivable depends upon the possession of a particular faith, and yet to tolerate those who condemn that faith. Religious tolerance is, among us, a measure of the uncertainty or indifference with which the traditional beliefs are regarded. (p. 274.)

Another evil, due to religion, is the devotion of energies and interests, which should be given to making a better world here and now "are diverted to God, Christ, the Virgin, the saints. Examples of this abnormal and, at times, repulsive misplacement of human affection are found among the celebrated mystics." Again, as Leuba rightly observes, "The habit of seeking refuge in God, comforting though it is, may be as much a handicap to the adult as excessive reliance upon his parents is to the molly-coddled child. Instead of constituting a satisfactory adaptation to the world of realities, faith in the 'Good Shepherd' keeps one in a world illusion. It is on the whole an infantile relationship, to be outgrown as speedily as possible." (p. 275.)

Another characteristic feature of Christianity is that it gives all the weight of its authority and prestige to the teaching of humility and obedience to the established powers. Leuba says:—

It is therefore, not surprising that those who are or would be in authority strive for its maintenance. Whoever wishes to hold in check the propensity of human nature to freedom of self-expression, should be a supporter of our traditional religion. It is this aspect of Christian teaching which won for the German clergy the name of "Black soldiers of the State," and it is the same which accounts for the support given to-day to the Christian religion by the very large proportion of political and industrial leaders who have no personal use for it. (p. 23.)

Leuba gives glaring instances of this in the case of the American Steel King, who "affirmed in one and the same speech, the necessity of religion and of keeping at work part of his employees twelve hours a day, and understood how much they needed the great encouragement to resignation found in the traditional Christian religion." And in that of the head of the great Pennsylvania Railroad, who wrote to a Protestant Bishop, affirming "that the forces working against religion must be regarded as the enemy, both of religion and of sound industry." But the protective value to the propertied classes has never been set forth more forcibly, or shamelessly, than in the effort to collect a huge sum of money for the strengthening of religion in the United States. In 1920, Roger Babson, working for the Inter-Church World Movement, now defunct, issued a "Special Letter" from which the following is extracted:—

What is our real security for the stocks, bonds, mortgages, deeds and other investments which we own? . . . The value of our investments depends not on the strength of our banks, but rather upon the strength of our churches. The underpaid preachers of the nation are the men upon whom we really are depending rather than the well-paid lawyers, bankers and brokers. The religion of the community is really the bulwark of our investments.

For our own sakes, for our children's sakes, for the nation's sake, let us business men get behind the churches and their preachers! Never mind if they are not perfect, never mind if their theology is out of date. . . . By all that we hold dear, let us from this very day give more time, money and thought to the churches of our city, for upon these the value of all we own ultimately depends. (p. 24.)

We commend this gem to the pious consideration of our psalm-singing labour leaders.

Prof. Leuba's *God or Man* is a trenchant and valuable addition to Freethought literature, and should find a place on every Freethinker's shelf who can afford it.

W. MANN.

Acid Drops

In view of the bombing circus going on over London at the time we are writing, and in view of the fact that nothing can prevent a number of "enemy" planes getting through and bombing the other "enemy," in view also that each country is agreed that the other ought to disarm, we suggest that an agreement should be reached in virtue of which each country shall keep a fleet of a thousand bombers just outside the borders of the other country, so that on receipt of wireless information that the "other" fleet was moving in "our" direction, each fleet could start the work of baby-killing as quickly and efficiently as possible. The last few words need qualification. It is generally understood and believed that it is only the "other" side that ever goes in for baby-killing. Each side is agreed upon this point.

Very emphatically the Lord was told that we wanted rain, and in the official prayers of the Church of England he was solemnly warned in set terms not to lose control of Himself and cause trouble in the giving. But he goes on in the old style, despite warnings or protests. The rain is falling, when it does fall, in a very patchy and often mischief-making manner, and elsewhere the trouble is very serious. In Poland thousands of people have been drowned by the tremendous floods, and in America large numbers dying from a sustained heat wave. Things couldn't be worse managed if the Lord retired from the weather business altogether.

After many years of discussion the Methodist Conference has again decided that it will not have women in the ministry. That is a thoroughly Christian attitude. From the Christian standpoint all the evils in the world began with the wickedness of a woman, and when Jesus established his order of preachers, he took care that not one of them should be a woman. It is true that women followed him, and "ministered to him of their substance," but that has been the fashion in the Christian Church ever since it was established. Women should find enough glory in working to make the lot of the parson comfortable, without desiring to usurp his position. The Methodist Church is acting quite consistently with the traditions of the Christian Church, the teachings of Christian theology, and the example of "Our Lord." Besides it would put some men out of a job.

"The sanctified spirit doesn't swagger," says the Rev. Baines Atkinson, "the sanctified spirit doesn't advertise." These queer statements arise from some Method-

ist authors accusing Wesley of a lack of sanctification. Mr. Atkinson says St. Paul and Wesley both had this indefinable quality, but "never boasted about it." Our own experience of those who possess undoubted traces of sanctification enables us to understand why nobody could ever be proud of it.

Sir Joseph Stamp's "testimonial" to the British and Foreign Bible Society strikes us as scarcely deserving of the publicity the B. & F.B.S. gives it. He only says "The very existence of the Society has an enormous value apart from the actual work it does." What on earth "value" can a society have "apart from" any functioning. Does Sir Josiah mean that a big office and a number of well-paid officials constitute the "enormous value" he mentions? He must be regarding it from the point of view of the well-paid officials.

We used to read that "God," and incidentally Jesus too, "loved the world." Now we learn from Harry Emerson Fosdick that this is all wrong. "On the contrary," he says, "read the gospels and see if the basic impression is not plain that Jesus was sickened by the world. This world made Jesus sick at heart, as it does any good man." Mr. Fosdick is quite wrong about "any good man." The wise man neither despairs of the commonwealth nor gets "sick" at a contemplation of the world. Infinitely finer was Paine's acceptance of "where freedom is not, that is my country."

This is the time of the year when the Three Year Plan of the Methodist Church leads to many changes of minister. One polite little girl addressed the departing minister with the words: "I hear we are soon to have the pleasure of losing you."

The Rev. R. W. Stewart, B.D., writes about "The Craving for Dictators." It appeals to Christians not to give up reason and thought. He opposes political dictatorships and "the dictation of authority in religion," and the "recrudescence of fundamentalism." He protests against the "proclamation of an imperial commanding Christ." We welcome it as a thoughtful comment on what we both oppose. But dictatorship (which Mr. Stewart writes against as keenly as any Freethinker) either originates in, or draws encouragement from obedience to the so-called "Word" of a despotic deity.

Dr. James Reid, D.D., preaching from the words, "He that heareth the word is like a man who seeth his face in a glass," assured his hearers that "The Bible is the most depressing and the most hopeful book in the world." He does not apparently see that it may well be most depressing BECAUSE its over-indulgence in false hopes creates a certainty of depression in its dupes. Has he ever heard of the definition of a pessimist as "a man who lives with an optimist"?

Recent alleged "portraits" of Christ lead Prof. Alex. Findlay to a consideration of what Christ looked like. He quotes Dr. Rendel Harris as believing that Luke xix. 3 proves that Jesus was dwarflike ("He was small of stature"). Many believe that Isaiah liii. "there was no beauty that we should desire Him," proves him to have been ugly. Phil. ii. 1 can be read as meaning that Jesus looked worn-out. The very silence of the gospels are in themselves a reproach. We know that Moses was meek, Samson strong, Solomon wise, Daniel fair and fat, Esau hairy, Elisha bald-headed, Absalom with hair too long for his health, Isaac short-sighted, and some had too long a tongue, and some too much cheek, but Jesus? Only the spiritualists can tell us what he looked like. We don't even know whether he was white, black or brown.

The London Missionary Society is ambitious. It has determined on covering up its defects by boldly facing—possible subscribers! The *British Weekly* is responsible for the news that "Their feeling is that the time

has come when missionary societies should be definitely aggressive, provocative and even defiant." Do they realize that two can play at this game. Already many Christians are extremely sceptical about these religious merchants whose foreign fooleries are an inexcusable expense, only adequately to be described in Scriptural language—see Matt. xxiii. 15.

Seven hundred and twenty pilgrims went to Lourdes from Liverpool the other week. There were 120 sick and over 20 stretcher cases, and it will be interesting to see how many of these, duly attested by non-Catholic doctors as genuinely ill, will come back completely cured through one dip in the "holy" water. One can ask often and ask in vain, why Lourdes does not instantaneously cure hopeless cases of cancer—that is, cases which are certified by eminent non-Catholic doctors as absolutely hopeless. There are also incurable cases of all kinds in our Homes for Incurables—why are not any of these unfortunates cured? Echo in vain answers why?

A Catholic editor, in showing how to deal with an "Agnostic lady friend," advises a correspondent to present her with *Rebuilding a Lost Faith*, by J. L. Stoddart, who is a converted Agnostic. *Twelve years in the Catholic Church*, by the same, and *A Modern Pilgrim's Progress*, by a lady convert from Agnosticism. We cannot say that we have heard of these pious people nor of their works; but it seems a pity that now and then they do not conduct a "red-hot" mission among Secularists. The editor also points out that "Biblical Study has advanced considerably since the time of Voltaire." Ye Gods! We should think it has, but not in the way Catholics, who never read modern Biblical criticism, imagine. The point of view of orthodox Catholicism is that of the stupid Church Fathers or even sillier. Modern criticism has disintegrated the Bible into myth, legend, and "symbolism."

A beautiful picture of the amenities of village life, and the marvellous influence of Christianity comes to us from Great Sutton, Essex. Owing to some difference of opinion with the Rector, a dear old lady of seventy greets him every day of the week, except Sunday, when he passes her house, by beating a brass gong with a garden fork. The Rev. Mr. Williams, the Rector, looks upon this as a sign that the Devil has possessed the woman, so he determined to use the power Jesus and the Church has given him. He met the evil-spirit-possessed lady in the street the other day, and "Raising my Bible," he said, "I cursed her in my priestly capacity, saying, 'In God's name, I curse you for an evil tongue.'" If that does not exorcise the Devil, we feel nothing will. No Devil we know of has ever managed to survive a Cross, a Bible and a Curse. That is something for which we ought, as Cardinal Newman would say, to be thankful to Christianity.

Is it a silly optimism only, or is it a most paralyzing pessimism which induces Christians to exclude every effort for good which does not bear their own narrow trade-mark? The Earl of Athlone has done precious little good in the world so far. But he is perfectly sure that "there never has been any other way to set the world aright than that shown 2,000 years ago on Calvary." Calvary, you will remember was where a dying reformer cried, "It is finished," and "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me." A pretty model for "setting the world aright." And nobody must dream of "any other way."

The Rev. James Ellis asks the question: "Can one live the Life of Christ to-day?" The answer is, "Did one ever live it?" Mr. Ellis seems to think that even Jesus didn't get a chance to live the kind of life he wanted to. He had to put up with interference—from God the Father! Mr. Ellis puts it: "God said No, even to our Lord." With some questionable relevance, Mr. Ellis says, "It is impossible for us now to understand

why God says 'No' to us; we must wait till we are grown up." Did Jesus have to wait till he grew up? And is he now old enough to "Live the Life" he always wanted to live?

The origin of many of our Christian missions makes amusing reading! One story is naively told by the Rev. A. D. Belden in a "Children's Column." He says:—

The Hudson Bay Company found that its fur and skin trade was on the decline, and when they investigated the matter they were told that the Red Indians were making an anxious search for a book about the Great Spirit of which they had heard, and were so eager about it that they were neglecting their usual work. The Company promptly, as a business proposition sought for a missionary who would take the Bible to the Indians, and the choice fell upon James Evans.

Of course, Mr. Evans, being a Christian missionary, was a good man, and it was quite an accident when he killed a native. It was also quite an accident when Christian missionaries, sent out by trading companies for business purposes, turned out to be as harmless as Mr. Evans.

A writer in the *British Weekly* gives some interesting facts about the present position of the Catholic Church in Spain. The Jesuits are back again and the Church is again subsidized by the Government. The anti-clericals are exceedingly angry at the governmental backsliding and are pressing for immediate general elections being convinced that the electorate is still entirely opposed to the Churches and Religious Orders. It is calculated that the Church holds over 100 million pounds worth of property. There are 32,000 priests, 10,000 monks, and 39,000 nuns in 900 monasteries and 3,300 convents.

John Bull wants the nation to try the experiment of a "Week of Kindness." In exposition of this idea, our contemporary sermonizes the Church in this wise:—

And the Church . . . they could show by precept that even if it is not possible, to live like the Sermon on the Mount for a lifetime, ordinary humanity might try to do it for a week.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," says the Sermon on the Mount. *John Bull* and the Church may be doomed to inherit the earth, but we fancy that neither together or separately are they capable of showing ordinary humanity how to live in strict accordance, even for a week, with the Sermon on the Mount.

Elizabeth Summerscales, aged ninety, declares that "the Bible is a good thing to live by and to die by." It is pretty safe to assume that Elizabeth was taught when very young to believe the Bible as divine revelation to mankind, and that she has never studied Free-thought criticism of the Bible, and of the ideas the Bible enshrines. If such is the case, the value of the testimonial is not very great. It merely affirms the obvious—that Elizabeth, aged ninety, has mentally never grown up. However, the fact that there are millions similarly afflicted is the only reason why priests and parsons have no need to earn, like ordinary folk, the necessities of life.

At last we are to know what is (or shall we say was) the "Essential Jesus." The Rev. John Bevan "hands it to us." As usual he starts by telling us we ought to be more "definite" than we are, and thenceforth he loses himself in the illimitable indefiniteness of all Modernists. "The secret of it all," he concludes, "is that Jesus knew God . . . Jesus saw God with unclouded vision. . . . He gave us our Father. Himself completely filled with God, He showed us that love is God—the goodness that is God." So now you know—well, you know as much as we do, as to what is the "essence of Jesus," in all its "definiteness."

Christian humourists are found everywhere—sometimes. Even the terribly depressing atmosphere of a "Holiness Convention" can turn lamentation and

mourning into merriment when a funny parson takes a hand. Dr. Ferrier Hulme, at the Southport Holiness Convention, last week, kept the sanctimonious congregation in a continuous burst of laughter. In the language of the *Methodist Recorder* he "convulsed the tent." Some of the "jokes" were a wee bit *risqué*, as for instance, the one he told about the little girl bringing a tremendous fat woman to the Mercy seat, saying, "Please, she wants to get her soul washed." But the climax was the Limerick:—

"There was a young fellow called Larwood
Who played cricket same as his Pa would,
But lots of the boys
Down below made a noise,
And asked him to play as his Ma would."

Dr. Maude Royden has more courage than any man-minister. She may believe much the same as the rest, but there are limits, and Dr. Royden frankly admits it. In the *Christian World*, she describes her "conversion," and how she decided to "accept a good deal of the Sermon on the Mount, though by no means all, as lofty, reasonable and true." She knows, after many years trying that "it is impossible to live up to even what I accepted." "I could not do it; I never have done it." Of course, Dr. Royden did not do the logical thing and discard the absurdly impossible. It makes a Christian think there "must be something in it," if it tells you to perform the impossible! And that, dear Children, is how Dr. Royden found out that Christ was God!

We have seen some original ideas as to how Christianity triumphed over Paganism. The newest and cleverest is surely that of the Rev. Townley Lord, who says in a recent sermon that "the Christian gospel out-thought the pagan world." It must have been Constantine's "thought," and we all thought it was his sword, that brought about the change. Mr. Lord thinks "the greatest service we can render to our time is to maintain in private and public, the life that waits on God." Of course, what the Christian clergy call "Service" is just an orgy of prayer and sermon.

The Vicar of St. Paul's, Bournemouth, has made a solemn protest against the performance of stage plays inside churches and cathedrals. It is not, as one might think, that the local amateurs have been playing "Charlie's Aunt" in St. Paul's, or even that one of Shaw's "Unpleasant Plays" has been staged in St. Peter's. He hates still more the idea of Christ being represented on any stage anywhere. We share his objections, only on the ground of boredom. The Vicar is probably right in guessing that a church is no place for entertainment. A minister once boasted that "thank God we have never had a Pleasant Sunday Afternoon in our church."

Fifty Years Ago

ATHEISM, as Bacon said, leaves us to nature. By faithful study of her processes we can gain Knowledge, and Knowledge is power. This devastating cholera in the South of France was hatched in some Asiatic hot-bed of disease, and it slays wholesale in more favoured lands because their inhabitants have not fortified themselves and their surroundings against its deadly attack. This plague will teach them a stern lesson, which let us hope they will profit by in the future, organizing their defence before the enemy appears at their gates. Our weal and woe depend on material conditions, and everywhere in nature we perceive the adamant chain of cause and effect. The man of Science is our true Saviour. He places the means of redemption in our hands, and we have only to use them. One scientist is worth a million priests, one wise act is worth a countless host of prayers, and one hour's study of Nature is worth more than a millenium's worship of God.

The "Freethinker," July 27, 1884.

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE,

EDITORIAL:

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No. : CENTRAL 2412

TO CORRESPONDENTS

TAB CAN.—Thanks for cutting, and correction.

B. J. BAILEY.—Sorry, but we cannot open our columns to a correspondence as to who understands Communism properly, but we think you are correct in saying that Russia is not Communist at present. The blunder is one that is frequently made.

H. CHARLTON.—You must remember that we have but little space for letters, and cannot undertake to publish communications on all subjects merely because they are interesting, or even important.

OLIVER HALL.—Thanks for pamphlet, but there is nothing in it that calls for special mention. Yarns about the Bible are usually too stupid for serious argument. They are only useful as indications of the mental state of those who prize them.

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

The offices of the National Secular Society and the Secular Society Limited, are now at 68 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Telephone: Central 1367.

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When the services of the National Secular Society in connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, R. H. Roselli, giving as long notice as possible.

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

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

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

Sugar Plums

We have received an article from Mr. E. E. Stafford replying to Mr. Taylor's article in our issue for July 15. Unfortunately a breakdown in our Linotype machine has held up things, and the reply cannot appear until next week. Meanwhile, we take the opportunity of pointing out that this correspondence cannot go on until one disputant is satisfied that he has silenced the other. That is too much like the political absurdity of believing that the only way to keep the peace is for each side to be stronger than the other. And in this controversy neither side appears to be getting "forrader."

So we take advantage of this pause to point out that the real issues are very simple. These are (1) Is a Freethought which aims at beating down all legal and social barriers to complete freedom in thought and speech, and inculcating a mental discipline and method that can be applied to all subjects, of no value unless the parties advocating that method champion a specific sociological or economic theory? (2) Is there no value in an association of men and women of varied opinions on economic and sociological topics, who shall, as an association, make it their exclusive business to see that the rights of freedom of discussion is preserved (as in the case of the present combination of Communists, Conservatives, Liberals, Socialists, Individualists, Atheists and Theists in opposition to the Incitement to Sedition Bill) unless

they at the same time champion collectively some definite economic cure for human ills? (3) Is a Freethinker true to his professed principles if he believes in a Government controlling, and banning the publication of opinion on the ground that it is against the welfare of the State, and an attack on its existence? (4) Is anyone logically justified in protesting against the social form (a) suppressing the social form (b) if (b) at the same time proclaims its intention to suppress the social form (a) so soon as it has the power? (5) Are we justified in assuming that any social form will be or ought to be absolutely permanent? If the answer to this is, No, in what way are we to reach the presumably better form of society if free discussion of the existing form is suppressed? If the answer to this question is, Yes, if this new state is to be maintained only by suppressing all agitation for its replacement by another social form, are we to take it that the fight for Freethought is one for establishing the permanent denial of freedom of thought and speech? Finally (6) is Dictatorship in itself a dangerous and ultimately bad form of Government, or is it objectionable and entirely dangerous, only when it is directed to ends of which I, or we, disapprove? We think this about exhausts the points that have been raised, and they surely admit of brief, precise, and definite answers. And please don't say that we have taken up space in protesting against the waste of space by others. We have been trying to clarify the issues.

The Vicar of All Saints, Upper Norwood, has supplied an explanation why the rain that followed the general prayer was of such a scanty quantity, and why the drought then proceeded on its thirsty way. In the parish magazine for July he writes:—

Let us not fail to be in our accustomed place in Church to thank God for all the joys of summer time in England, and for the recent rain which has come to us in our time of need, and which, by the way, played such a decisive part in the Second Test Match.

That clears up the matter. The Lord did not reply to the Bishop of London's prayer. But he had his eye on the Second Test Match. So he sent enough water for that, and let the people go to hell—or, rather, let the people get a foretaste of hell. But was it cricket for God to interfere with the weather so that the British team might make a better show than it might have done otherwise?

The General Secretary of the N.S.S. will be away on holiday from August 11 until the 25th inclusive, and during that period matters of pressing importance only will receive attention. It will help if other matters are forwarded before or held over until after those dates.

Freethinkers in the Brighton area, resident, and on holiday, are reminded that the local N.S.S. Branch holds lectures at the Level on Sunday evenings, and support, financial and otherwise would be much appreciated. The local secretary, Mr. J. T. Byrne, 188 Elm Grove, Brighton, Sussex, will be pleased to furnish particulars of membership or other aspect of the Branch's activity.

On Saturday July 28 the North East Branches of the N.S.S. are holding their District Outing, to view the beauties of Jesmond Dene, Newcastle. All members and their friends, or any unattached Freethinkers in the area are welcome. The time of meeting is 2 p.m., at the main entrance to the Dene. Arrangements have been made to meet late comers at the "Old Mill," at 3 p.m. There will be an informal entertainment after tea at 6 p.m. It is to be hoped that as many Freethinkers as possible will make use of this opportunity to enjoy themselves in the company of their fellow-"Saints."

Mr. Le Maine asks us to thank the numerous friends who have sent him letters of sympathy and good wishes during his illness. He appreciates them very much. We are sorry we cannot report any marked betterment in his condition, but we hope soon to be able to say that he has taken a turn for the better.

Do Oxen Matter to God?

IN Deuteronomy (xxv. 4) Moses, who claimed to give his laws by divine command, is reported to have said, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." In I Corinthians (ix. 9-10), the apostle Paul teaches that this provision was not made on account of oxen, but for the sake of himself and his fellow-labourers in the Gospel, the ordinance thus being a figurative way of impressing upon the people the duty of their remote descendants to support the Christian clerisy when it should have come into existence. The words of the Apostle as rendered in our two Versions respectively are as follows:—

For it is written in the law of Moses: Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt this is written that he that plougheth should plow in hope; and he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things.

For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. Is it for the oxen that God careth? Or¹ saith he it altogether for our sake? Yea, for our sake it was written because he that plougheth ought to plow in hope, and he that thresheth to thresh in hope of partaking. If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?

Here the Revised Version agrees well with the original as given by Professor Eberhard Nestle, D.D., of Maulbronn in the Greek edition of the New Testament prepared by him in 1904 for the Centenary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, celebrated during that year. The meaning of the passage is perfectly clear, to wit, that the Mosaic precept in question was given not for the benefit of the oxen, but for the benefit of the future ministers of the Christian Church. The Apostle does not say that, as God had so carefully considered the well-being of oxen, he would be sure to consider still more the well-being of clergymen. He simply scouts the thought that oxen mattered to God. This becomes very evident on comparing the passage with that where Jesus says, "Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they?" (Matt. vi. 26); or with that where he declares, "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children [when they ask you for them] how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matt. vii. 11). In both these passages something is admitted to take place, and from this admission it is argued that something of far greater importance should be expected. God feeds birds; ergo, he will feed men. Earthly fathers grant their children's requests; ergo, our heavenly Father will hear our prayers. On the contrary, the Pauline passage argues that because a certain explanation is inadmissible in a lower connexion it must be taken in a higher connexion. Who supposes that God cares about oxen? Ergo, the provision concerned relates to the clergy.

In the Greek text the clause referring to God and oxen (*me ton boon melei to Theo*) has no nominative. There "God" is in the dative and "the oxen" are in the genitive, an impersonal verb *melei* governing the entire sentence. The above verb means anyone's care or concern for any person or thing, the subject of the care or concern being put in the dative, and the object thereof in the genitive. Impersonal verbs were

¹ Or saith he it, as he doubtless does, for our sake?—R.V. margin.

not infrequently used by our older writers, e.g., "It repented him of the evil" stands for "He repented of the evil." Perhaps the most idiomatic rendering of Paul's words into modern English would be "Matters it to God about oxen?" Here, however, as in both our Versions the particle *me* is not reproduced; and indeed the difference between the two languages prevents its reproduction except by paraphrase. The term indubitably indicates that the question wherein it occurs is expected to have "no" for its answer.² In such cases our only means are expletives. "Will it rain?" is a query merely implying uncertainty on the part of the querist; but, "It won't rain will it?" means that he expects the reply, "No it will not rain!" The Greek *me* expresses this kind of meaning with even greater force. The maker of the Vulgate version, a sound scholar to whom both Greek and Latin were living tongues, had not a doubt concerning Paul's opinion on God's attitude towards oxen and clergymen:—

Numquid de bobus cura est Deo? An propter nos utique hoc dicit? Nam propter nos dicta sunt.³

[Surely you don't think] it matters to God about oxen? or [doubt that] he [Moses] says this altogether on account of us? For on account of us were [these things] said.

Here *numquid* in the first question demands the answer "no," and *an* in the second question continues the same mode of interrogation and demands the same answer, whilst *nam* in the final clause clinches the argument.

C. CLAYTON DOVE.

² In the *Daily Telegraph* of June 2, 1934, the Dean of Durham, Dr. Alington, formerly Headmaster of Eton College, writes as follows when discussing "[The] Christian's Duty to Animals":—

"Doth God care for oxen?" St. Paul rhetorically asked, expecting the answer NO, though it is only fair to remember that this translation does not express his meaning.

Which of our novelists was it who made one of his characters say to another, "Sly, sir, devilish sly."

³ Nestle's Edition, Stuttgart, 1912.

Revolutionary Activity

THE PROS AND CONS

Pro. Revolutionary activity is the use of force. Force in the ultimate analysis is the only motive power in the universe. Nothing is, or can be, done without it.

Con. True, but why confound the force of pitchforks with the force of ideas? We are dealing with human beings, remember, not with inorganic matter, and our material is the evolved mass of ideas in people's heads.

Pro. Ideas are legislative merely, not executive. Obviously no revolutionary denies that before a number of people can act they must have an idea of what is the object of their activity. They are not likely to act unanimously and therefore effectively, unless there is some common perception of the end in view. Yes, ideas are of primary importance, but if they remain inert they are practically useless. If they are not translated into action they may as well not exist.

Con. But surely these ideas may find an outlet—a socially useful outlet—in other ways, e.g., (1) Words, spoken or published. These may lead others to form similar ideas, leading to (2) Votes—a very practical way of putting ideas into action; and (3) personal behaviour. You see, ideas can be expressed in action without resorting to a crude, violent battery on those with whom we disagree.

Pro. Consider those outlets. (1) Words, on

your implied admission, might convey truth to the empty air unless they result in (2) Votes. Are you, then, content to put your little cross on an election form every five years, and have it immediately negated by the next voter, who knows nothing of sociology or economics, and who votes according to heritage? Content, too, to have your man, even if elected, misrepresent you? As for (3) personal behaviour, there I acknowledge an end is realized, but your behaviour is restricted until your ideology has State recognition.

Con. Your cynicism re voting is, of course, stale. Does not the same apply to every elector, and can everybody's whims be satisfied? The State can only deal with a *body* of desires, if it is to remain democratic. Defects in our franchise there may be, but these call, not for sticks and fists, but for a progressive improvement with that same system as the only effective medium. It opens the way to progress.

Pro. By what means? By voting? And so in about a thousand years we are to evolve a perfect voting system, with which we can then settle down to tackle the problems before us. A remote and speculative hope, indeed. Meanwhile votes are manufactured in the infant mind. Characteristic responses are integrated by church teaching, and they endure all argument. Look at our friends the advanced and emancipated Rationalists, annually drinking the toast of "The King."

Con. You are, I think, underestimating the steady progress of education and post-school education.

Pro. And what proportion of adults bother about educating themselves? What time have they, working eight hours a day under the present system, and having many more hours filled with reading about murders and divorces? How is voting going to get rid of a press which, taking advantage of the fact that people can read, panders to some of their lowest passions, and even controls their votes? Education fits the individual for his place in a capitalist society, and also prepares customers for the stunt press, which in its turn manufactures "opinion," and so makes the conditions safe for capitalism.

Con. Nevertheless you have no proper alternative to voting as the means of expression. It is thus we get social changes in an orderly manner. Revolution, on the other hand, invites retaliation. Revolution is aggression. You must expect class struggle, and become espoused to the principle that might is right.

Pro. I am not logically bound to posit might as right, inasmuch as I would not take the success or failure of revolutionary activity as the criterion of its justification. The Revolutionary ideas I consider right on their own merits, and I am concerned with adding might to right.

Con. And naturally the other side proceeds with exactly the same idea of "right." And in the end, right becomes a synonym for the political system most favourable to your own personal pocket and your own personal desires. Meanwhile your side decides to become aggressive. You force the others to defend.

Pro. It is they who have forced us to defend. Revolution is not aggression; it is, on the broader view, a form of defence. It is the Church and the Capitalist system who have aggressed and oppressed, and it is the revolutionary who, in long-overdue self defence, seeks to overthrow the existing form of society. He struggles to gain for his class a place in society in which they are no longer exploited by fellow-members, just as machines are exploited. He seeks to remove these parasitic and degrading blemishes which

are inherited from the savage, such as the king and the priest. He strives to gain an economic status which is denied him, and he regards his own non-possession of that status as an act of oppression, against which he now, at long last, kicks in defence.

Con. And yet, with such a strong case, he is afraid to trust to the voting. Why? Simply because he *cannot raise a majority*. In other words, his minority must be allowed to overthrow the State elected by the majority—a most undemocratic procedure.

Pro. Society is full of minorities. A majority only functions on a yes-no problem. How to construct society is not such a problem. The revolutionists' minority is a potential majority in a way that no other is. The revolutionist supposes two groups, *viz.*, (a) workers and (b) parasites and exploiters. He opposes the latter group, a minority. He does not attack *the interests of a majority*. Meanwhile, the fact that his own class are mainly outside his revolutionary organization is due to the fact that he is debarred from advocating his policy to any extent by oppression and non-recognition (*e.g.*, by the B.B.C.), and by financial embarrassment. He thus turns to the weapon of rebellion.

Con. A procedure which is contrary to the process of nature. Nature evolves gradually; it has taken æons to produce man as he is, centuries to develop the social system we have to-day. Progress is essentially gradual; it has an element of conservatism.

Pro. On the contrary, nature does not evolve gradually; it does it in periodic leaps. At certain points novelties emerge; some Holist philosophers call them "creative levels." Life and mind are such "jumps." The appearance of graduation is a result of seeing as a whole, with regard to detail. Sociology is no exception—why should it be, for man is part of nature? Where were the improvements in the Dark Ages? Institutions remain much the same for long periods of time, and then a jump is taken.

Con. But even then a jump must include within it the best elements of what is superseded. Surely that in which it was born must leave a trace. If you dislike Capitalism, then let it imperceptibly pass into Socialism, until one day you will wake up and find yourself in Socialism.

Pro. Did Capitalism imperceptibly arise out of Feudalism? The Industrial Revolution made us a nation of exploiters and exploited. Mass organization is not so ready as individual, and thus Capitalism was the natural consequent. There are what we call "nodal points" in the development, at which we find revolutionary leaps as in lower forms of nature.

Con. Leaps conditioned by the existing situation.

Pro. Exactly, and we must look in the syntheses for something *new*, as in the combination of H₂ and O. The old disappears; the new emerges, continuous yet discrete. As Capitalism arose in opposition to Feudalism, so, in opposition to Capitalism, will Socialism emerge.

Con. To meet, in its turn, some further revolution, pointing to a series of recurring class hatreds at your "nodal points."

Pro. There can be no class hatreds in a classless society, and the oppositions, or contradictions, conditioning further "leaps," will not include the element of human hostility. My contention is that revolution and evolution are closely allied, and that we have support from nature and from history.

Con. And mine is that, assuming your ideas to be of social value, you have less to risk and more to gain by utilizing existing social institutions, including the free use of propaganda.

The "Praise of Folly"

WHAT is the greatest novel in the English language? This is a hard question, which we shall not attempt to answer. We leave every one of our readers to enjoy his own selection. Sir Walter Besant declared his opinion that the greatest novel in the English language is Charles Reade's *The Cloister and the Hearth*. That it is a *great* book no one fit to judge will deny, or hesitate to affirm. It is full of adventure and hairbreadth escapes; it exhibits a large variety of life and character; its wit, insight, and pathos show the mind and hand of a master; and a certain vivid actuality is derived from the fact that its pictures and portraits are to a large extent historical. Gerard and Margaret, the hero and heroine of the story, are the father and mother of the great Erasmus; respecting whom Charles Reade closes his book with a noble and pregnant piece of writing:—

First scholar and divine of his epoch, he was also the heaven-born dramatist of his century. Some of the best scenes in this new book are from his medieval pen, and illumine the pages when they come; for the words of a genius, so high as his, are not born to die; their immediate work upon mankind fulfilled, they may seem to lie torpid; but, at each fresh shower of intelligence Time pours upon their students, they prove their immortal race; they revive, they spring from the dust of great libraries; they bud, they flower, they fruit, they seed, from generation to generation, and from age to age.

Erasmus was born at Rotterdam, probably on October 28, 1467. He was a "love child." His father, Gerard of Tergou, being engaged to Margaret, daughter of a physician of Sevenbergen, anticipated the nuptial rites. Gerard's relations drove him from his country by ill usage; when he went to Rome, to earn a living by copying ancient authors, they falsely sent him word that his Margaret had died; upon which he took holy orders, and became a sworn son of the Church. Finding his Margaret alive on his return, he, of course, lived apart from her, and she did not marry another. They had a common interest in their boy, whose education they superintended. Margaret died of the plague when Erasmus was thirteen; and Gerard, inconsolable for her loss, soon followed her to the grave. Their boy was left to the guardianship of relatives, who cheated him of his little patrimony, and compelled him to adopt a religious life. Erasmus was thus a priest, though a very uncommon one. How curious that so many great wits and humorists should have worn the clerical garb! To mention only four, there were Rabelais, Erasmus, Swift, and Sterne; each of whom has added to the world's gaiety, and also helped to free it from superstition. Christians who prate about the "ridicule" of holy things in which Freethinkers indulge should be reminded that these four priests of the Christian religion could easily, between them, carry off the palm for profanity; while for downright plain speech, not always avoiding the nastiest of subjects, there is hardly a professed sceptic who could hold a candle to them.

Erasmus divorced himself from religious duties as early as possible. He detested the monks, regarding them for the most part as illiterate, bigoted, persecuting, and parasitical vermin. His life was devoted to literature, and in the course of his travels he contracted a friendship with the most eminent and able men of the age, including our own Sir Thomas More, the author of the famous *Utopia*. Erasmus died on July 12, 1536. The money he had accumulated by the exercise of his pen, after deducting some handsome legacies to personal friends, he left to relieve the sick and poor, to marry young women, and to as-

sist young men of good character. This was in keeping with his professed principles. He always regarded *charity* as the chief part of *useful* religion, and thought that men should help each other like brothers, instead of fighting like wild beasts over theology.

Erasmus was a contemporary of Luther, and there is an excellent essay by Mr. Froude on both these great men. He gives the palm to Luther on account of his courage, and thinks that Erasmus should have joined the Reformation party. But the truth is that Erasmus had far more *intellect* than Luther; he knew too much to be a fanatic; and while he lashed the vices and follies of the Catholic Church, he never left her fold, partly because he perceived that Luther and the Reformers were as much the slaves of exclusive dogmas as the very Schoolmen themselves. Erasmus believed in freedom of thought, but Luther never did. To sum up the difference between them in a sentence: Luther was a Theologian, and Erasmus a Humanist. "He was brilliantly gifted," says Mr. Froude; "his industry never tired, his intellect was true to itself, and no worldly motives ever tempted him into insincerity."

The great mass of the writings of Erasmus are only of interest to scholars. His two popular books are the *Colloquies* and the *Praise of Folly*, both written in Latin, but translated into most of the European tongues. The *Colloquies* were rendered into fine, nervous English by N. Bailey, the old lexicographer. The *Praise of Folly*, illustrated with Holbein's drawings, is also to be read in English, in the translation of Sir Roger L'Estrange—a writer who, if he was sometimes coarse and slangy, had a first-rate command of our language, and was never lacking in racy vigour.

Erasmus wrote the *Praise of Folly* in the house of Sir Thomas More, with whom he lodged on his arrival in England in 1510. It was completed in a week, and written to divert himself and his friend. A copy being sent to France, it was printed there, and in a few months it went through seven editions. Its contents were such that it is no wonder, in the words of Jortin, that "he was never after this looked upon as a true son of the Church." In the orthodox sense of the term, it would be difficult to look upon the writer of this book as a true Christian.

Folly is made to speak throughout. She pronounces her own panegyric. She represents herself as the mainspring of all the business and pleasure of this world—yes, and also of its worship and devotion. Mixed up with capital fooling, there is an abundance of wisdom, and shrewd thrusts are delivered at every species of imposture; nay, religion itself is treated with derision, under the pretence of buffoonery.

Long before Luther began his campaign against the sale of Pardons and Indulgences, they were satirically denounced by Erasmus. He calls them "cheats," for the advantage of the clergy, who promise their dupes in return for their cash a lot of happiness in the next life; though, as to their own share of this happiness, the clergy "care not how long it be deferred." Erasmus anticipated Luther in another point. Speaking of the subtle interpreters of the Bible in his day, who proved from it anything and everything, he says that "they can deal with any text of scripture as with a nose of wax, and knead it into what shape best suits their interest." Quite as decisively as Luther, though with less passion and scurrility, he condemns the adoration of saints, which he calls a "downright folly." Amidst a comical account of the prayers offered up to their saintships, he mentions the tokens of gratitude to them hung upon the

walls and ceilings of churches; and adds, very shrewdly, that he could find "no relics presented as a memorandum of any that were ever cured of Folly, or had been made one dram the wiser." Even the worship of the Virgin Mary is glanced at—her blind devotees being said "to think it manners now to place the Mother before the Son."

—Reprinted.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

Science To-Day

The Progress of Science, by J. G. Crowther
(Kegan Paul, 12s. 6d.).

To turn from current apologetics and parsonic polemics to science and its nobler expositors is nothing less than passing-out from fog into sunlight.

There is no feeling of fence or concealment in Mr. Crowther's book. All is honest, modest, and supremely natural. It is the difference in "atmosphere" between medieval Spain and to-day's Russia.

The valuable resources of new scientific research are here drawn-upon; and all to the secular advantage of man.

"Once new knowledge has been tasted, never before known to man," writes the author of this inspiring book, "the attractions of other things seem insipid, and the researcher seeks to tear further knowledge from the mass of obscurity he has already gnawed." Here is the root of the matter; the reason for the only intellectual quest that is to the ultimate advantage of humanity. Here, if it be needed, is the apology for *The New Adventure*. It is Science—and especially, I think, the science of psychology—that will save Europe; if Europe is to be saved.

Mr. Crowther's book begins with an account of the Cavendish Laboratory; this famous institution is only sixty years old, but its history is a history-in-little of science-progress during that period. There have been but four directors since the Laboratory's foundation—Clerk Maxwell, Lord Rayleigh, J. J. Thomson, Rutherford; the relationship of the Cavendish Laboratory to world-culture is expressed admirably in a phrase at the close of Mr. Crowther's first chapter: "As Eddington has elegantly explained, the studies of astronomy and physics advance in unison, the structure of the atoms elucidating the constitution of the stars, and the behaviour of stars the properties of atoms." Here, if it be needed, is a triumphant vindication of research; man's place in the universe may be revealed to him. Here is an international death-blow to superstition.

As may be anticipated, it is in Soviet Russia, where religion is officially discountenanced, and is becoming popularly derided, that laboratory-planning and laboratory-work are most happily evolving. There the incalculably-important science of physics is getting unhampered chances of progress; for it is there that scientific reaction has been annihilated. It is largely in the Khar'kov Institution, founded in 1931, that the future of science, and hence of civilization, is being determined.

Interesting to the point of excitement is the account of the physico-astronomical researches of Professor E. A. Milne, intellectual heir to Eddington and Jeans. The "splitting" of stars may conceivably account for both constitution and aspect of the stellar universe; there is some physical ground for the theory; the man of the future, thanks again to Science, may know where, if anywhere, in the universe he "stands."

In *The Chemistry of Evolution*, Mr. Crowther gives the latest results of researches into the mechanism of Evolution; the great collective discovery goes to confirm the theory that matter has in itself the power to evolve; save to incurably-speculative teleologists, a theistic interpretation of the facts is here negated by the facts themselves. Pantheism, the last refuge of Goddery, may survive for a time among theists; but as Pantheism is, ultimately, merely another aspect of Atheism—so far as concerns nature—evolution remains as a purely "natural" process. Be it added, to the

scientific mind any other attempted "explanation" is unthinkable. It does not fit the proven facts.

By the way, on page 207 there is a slight mistake; it is there stated that "91.5 per cent of the nitrogen excreted by the embryo during development is in uric acid." 91.5 is clearly, from the text, a misprint for 91.35.

There is a chapter on Human Heredity that, controversial in certain respects as it may be, "takes-in" wholly the modern conditions and developments of social evolution. Here, once more, all available facts are included, so far as a single writer can embrace them in his script; by a necessary turn of theological 'event,' the new developments of collective humanism are shown purely and reasonably in their evolutionary development; Karl Marx, as an entity, is explained, in terms of his own personal evolution, by the hand of a sympathetic master of evolutionary thought; and the explanation of society's now-revolutionary "turn" is given both lucidly and temperately.

"The vigour of contemporary physical science," affirms the author, "is in remarkable contrast with the languor of contemporary social life. In a period of contraction of economic activity and of political reaction, natural science continues to exhibit, within its sphere, high creative power and intellectual freedom." Without prejudice, the new evaluation will have to be taken very seriously; it is in the genre of the present in a specially intimate way; and present social "feeling" is, in its collective aspect, as much an affair for scientific thought as is any other branch of evolution. Mr. Crowther perceives this; and, with full justification, says it boldly.

Here, at last, after an interminable interval of "religion," chicanery and sophistry, science and her votaries are taking their dues as the causes of human progress. Salutations to the new Republic of Thought.

Gradually most diseases are being overcome by Science; the Finder of Causes. In his final chapter Mr. Crowther gives his account of the modern method of treating pernicious anæmia. There is every hope for man and his future now that the Oratory has, among the civilized, been supplanted, finally and inexorably, by the Laboratory. That is the unwritten but implied moral of this wholly-excellent and enthralling book. To both layman and scientist here is a work that must be appreciated by whomsoever can unbiassedly "take" its significance. In the little-known, but apposite, phrase of Swinburne, the Atheist, "God, once caught in the fact, shows you a fair pair of heels."

VICTOR B. NEUBURG.

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD JULY 20, 1934

THE President, Mr. C. Cohen, in the chair.

Also present: Messrs. Quinton, Hornibrook, Clifton, Wood, Easterbrook (W. J. W.), Ebury, Preece, McLaren, Sandys, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., Mrs. Venton, Mrs. Grant, and the Secretary.

Minutes of previous meeting read and accepted. The Monthly Financial Statement presented. New members were admitted to Plymouth, Blackburn, West London and North London Branches. Reports and correspondence were dealt with from Bradford, Birkenhead, Swansea, Montreal, and a number of outside organizations. Suggestions for further advertising were noted and discussed. Mr. Ebury drew attention to a recent case of prosecution for obstruction, and the President undertook to make enquiries. The Secretary reported the Stratford Town Hall had been booked for Sunday evening, November 25. Owing to holidays it was agreed to hold the next Executive meeting on September 28.

R. H. ROSETTI,

General Secretary.

Correspondence

SOME OPINIONS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I have been a reader of your paper for fifty-three years, and write to thank you for "Views and Opinions" this week. Mr. Redwood has been asking for it, and now he has got it. Have you noticed the spiritualistic twaddle turned out weekly by Sir Oliver Lodge in the *Sunday Graphic*? Here is a good target for your gun! Thanks also for the correspondence on social science. Britain will be ready for Socialism when the majority of the voters are Freethinkers and Secularists. A dictatorship of the proletariat headed by "devout churchmen" like Mr. Lansbury and Sir Stafford Cripps recalls to my mind the worst tory tyranny of Lord Sidmouth and Lord Eldon.

J. STEPHENS.

THE SIMPLE SAVAGE

(Experiences in New Guinea)

The Puri-Puri-man (Medicine-man) made himself particularly amiable. . . . White man was a queer thing, he explained. A Patrol Officer had taken him away and put him in the gaol-house because he was a sorcerer. It was the fashion of the Government to put sorcerers in the gaol-house. The Government had a most unreasoning dislike of sorcerers. . . . Anyway white men had a sorcery of their own. . . . At the mission where he had been sent for a month before being returned to Mailala he had seen men kneeling with clasped hands and closed eyes and talking to nobody. And over the doorways of white men's houses at Moresby he had seen "boots belonging to horses" (horseshoes) nailed up. What were these things but sorcery? he asked.

He made astonishing deductions concerning the white-skinned race which so misgoverned the country that sorcerers were imprisoned. Was it not true, he demanded, that in big villages like Sydney, Merica, Townsville, and Beretani (Britian), whence came all these white men, that many people went hungry in the midst of plenty? Did not the people quarrel and steal so much that strong men called policemen continually walked the village streets to keep the peace. Did they revere and faithfully tend their Aged? Their non-related Aged? Did they help one another as members of a village should? Of course they didn't.

Why the Missionary had told him of one man who, knowing the imminence of a great flood, built a large canoe with a big house upon it, placed on board a male and a female of his pigs, his puppy-dogs, his fowls, and many animals and birds of the jungle, and with his wives and sons, and their wives sailed away, leaving the rest of the villagers to drown! The name of the mean person was Moses, he thought. Perhaps I had heard of him?

Such things could not happen at Mailala, declared the brown-skinned preacher of the non-civilized virtues. At Mailala no man went hungry while another had food, he said; and there was but little quarrelling, except occasionally with other villages, no stealing save the stealing of wives—which was, of course, another matter. In their communal life each individual assisted every other individual willingly and without thought of reward. And the Aged were cared for tenderly, and respected and obeyed; for were not old minds replete with the wisdom of the years, and was not Wisdom a thing to be revered?

From "My Odyssey," by Jack McLaren.

HIGH POLITICS—LOW BUSINESS

It is a poor friendship which is based on the mutual hatred of a third party. In politics, this is known as a treaty covenant or pact: in reality it is not only poor friendship but bad business.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCHES N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.0, Mr. P. Goldman.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, July 29, Mr. P. Goldman. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury. South Hill Park, 8.0, Monday, July 30, Mr. C. Tuson. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Thursday, August 2, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 7.30, Sunday, July 29, Mr. Campbell Everden. Rushcroft Road, near Brixton Town Hall, 8.0, Tuesday, July 31, Mr. L. Ebury. Stonhouse Street, High Street, Clapham, 8.0, Wednesday, August 1, Mrs. E. Grout.

WEST HAM BRANCH (Corner of Deanery Road, opposite the Library, Water Lane, Stratford, E.): 7.0, A Lecture.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Sunday, Mr. W. B. Collins. 3.30, Platform No. 1, Messrs. Wood and Bryant. Platform No. 2, Messrs. Saphin and Tuson. 6.30, Platform No. 1, Messrs. Collins and Hyatt. Platform No. 2, Messrs. Saphin and others. Wednesday, 7.30, Mr. Campbell Everden. Thursday, 7.30, Messrs. Wood and Saphin. Friday, 7.30, Two Lectures.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

ASHINGTON BRANCH N.S.S.: 7.30, Friday, July 27, Mr. Allan Flanders—"War and Christianity."

BLYTH (Market Place): 7.0, Monday, July 30, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

BRIGHTON BRANCH N.S.S. (The Level): 8.0, Mr. J. J. Byrne—"Moses, 'Lord.'"

BURNLEY (Barden Lane, near Sports Ground): 8.0, Tuesday, July 31, Mr. J. Clayton.

CROOK (Market Place): 7.0, Thursday, August 2, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Dunne Square, Paisley): 7.30, Friday, July 27, Debate: Rev. Wright, M. A. (Methodist Church, Paisley) and G. Whitehead (N.S.S.)—"Moral Teaching of Jesus."

MR. G. WHITEHEAD will lecture in the following places: Paisley, 8.0, Saturday, July 28. West Regent Street, 7.30, Sunday, July 29. Albion Street, Glasgow, 7.30, Monday, July 30, Tuesday, July 31, and Wednesday, August 1. Dunne Square, Paisley, 7.30, Thursday, August 2 and Friday, August 3.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Corner of High Park Street and Park Road): 8.0, Thursday, July 26, Messrs. D. Robinson and C. McKelvie. Queen's Drive, opposite Walton Baths, 8.0, Sunday, July 29, Messrs. A. Jackson and W. Parry.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Platt Fields, Platt Lane, Rusholme): 7.0, Mr. Maertens (Stockport)—A Lecture.

STOCKTON (Market Place): 7.0, Sunday, July 29, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

NELSON (Chapel Street): 8.0, Wednesday, August 1, Mr. J. Clayton.

PRESTON (Town Hall Square): 3.0 and 7.0, Sunday, July 29, Mr. J. Clayton.

SUNDERLAND BRANCH N.S.S. (Gill Bridge Avenue, Sunderland): 7.0—A Lecture.

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