

THE FREETHINKER

• EDITED *by* CHAPMAN COHEN •
— Founded 1881 —

VOL. LIX.—No. 39

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1939

PRICE THREEPENCE

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Views and Opinions

God and Us

We can hardly say that we have gone to war without paying attention to religion. Just over twelve months ago, immediately before the Munich fiasco, Westminster Abbey was thrown open for daily prayer on behalf of peace, Mrs. Chamberlain was a well-advertised member of the praying circus, the other Churches and Chapels joined in, and the B.B.C. gave an increased dose of religious services. As an answer to prayer the Lord gave us Munich, which meant an immense strengthening of the Fascist position, with millions of pounds-worth of munitions, an improved geographical situation, and a strengthened conviction to Goering and Co., that the rest of the world would submit to whatever they did—so soon as they had done it.

There was a repetition of this activity on the religious front prior to September 1-3. Every evening the B.B.C. turned on a special service to the Lord to give us peace, there were prayers in the Churches and Chapels, and our God was given the chance of working a spectacular miracle. He might have worked it in as spectacular a manner as was the summons to Mr. Chamberlain to go to Munich. It would have been as striking an instance of divine interposition as was the Mons Angels, or the miraculous upholding of the stone angel at Albert during the past war. But either the prayers are not suitable, or perhaps as Elijah said of the gods of his period he is "talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be wakened." Or it may be he was interested in a Church Congress. At any rate God did nothing and the obviously farcical game went on. The situation that has developed could not have been worse had all the Churches been shut up and all the clergy taken to digging underground shelters. Or perhaps the Lord has taken offence at seeing his Churches guarded by sand-bags, and knew that in the event of a raid his special servants would take shelter in a crypt, or a dugout that had never been even sanctified. After all the Lord

has his feelings, and if his own servants cannot trust wholly and completely to his being able to protect them, and his own buildings, I do not wonder that he sat back and said to his attendant ministers, "Let them look after themselves."

* * *

Attacking in Mass

But that very artful person, the Archbishop of Canterbury is not easily to be set aside. Like Dickens's well-known character, Major Bagstock, he is "tough—and devilish sly." If the Lord takes no notice of him he refuses to take no notice of the Lord. It is part of his professed creed to bear with patience the burdens the Lord places upon him, including a couple of palaces and a very handsome salary, and snubs from an heavenly quarter counts for nothing. So the Archbishop returns to the attack by ordering in all his Churches, for October 1, a service of prayer for peace. All the other Churches will doubtless join in, so will the B.B.C., and copying the German tactics in Poland there will be a mass attack on heaven. Whether the heavenly Siegfried line will be broken before this mass attack remains to be seen. Let us bear in mind the date—October 1—and watch events. I am quite convinced that after that date something will happen. If it is something good we shall have a thanksgiving service. If it is bad the Archbishop will again remind us that we have sinned and deserve the punishment of sin. Heads, the Archbishop wins; tails, the other fellow loses. Archbishop "Joe Bagstock is tough, tough, sir, and devilish sly."

During the massed attack with the tanks and big guns of the pulpit, the machine-guns of the responses, the poison-gas of sermons, and the Amen bombs, there is to be an interval of five minutes for reflection. That is, I think, a rather dangerous experiment. Of course, the Archbishop wishes them to reflect upon the goodness of God, the power of God and the necessity for giving whole-hearted support to his Church, of which the Archbishop is one of the chief figureheads. Suppose some of those in the congregation—I had almost written "audience"—after they have listened to the service—damn it! I was on the point of writing "performance"—reflect that all these petitions have been made many a time to the Lord without their making a pennyworth of difference. What then? Suppose they reflect that if God can interfere he ought not to wait for a formal application. When a child falls in a river the man on the bank who can swim does not wait for a formal invitation from the parents of the child before he attempts a rescue. And if he did and explained afterwards that he did not do so because the parents of the child were a bad lot, we should not praise his sense of righteousness. After all, the Archbishop should be artful enough to reflect that there is a limit to the foolishness of some of his congregation. It is true they are all professed Christian followers of the Christian God, and that these are

labelled, in the New Testament, sheep. Still there is a likelihood that with some of them the potentialities of goats exist, and may not be quite so docile.

The Archbishop in his attempt to make something out of the war, guards himself with the remark that Fascism is "based on force," and force must be met by counter-force. Bless Archbishop "Bagstock's" artfulness! If no force is used there is nothing to meet with "counter-force." If force is used then the New Testament command is absolute. It does not say "Turn one cheek to the smiter, so long as he does not threaten to strike you," but if he does strike one cheek give him the other. It looks as though the Archbishop is relying upon the fact that the two animals mentioned with honour in the New Testament are the sheep and the ass, and hopes that their human analogues may come to his aid. The position is difficult for him. As a Christian minister he ought to say one thing; as one who owes his appointment to the State he is expected to say another. So he compromises and says both—and to the same audience. In the second century a great Christian writer—great for the Christians of that period—said of some articles of the Christian faith, "I believe because it is impossible." Over the gulf of centuries an English Archbishop shakes hands with Tertullian.

* * *

A Risky Experiment

This five minutes reflection may well turn out to be one of the most dangerous bombs ever dropped on the Church. The writer of "A Journalist's Note-Book," in the *Church Times* thinks "it is surely reasonable to believe that the glorious weather in the opening days of the war is intended to hearten and encourage." Hearten and encourage whom? Those of us who are sitting here in England, comparatively safe and comfortable, presumably. But this fine weather was exactly what the Poles did not want. Unseasonable weather, or weather that was rainy, and "glorious" swamps, might have saved thousands of women and children from the machine-guns, the explosive and incendiary bombs of Goering and his gang. (I think we might cease to talk of that empty-headed and cowardly fool, Hitler, as being responsible and at the head of affairs. It will make things more understandable). Those of the congregations that are assembled on October 1, may possibly reflect that Polish women and children deserve some attention and protection as well as "God's Englishman," and that it will not bring these women and children back to life, or reduce their sufferings in the smallest degree if, in the end, German Fascism is crushed. We have an English hymn, "There is a friend of little children" that with unconscious irony was sung at a funeral of a number of children who were killed in East London during the last war. Some of the members of the congregation may think—they should think unless their religion has completely numbed their brain—that these Polish children are *his* as well as are British children, and that our British law is apt to deal rather harshly with parents who either neglect their children or expose them to avoidable danger. Of course we cannot serve a summons on God for neglecting his children; but we can at least not disgrace ourselves by grovelling on our knees and singing his praise for what he has not done. I said last week that the proper retort to the Christian preacher who talks about the horrible thing it is to think of the world without God, is that, granting whatever is said, it is nothing near so horrible as to think of the world with a God who mocks human despair, tolerates the worst infamies that man is capable of, and promises to make all things right in the next world.

That is one of the greatest falsehoods ever fostered by even the Christian religion. If there is one certain thing in nature it is that a thing once done cannot be undone. You may restore the building you have razed to the ground, you may replace the goods you have stolen, you may build again the towns and villages that wars—our wars, as well as the wars of others—have destroyed, you may compensate in a thousand and one different ways whatever wrong a man may commit, but you can never wipe out completely from a man's nature the crime he commits, and you can never restore the victim to what he was before the crime on him was committed. Nothing can make good the sufferings of the Polish people, which were helped by the fine weather which a religious writer thinks was sent by God to cheer us.

It is not perhaps altogether fair to the Archbishop to bracket with him Mr. Beverley Nichols, but I cannot refrain from noting his very religious comment in the *Sunday Chronicle*. Mr. Nichols appears to be in France, and the sight of horses going along the road to War left him unable "to control the lump in his throat much longer." He shouted out loudly, "Damn Hitler"—quite a change since Mr. Nichols wrote so much in favour of German Fascism. Then a more suitable newspaper impulse came over him, and he decided to pray for Hitler. There is a humorous side to most serious things, tears and laughter, as we have been so often reminded are very close together. But I think the laughter must be the strongest where the resolve of Mr. Nichols to pray for Hitler is concerned. He almost completes the troupe of which the Archbishop of Canterbury may be considered the manager and star turn. I do not rank the intelligence of Mr. Nichols very highly, but I do not believe he seriously thinks that his prayers will have any effect on Hitler. But, hold! He may think that if he cannot influence Hitler directly, he may influence God to set to work on Hitler and his gang. In that case one can only say, May the Lord give us a good conceit of ourselves.

* * *

A Final Note

To close on a more serious note—at least in form—for I hope that none of my readers will think that serious things can be treated in no other way than with a long face and in funereal tones. As I have already said, laughter and tears are very closely related, and by laughter and tears I do not mean a grin and a snivel. I once told a well known man with whom I was debating, and who had complained that I was treating his arguments humorously, that those who knew me were aware that I was never so serious as when I was humorous; while it seemed that he was never so humorous as when he was trying to be serious. I think that most of my friends will appreciate that piece of self-analysis, if my enemies do not.

The Churches have been working hard for some time to work up, out of fear of war, some profit for Christianity. They may meet with some measure of temporary success; for as religion was nourished in fear, so the wave of fear that has swept over the country, and which reached its highest point in September 1938—thanks to the propaganda of fear that was conducted—may bring religion a little temporary profit.

But I would seriously ask why anyone should regard the Christian religion as a bulwark against war? When has Christendom been free from war? When have the Christian Churches as a body stood against war? It is mainly owing to the conduct of Christian nations that other countries have been driven to excessive arming. Christian Churches are decorated with memorials of war, and the clergy have, as one of our own generals testified, been amongst the active

creators of what he called "blood-lust." The brutality of war has grown in proportion to the opportunity for indulging in it. I do not say that religion has been the only factor in this process, but I do say that it has moralized war, and that the crusades in favour of peace have come mainly from the less religious groups, certainly it has not come from the established Church. What religion has done is to add an increased hypocrisy to war without diminishing to any extent its brutality. I see no reason whatever for believing that religion will play any other part in the present conflict.

CHAPMAN COHEN

The Dean's Dilemma

In the sight of Humanity and Wisdom it is better to erect one cottage than to demolish a hundred cities.

Landor

Only that good profits, which we can taste with all doors open, and which serves all men.—Emerson.

WHAT should we do without our deans? They lend spice to life, and are the cause of amusing paragraphs in the newspapers. Without pretending to more than a dean's share of spiritual authority, they express themselves very freely on all manners of subjects. And, between them, they cover a wide political range. Dean Inge, for example, is a fine, crusty, old Tory, whilst his brother-in-the-Lord, Dean Matthews, also associated with St. Paul's Cathedral, voices, with no uncertain sound, far more Liberal views, with some of which his older clerical colleague must positively shiver as to where he will spend eternity.

There are yet further differences between these two reverend gentlemen. One has been dubbed "the gloomy dean," whilst the other is endowed with a gay irresponsibility, unusual in a divine. Dean Inge is always arguing, whilst Dean Matthews, to use Artemus Ward's phrase, "cannot ratiocinate worth a cent." Indeed, this peculiar trait gives freshness to brother Matthews' writings, for the reader never knows what he will say in the next sentence. His latest effort, for example, concerning "The Church and the War" (*Sunday Despatch*, September 3) is so discursive that it reminds me of a Hyde Park debate, which started with a discussion concerning "Immortality," and finished with a fierce argument concerning the price of beer at Gibraltar.

In his very topical article, Dean Matthews starts off with the plaintive questions, "Where does Christianity find a place in war? What has the Church of Christ to say about it?" These queries are about as profitable as little Paul Dombey's inquiry: "What are the wild waves saying?" For most thinking men have long since ceased to regard Christianity as a live force. But Dean Matthews still lives in the eighteenth century, and like the parson in *Tom Jones* would say: "When I say religion, I mean the Protestant Religion, and when I say the Protestant Religion I mean the Church of England."

It is a pity that the dean's cocksureness is not accompanied by the clarity that distinguished the old theologians. They may have been wrong, ignorant, prejudiced, but they always expressed themselves clearly, and gave chapter and verse for their conclusions. Not so, Brother Matthews. He deals in windy generalities, and uses phrases with all the generous freedom of a quack doctor addressing an *al-fresco* audience.

For instance, the dean says that war "is contrary to the mind of Christ," and adds

the human world is organized to at least ninety per cent of its structure on principles which are contrary to the will of God.

Here's a pretty kettle of fish! Does Brother Matthews know "the mind of Christ?" If so, he is in the happy position of knowing more than all the Christian priests and theologians for near two thousand years. They argued and wrangled all their mis-spent lives, but the result is to be seen in hundreds of different sects, each claiming to be the original and only genuine interpretation of Christian teaching. Not only do they differ in detail, but they contradict one another flatly. Some believe in the authority of their Church; others rely on the authority of their Bible. Churches are trinitarian, and also unitarian; whilst the Roman Catholics have added the "Virgin Mary" to the divine syndicate. They all hate one another as much as an old-established grocer hates his cut-price rival. And the Church of England, of which Dean Matthews is so distinguished an ornament, is not even in the "Big Three" of Orthodoxy, but is simply among the "also ran." The Anglican Church is not a hoary antiquity like the Coptic, Greek, or Roman Hierarchies, but a mere mushroom of yesterday, subsisting largely on properties filched from its older Catholic rival. In what sense can such a body lay claim to infallibility, and pretend to be the residuary legatee to the "mind of Christ?" Is it not the residuary legatee of anything but stolen property?

Dean Matthews' contention that the world is ninety per cent organized on principles contrary to the will of God is about the silliest argument ever used in a theological discussion. What sort of a God is he pretending to worship, and asking other people to venerate? A ten-per-cent limited-liability deity! Would not even religious people tend to worship the ninety per cent Authority, even if it were dubbed Satan? Brother Matthews is perilously near to advocating devil-worship in his anxiety to make excuses for the failure of Christianity. If the dean had lived in the sixteenth century he would have been burnt alive for expressing such opinions. To-day, he risks being laughed at as a medieval survival.

The dean's inquiry as to where Christianity finds "a place in war" is a veritable boomerang. Christian priests bless regimental standards, christen battle-ships, and organize "Te Deums" for victory. Christian priests also officiate as army chaplains, not obtaining soldiers' rations but the pay and status of officers. Every bishop at his consecration promises that he will "maintain and set forward quietness, love, and peace among all men." How has that promise been fulfilled by the Episcopal Bench in the House of Lords, when questions of war and peace have been considered by our legislators?

War has been waged by British arms in every quarter of the globe these last hundred years. Countries have been annexed, native races subdued, and the size of the British Empire marvellously increased. Whether these wars are held to be just or unjust, inevitable, or the result of ambition or bad diplomacy, the Christian Bishops in the House of Lords never condemned them. In times of war these prelates have not hesitated to shout with the Jingo, and rejoice over the conquest of the enemy.

The case of international arbitration owes nothing to the bishops of the Church of England. There has been no war waged by Britain that has earned serious episcopal displeasure. Invariably they blessed the soldiers, and invoked God's help against the enemy. To these Right-Reverend Fathers-in-God, a British war cannot be an unrighteous war. As for maintaining and setting forth quietness, love, and peace among all men, war itself sets forward the quiet of the grave, maintains the primitive love of slaughter and conquest, and sets forward the peace of desolation and death.

"There are not many things worse than war," says

Dean Matthews. Yet Christian priests have always evaded their responsibilities concerning so great an evil. Robed with authority, sitting in the House of Lords, they have folded their hands and done nothing except to safeguard the purely selfish interests of their own profession. But, adds Brother Matthews, "War is the consequence of sin." There's wisdom for you! It certainly takes some courage for a modern Englishman, pretending to a little culture, to write such medieval nonsense. It is only when one reflects that the writer is a licensed dealer in spiritual sentimentality that one understands the circumstances. Plain men cannot, as our French friends say, "pay themselves with words." The dean uses words to evade a painful issue, but they remain mere words, "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." That brave journalist, W. T. Stead, thought that militarism was a cause. He fought it in his periodical, *War Against War*. In doing so, he proved himself a better man than all those tens of thousands of clergy, who, professing to follow a "Prince of Peace," pander to the Moloch of Militarism. If Europe is semi-barbarous at this present hour, most of the responsibility rests on the clergy. For they have helped to perpetuate Barbarism instead of spreading culture.

MIMNERMUS

Heroes of the London Corresponding Society

"ARISE, shine, for thy light is come . . . and nations shall come to thy light and Kings to the brightness of thy rising," cried the prophet Isaiah to the Jerusalem that the Jews were to build on their return from the Captivity. His new Jerusalem never shone as he had hoped, but at the end of the eighteenth century the city of Paris blazed even more brightly. "Nations came to its light." The whole of the island of Britain was, so to speak, illuminated in its mountains and valleys by brilliant white rays which, as the years went on, changed to dark red. Nothing that occurred over here was not conditioned by what happened in France. . . .

Tom Paine himself did not take a great part in the defence of liberty in the years which followed 1793: he was in exile in France, driven there by a special proclamation on seditious publications which was not so much a new invasion of liberty as a revival of an old means of oppression. That task fell to numerous Paineite societies with such titles as "The Friends of Freedom"; above all, to a number of "Corresponding Societies" which circumvented the law against national organizations by being merely "in correspondence" with each other. The London Corresponding Society at one time may have had as many as 10,000 members.

The object of the Government, even before war with France began in 1793, was to make impossible all free political comment and so to use the law as to make it a criminal offence to demand the reform of Parliament. But they were not going to start in London: the results of Wilkes's agitation were too lasting. London juries continually returned the "wrong" verdicts; in the cant of the time this was called the London Disease. They were going to start from the outlying districts and work inwards.

Their first method was "the mob." It was a never-failing joke in Conservative circles even before Hitler, to use the people itself to smash up democratic movements. The Government merely stood aside while volunteers from the aristocracy organized, and

even paid, "Church and King" mobs to burn the houses of democrats. The most notorious was the one which destroyed the laboratory of the famous chemist Priestley in Birmingham. It wrecked every instrument, poured the contents of his cellar either into its belly or over the floors, set the house on fire, and collapsed in drunken heaps in his garden, while the great scientist watched from the road outside. But when a similar mob tried the same game on Thomas Walker, one-time Borough Reeve (i.e., Mayor) of Manchester, he and a few friends fired over their heads out of an upper window, and the patriots ran screaming.

The mob was not reliable enough. Scottish judges were to be found more useful. McQueen, Lord Justice Clerk (Braxfield, of Stevenson's "Weir of Hermiston"), at the head of the judiciary, controlled the whole machine, and from 1793 onwards a series of horrifying trials stamped all political liberty out. "Come awa', Maister Horner" called M'Queen once to a juryman before the case began, "Come awa', and help us to hang ane o' thae damned scoondrels." Gerrald, one of those arrested for reform propaganda, proudly said that Christ, too, was a reformer: "Muckle he made o' that," chuckled the judge, "he was hangit." And when Robert Watt was dragged on a hurdle through Edinburgh to the Tolbrook, hanged and then beheaded, the cause of liberty was lost in Scotland.

Before long it was lost in England too. Only the bravest stayed members of the London Corresponding Society: among them Thomas Hardy, the working man secretary. He and his committee were held in prison most of the blazing hot summer of 1794, examined and re-examined in the hope of securing evidence of sedition. Pitt himself helped in trying to break them down: when one remained obstinate he turned away from him with a theatrical gesture and cried: "Well! We can do without his evidence. Let him be sent to prison and be hanged with the rest of them in the Tower." Thomas Hardy's wife died in childbirth while he was in prison. Her last unfinished letter, beginning in the eighteenth century manner "My dear Mr. Hardy," is among the most affecting letters I have ever read. In October, when they came to trial, it was shown that the London Disease was still strong: the trial lasted nine days, but the verdict was "Not Guilty," though the foreman was so overcome by his own temerity that he fell down in a faint the moment he had spoken.

This victory only meant that new laws had to be passed to destroy political liberties, and from 1795 onwards passed they were. Not only was all political freedom extinguished by the "Two Acts," but, more or less casually, trade unions were forbidden in 1799. 1800 is perhaps the blackest year in the history of English freedom.

Very slowly, in the new century, did men attempt to recover some of their liberties. Sir Francis Burdett, M.P., almost alone, from 1807 onwards conducted an opposition in Parliament. In 1810 one J. G. Jones was sent to prison for organizing a debate on the action of the Commons in excluding strangers. Sir Francis delivered a speech demanding his release, and then published it; the House declared this a breach of privilege and ordered him to be sent to the Tower. When the soldiers came Sir Francis was found teaching his son to translate Magna Carta from the original Latin. This melodramatic arrest was followed by a few weeks in prison and marks the last time the House ventured to punish discussion of its actions.

Some of the names of the men who struggled for political freedom throughout the reigns of George III. and IV. are well known—such as William Cobbett and

Orator Hunt. But the bravest and most effective was one who is partly forgotten—Richard Carlile. He was a self-educated man of no resources, poor and at the beginning of his career almost unlettered. His career began in 1817, when he spent £1 upon a parcel of "Black Dwarfs" (a radical paper) and started reselling them to shopkeepers. From hawker he became publisher and from publisher writer. Throughout his life the one thing that startles us is his unequalled obstinacy. He was never afraid of anything and would never stop. The moment he came out of prison he would go back to his shop, print some "seditious" or "blasphemous" paper and offer it for sale. He infected his wife, his sister, and innumerable shop assistants with the same fury of self-sacrifice. Nothing would stop "Carlile and his shopmen" from selling "undesirable" literature, till even the Regency judges began to falter.

Most of the time Carlile was in prison, but he scored several successes, as for example in his first year when he reprinted Hone's *Political Parodies*, and successfully showed that the mere veto of the Attorney-General on them had no legal value. Fantastic sentences and fines were passed upon him, but their very violence undid their effect, for the fines could not be collected and the length of the sentences made it necessary to remit them.

Nor were the sentences of any use in suppressing Republican and Deist publications. The intrepidity of Carlile excited such admiration that volunteer after volunteer came forward to serve in his shop and sell literature in defiance of the Government. Aldred, in his *Life of Carlile*, names 31 who received sentences of from three months to three years. Their enthusiasm was something like that which afterwards supported the suffragettes, but it had its reward more quickly. A hundred and fifty had been arrested when, in 1823, the Lord Chief Justice suddenly intimated from the Bench that it would be ill-advised to continue prosecuting them. Two years later Carlile himself was taken from his cell in Dorchester Jail and put outside the gates, bag and baggage, without any explanation. The Government had had sufficient.

But though the freedom of the Press was secured, that was not enough. There remained a heavy tax on all cheap newspapers, which prevented any being sold under sevenpence. For the next 25 years a straggling warfare was carried on between the Government and editors like the Chartists, Henry Hetherington and James Watson. The legal dispute turned on whether the papers were newspapers or "periodical pamphlets"; the Government met with several rebuffs, but it ruined a good many poor men; and the "taxes on knowledge" were not repealed till 1855. From that time on the Press was free: the fiercest attacks on even royalty went unregarded. Indeed some of the leaders in *Reynolds's* in the '70's would shock even the most placid, and I doubt if the editor would allow me to reprint them.

There was one, and only one, instance of repression before we come up to 1914. That deserves special notice, because although it remained an isolated instance, a scandal, we see to-day that it was not an accident, but the first locust that announces the horde. In 1912, Tom Mann, Fred Crowsley, Guy Bowman, and two printers named Buck, were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, up to nine months, for circulating to soldiers a "Don't shoot" leaflet. It said: "When we go on strike to better our lot, which is the lot also of your fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, you are called upon by your officers to murder us. Don't do it."

RAYMOND POSTGATE
(In *Red Tape* for August)

The Pacifist and the "War to End War, No. 2"

THE Pacifist is under fire again. No war has brought such a searching test to the progressive-minded Pacifist, his conscience, values and convictions, as the "War to End War, No. 2."

The surface issues are all too obvious; the deeper, ultimate issues of imperialist and economic rivalries, of bungled causes and distorted effects, are all too swiftly submerged beneath a rising tide of emotions too easily aroused and appeals too readily assented to.

So many are buckling on the breastplate of righteousness and drawing the sword of truth, as the lights go down in Europe and the inquiring searchlight picks him out, that the Pacifist begins to feel almost indecently naked in his more modest garb of peace, and is tempted to assume the white shirt of the penitent.

It is—we are told on the Allied side—a "war of moral values," a "just war," a "righteous cause," a "holy crusade," a "war for truth and justice and decency," a "war to crush Hitlerism and methods of violence," a "war to end war." All the phrases are out; and the Pacifist hesitates as the flood of words and emotions threatens to sweep over him and batter away those other phrases and convictions upon which his Pacifism has been built, other voices that still amid the carnage whisper to him of the humanity and brotherhood of those he is now so persuasively cajoled or commanded to kill.

For the progressive-minded Pacifist, whether he be Freethinker, Christian, Socialist, or outside the creeds and parties, also wants to see the end of war and tyranny and violence, the downfall of Hitlerism (and all oppression), and an end to Hitler methods in international affairs. He also is a responsive hearer of those calls in the name of justice, truth and freedom. He also would eagerly take his place in the ranks if he honestly thought that this war was the true and the only way to forward those causes. But that is the point—is this war the right way? More important, is it the right way for him?

We are not at war with a people, we are at war with a system—we are told on the Allied side—we have no quarrel with the German people, apart from their Nazi Government. Yet even people of the mentality of, say the Bishop of London (so excellent a recruiting agent in the War to End War, No. 1—1914-1918) or Mr. Arthur Greenwood (so excellent a recruiting agent in the War to End War, No. 2—1939—) might smile at the irony of an Allied airman's solicitous murmur, "We have no quarrel with you, dear German people," as he drops a bomb that may blow those dear German people to hell, or maim and cripple them for life.

But it is necessary that those dear German people should be blown to hell or maimed and crippled (accidentally, of course), we are told (in much more diplomatic language, of course); it is necessary not only to save Polish and other people from similar treatment, but to end Hitlerism and save justice and decency in Europe. Isn't there rather a familiar ring about those words? Weren't we told exactly the same kind of thing in 1914 onwards?

"Gallant little Belgium" (now in the hour of another's need still so gallantly neutral) has become "gallant little Poland." 1914-1918 was a "War to End Kaiserism"—did it? 1939—is a "War to End Hitlerism"—will it? 1914-1918 ended the Kaiser as Kaiser, but did it end Kaiserism? 1939—may end Hitler as Hitler, but will it end Hitlerism?

1914-1918 was a war "for liberty"—and since it finished there has been a more rapid decline of liberty

in Europe (including Britain) than in any comparable period.

1914-1918 was a war "to end war"—and produced the evil spirit that presided over the Versailles Peace Conference, and prompted the ensuing Allied fear-repression of Germany which in its natural turn led to the morbid growth of Hitlerism and the War to End War, 1939—.

If post-war Liberal Germany had been treated with the deference that re-armed Nazi Germany has been treated with up to now, there would have been no Hitlerism to deal with. But that would have required generosity and courage; it would have required the free use of those "high ideals" and "moral values" which Britain, on the outbreak of yet another war to protect her world-wide interests, has discovered she and her allies possess in such superabundant quantities.

If the imperialist democracies had entrusted the League of Nations with more of those "moral values" and "high ideals," and less with the task of becoming (or seeming to become) a diplomatic bulwark of the new *status quo*, the methods of Hitlerism might not now be to the forefront in international relations.

All this does not excuse Hitlerism (which in itself is indefensible), but it does help us to understand it. One does not wish in the least to defend Hitler, but it is important to understand why a man of his type has been thrown up by the tide of events. And if you pour refuse into the sea, it is no good complaining that the tide throws up scum on the shore. It is true that Hitler, had he been the type, and had he wished, could have averted the war; but he is not the type, and did not wish to do so. It is not true, except in a very limited sense, that Hitler "caused" the war; just as the murder of an Archduke did not "cause" the war of 1914-1918. One man, even a Hitler, does not cause a war.

Behind the conflict of 1914-1918 lay trade and economic and strategic complications of the "great" Powers, and behind the Anglo-German clash of those days lay an impatient Anglo-German rivalry. Behind the Anglo-German clash of these days lies the same rivalry, the same challenge of growing German might to British supremacy, and the same British determination to brook no world rival to an empire of interests conveniently established before the "Have" Powers became so righteously insistent that territories should not be seized by force or peoples subjugated and oppressed.

In addition, of course, there are those "moral values." But while listening to the present spate of oratory on "moral values" and "high ideals," and "international law and rights," let us spare a moment to think of the Spain of not so long ago. In that Spain—now so quickly a thing of the almost forgotten past—when the legally elected and constituted Government was suddenly confronted by an illegal and bloody insurrection backed by foreign aid, what did the democracies do but rush to deny that Government its elementary international right of buying the arms and men needed for its defence? The British Government which deliberately assisted in that blockade and defeat of a democratic Republic is the British Government which has deliberately placed its arms and resources on the side of semi-Fascist Poland. Can one be blamed if he is not too gullible about such a Government's sudden conversion to "moral values" and the sanctity of international law?

It is probably true that the British Government, which has been showing such gentlemanly restraint during the early hostilities, has entered this war very unwillingly. It is understandable. Apart from quite genuine sentiments of peace, war no longer serves the purpose of Britain or the Empire. And few are fools

enough to fight when they can get what they want, or keep what they have, without fighting. Hitler, too, has entered the war against Britain and France very unwillingly. Poland was one matter, but Poland, Britain and France are a different proposition.

These, then, are a few of the additional considerations (additional to the "moral values," "high ideals," etc.) which a Pacifist may take into account in reviewing the situation and coming to his personal decision on the present conflict. They do not necessarily mean that his decision is already made, for there is a lot to be said for those "moral values"; but we must get "moral values" in their proper perspective, not drink them in open-mouthed and empty-minded. War time is the time above all to be critically-minded.

What the Pacifist's decision may be, we must now leave to a further article; but meanwhile, whether we be men of war or men of peace, fighters or non-fighters, let us respect each other's right to an opinion even more in war time than in peace time. Some things are too serious to be too serious about them.

On the lighter side, with Britain so righteously appealing to God at every tiff and turn, and with the Polish and German armies both assured that they "march with God" (though marching, and fighting, in opposite directions), it is worth while recalling Sir John Squire's comment on God's similar difficulties in the last war to end war:—

To God the embattled nations sing and shout:
"Gott strafe England" and "God save the King";
God this, God that, and God the other thing.
"Good God!" said God, "I've got my work cut out."

R. H. S. STANDEAST

(To be continued)

Man or the Gods?

THE Men of Good Will have not prevented War, but that is only because there are not enough of them. The people who feel and think logically number a few battalions. These have tried to deluge the mush of mankind's primitive emotions with common-sense, but it has been like facing up to a Big Bertha with a popgun. They have no God to help them, these men of good will. The help of Omnipotence is denied them.

The Old Guard have God on their side. Not only the Old Guard in England, mark you, but the Old Guard in Poland, the Old Guard in France, the Old Guard in Russia. One has just passed in the street a contents bill of the ineffable *Christian Herald*: PRAYER DOES STOP WAR. It is a reasonable belief to hold, if one thinks there is All Power and All Goodness behind our planet. All the same, war stops as a rule when the guns and men run out. God is on the side of the big battalions. All army commanders act on this assumption, because they look at history (perhaps) and find it confirmed.

One must be reasonable even with one's God. It is silly to ask him to advance and retreat at the same time; to give us sunshine and darkness at the precise tick of the clock. Omnipotence has obvious shortcomings and this is just one of them. God, Three Gods, a Hundred Gods or No God, the only sane policy is to work out your own salvation. No God will justify the policy; One God, Three Gods, will approve it. Any conception of God that asks for Man to flop on his knees in the hour of trouble is a degrading conception, and stinks of the primeval slime.

Already Churches have been bombed by divine assistance, and the incidents have been considered worthy of special notice. Already people have been

called to Prayer all over the combatant world and churches thrown open for meditation. Millions are engaged in praying that God will help them; praying furiously, sincerely and with passion. But how can God help? It is obvious that he cannot.

God on the lips of each potentate and under a thousand spires that millions of servants of Christ may receive from God the strength to tear and blow each other to pieces, to ravage and burn, to wrench husbands from wives, fathers from their children, to starve the poor, and everywhere destroy the work of the spirit. Prayer under the hundred thousand spires for the blessed strength of God, to use the noblest, most loyal instincts of the human race to the ends of carnage.

No supernatural creed—in these days when two and two are put together—can stand against such reeling subversions.

But Christianity, however, in spite of Galsworthy, makes the effort to thrive on reeling subversions. A welter of suffering and death in the years 1914-1918 made the old creeds totter for a while, but then up popped the Archbishops and Bishops in 1937 and boost the Return to Religion, a return, that is, to the reeling subversions they have always stood for, a combined effort to hinder the progress of the belief that Science is the Providence of Man, and that any little advance in sweet and rational living is for Man to make and Man alone. That the Gods must take their holiday, is the danger above all dangers, say the churches.

God is so disgusted with us, we are told, that he is allowing us "to stew in our own juice." All right then if it pleases you. The lesson is still the same. Let us attend to our juices so that the stew may be a little more wholesome. But begging and supplicating for intercession? Is this the recipe to work the miracle? Throw away, we say, such a pinchbeck deity, and if you *must* retain your beliefs, make them respectable. Have a deity that is as impressive as Julius Cæsar, as kindly as John Howard, as wise as Herbert Spencer, as human as Omar Khayyam? Give us a composite figure that will make us look upon it with a modicum of respect, not a tawdry thing of shreds and patches taken from a rag-bag.

Every little bit of reliance on beings beyond the clouds makes man's progress more difficult. Everything that man can do but does not do, preferring to delegate to deities, is a treason to the human race. There is only one message that has a validity which will last beyond the range of the bloodiest of wars, and that is that falling on one's knees keeps us from realities, drags us back to the jungle, and delays the progress of the Kingdom of Man.

T. H. ELSTON

God-on-Both-Sides

THEY'VE mobilized God in the War
 For Justice and Right
 And each of them's perfectly sure
 On which side He'll fight
 (God and) Great Britain and France are
 To kill and to maim
 (God and) the Germans are doing
 Precisely the same
 And therefore it seems to me clear
 Although it is odd
 Whoever may win in this war
 It will scarcely be God.

C. G. L. DU CANN

Acid Drops

It is a little too early to decide the full significance of the Russian occupation of part of Poland. That it will not lighten the task of the Allies is certain, that it will only delay the victory of the Allies seems almost certain. And there is the world repercussion against the march into Poland which should also count in the favour of the Allies. But it should not be forgotten, it would certainly not be forgotten in France, that our Government is not free from responsibility here. In the early part of this year, Churchill, Eden, Lloyd George, Sinclair, Greenwood, and others, with such religious journals as the *Church Times* and other papers, all joined in stressing the need for coming to an understanding with Russia. But the Government treated Russia with only slightly veiled comment, it dallied and dallied, it declined to make a pact with Poland dependent upon Russian troops being allowed on Polish territory in the case of war, and we have the consequence before us. Hitler's "Fifth Column" in this country served him well. But we shall not be at all surprised if events prove that alliance with Russia proves one of the factors in the collapse of German Fascism.

We do not, of course, lay any claim to being an authority on military matters, but bearing this in mind, it seems to us that even though Russia gave some help to Germany it would not materially affect the final result. Not more than a certain number of men can attack on a given line, and if the war develops into a dogged war of trenches, time is on our side. We can wear down Germany—even though she gets assistance from others. The war may be prolonged, but the resources of the British Empire, with what help is given from outside its borders are far greater than any Germany can command.

In our last issue we said:—

Fascism has driven from Germany some of its best brains in medicine, science, literature and philosophy; and we know from the fate of Spain, after it had driven out the Moors and the Jews, the kind of nemesis that brings to a nation.

We had not long to wait for an illustration of the truth of this. The Hitler gang are appealing to German Jews who are doctors, scientists and technicians to return to Germany, and promising to restore to those who do return, to give them back everything which had been confiscated. Anyone who goes back to Germany on that condition deserves to be banned from human society. German Fascism is fast justifying our description of it as the vilest thing that ever crawled the earth. It does not understand how to live with decency or die with dignity. We hope those highly-placed members of English "Society" who up to the declaration of war spent so much time protecting and apologizing for German Nazism will feel sufficiently ashamed of themselves not to resume their performances when this war is over.

We like to make acknowledgements when even the world's greatest liars drop into the truth, and we believe without question the following official statement by German Army Headquarters:—

Our airmen, armoured-cars and infantry showed achievements which are *incredible*.

One has to be very careful not to let the truth sometimes slip out. On the other hand, what the Germans—and Italians—did at Guernica may make some question their performance in Poland. Besides there is the Spanish War, which, thanks to the non-intervention policy adopted by England and France, gave the German airmen some pretty practice in the machine-gunning of women and children. And a Government that has treated its own people with an almost inconceivable brutality, is not likely to stop at any barbarity where foreigners are concerned.

One of the towns bombed and set on fire by the Germans in Poland is the place known as the "Polish Lourdes," Czestochowa. Thousands of pilgrims have always flocked to it since the "great" day when St. Albert, the Apostle of Poland, in the year 996 "declared he had a vision of Our Lady." In particular, large crowds visited the shrine just before the German invasion. How much good all this devotion could do is shown in the fact that a week later German bombing-planes almost destroyed the entire town. This will not, of course, make the slightest difference to the beliefs of the devout any more than the exposure of a fraudulent spirit medium will stop people consulting him or her in the future.

According to the *Herald* Army Commander von Brauchitsch, the C.-in-C. of the German forces, has issued a Command in the name of the Fuehrer, concluding with the words: "Forward with God for Germany." God's old worry begins again. We English are certain that God is on the British side. But the Germans know better. We imagine that it is only repeating what happened in 1914 when the Rev. C. O. Jones illuminatingly described the

Two volumes of prayer daily ascending (one from each side). They cross each other like shrapnel fired by the opposing armies.

No doubt we English cannot imagine that God listens to any "foreigner" speaking to him. Unless, like Hitler, He has an interpreter always by His side.

Dr. Winnington Ingram, the former Bishop of London, has already been addressing troops in barracks. From the *Telegraph* we learn that he told them:—

War is a terrible thing and the man who has started this one will have something to answer for before High Heaven, I should be sorry to be in his shoes at the Judgment Day.

We know nothing about the courts in High Heaven, but we fancy a merely human court might have some difficulty in fixing responsibility for this War upon one Man. But where even angels could be excused for treading warily there are others who have no such misgivings.

Winchester Cathedral, according to its Dean, is organizing "prayer" with the ruthless efficiency of a war department. Dr. Selwyn insists that everybody should do a "duty" prayer every morning, followed by a prayer of "recollection," with a prayer of "charity" for our enemies thrown in. In addition, the cathedral is having two boxes installed marked "Intercessions," so that people who want special prayers offered can drop them in, and the Dean will do the needful to send them to God. He is also ready to offer up prayers for those on active service, or are wounded, or who fall while on duty. Why he does not install a few genuine Buddhist praying wheels and have done with it, we can't understand. One might as well send up thousands of prayers to the Almighty at the same time, as bothering the Lord with a few at odd times. One turn of the handle and enough duty and other prayers could be wafted up to last for several years. 1,000 prayers at 6d. a turn of the wheel ought to increase the cathedral's revenue in a short space of time out of all bounds. We hand Dr. Selwyn the suggestion free and gratis.

The *Church Times* pays a back-handed compliment to the King of Kings and Lord of Hosts. It says:—

Never were greater demands made on men and women who proclaim their allegiance to Christ the King. He remains the Immortal Pattern of Calm Courage.

As far as the Gospel Christ is concerned, we would prefer to pity rather than blame his evident—let us say—reluctance—to face death, in circumstances which not for a moment compare with the horrors many people are to-day enduring with enviable "Calm Courage." But Jesus could only die—or live, if he lived—as a man. Any kind of God would need singularly little bravery in the presence of a death which an Immortal could never experience. The *Church Times* assures its readers that:—

After the warfare of the world, there will dawn the Peace of God.

For the dead? Or for the survivors? The Peace of God passeth all understanding—and has no date and no definite locality.

Prayer is like Prophecy—it may provide consolation for ignorant and illogical people capable of extreme self-deception. The first words in the issue of *The Guardian* which announced the opening stages of the war are almost a "miracle" of fatuous nonsense:—

Our Prayers have been answered—but not in the way for which we had hoped. . . . In the mysterious providence of God we are not permitted to realize our ideals in any measure without a grim and terrible struggle.

The last sentence—minus the absurd first six words—is sane enough. But why drag in God, Providence, and Prayer? What on earth have they to do with it? Human ideals are in for a "grim and terrible struggle"—and it is man, not God, who will suffer grimly and terribly.

Twenty Five Years Ago

In times of war many people lose their heads. The conditions are so abnormal, things in general are looked at from a point of view so far removed from the customary, our interests are forced so violently into an unusual channel, that a great deal of rash and extravagant language may easily be excused. John Bright most probably had this in his mind when he said that he would as soon lecture a cage of wild animals as preach peace to a people seized with war-fever. Human nature is not really built for war, but for peace—that is in any permanent sense. The strain of warfare is too intense, the emotional tension too great for human nature to stand without being thrown, temporarily, off its normal balance. That is why it does not do to scrutinize too carefully the language of men and women during such a time. Human nature must be finally judged by what it is in its normal rather than in its abnormal phases.

This strain appears to be showing itself in unexpected quarters, and developing in unexpected directions. Some of the religious papers have informed us that with many people there has been a marked increase in the intensity of religious belief. That one may easily believe. A flood of feeling once aroused will expend itself along the line of least resistance, and with many this is most likely to take a religious form. Those of a more reflective and analytical turn of mind are much more likely to find their religious convictions disturbed. But it is inconceivable that religious belief should be created by such a catastrophe as that of the present war. If people fail to find God in times of peace, it does not seem reasonable to suppose that they will find him when the air is full of tales of battle and deeds of bloodshed. Well-balanced intellects do not veer this way or that with every passing phase of national temper.

Fifty Years Ago

Of all the multitudinous sects into which the Christian world is divided, few realize more thoroughly the ideal of the doctrine of Jesus than the Russian sect of Skoptski, i.e., the castrated. No sect, if we except the Mormons, has made greater progress, than this within recent times. It is widespread in some governments as that of Orel, comprising whole villages, and the sect numbers adherents among the wealthy jewellers and goldsmiths of St. Petersburg, Moscow, and other large towns. Indeed, it is said to ramify from Archangel to the Polish frontier.

Every member of this sect is required to mutilate himself. No one can be admitted without this act of self-mortification.

The Freethinker, September 22, 1889

To get a New Subscriber is to make a New Friend

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4
Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

G. WALLACE.—Next week. We agree thoroughly that while we are fighting Fascism abroad we must beware of encouraging its development at home. While the British people consent to all kinds of restrictions on freedom of movement and action during war, they must be equally determined to abolish those restrictions when the war is over. Officialdom of any kind gives up its power unwillingly.

S.L. AND OTHERS.—Pleased you think our "Special" hits the mark. We shall not forget to recur to the topic whenever we feel that events call for a straightforward expression of general Freethought opinion.

T. HEMINGWAY.—Your name has rather a familiar ring to one who is acquainted with the last half century of the Freethought movement. Thanks for your offer. But we hope to make a general statement about the end of this month. The position naturally gives rise to some anxiety, but we are neither dismayed nor expectant of anything happening that cannot be overcome.

"ISHMARLITE".—Sorry we cannot use. Mythology does not lie at the root of religion. It originates in a comparatively sophisticated age, when the religious formulæ in operation are in too plain conflict with existing knowledge and feeling.

H. V. CRECH.—Thanks for news cutting. A capital article.

T. RAWLINSON.—We shall issue a statement at an early date. There is, however, no need for alarm. We do not know what may happen, but we leave alarm until the occasion arises for it, and even then it is easily possible to keep a level head. Some of the papers we expect to disappear during the war will be those that have been subsidized by Fascists in this country, and those that have been part of the German propaganda. It will be too dangerous for them to continue on their old lines at present.

MRS. C. M. REID.—Thanks for address of a likely new reader; paper being sent for four weeks.

To Distributing and Circulating the *Freethinker*.—E. Horrocks, £2.

J. SEIBERT.—Next week. As stated elsewhere, copy must reach us early if it is to go in the next issue. In these days of surprises we cannot afford to leave the make-up of the paper as late as we have done hitherto. This reply applies to others whose letters have reached us too late to be dealt with in this issue.

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

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

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

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

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. Rosetti, 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.

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.

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

Though all men abase them before you in spirit, and all knees bend,
I kneel not, neither adore you, but standing, look to the end.
Swinburne.

SPECIAL

THE wholesale newspaper distributors have decided, owing to war conditions, no longer to take back unsold copies of papers from newsagents. We ask readers to take special note of this fact, and to be sure that their copies are ordered—and delivered.

We also call attention to the fact that this rule, while the war continues, will prevent the opportunity of chance readers making acquaintance with this journal. On this point we wish to ask, very seriously, the aid of our readers. Costs have been going up for some time, and paper soon bids fair to double in price. War conditions have also plunged us into extra expense in many directions, and they must be met. We shall have more to say on this in a week or two.

Meanwhile we wish our readers to help in making the wholesale agents' decision concerning returns. Those who are interested enough might resolve on a special campaign for new subscribers, and those who can afford it might take an extra copy per week to give or send to a likely subscriber. We are in for a hard fight—harder perhaps than in 1914, but we shall pull through. Let us do it as easily as it can be done.

Sugar Plums

Among the early casualties in the war were those papers which declared with all the wisdom of twenty line "leading articles" that there would be no war. Also the astrologers, whose prophecies never ran counter to the papers for which they wrote, who also said that the stars were on the side of peace. Now they will have to re-read their calculations. But that matters little. The kind of brain that can suck up these knavish fooleries will not be disheartened by the failure of the prophets. If they do happen to develop enough intelligence to dismiss one kind of roguish stupidity they will immediately look forward to something of the same kind. The flats hunt for the sharps quite as assiduously as the sharps hunt for the flats.

We had this impressed on us in our very youthful days. In those far away times what was known as the "Purse trick," was very common where crowds assembled. A well-known character at the game was a tall well-built man, one Frank Lowry. (We think we have the name correctly). The "game" consisted in selling a man a purse with three shillings for a shilling, seven and sixpence for a half-crown, three half sovereigns for 10s., and so on. The aim was to sell the series to one man, and then look round for a fresh "Mug." In his purse what was found were halfpennies, pennies and farthings.

One day I came across Frank Lowry selling a naval character with a great deal of gold braid about him, a series of purses. The man bought them, and then went away to gloat over his gains. Finding only fivepence farthing he came back in a temper demanding the return of his money. Lowry tried to get rid of him (Lowry stood over six feet) but for some time without success. Then the man said to the purse-sharper, "You have robbed me!" We can see now Lowry's look of contempt. He replied: "Robbed you, of course I've robbed you. You come to me with enough gold braid about you to buy a battleship, and expect a poor—like me to give you three shillings for a shilling. Of course I've robbed you! What else do you think God made such—fools as you for except to be robbed?" I have never ceased to appreciate the philosophy of that retort. The purse-buyer had had enough, and went away.

We are getting out each week's *Freethinker* under some difficulties, but the paper will appear with its usual regularity in spite of it all. Still, we want to make them as few, and as light as possible. For that reason we wish everyone concerned to note that communications of any kind that are intended for the next issue of the paper *must* reach us not later than the first post on Monday morning. If they can be sent earlier they will be the more certain of publication. Those readers who have had trouble in securing their copies of the paper should write to the office. Other copies will then be sent by post.

We have received an article from Mr. Du Cann, in reply to our criticism of him in the *Freethinker* for September 3 and 10. We regret to have to hold it over until our next issue, but owing to war-time conditions we have to prepare for the press a little earlier than in normal times. Mr. Du Cann's reply will appear in our next number.

The many Freethinkers residing in Southend-on-Sea and district should lose no time in getting in touch with the newly-formed Branch of the N.S.S., which holds meetings on the sea front. Mr. L. Ebury will speak on Saturday and Sunday, 23rd and 24th inst., morning and afternoon, on each day. Unfortunately time for starting was not included in the details sent, but 11 a.m. is most likely for the mornings. The local Secretary is Mr. M. Ross, of 75 Heygate Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, who will be pleased to give information concerning membership, etc.

The religious type of man who sees God's hand in everything, and who approaches problems of present-day urgency with a bombardment of Bible texts and pious imbecilities, has met with a neat and ironical corrective from a correspondent in the Scottish Journal *The Courier and Advertiser* :—

Sir,—It is very comforting to read that after Mr. M'Farlane's explanation there should be less confusion between the innocent and the poisonous use of the term evolution. I would suggest that a copy of his letter be sent to every university where the scientific account of human origins is taught, for it seems such a waste of time studying embryology, geology, and so many other 'ologies when evolution can be understood by reference to a dictionary.

It may be that scientists are pursuing their researches in ignorance of Mr. M'Farlane's explanation, and something ought to be done about it. Could they not be advised before it is too late to abandon their investigations into the age of rocks and concentrate on the fundamentalist's exposition of the Rock of Ages?

A. WHITFORD

1914 and To-day

[It has been suggested that some of the articles which we published at the beginning of the war of 1914 would be applicable to-day. We have adopted the suggestion.]

FOR years, in every State in Europe, the militarists have been proclaiming that the way to keep peace is to prepare for war. To the Pacifist that policy is as sensible as promoting temperance by filling one's house with whisky. But every nation in Europe has listened to the council, and piled up armaments. In times of peace they *have* prepared for war (when else could they have prepared for it?), and the result is that war is here on a scale such as the world has never before seen. In addition, it is the nation that has most sedulously prepared for war during times of peace, the nation in which the ideals of militarism were nearly realized, that is charged with the responsibility for the outbreak. Who then is in the wrong? These huge armies and navies are no guarantee of peace; they are a constant incentive to war; they keep

the idea of war constantly before the minds of the people. Tools are meant for use—otherwise there is no use in having them. Whether our tools be dreadsoughts or pickaxes, ploughshares or rifles, that remains true. Pacifists were never silly enough to say that war was impossible; all they said was that the European nations were going the right way to ensure it.

Now that war is here many are endeavouring to extract some comfort from the situation. The religious press is at it with the usual banality that "Our civilization has merited and needed a purging," the notion being that God has permitted the war for this purpose. A purging of what? It takes a Christian to talk of war, with its brutalities and savageries, its creation and perpetuation of evil methods as God's way of purifying civilization. Let there be no mistake about one thing. However inevitable war may be it purges a nation of nothing that is bad. It creates nothing that is good. The virtues it utilizes are those that are created in civil life. The proof of this is that never in the history of the world has a nation been able to perpetuate itself by militarism. The decency and discipline of an army lasts only so long as there is a civil population to feed it with fresh blood. Militarism is hopelessly parasitic.

Some, while fully endorsing the evils of war, prophesy good from the conflict. It is assumed that it will make the peoples of Europe so disgusted and horrified with the consequences of war that steps will be taken to prevent its repetition. I wish I could agree with them; and hope that they are right and I am wrong. But I know that every war has left its legacy of suffering and horror. Over and over again the Continent has heard the clash of arms and watched the progress of ravaging armies. What effect has it ever had in preventing future wars? Does it make nations less ready to engage in fresh wars? People can get habituated to conditions no matter how horrible. It is, indeed, one of the complaints of the militarists that owing to the absence of war the people are getting soft and squeamish and need a war to brace them up.

Such prophecies take no account of all that war leaves in its track, and which acts as factors that make for fresh conflicts. One need go no farther back than the Franco-German War for proof of this. How much did the horrors of that campaign do to foster peace between France and Germany? It filled one with arrogance, it left the other with an open wound, and caused each to hate the other with intensified bitterness. And if, and when, the German-Austrian forces are defeated there will still remain on the one side the influence of the triumphant military element, and on the other hatred for defeat experienced. The moral will be drawn again, as it has been drawn before, that it is every nation's duty so to arm that it has nothing to fear from others. It is almost certain that the rebuilding of shattered armies and navies will receive first attention when the war is over.

Who is to say there shall be no more wars—Is it England? Is it Russia? Is it France? Is it the three combined? Will any of these trust each other sufficiently to depute the task to any one? Is Russia and France and England in alliance because of their mutual love, or because of their mutual enmity to others? Was it love of Russia or hatred of Germany that drove France into an alliance with the Czar? And with Germany eliminated what is there that can unite the autocracy of the Czar with the Republic of France?

If not one nation will the three combine to secure international peace? That is to assume that the aims of these countries are so mutually reconcilable that

they can pursue them without fear of conflict. As the industrializing of Russia proceeds is it not certain there will be increased opportunities for conflict? Is it quite beyond the bounds of possibility that we may not see an Anglo-French-German alliance against Russia to play the part that Austria once played against the Turks?

An international agreement that would secure permanent peace is a laudable ideal, but how is it going to be secured? England will seek control of the seas. It suits us and we say it is necessary to our existence. Very good; but can we expect every other country to submit to this ownership of the world's highway? This fact alone will drive other nations along the old line of offensive and defensive alliances, the fruits of which we are reaping in the present war. Of course, it may be said that it is to everybody's interest that war should be prevented in the future. Quite so; but it is never to anyone's real interest to go to war. Even to win is to lose. The truth is that nations do not go to war because it (commercially) pays them, but because of misdirected ambitions and mistaken ideals; in other words, because of lack of intelligence and defective civilization.

How wrongly the lessons of the war are being read, and will be read, may be seen in the newspaper talk about "blotting Germany out," or "wiping Germany off the map." These are the greatest stupidities of all. If by "blotting out Germany" is meant the destruction of the German Navy and the defeat of the German Army, that may be done, and looks like being done—unless our press censorship is keeping us in the dark. But Germany remains, the German people remain, German ambitions remain, and there will also remain the memory of a crushing defeat. And that man is a lunatic, blind alike to the lessons of history and the facts of human nature, who imagines that a nation of seventy millions can be "blotted out." All the power of Russia has not been able to crush the sentiment of nationality in Finland. All the power of Russia, Germany, and Austria has not been able to crush out the sentiment of nationality in Poland. After four centuries, England, in spite of all it could do, finds the sentiment of Irish nationality as active as ever. Short of an absolute, a complete massacre, a nation of seventy millions cannot be "blotted out."

They remain; their ideals and ambitions, and their way of looking at life, must always be reckoned with. Armaments will go on; of that I feel assured, although I should be only too pleased to find myself mistaken. Germany may not realize its ambitions by the present war; but ambitions are not killed by being frustrated—they are only killed when they are replaced by ambitions of another kind. Militarism will awaken to none of its blunders, and diplomacy will continue creating danger centres all over Europe, as Germany scattered mines in the North Sea, and will then profess pained surprise when trouble arises. On the other hand, there should result from the war an increase in the number of men and women in every country who see the futility of war, of its utter powerlessness to solve or settle any problem, of its complete uselessness as an agent of civilization. That will be the only item on the credit side of the catastrophe.

CHAPMAN COHEN

(Reprinted from *Freethinker*, August, 1914)

Cuba's Strange Story

THE West Indian island of Cuba, discovered by Columbus in the course of his maiden voyage in 1492, possesses an extraordinarily turbulent history. This is also true of almost all the Spanish conquests in the Western Hemisphere. But Cuba's close connexion with the mainland of America lent it an additional importance in consequence of its commercial intercourse with neighbouring lands.

Havana, Cuba's chief city successfully resisted the great navigator, Drake and, at a later time, Penn and Venables, failed to take it. In 1760, however, its forts were stormed and Britain occupied Havana until the end of the Seven Years' War. The yoke of Spain in Cuba was never light, but Iberian misgovernment seems to have occasioned no serious outbreak until the nineteenth century, when a bitter conflict which raged for thirty years (1868-1898) devastated the island. Then, as a sequel to the Spanish American War, a semi-independent Republic was established which was continually distracted by violence and slaughter, slightly alleviated by the counsel and intervention of the United States.

When Napoleon invaded European Spain in 1808, the Cuban authorities declared their loyalty to the Spanish throne. Their allegiance to Ferdinand VII. they maintained, although nearly every other Spanish settlement which then adhered to its mother-country, subsequently proclaimed its independence. The Cubans were naturally affected by the founding of so many Latin Republics in Spanish America, as well as by the revolution which occurred in 1820 in Spain itself, yet they displayed no desire for independence.

The repressive system in vogue in the sixteenth century was continued into the nineteenth. No speculative belief was permitted save that of rigid Roman Catholicism, while immigration and foreign trade were prohibited. In his invaluable survey: *Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, 1938), Mr. F. A. Fitzpatrick notes that "this last remnant of the Spanish Indies, Cuba and Porto Rico, still suffered absolute and arrogant government by Spanish officials; excessive, ill-regulated and irritating taxation; exclusion of Cubans from lucrative or powerful offices; corruption and extortion by judges, tax-gatherers and all officials from Captain General downwards with all (with occasional exceptions) seeking to enrich themselves quickly; supercilious arrogance towards Creoles." Instead of lightening public burdens, absolute authority was conferred on the Governor of the island by the Spanish Crown, a despotic system maintained for fifty years.

At last, in 1834, Tacon, an energetic and upright Captain General was appointed who did much to cleanse the cesspools and sweep away the vice and maladministration that had so long disgraced Cuba. Tacon constructed thoroughfares, erected municipal buildings and contrived various other improvements. But his vigorous proceedings disconcerted the indolent and reactionary elements, while his peremptory deportation of Cubans suspected of seditious inclinations strengthened those who favoured independence.

Tacon's rule was succeeded by the restoration of the old evil system. The wealthier classes were content to derive large profits from the slave trade; to safeguard the submission of the coloured population essential to the cultivation of slave-grown sugar. A treaty with Great Britain for the liberation of the slaves was signed in 1820, but the revolting traffic persisted into the 'sixties and even later, the Captain General of Cuba "receiving a fee from the importers of every African slave landed."

Every deathbed is the fifth act of a tragedy.—*Carlyle*.

Is the open mouth of ignorant wonder the only entrance to Paradise?—*Ingersoll*.

American statesmen occasionally cast a covetous eye on Cuba, and in 1850-1, Lopez, an official who had been deprived of position and pay as a result of political disturbance in Madrid, engineered a conspiracy against Spanish ascendancy in the island. He was soon a refugee in the United States, but with the support of American and other sympathizers he twice attempted to annex Cuba. There his expedition was coldly received. Lopez was arrested and he, and many of his adherents were executed. The Spanish authorities were gravely concerned by the encouragement the insurgents had received in the United States, while American traders were exasperated by the impediments to their commerce which the Cuban port-officials maintained.

So early as the 'fifties, American politicians contemplated the annexation of Cuba, either by purchase, favour or threats. Still, President Buchanan's openly avowed ambition to "add Cuba to the Union" was not approved by Congress, and the election of 1860 proved adverse to the proposal. Spain was justly alarmed by the imperialistic utterances of public men in the States, and appealed to France and England for assistance.

Lord Palmerston strongly advised Spain to restore Cuban loyalty by the introduction of generous reforms and to counteract the desire of the Southern American slave States for the acquisition of Cuba by setting their own slaves free. With marked prescience, Palmerston cautioned Spain of the danger attending armed conflict with America and intimated that Cuba and the Philippine Islands were practically defenceless. But the inveterate stubbornness of Spain soon precipitated rebellion.

A Creole patrician, Céspedes, having manumitted his slaves, earnestly advised his compatriots to rally to the independent standard in 1868. His adherents met with a reverse, but at the close of the year thousands of Cubans revolted, and a ten years' conflict commenced. A constitution was drafted with Céspedes as President, supported by a Cabinet and Parliament. After mediation had been rejected, the United States remained neutral despite serious trading losses and the destruction of American property. Yet, although volunteers were prevented from rendering aid to the rebels no embargo was placed on the export of armaments, and some spirited American adventurers reached Cuba. A critical moment occurred in 1873, when the Spaniards seized a ship flying the Stars and Stripes and shot fifty-two of its crew, and American anger was only appeased when the Spanish authorities apologized, compensated the dead sailors' families and released the surviving members of the ship's company.

The civil war was accompanied by the customary horrors of slaughter, brigandage, starvation and disease. The most atrocious methods were employed to suppress the insurrection and the insurgents' reprisals included the burning of the crops, sugar factories and abodes of the Government's supporters. But the liberators' cause was sadly weakened by personal animosities. Céspedes was superseded and soon met his death when the Spanish troops raided the village to which he had retired. His successor, Estrada Palma lived to become the first President of the later Cuban Republic.

Agremonte proved a very capable insurgent commander, but the popular idol was Maximo Gomez, who, nevertheless, suffered defeat in 1875. Hostilities continued for three years longer, but the insurgent commanders were at bitter variance, and desertions grew from day to day. In 1878, Campos, a persuasive Captain General induced the rebel remnant to accept a peace pact. According to official estimates the Spanish losses totalled 140,000, mainly from dis-

case, while insurgent casualties exceeded 40,000. A minor negro uprising in 1879 was soon suppressed, but it hastened the abolition of slavery, seventy years later.

The ameliorative measures which the Spaniards promised failed to appear. Discontent increased and the heavy debt incurred by the civil commotion strained the resources of the Cubans. Pronounced differences of opinion concerning the future administration of the island prevailed, but those who favoured complete independence formed the majority. José Martí, the anniversary of whose birth is still celebrated as a public holiday, advocated autonomy, and was sentenced to imprisonment and exile. Unfortunately he was fatally wounded in a skirmish at the opening of the War of Independence in 1895. The period was propitious for insurgency for a deep depression had set in after a long spell of prosperity in the sugar industry, Cuba's staple production. Poverty and privation encouraged recruits for the rebel forces, and in the eastern districts the insurgents were able to improvise an independent Government and defy the Spanish authorities.

Terrible atrocities disgraced the conflict, and the patriots ruthlessly destroyed everything likely to assist their adversaries. General Weyler was equally relentless, and he drove the insurgent peasantry into concentration camps, where the rations officially assigned for their sustenance were so meagre that the prisoners starved. In 1897, Weyler appeared on the point of victory, despite the undaunted resistance of his foes when he was superseded by the more clement and conciliatory General Blanco. This improvement may be fairly ascribed to American indignation which induced President Cleveland to hint at intervention. Later, in 1898, the *Maine*, an American warship exploded in Havana Harbour with a loss of nearly 300 lives. Whatever the cause of this calamity, it was attributed in the States to Spanish malevolence and war became inevitable.

With the destruction of the Spanish navy Porto Rico became an American dependency. But the States refused the annexation of Cuba, although Spain herself recommended it as the best safeguard for the lives and possessions of Spanish and other residents in the island. A three years' American administration, however, did much to repair the ravages of war and its remarkable efficiency astounded the so long mis-governed Cubans. The Civil Services were reformed and the Cuban University was converted from a pretentious sham into a real centre of enlightenment. The hungry natives were clothed and fed, and a pest-ridden population supplied with sanitary appliances. Yellow fever, almost ubiquitous in tropical America was nearly stamped out by Leonard Wood. That the mosquito is the carrier of the infection was demonstrated by American science, and Dr. Lazear who made himself the subject of experiment, succumbed to the disease. Previously a pernicious centre of infection for adjoining territories, Havana became a healthy city.

In 1902 a President of the Cuban Republic, Estrada Palma was elected, but discord soon returned and Charles Magoon ruled the island as a result of American intervention. His two years' Governorship was timely for the Cuban officials had shamefully neglected sanitation and yellow fever reappeared. But the succeeding national Government proved more efficient, and the malady was mastered. Still, an independent Cuba under the Presidency of Gomez was again distracted, and outside authority was necessary to quell a black insurrection. The Cuban politicians proved venal, and disturbances were seldom absent.

There was greater tranquillity during the World War and the allied countries benefited from the

enormous output of Cuban sugar, from which immense fortunes were made. This prosperous experience, however, led to an orgy of extravagance and reckless speculation. In 1921 the slump supervened and the crash occurred, leaving widespread ruin in its train. Those apparently opulent were reduced to poverty; the banks failed and public credit collapsed.

Civil strife seemed inevitable. Retrenchment was tried, but the authorities soon reverted to speculation. In 1925 Machado was hailed as a redeemer, but his despotism soon became a minor imitation of the autocracies of Hitler and Mussolini. Ultimately, even Machado's well-paid army mutinied, and he only escaped popular vengeance by flight. His palace was plundered and his spies and informers were torn to pieces by infuriated mobs.

Then, six Presidents successively rose and fell in three years. Disastrous strikes, riots, arson and martial law were the order of the day. It was sanguinely assumed that Cuba had regained normality in 1936. The Church and State have been separated and religious liberty is recognized. Under the fairly benevolent military dictatorship of Balista a semblance of order has prevailed. Some think the improvement permanent, but there appears little prospect of any immediate paradise in an island rich both in beauty and productive power.

T. F. PALMER

Some Bible Studies

V.

It must be very disconcerting indeed for all believing Jews and Christians to find in the Ras Shamra Tablets the god El—plainly a mythical deity of the people who were living in Canaan, and some of the surrounding country, before the invasion of the Israelites. Not only that, but the word *Elhm* is found in two tablets, and there can be no doubt that this is the God of the Jews and the Bible, "Elohim." It is, of course, a plural word. Dr. Jack, in his *Ras Shamra Tablets* says:—

Some scholars, such as Dussaud, regard the—*hm* as the third person plural pronominal suffix, and would translate "their God" (namely, *Suamuna*, the Cassite deity, whose name immediately follows the *Elhm*). But there is a strong probability that we have here the Divine name Elohim, for the rendering "their god" does not satisfy the sense in all the cases.

It would not be unfair to Dr. Jack to say that were he not a Doctor of Divinity, he would not have written the word "probability" here. He would have said that it was a fact that in the word *Elhm* we have the genuine original of the god who has been accepted by so great a part of the civilized world as the Creator of the Universe instead of being, as should now be apparent, merely one of the thousand tribal deities whose home was in Asia Minor.

El was also called "El the Bull" just as, says Mr. Gaster in his monograph *The Ras Shamra Tablets*, Balaam characterized him in Numbers xxiii. 22—"El who brought Israel out of Egypt hath the towering horns of a wild ox." This is not the translation of the Authorized Version, but the literal translation from the Hebrew—as is admitted in the footnotes to the Variorum Bible. The Hebrew word *Reem* is translated as "unicorn" in the Authorized Version, and Dr. Young says that is how the Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate rendered it. Gesenius, the great

Hebrew lexicographer, gives "buffalo." It is obvious that this close connexion of El, the God of the Jews, with the bull gods of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia, as well as with Taurus in the signs of the Zodiac, was not at all to the liking of the translators of the Bible.

In addition to the male gods El and Baal—and their sons—*The Ras Shamra Tablets* mention a number of goddesses, the Kassite Shumalia, the Mitannian Sauskas, Asherat, Anat, and Astarte. Asherat is the Asherah of the Old Testament, where she is associated with Baal, the passages being undoubtedly connected with phallic worship. Anat, says Mr. Gaster, "is a Semitic Artemis. She is always called the 'Virgin,' and she is a goddess of War." Whether Anat was really a virgin—the claim made for Mary, in spite of the fact that she had a son, and called Joseph his father—is a problem Christians will not care to discuss. The presence of other virgin goddesses in the field has always been a sore-point with the followers of Jesus.

In one of the tablets there is mentioned a god called Yo-Elat, which has led to a discussion as to whether he is the original Jehovah—or rather Yahveh or Yahweh. Sir Charles Marston wants to give the impression that "Jehovah" is mentioned in the tablets to prove how they substantiate his claim that the Bible is true. The Tablet is broken at this point; so, he says, "Elat may begin another sentence and not link up Yah (or Yo); or on the other hand it may actually be Yah-Elim, in other words Jehovah-Elohim." That is how the case for the truth of the Bible can be so easily made up. As a matter of fact, if in Yo-Elat we really have Jehovah-Elohim, the identity of the Christian Creator of the world with a petty pagan deity, who only existed in the minds of some ignorant and credulous ancient priests, is completely made out. Mr. Gaster, who quite understands this—and other implications—says, "It is scarcely correct at once to jump to the conclusion that Jehovah is mentioned on the Ras Shamra Tablets." He himself thinks that Yo-Elat "represents one of those bisexual composite deities like Malik-Ashtart or Eshmun-Ashtart of the Phœnician inscriptions, in which an early god Yo has been fused with the goddess Elat."

In the accounts of the Temple where these gods and goddesses were worshipped the resemblance to the worship in the Jewish temples is remarkable. The pagan priest was even called "Kohen"—the title given in the Bible, says Sir Charles Marston, to Melchizedek and Jethro. The ritual and the sacrifices have many points of contact with those of the Israelites, many of the words used to denote the ceremonies having been adopted bodily into Judaism. For example—one of many—take the case of the Ras Shamra Temple altar. Mr. Gaster says:—

On this object gifts to the gods were placed, so that it must have been some kind of table-stone. . . . I venture to identify it with the cult-stone of South Arabian and pre-Islamic religion. This stone . . . was also employed as a kind of altar, and oaths were sworn beside it . . . and a circumambulatory dance, called the tawwaf, was performed around it. There is a Jewish analogy to this in the sevenfold circumambulation of the altar at the autumn harvest-festival, a custom surviving in the Synagogue service of to-day. The word "ed" means "witness" and the stone was so called because it was used in the swearing of oaths, and also perhaps because it witnessed to the covenant between God and the people. You will remember that when Israel crossed the Jordan, Joshua set up a stone which he called in Hebrew, an edah or "stone of witness." I suggest that what Joshua set up was a cultic stone like the "ed" at Ras Shamra.

Perhaps it has not occurred to Mr. Gaster that what really happened was not that Joshua set up a stone at all, but that, following the practice of the native inhabitants of Palestine, the writers who eventually wrote up the exploits of Joshua, said he set up a stone, and they gave it a name which is based on that which it already had. Sir Charles Marston, whose Job is to prove that the Bible is true, has a very simple way of settling this point. He says:—

Ark of the Covenant: There is an allusion in the Ras Shamra tablets to a sacred object called "Ed" round which the women worshippers danced. This may be a reference to the ark of the Covenant since the word for "Covenant" is "Eduth."

If this statement is compared with that of Mr. Gaster, it will be seen how great is the value of *The Bible is True*, in which work Sir Charles gives ten instances of the ritual and ceremonies of the Israelites corresponding to those of the people of the tablets. And his simple way of settling the priority in this matter is quite unique. It appears that, he says, "the authors of this pagan ritual, ceremonial, and other tablets, may have imitated quite a good deal of the ritual and sacrifices instituted by Moses; and copied as well earlier rituals such as are used by Abraham, by Melchizedek of Salem, and probably also by Jethro, the priest of Midian."

How the pagan priests of Ras Shamra managed to get hold of the details of these rituals and ceremonies, we are not told. But it may have happened, says Sir Charles; which, of course, settles it. The miracles of the Bible may have happened because the Bible says so. So may the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection; and in case this may is not quite strong enough we can add that the Roman Church also says that these events "must" have happened; so the Bible "must" be true.

All the same Sir Charles Marston forgets sometimes later what he insists upon earlier; for he admits, after all, that "the Bible itself supplies evidence of the earlier Semitic ritual in existence long before Moses," and he quotes the code of laws attributed to Hammurabi, "promulgated in the days of Abraham," which "bears resemblance to the Mosaic code of laws." Or in other words, after claiming priority to Moses for the "code of laws" he has to admit that there was a similar code before Moses. And even he may come to the conclusion that the Israelites—whether they were, as I believe, the original inhabitants of Canaan, or whether they were actually the descendants of Abraham (whose father Terah is mentioned in the tablets as a moon-god)—invading and conquering the country, produced in the Bible not a revelation from God, but a much-edited version of the myths and legends of Canaan and the surrounding districts at a date somewhere about that given to Ezra; and that this Bible was very much later "translated" into a made-up language called Hebrew, by priests which was given the character of "holy" so that they themselves should always be regarded as "sacred," and in communion with "God."

No one indeed can read the accounts we have of the Ras Shamra Tablets without seeing that in them we have contemporary evidence of the wholesale "lifting" by the Israelites of pagan customs, rituals, ceremonies, myths, and legends, which dominate the Bible from the people living in and surrounding Canaan.

H. CUTNER

Truth is higher than politeness.—Renan.

Correspondence

CHRISTADELPHIANS AND WAR

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—In the *Freethinker*, September 3, Mr. G. Bedborough, I am afraid gives a wrong impression, that Christadelphians are against war. Their strong point is prophecy and are looking for the appearance of Jesus Christ not before God's plan is fulfilled by the Armageddon.

They certainly object to take active part in war, preferring to look on whilst their God does the fighting.

I cannot see the logic in Christadelphianism pretending to be the friends of peace when they declare their God will avenge his own elect by smiting the nations and rule them with a rod of iron.

ROBT. SPEIRS

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 BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. White Stone Pond, Hampstead: 11.30. Parliament Hill Fields, 3.30, Messrs. G. W. Fraser and J. L. Lewis will speak at these meetings.

COUNTRY

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BURNLEY MARKET: 6.15, Sunday, Mr. J. Clayton.

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