

THE FREETHINKER

Founded 1881

Editor: CHAPMAN COHEN

Vol. LXX.—No. 40

[REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL
POST OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER]

Price Threepence

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

Canterbury and the Bible

THE recent pronouncement by the Archbishop of Canterbury that the Virgin Birth is an historical fact while the Assumption of Mary cannot be because it is not in the Bible, should again draw attention to the importance still attached to the Bible as a "revelation" from God or as his own Precious Word by the heads of the Church and their followers.

It is almost always concluded by a good many Rationalists—especially those who never do any proselytising—that the Bible is no longer believed in by the mass of people. The contrary is nearer the truth. Even those who never read it, and could hardly tell you the names of a dozen of its books, would accept any oath pronounced upon it, or would be ready to vote prison for anybody found guilty of "blasphemy." One may be allowed now and then to poke a little fun at Noah and his Ark—so long as it is innocent and clean fun—but any jibe at the person of "our Saviour" is quite another matter. In any case, fun or no fun, Noah and his Ark stand for the strictest historical truth by both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope, and they would no more give them up than they would give up the twelve Apostles.

It would prove interesting to learn what some of the Archbishop's more erudite brothers in Christ have to say of his distinction between the Assumption and the Virgin Birth. The *Church Times*, which is the organ of the more credulous type of Anglo-Catholics, is so incensed at any denial of Mary's virginity that it even refused to give the name of Dr. Wright (who called forth Dr. Fisher's angry disclaimer). He is referred to as "a clergyman of no particular distinction," and the "emphatic endorsement" of the Archbishop made by the World's Evangelical Alliance is heartily "welcomed." This body averred that "there is no textual evidence whatever which compels the abandonment of the historical accuracy of the accounts of the birth of Jesus recorded in St. Matthew's and St. Luke's gospels." Of course; every word in God's Revelation must be true. Every comma as well. Even though the Revised Version differs in a thousand places from the Authorised Version, and even though any number of texts have been altered, the Council of the W.E.A. would insist that both accounts were true—that it would be better to swallow both with faith than to risk Hell by rejecting one.

Not many people read that great Church Father, Tertullian, these days. Christian writers love to quote all the Church Fathers when they can, if only to show the extent of their scholarship; and they are taken on trust almost with the same childlike belief that the Bible is taken on trust. But any book on Christian apologetics will give you crowds of quotations from both Tertullian and Irenaeus.

Very few of our Christian writers, however, appear to have read either of them—what they do is to quote from each other, so to speak, and they hope it will not be

detected. Irenaeus, for example, is the first writer who mentions, about the year 180 A.D., the Four Gospels by name. There is no record, whatever, that before then they were known either by their present names or in the form we have them. This point is rarely stressed by Christian apologists—perhaps because they don't know it. Nor is the point Irenaeus makes that Jesus was not crucified under Pontius Pilate but died an old man, presumably in his bed. Even our reverent Rationalists do not like this quotation, for to give up the Crucifixion is tantamount to denying the historicity of Jesus, a horrible piece of ignorance from their point of view.

Tertullian is no less disconcerting to the fervent believer. In his *Adv. Marcion* he says, "Of the apostles, John and Matthew, and apostolic men, Luke and Mark, these all start with the same principles of the faith . . . how that He was born of the Virgin, and came to fulfil the law and the prophets." Of course, Mark and John never mention the Virgin Birth, so it must be either that Tertullian was not telling the truth, or that the Gospels he had before him were not altogether what we have before us. In any case, one eminent Church Father flatly contradicts God's Word, and the other is—even at the expense of being called a liar—*plus royaliste que le roi*.

Whether Tertullian, together with Dr. Fisher and the Pope really believe that Jesus came to fulfil the law and the prophets it is impossible for me to say. But the Catholic Encyclopedia (very surprisingly!) throws completely overboard one of the prophets, and it would be safe to assume that not many Catholics know this, and certainly fewer non-Catholics. Here is the quotation: "Modern theology does not grant that Isaiah vii, 14, contains a real prophecy fulfilled in the virgin birth of Christ; it must maintain, therefore, that St. Matthew misunderstood the passage when he said: 'Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, etc.'" (C.E., xv, 451). The picture thus given of the saintly "publican" Matthew misunderstanding Holy Writ must be heartbreaking to all true Protestants who here include—though they hate the word—all Anglo-Catholics. And if one gives up the prophecy in Isaiah—ridiculed throughout the ages by Jews—where are we to stop? The World's Evangelical Alliance have settled the problem—they hope—for they insist that, on the authority of the "whole" scriptures, "our Lord was miraculously born of a Virgin." It is a pity that the W.E.A. cannot hear the contemptuous laughter of most married women when a (or the) Virgin Birth is mentioned to them.

Pagan history is, of course, full of all kinds of virgin births—not necessarily like that of Christ in details but all of the same kith and kin. St. Augustine, for example, never questioned the founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus nor their virgin birth by the God Mars, and their nursing by a she-wolf. Rhea, their mother, was a vestal virgin. But to deal with all the virgin births, more or

less similar to that of "our Lord," would require a thick volume.

The truth is that stories of Gods toying with virgins were commonplaces of Eastern mythology varying only because they were born in different countries and in different centuries. They were based, no doubt, on all kinds of myths about the Virgo of the Zodiac, and centuries before the Christian era centred around Isis and her son Horus. Mary was the Queen of Heaven and the Mother of God because Isis was, and for no other reason. Everything known about Mary (and it is precious little) is myth and fable. Jesus almost treats her with contempt, and to get to know her more intimately one must go to the Apocryphal Gospels — which would have been thoroughly believed in by Dr. Fisher if only they had found a place in the "canon."

The declaration by the Archbishop of Canterbury surely forms a great lesson for Freethinkers. It is that it is a great mistake to imagine that "Bible-banging" is altogether obsolete, and that we can now give up attacks on the Bible as a sheer waste of time. The supposed reason for this is that most people have already given up belief in "revelation" and treat the Bible as any secular work. This is a gross mistake.

The Bible is still a fetish book. It is still used in our courts of law as something supremely holy. It is so taught in all State schools and children mouth the "Lord's Prayer" on every possible occasion with the utmost reverence. Even though it is sheer gibberish to them—and to most of us—it is still "holy."

So long as our Archbishops can refer to such an incredible story as the Virgin Birth as an historical fact, so long must Freethought wage war on the Bible.

H. CUTNER.

IS PSYCHO-ANALYSIS A DELUSION ?

ON October 2 of last year there appeared an article in *The Freethinker* under the above title, written by a person signing himself "H.E." This purported to be a criticism of a book of mine which had just been published by the Pioneer Press—*Psycho-Analysis: A Modern Delusion*. At that time I was seriously ill and unable to reply, and it is only recently that I have recovered sufficiently to perform that task. I feel that, even at this late date, a reply is called for, if only to clear away some of the misunderstanding that may have been occasioned by my silence.

"H.E." says that "from the beginning the title of the book does not help to put one on good terms with the author." Here he is speaking for himself and other psycho-analysts, who are never on good terms with anyone who questions their pretensions. I should have been greatly disappointed if it had been otherwise. He then quotes the opening sentence of Chapter II: "The first thing that strikes us when we come to consider the subject of consciousness is the relatively small and unimportant part which it plays in human behaviour as a whole." I have made it quite clear in the text that the unconscious behaviour referred to occurs while we are awake. In fact, I have definitely referred it to the period "from getting up in the morning to retiring at night" (p. 12), and yet, "H.E.", commenting on the passage which he quotes, says: "To which one can give the obvious reply that the most important things in one's life are *not* done in one's sleep." Such a reply may be obvious to a psycho-analyst, but it is certainly far from obvious to anyone else.

"The argument from 'secondary automatic actions' he says, "quite misses the point: habitual actions are unconsciously, i.e., mechanically performed, but anything new, anything requiring a decision or a deliberate adjustment needs the intervention of conscious mentation." Anyone reading this who had not read the book would think "H.E." was opposing some argument of mine, which is obviously the impression he wishes to create. But far from opposing, his remarks are merely a confirmation of what I myself have already said. True he slightly alters the wording, but I defy anyone to find a fundamental distinction between his: "habitual actions are unconsciously performed, but anything new, anything requiring a decision or a deliberate adjustment needs the intervention of conscious mentation," and my: "Consciousness disappears in proportion to the fixity of response, and is manifested only in the case of imperfect adjustments, or when entirely new adjustments are in the process of being formed." (p. 12.)

"H.E." says that my explanation in Chapter VII of psycho-analytic cures as the result of suggestion leaves me open to the question of what is suggestion in mechanistic terms. All I can do here is to refer him to page 119 commencing: "The results of suggestion are often so remarkable that to many no other explanation seems feasible than . . . that they must be due to the power which the mind has over the body. . . As we have rejected the conception of the mind as an entity, it is essential that some other explanation should be sought." On this and the following four pages I have given a mechanistic explanation sufficient to satisfy anyone but a psycho-analyst.

"H.E." next refers to my "absurd equation of the methods of hypnotic suggestion and faith-healing with psycho-analysis"; and says: "The least acquaintance with analytic methods would show how diametrically opposed the techniques are." I should be pleased if "H.E." would point out any passage in which the absurd equation he refers to has been made. In fact, I have myself emphasised the difference in the methods, not only between psycho-analysis and other faith-healing devices, but among them all. (pp. 115-116). If there has been any equation it has been between the results and not the methods by which the results have been brought about.

"H.E." says that the plea for morality comes strangely from a mechanist, and asks: "where in the brain does this higher morality reside?" I should have preferred the term "materialist" to "mechanist," but apparently "H.E." considers it would not have been so effective. What does "H.E." imagine "morality" to be? He seems to imagine it to be a thing, an entity, otherwise he would not have asked where it resided. He evidently fails to realise that morality is an abstract term, used to describe the various relations subsisting among human beings. Apparently "H.E." has not yet got beyond the stage of treating an abstraction as a metaphysical entity governing the phenomena it was invented to describe. As even a "mechanist" has to live among human beings it is not so strange that he should seek to make the relationship agreeable.

Next "H.E." asks: "What of purposive motivation? How does that derive from the nerve cell structure?" "H.E." has apparently forgotten what he wrote in the first paragraph of his criticism. There he says: "Was it not Freud himself who looked forward to a psychology based on physiology?" When such a psychology matures H.E. will have the answer to his question. Whether he will welcome it or not is another matter. With all due

humility I should like to state that the "truculent and ill-advised" book which he criticises is an attempt to bring such a psychology about.

Then I am told that the attempt to bring in Hadfield, who, says "H.E.", is not a psycho-analyst in the strict sense of the word, is very misjudged. Hadfield is a practising psycho-analyst and, if he is not a psycho-analyst in the strict sense of the word, I should like "H.E." to tell me who is. He quotes Dalbiez with approval, yet when I quote Dalbiez I am informed by another critic that this is not permissible, as Dalbiez is a Catholic! I have also been informed that it is not permissible to quote Leslie Weatherhead because he is a Methodist, and I should not be in the least surprised if my citation of the views of some other psycho-analyst should be objected to because he has red hair, or walks with a limp.

Finally, "H.E." states that the most effective reply are the dozens of previously hopeless patients cured by analytic psychotherapy who are infinitely grateful to Freud for his pioneering work in this field. This reply might have been relevant if I had not myself already admitted that cures have followed psycho-analytic treatment, and that, in many cases, such treatment has been instrumental in bringing the cures about. (p. 111.)

"H.E." complains of a dogmatic aggressiveness which runs right through the book, but, I ask, how can one deal otherwise with a subject which adopts the "heads I win, tails you lose" attitude of psycho-analysis? An attitude which makes rational criticism so difficult and where the psycho-analyst himself is concerned, ineffective. When the psycho-analyst does occasionally stoop to discussion with one of the uninitiated we usually find that his arguments amount to little if, as in the criticism under review, we exclude that part which is devoted to disproving statements that have not been made.

FRANK KENYON.

MYTHICAL HISTORY AND HISTORICAL MYTH

I HOPE my pertinent criticism is not taken as personal, but logic, the so-called science of reasoning, is said to be impersonal. Mr. Cutner says Christianity is sun worship with phallic elements grafted upon it. But surely, in sun worship, the sun is a fertility agent and the phallic element is indispensable to solar myth. With such illogicality the tactic of demanding historic accuracy and expecting to get away with the vagary of myth is the simplest form of dialectic; typified in the Socratic searching questions and Plato's myth of the cave and the world of shadows. Truly does Mr. Cutner say it is academic. But the logic of the question of the historicity of Jesus confuses the problem of Christianity. The dialectic of modern theology is far more subtle.

To assert the non-existence of God, that God is nothing, is to say one is arguing about nothing; so also, the non-existence of Jesus, either as God or man. To assert Jesus as a man might be to deny his divinity, but to say Jesus was a God involves the reasonableness of the belief in God, and whether Jesus was or was not historical, the historicity of Christianity is indubitable. But history is highly debatable and involves questions as to the nature of, as well as the interpretation of, evidence. A mythical element lingers in history, and myth, like history, is also a matter of evidence, and its credibility or reasonableness in interpretation. To Kierkegaard, it was enough that someone said it, but Arnold Toynbee has

argued a mythological interpretation of history, and both were Christians.

To assert myth is to find problems. If Christianity began in myth it cannot only accept it but even assert a mythological interpretation, and find plenty of precedent for it. But the Christian is less concerned with the History or Myth controversy than the rationalist, and the question of reasonableness involves consideration of the logic of this controversy; with both deductive and inductive reasoning. In contrast to the deductive method typical of doctrine and literary criticism, the mythicist uses the inductive method of comparative religion, and as with the typical confusion in logic of deduction and induction, it shows logical confusion leading to paradoxical contradictions in psychological problems, confused in dialectical antagonisms in personal feeling.

Dialectic contradiction is fashionable nowadays, and the idea that there must have been someone is typical of deductive method. If a Christian asserts a God-man or man-god, he is logically consistent with documentary evidence, with historical contradictions and paradoxical doctrines; such as, salvation by Grace or by one's own efforts; and the resurrection of the body or a spiritual resurrection in a mystical re-birth of the Old Adam. And with the Church as the Bride of the Lamb and the Body of Christ, it not only asserts myth, but in analogy stretched to allegory. Further, there is definite connection in symbolism with ritual and mystery play in the drama of the tragedy of the divine scapegoat. The humanistic analogue in rhetorical exaggeration and allegory is intimately personal.

With pagan and pre-Christian beliefs and customs it also involves a natural development of ritual and dogma which is historical since the supposed time of Jesus; the evolution of the Mass, of ecclesiastical organisation, and theology; so that in resolving the paradoxes the emergence of distinctively Christian characteristics and the influence of Christianity needs consideration. The methods of Plato's dialectic and Aristotle's logic in theological controversy concerning the contradictions of the historical and the mythical leads up to the Modernist, who has given us a new mystery in the dialectic of what is called Natural Theology, and with personal symbolism in a personal approach, it is claimed that Humanism is Natural Theology.

If, like history, Christianity arose from myth, it is logical that criticism of religion should also begin with mythological interpretation, but its historical development is different. The advent of printing facilitated comparison and critical analysis of documentary evidence, and the discovery of the New World, with world-wide colonisation, led to the technique of comparative religion. The method was to find a natural explanation by drawing parallels or analogies. As in Volney's *Ruins of Empires*, and the works of such men as Taylor and Dupuis, the solar myth theory had quite a vogue with considerable publication, no doubt aided by the vogue of astrology. But this was not the case with the phallic theory that arose from it, probably owing to the distinctively Christian attitude towards sex.

Natural parallel in solar myth and phallic theory does not touch the typical fear of the hereafter of the God-fearing Christian, but fear was introduced in Spencer's ghost theory and fear of the Unknown. With sympathetic magic in Frazer's *Golden Bough* and *Folklore in the Old Testament*, came a more psychological approach, seen also with religion in Tyler's animism and the dream vision in his *Primitive Culture*, which was modified in Elliot Smith's Migration of Culture theory; while a

deeper consideration of fetishism and totemism led on to Marett's animatism or "mana" and his *Psychology in Folklore*. It is in social anthropology and psychology that we come to grips with the myth and symbolism of the Natural Theology of the Modernist.

But it will be noted that the History or Myth controversy involves opposite methods and attitudes. In this dialectic, on one side, the deductive method insists upon distinctive characteristics, and on the other, the inductive, follows the line of parallels. The one argues that Christianity is distinctive and unique, and the other, that all religions are analogous. But these two approaches also diverge in different directions, so that whereas the historicity theory leads away from the supposed time of Jesus up to the present day in the psychology of personal problems, the mythicist goes away further into a hypothetical primitive past, away from the psychology of such personal problems to which the myth technique of symbolism is applied by Natural Theology.

If the question of the historicity of Jesus is admittedly academic, it is so in more senses than one, and a rationalist should have some idea of the logic of the case, if not of the psychology of reasoning. It is not simply that theology still clings to what has yet to be explained and that more research is needed. The method of analogy fails to discriminate, and further, the vagary of myth and the element of symbolism is characteristic of, and useful to, theology. If solar myth is totally inadequate, to argue myth in any form is to play theology at its own game, if not to play into its hands.

H. H. PREECE.

CHRISTIANITY AND SLAVERY

THE claim that Christianity abolished slavery is another claim opposed to historic facts. The *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* (ed. by Hastings) gives a sketch, in 36 pages, of slavery, Primitive, Christian, Greek, Hindu, Jewish, Roman, extolling "the Christian declaration of the spiritual equality of all." The *Catholic Encyclopædia*, in a small article, refers to Pagans—"to whom the sentiment of fraternity was unknown"; mentions Pius (A.D. 142) and Calixtus (220) as Popes who had been slaves; and names seven Popes, 1462 to 1888, who "declared against slavery"; and concludes: "If not the only, at least the principal cause of that [slavery's] disappearance is Christianity."

Mr. McCabe gives credit to the Lydians and the Stoics for their pre-Christian teaching of "the brotherhood of man"; mentions Zeno, Plutarch, Epicurus, Dion, Chrysostom, Florentinus, Ulpian, Seneca and Juvenal; and quotes Dr. E. Reich: "Slavery in the Roman Empire was mitigated by the noble philosophy of the Stoics, and not by the teaching of the Church Fathers, who never thought of recommending the abolition of slavery" (*Histry. of Civ.*, p. 421)—a change from the Delic slave market, 2nd century B.C., when 10,000 slaves were often sold in one day (Mommsen's *Rome*, I, 75). The Essenes of Palestine and the Therapeutists of Egypt had no slaves (B.C.). "The prohibition of slavery . . . had no place in ecclesiastical teaching. Slavery was distinctly and formally recognised by Christianity, and religion laboured more to encourage a habit of docility and passive obedience. The justice of slavery was frequently based by the Fathers, as by modern defenders, on the curse of Ham" (Locky, *Eur. Morals*, II, 66). "The Christian Churches in the slave states scandalously violated their most sacred duty and used their influence in the maintenance of slavery, the ministers of religion

declared it to be sanctioned by Scripture, and sometimes even encouraged the atrocities resorted to in defence of the system" (J. K. Ingram's "Slavery and Serfdom," p. 194).

What says the Bible? God established slavery—Lev. XXV, 44-46 (strangers, bondmen for ever); Ex. XXI, 7. A man may sell his daughter, Ex. XXI, 7. God orders slave-capturing expeditions, Deut. XX, 10-15. A slave may be slowly beaten to death, Ex. XXI, 20-21. God directs slave-branding, Ex. XXI, 6. The New Testament sanctions slavery, I Tim., VI, 1; Titus, II, 9; Eph., VI, 5; I Pet., II, 18. Death to Jew stealing Jew, Deut., XXIV, 7. Paul sends back fugitive slave Onesimus to his master (Phil., verse 12); similar to slave concubine Hagar's return to her mistress Sarah (Gen., XVI, 9). The Greek word *Doulos* in the New Testament usually translated "servant," commonly means a slave. St. Augustine (354-430) justified slavery in his *City of God* as a great punishment for sin: slavery was no crime in God's eyes. St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor (1226-74) held that slavery and serfdom are not only economically sound but morally defensible also. Dr. G. G. Coulton says: "More than one pope in later Middle Ages decreed slavery as a punishment for his political enemies, and the Negro slave trade had its origin in two Papal Bulls" (*Medieval Village*, 171). Slavery was decreed by Popes Clement V and Gregory XI (14 cy.), Sixtus IV (15 cy.) and Julius II and Paul III (16th century). (*Encyc. Brit.*, 14th ed., XIX, 35).

Popes Urban II and Leo IX decreed slavery for priests' wives (Lea, *Sacer. Celibacy*, ch. XV and XI). Pope Leo I, the Great (440-61) forbade the admission of slaves into the clergy because of the vileness of their condition—their "vilitas" would "pollute" the sacred order; and Pope Gregory I, the Great (590-604) renewed this ban (v. McCabe's *Encyc.*, p. 545). Pope Gregory I was the largest slave-holder of his time, and Mr. McCabe shows that his freeing two slaves was because they had inherited money, which was to pass to the Church. The *Cath. Encyc.* mentions that Gregory enfranchised serfs of the Roman Church—but not the reason—in its contention that ecclesiastical serfs were not less fortunate because of the inalienability of Church (serf) property than slaves. And Pope Paul III, given by *Cath. Encyc.* as "forbidding the enslavement of the Indians in 1537," decreed slavery, it is omitted to state, in 1538, against all Englishmen who should dare to support Henry VIII against the Pope; and in 1548 he confirmed the rights of laity and clergy to own slaves. The importation of Negro slaves to Portugal began in 1442; in 1454 this traffic was endorsed by Nicholas V. Conversion of slaves to Christianity did not earn freedom. (Tim., VI, 1-4). Virginia in 1670 enacted: "All servants, not being Christians, imported into this country by shipping, shall be slaves . . . Conversion to the Christian faith did not make free" (Bancroft, *U.S.*, II, ch. 14). The Crusaders had Greek Christians as slaves; and the Papal Court in the 15th century had Saracen slaves. The exportation of black slaves or of West Indians was justified by Deut. XXVIII, 68: "The Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships . . ." London, in 1760, had 80,000 black slaves. This vile traffic was profitable. Of the black slave horror, the Christian apologist, Mr. Brace, has to say: "The guilt of this great crime rests upon the Christian Church as an organised body" (*Gesta Christi*, p. 365). There was not much to choose between slavery and serfdom.

In a *Truthseeker*, New York, book which I have, ninety pages are devoted to books and pamphlets by Christian

clergy in the 19th century strenuously upholding slavery, by the Bible. As a sample: Thornton Stringfellow, D.D. (1856): "Slavery had the sanction of the Almighty in the Patriarchal Age; it was incorporated into the only National Constitution which ever emanated from God; its legality was recognised, and its relative duties regulated, by Jesus Christ in his kingdom; and it is full of mercy . . . God decreed slavery—and shows in that decree, tokens of goodwill to the master." Bishop J. H. Hopkins, D.D., LL.D. (1864) in his book of 284 pp., finds support in the Fathers down to the 7th century (pp. 99-109), and in citations from Canons, Constitutions and Councils (pp. 110-115); from Ecclesiastical Histories; and from Commentators (pp. 123-228). Of the common claim that "the extinction of slavery in Europe was owing to the influence of Christianity," the Christian Bishop says: "No statement can be more utterly unsupported by the facts of history . . . To prove conclusively that Christianity had nothing to do with the change, the last of the villeins that remained were those who belonged to the bishops, monasteries, and other ecclesiastical corporations . . . It is perfectly manifest that if the Church had disapproved the system as being inconsistent with the Gospel, the bishops and the monasteries would have been the first, instead of the last, to let their bondmen go" (pp. 262-4). Dr. G. G. Coulton, Mr. McCabe, and their authorities show that serfdom continued in Church estates when it was practically extinct elsewhere. Of the one and only exclusive true Church, Dr. Coulton re slavery abolition has to say: "The R.C. Church was here not in the van, but almost in the rear . . . and in the nineteenth century it was the non-Romanist countries which far outstripped the Romanists in freeing the blacks" (Rom. and Truth; vol. 1, p. 87). The usual tendency is to give credit to the "Christian" spirit. In face of the real Christian spirit in its adherence to "Revelation," it is surely heresy to condemn slavery in departure therefrom: "to repudiate REVELATION is to fall into the horrors of NATURAL RELIGION."

Mr. Brace mentions that the Protestant Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Lands did not supply religious instruction to its own slaves in its plantations in Barbadoes. Such Christian clergy and upholders of slavery expose the sham of Christian unity of brotherhood and universal love. Christians claim that Jesus did not condemn slavery because to do so would cause economic chaos! Read Mr. McCabe's "Slavery" in his Encyclopædia for its information, its comments, its corrections and exposures of orthodox apologists; and for the triumph of humanitarianism.

GEORGE ROSS.

COMRADES AND FRIENDS

DISCUSSING the question of a united European Army, at The European Assembly at Strasbourg last week, Mr. Churchill said it was hoped to enlist the services of "our German friends and our Italian comrades." Friends and Comrades!—why it was only five years ago since our Press and politicians were denouncing the Germans as Huns and degenerates whilst there were no words of contempt strong enough to denounce the cowardly and treacherous Italians. We were told that our future Italian comrades were cruel and bloodthirsty scum. That they had taken wretched Abyssinians, bound them hand and foot and then dropped them out of aeroplanes whilst the Italian soldiers shrieked with joy at the new game of "watch them bounce."

Our papers told us that all Germans who were or had been members of the Nazi Party, were criminals and murderers at heart. It is good to know that, owing to the democratic and civilising influence, especially of the U.S. Army of Occupation, many of these gents have now seen the error of their ways and are now full-blooded democrats, ready and willing to devote their influence and their lives, if necessary, in the effort to combat tyranny of any kind and no matter from where.

In the Press of August 16 we read that the U.S. Occupation authorities had freed eight senior war criminals "because of their good conduct." The eight men were serving seven-year sentences and have three more years to go. They are Otto Dietrich (52 years of age—Goebbels's Nazi Press Chief, convicted of cruelty to civilians), Walter Darre (aged 55—Nazi Food Minister who recruited East European and Jewish slave labour for German farms), Friedrich Flick (67 years of age—Steel Magnate, sentenced for exploiting slave labour and looting German-occupied countries), Rudolf Ehmann (Judge Advocate-General of the Wehrmacht), Kurt Rothenberger (former State Secretary in the Ministry of Justice), Fritz Ter Meer (Ex-Director of I. G. Farben), Heinrich Lehmann (former Director of Krupps) and Karl Rasche (former head of the Dresdner Bank).

Now Otto Dietrich, Goebbels's great friend, confined his activities to cruelties to civilians and always respected the man in uniform. At his trial he expressed his sorrow for having done this, but says that he did it under Goebbels's order. Goebbels, scoundrel as he was, had at least the guts to commit suicide.

Walter Darre recruited thousands and thousands of East Europeans and Jews for slave labour and probably nobody regretted more than dear Walter that so many thousands of them died from under-nourishment, exposure and over-work. That, as an American might say, was "just too bad."

Herr Flick exploited the slave labour that his friend Walter had recruited, and felt, as a member of the superior race, that many of the art and other treasures of occupied countries should have their rightful place in Germany, the land of culture. His intimate knowledge of the Steel Industry may prove very useful to the democracy now that he is a reputable citizen again, and this would also apply to another of the eight—Fritz Ter Meer of I. G. Farben which latter monopoly had a working agreement with their opposites in England and France.

Heinrich Lehmann was one of the armament kings whose company manufactured the shells that wiped out allied soldiers and whose bombs did such successful work in killing thousands of Britishers in the air raids.

Karl Rasche, as a banker, may be quite useful in "getting finance upon a sound footing" which our Press informs us is so vital.

This gang and many like them will be found amongst our friends.

For years our Tory Press has sneered and laughed at the Communist greeting "Comrade," but that must stop now, for we soon will have our Italian comrades.

Men are known by the company they keep and it seems as if we are mustering a motley army to fight for Christian democracy which, we are informed, is in danger. Soon we will be told that the slave camps never existed—just a lie spread by the Jews: that the story of millions of Jews being massacred was untrue—that the Jews just committed suicide to discredit our German cousins and that the cowardice and cruelty of the Italians was a gross exaggeration—that the Italians were worthy descendants of the old Romans.

F. A. HORNIBROOK.

ACID DROPS

From the scientific point of view, the last B.B.C. talk by Mr. Fred Hoyle on the "Nature of the Universe" was a veiled attack on revealed religion, and as such will be heartily disliked by all those listeners who imagine that the B.B.C. ought to be the vehicle for Christian propaganda only. Mr. Hoyle found no place in his astrophysical world for Hell, Heaven, Devils, or even a God. On the other hand, his whole series showed a purely mechanical Universe, and it will be anathema both to Christians and to Dialectical Materialists alike. But not to Freethinkers.

Although the "Church Times" as a journal backs up the Virgin Birth and other Bible absurdities to the utmost, this does not mean that some of its individual correspondents do so. For instance, Mr. Albert E. Baker in it subjects the Pope's latest Encyclical to a searching examination. He ridicules what the "Holy Father" says about Science and Evolution, and particularly the pious nonsense that all human beings have descended from Adam. And he admits that while Christians accept the "authority" of the Bible, this has "no relation to any alleged accuracy in what it says about science and history." We wonder what the readers of the *Church Times* will think of that?

The "restoration" of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England took place 100 years ago, and naturally celebrations are to take place. One of the first objects, however, is once again to try and convert England to accomplish which "the Litany of our Lady" is to be recited on every Sunday in October. We have the profane idea that if it were recited for the next 1,000 years it would no more convert England than it would Russia. Still, people who can swallow the Assumption of Mary are ready to swallow anything—the bigger the absurdity, the easier it is to swallow.

According to a priest writing to the *Hampstead and Highgate Express* it is an "impertinence" on the part of "amateur theologians" to criticise the Dogma of the Assumption, and for the editors of any journal who give them space to do so, it is even worse. Here we see the unashamed dictatorship which, if Rome had the power, would be forced on to this country by a pack of credulous, Italian-taught priests. Some of us, whether "amateurs" or not, certainly will continue to criticise about the biggest piece of sly humbug that has ever emanated from the Vatican; and we hope its priests won't like it—and be allowed to say so.

Whatever the Pope may say about Adam being the first man, we note the *Universe* telling its readers that "modern Catholic scholars are agreed that there are no reliable indications of the age of the human race to be found in the Bible." This will surely prove a shock not only to all believing Catholics, but to all believing Protestants. The date given to Adam is 4004 B.C., and on pain of Eternal Damnation all good Christians ought to believe it. Alas, the leaven of Freethought has worked itself unto the most sacred thought of the Church of Rome.

Canon C. E. Douglas of Southwark told his fellow Christians the other week that marriages in a register offices were not really marriages—so there must be many millions of people, according to this bright luminary of the Church, living in sin. Of course, readers have no

need to be told that he was talking unmitigated rot for the only marriage that is legal in this country is before a specially appointed civil servant; and a clergyman or a priest can only conduct a legal marriage if he is also so appointed. Still, these people must have their say if only to prove how idiotic it can be.

It was, however, rather surprising to find that—more or less—religious paper, the *Daily Mail*, publishing immediate protests from happily married people who, though married according to the law, are, according to the pious Canon Douglas, actually living in sin. It is a pity that the Attorney-General does not step in here and ask him whether he knows he is flouting the law of the land? Is it not possible to administer a severe rebuke to the worthy Canon?

We learn from *Newsweek* that American Roman Catholics are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with President Truman and the Democratic Party. The Chairman of the Party, Mr. W. Boyle, has been told by "friends in the Church" that, because of President Truman's opposition to the Spanish Loan, and the Administration's "softness" towards Communists, many Democrat and independent Catholics will vote Republican this year. This need not surprise anyone with a knowledge of Catholicism. To a Catholic, his religion and his orders from a foreigner in the Vatican are more important than his own country.

General MacArthur, who is apparently trying to build up a reputation as a second pious Chinese Gordon, is keeping the U.S.A. forces in Korea well supplied with Bibles. We can, however, imagine what the G.I.s will be saying when they learn that they are to receive Bibles instead of the reinforcements so badly needed. After all, a Bible is not much use as a tank "buster." And we do not think that the North Koreans can read English, anyhow.

On reading an extract from the *Taegliche Rundschau*, the Soviet newspaper of the East Berlin sector, we remembered that excellent article in *The Freethinker* of September 10, "Say What You Mean," by J. Effell. The *Rundschau*, writing of the coming election in Berlin, says, "These Elections will be the most free Germany has ever had, free from anti-Soviet agitation, free from demagoguery of opposition parties." "Freedom" evidently means something totally different in Berlin; or perhaps somebody in charge has heard of Humpty Dumpty who, when he uses a word, says it means just what he intends it to mean.

A correspondent informs us that the Inverness Free Church Presbytery have decided to observe October 11 as a day of prayer for world peace. He asks us if prayers can stop a bloody war, what the h-ll are they fighting for? We can only suggest that our correspondent sends his query either to the Pope, or to the Archbishop of Canterbury, or even to General MacArthur who is supplying his troops with Bibles.

A report in the *News-Chronicle* says last Sunday's rain covered hundreds of acres in North Wales and destroyed farmers' last hopes of saving something from a disastrous harvest. But harvest festivals will be held as usual, even if the congregations have empty stomachs, and will still sing hymns of praise and offer up prayers of thanks. If you were a God, would you laugh or frown?

"THE FREETHINKER"

Telephone No.: Holborn 2601.

41, Gray's Inn Road,
London, W.C. 1.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

C. F. RUDGE.—It is not easy to get authoritative articles on difficult scientific subjects except from highly paid scientists.

When the services of the National Secular Society in connection 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, 17s.; half-year, 8s. 6d.; three-months, 4s. 4d.

Will correspondents please write on one side of the paper, and keep their letters brief. This will give everybody a chance.

Readers in the Glasgow area are reminded that the Glasgow Secular Society opens its indoor season to-day (October 1) with a lecture in the McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, on "Man's Animal Ancestry." Mr. R. H. Rosetti, President of The National Secular Society, will be the speaker. Admission is free, with some Donation Tickets, and the lecture begins at 7 p.m. Questions and discussion are invited.

The South Place Ethical Society celebrated the 21st anniversary of the opening of Conway Hall in an appropriate manner last Sunday. Speeches, full of reminiscences, interested a large audience, in which the N.S.S. was well represented. Tea was then served in the library; it was a large and enthusiastic tea party in which conversation, and the jingle of cups, saucers and plates had complete command. After tea the party again went into the big hall where a musical programme, with ballet dancing, brought the official proceedings to an end. Those responsible for the arrangements are to be congratulated on the success of their efforts.

The Merseyside Branch N.S.S. will begin its indoor session with an open discussion on "What does Free-thought mean to me?" It will be held in Coopers' Hall, 12, Shaw Street, Liverpool, 6, at 8 o'clock this evening (October 1). Admission is free, and as all who wish can take part in the discussion, a very interesting evening should result. Applications for membership in the Branch, and offers of help, can be addressed to the local secretary, Mr. W. C. Parry, 476, Mill Street, Liverpool, 8.

Readers in and around London should reserve Thursday evening, October 12, for a lecture from Professor H. Levy, M.A., D.Sc., in the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, London, W.C. 1. Professor Levy will speak for The National Secular Society on "The Ethics of War." Admission is free and the lecture begins at 7 o'clock. Your help by making the lecture known to your friends will be greatly appreciated by the Executive, N.S.S.

Some of the very excellent papers from *The Plain View* have been reprinted with others in *Living as a Humanist* (Chaterson Ltd., 6s. net) and are well worth re-reading. They form an excellent presentation of the creed of Humanism—though it is not to be expected that Mr. H. J. Blackham's "Why Humanists Reject Christianity and Marxism" will be liked or appreciated by either sect. Mr. Blackham subjects Marxism to a searching analysis from the Humanist point of view and shows why it should be rejected—and his arguments will certainly appeal to all who think as he does.

In his essay, "Fantasy and Reality in Religion," Mr. M. L. Burnet has some shrewd remarks—for example: "Religion is the opium of the people," said Marx, and this is of course true of apocalyptic types of religion; though it must be born in mind that contrary to the usual picture painted by Marxists of religion forced upon an unwilling proletariat, there is in fact a very real consumer demand for religion . . . Christianity would have died out in Protestant countries had there not been a very real demand for it." The two essays by Miss Virginia Fleming and Miss Ursula Edgecombe are also excellent and the book should appeal to all who look at modern Humanism as the best "creed" for ordinary people.

CHRISTIANITY'S RIVAL

THE traditional rival of Christianity in the religious, and often in the cultural field has been Islam, the cosmopolitan creed founded in the seventh century of the Christian era by the Arabian prophet, Muhammad. In the Dark Ages, Christianity was nearly obliterated by the rival creed, whilst the counter-attack of Christianity upon the strongholds of the Muhammadan East continued for centuries in the form of "Crusades."

In modern as formerly in medieval times, the creed of Muhammad still remains as the most formidable rival of Christianity, though their religious competition is now of a more peaceful character, and is waged chiefly in the Asiatic and African mission fields. In Europe, since the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, Islam has made but little headway and that almost solely in the Balkan regions of the former Turkish Empire. Upon a world-scale, however, Islam still ranks as a major religion along with its old enemy, Christianity.

The expansion of European Imperialism throughout the world in recent centuries has brought many races of Muhammadan faith and culture into the Colonial Empires of European powers. This political relationship has led to an intensive study of Muslim culture and institutions by European scholars. In this sphere of study, France, the major Colonial power with Muslim subjects, has been particularly conspicuous.

The book before us,* adequately translated from the French, originally appeared under the title of *Les Institutions Mussulmanes*. Under this comprehensive heading, the learned author surveys in successive order Muslim history, theology, jurisprudence, social and political institutions, and the culture inspired by the Muhammadan creed.

It should be added that the Muslim culture is of the type that it is now the fashion to style as "totalitarian"; in Muslim communities, not only theology and ethics, but jurisprudence, law, and even secular culture, are supervised and regulated at every point by the dominant creed of Muhammad, denoted by its adherents as "Islam"—or "submission" to the omnipotent power of Allah, the God proclaimed by Muhammad as the unique Autocrat and Ruler of the Universe.

The religion of Islam is a religion founded upon an authoritative revelation, a "religion of the Book," as the Muslims themselves call it. In the case of Muhammad's creed, the "Book" which contains the Divine Revelation of God to man is the Quran, or Koran, in the more usual Western spelling. It is canonical dogma in all Islamic communities with any pretensions to orthodoxy that the Quran is the inspired and verbally

* Muslim Institutions by Maurice Gaudefroy-Demohynes. Allen & Unwin. Translated by John P. MacGregor. 15s. net.

infallible "Word of God." Indeed, Muslim orthodoxy goes further in its apotheosis of the Quran than does Christian orthodoxy with reference to the Bible. Most Muslim theologians hold that the Quran had no beginning in time but was directly written by Allah "in the Beginning, and was merely dictated to Muhammad by direct verbal revelation. It is obvious that such a conception makes any critical approach to the sources of Islam a completely impossible task.

Muhammad himself, the Prophet and Founder of Islam, was an historical character, the dates of whom are at least approximately known—c. 570-632 A.D. Unlike that of Jesus, his historical existence has not, as far as we are aware, ever been called in question. Nor, again unlike the alleged Founder of Christianity, has the Arabian prophet ever been deified by his adherents. It is rigid Islamic orthodoxy, as it is rigid Judaic orthodoxy, that God is One and that no human being, not even the most exalted prophet, can share His Divinity. To Muslim orthodoxy, the ascription of divinity to any human being represents unspeakable blasphemy.

In the case of the Quran, again unlike that of the Christian scriptures, there is no question as to its, at least fundamental, textual authenticity. For the Muslim "Scriptures" were edited in the form which has now become canonical within a few years after the death of the Prophet. Nor is the Muslim Holy Book the work of unknown authors. The entire Quran except, perhaps, for a few interpolations was written or dictated by Muhammad himself.

The Prophet himself was a religious reformer who probably regarded his religion as a purely Arabian creed. However, his preaching coincided with one of those "swarming periods" which periodically characterise nomadic tribes. Arabia, unified politically no less than religiously by the Muslim Church, so to speak, erupted into the neighbouring world, then in a decadent state, and in an incredibly short time built up a cosmopolitan empire which, within a century of Muhammad's death, extended from India to Western Europe. Under the rule of the Khalifs, or "Lieutenants" of the Prophet, a unified Empire and civilisation endured down to 1258 A.D. when the Khalifat was destroyed and its then capital, Baghdad, was taken by Tartar invaders from central Asia.

The religion of Islam, however, survived its Empire. Originating as a kind of cosmopolitan Judaism, it evolved its own theology, canon law, and appropriate social institutions. These have remained substantially unaltered, and are lucidly and learnedly described by our author in their relevant context.

To-day, the Muslim "Church" bestrides the Old World from Nigeria to Indonesia, and remains a world-power in politics no less than in the purely religious sphere. Indeed, in the contemporary field of power-politics, the creation in recent years of new Muslim States in Pakistan and Indonesia has actually strengthened Islam in the present-day world; a fact which, in and by itself, removes our author's subject matter from the purely academic field. For Islam is still one of the half-dozen major forces in our contemporary world; as an ostensibly religious power it is equalled only by the Roman Catholic Church.

The details of this many-sided creed will be found in appropriate contexts in *Muslim Institutions*. A word, however, may be usefully added in conclusion regarding the historic role played now for the past thirteen centuries by this powerful religious creed. Islam (which dates from the "Hegira" or "Flight" of Muhammad

from Mecca to Medina in 622 A.D.) is a democratic creed, without any special clerical caste and with a Unitarian theology less complex and less glaringly illogical than is, say, the Trinitarian theology of Christianity. In the main, however, Islam is a conservative creed, and its general influence has been extremely reactionary in both the social and theological spheres. There seems to have been a tendency for Freethinkers to have been misled by the glowing eulogies of Muslim Spain written by such critical historians as Draper, White and McCabe. The so-called "Muslim" culture of Medieval Spain and of the *Arabian Nights* was, however, a rationalist rather than a typically Muslim culture, and since the theological counter-reformation inaugurated by Al-Ghazali, "The Proof of Islam," the Muslim "Thomas Aquinas" (11th century), the medieval Moorish philosophers such as Averroes and Avicenna, are taboo in Islamic orthodoxy. Modern Islam is a consciously conservative force, which fiercely resists modern ideas and is impervious to modernist currents in its own ranks. Modern Islam compares, we would say, unfavourably even with Protestant Christianity in its powers of receptivity to new ideas. (cf. Wilfred C. Smith—*Modern Trends in Islam*.)

Muslim Institutions reviews the whole Islamic field lucidly and with profound learning. For the student of comparative religion, this book is required reading. It should be in every public library frequented by serious students.

F. A. RIDLEY.

SCIENCE, RELIGION AND MORALS

II.—CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALS

- (1) For present purposes Christianity will be taken as the religion to be considered in its fundamental principles.
- (2) This religion has been predominant for a long time and continues its activities in Europe and the Western World.
- (3) There are three further reasons, firstly, that Christian theological principles have been more developed than others.
- (4) Secondly, that Christians claim that their moral principles are higher and truer than those of any other religion.
- (5) Thirdly, they claim that Christianity is the culmination of religious thought and action for all humanity.
- (6) Any inquiry into these claims is forthwith confronted with the difficulty of defining what is Christianity.
- (7) Indefiniteness is characteristic of all religions, but this seems especially so in regard to this one.
- (8) Does Christianity rest on the historical foundations of certain alleged events said to have occurred long ago?
- (9) Is Christianity a theological or an ethical system which changes with developments in human thought?
- (10) The indefiniteness of the claims put forward on behalf of this religion render investigation difficult.
- (11) It seems advisable to consider Christianity under three main classifications or aspects.
- (12) The first of these is History, which forms its main differential basis from other historical religions.
- (13) Here this aspect will be mainly, but briefly, concerned with the historicity of its founder, Jesus.
- (14) In its developed form, Christianity claims that its founder was not only a divine Teacher but God himself.
- (15) Beyond holding this as a matter of faith, it seems to claim definite documentary proof of both these theses.
- (16) The second category is the Theological basis on which these claims are formally stated and elaborated.

- (17) Whether Jesus himself claimed to be God or this Thesis was developed subsequently is a subject of dispute.
- (18) Various factions of early Christians seem to have been effectively suppressed after the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325.
- (19) Since then some of the acutest minds in Europe have built up an ingenious, and greatly esoteric, theology.
- (20) The Christian religion, therefore, contains a theological structure which is extensive and intricate.
- (21) The third category is what may be termed, in the broadest sense, the moral or ethical basis of Christianity.
- (22) For Christians this includes such a large field that it is difficult to define its scope or limits.
- (23) It consists not so much of a definite ethical system as of an undefined and general "way of life" and thought.
- (24) It is based partly on the moral exhortations of Jesus, but more on environmental traditions and customs.
- (25) This ethical category of Christianity will be considered subsequently in some detail under the heading "Morals."
- (26) It seems to follow that these three categories are mutually interdependent for their validity and obligations.
- (27) The Christian view of the mission of Jesus is involved in the truth of the relative theological theses.
- (28) In turn Christianity as a moral basis of life involves the validity of both in order to effect obligations.
- (29) Thus if either of these three theses is not true the others are likewise involved in their implications.
- (30) This follows from the underlying theses that Christian morals and way of life are unique and not universal.
- (31) To obtain some working basis for inquiry five fundamental propositions of Christianity will be briefly stated.
- (32) These appear to be held, though in varying degree, by most of those who "profess and call themselves Christians."
- (33) Firstly, there is only one God, the Creator of the Universe, who is omniscient, omnipotent and benevolent.
- (34) This sufficiently differentiates Christianity from polytheism and also such vague religions as Hinduism.
- (35) The quality of benevolence implies that God is benign, but also that he actively intervenes in this world.
- (36) This differentiates Christianity from some forms of Deism in which God might be benign but does not intervene.
- (37) Probably all professed Christians would subscribe to this first brief description of the attributes of God.
- (38) Secondly, Jesus Christ was not only a divinely inspired teacher but was actually God himself incarnate.
- (39) This proposition appears to be denied by some who call themselves Christians, but it seem essential.
- (40) Thirdly, arising from the last, this God-man Jesus had a definite specific purpose to fulfil.
- (41) This purpose was to "redeem" humans in the only possible way under all the circumstances.
- (42) Fourthly, this implies that all humans had "fallen" from some higher state into a condition of "sin."
- (43) That they were unable by their own efforts to redeem themselves and an "atonement" was necessary.
- (44) Fifthly, that humans alone among all created things possess individual immortal "souls."
- (45) Unless this were so the essential features of divine atonement and redemption seem purposeless.
- (46) These five propositions involve the Fall, Incarnation, Atonement, Redemption and Immortality.
- (47) The subject can, therefore, be considered along these lines; the first and second, historical; third and fourth, theological; and the fifth, moral.

(48) There appear to be those who deny all these five propositions and yet call themselves Christians.

(49) Here these need not be considered further than to allude to their attitude when considering morals.

(50) It will there be shown that if one abstracts the moral from the theological basis Christianity becomes invalid.

W. EDWARD MEADS.

IN THESE LAST DAYS

In these last days of England's wealth and power,
Before the New World shall the Old devour,
Before the Mother by the Son be eaten,
Before his country finally is beaten,
An old man turns his thoughts to England's past,
And dwells on splendours to be dimmed at last.

In what did England's former glory lie?
That English folk loved freedom, and would die
For liberty in thought, and speech, and deed;
And for this Trinity would gladly bleed.
Beneath her Tudor monarchs, Rome was smashed,
And Spanish Dons, her slavish vassals, crushed.

The Stuart monarchs tried to bring Rome back,
But Mother England Charles and James did smack.
Then England for a hundred years grew great,
While Protestants alone upheld the State.
In those days statesmen Romans kept at bay:
But now that forthright age has passed away.

Just how the rot set in, I do not know,
But, partly, I suspect . . . but let that go;
At any rate, a new idea got round
Called Tolerance, which English people found
Congenial, for it needs little thought;
A little peace, by future trouble bought.

No doubt, believing tolerance is kindness,
Byron and Shelley, in a most strange blindness,
Strove manfully to bring the Romans back,
And back they came—through Shelley, woe, alack!
They brought this pestilence of fettered minds,
An antique faith that innovation binds.

The Catholic Church its foot got in the door;
A heave, a shove, and wider evermore
The door swings open to the citadel
Of thinking for oneself on heaven and hell.
The Press and Politicians have been nobbled,
And independent thought on *all things* hobbled.

In English ranks are near three million slaves,
Who turn to Rome, that intellect depraves;
They gave their thinking into other hands,
And, with alacrity, obey commands
Of a totalitarian hostile power:
England ranks second with them from that hour.

Across the ocean, in the land where came
Protestant fathers, base sons, to their shame,
Opened the door to Central Europe's slum,
Till now, it seems, the Protestants are dumb
Before the might of millions twenty-eight
Of R.C.s, who the Founder Fathers hate.

The moral of this story must be plain:
To our true path we must turn back again;
Fight, while the light still lasts, for English thought
Free and unfettered, which our fathers bought
With suffering, but firm, unflinching will;
Then ours will England's heritage be still.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

"To feed one good man is infinitely greater in point of merit than attending to questions about heaven and earth, spirits and demons. These matters are not to be compared to the religious duty we owe to our parents."

Buddha.

ORIGIN OF ANGELS

This heavenly fowl is a clear reflection of the conditions under Oriental despotism; little wonder, then, that the belief in angels has survived under the spiritual despotism of Catholicism.

The Hellenic tyrants were far from being unrestrained despots; nor were the Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt. Hence the notion of angels—angelology—remained alien to these countries. This belief originated in such countries as were ruled by Oriental despots who could not be called to account and were unanswerable for their whims. In religion, the image of the mundane despot is the despotic *monotheos*, a unique god, acting in a "mysterious way": reaction glorified. As a potentate true to pattern he wants his retinue of courtiers, ministers, poets, bards and sycophants. If it so pleases him, he raises one mean flatterer to an elated position and hurls another into the abyss of hell. Thus the angels and their various orders were devised as the heavenly prince's court. The political system of Ancient Persia with her satraps (district rulers) and 7 Viceroys (reflected in the 7 Ameshaspentas, or Immortal Spirits) was the prototype after which the judaeo-christian angelology was modelled. In post-Persian times, theocratic Judaism had 4-7 archangels, whilst the Persian *fravashi* (now "fristâh," Arabic "malak," Hebrew "mal'akh," hence the "Prophet" Malachi = My Messenger, Ambassador) became the host of elementary angels. Revelation (1, 20; 3, 1; 7, 1) makes it clear that the "Big Four" or "Seven Spirits of God" are the "7 Stars" or Planets. They are graded into Principality, Power, Might and Dominion (Eph. 1, 21; Col. 1, 16); departing from the angelic order as established by St. Gregory, Dante (c. 3, 28) has 9 governors of 9 celestial districts.

Seven conspicuous "stars" were called "planets" (from Greek *planêtês* = a wanderer) because in the ancient astronomy they—including sun and moon—seemed to wander about, whilst the other (fixed) stars obviously did not. The planetary spirits accordingly were "mal'akhî," or, in the Greek translation, angels (*angelos*); the evangelist is a messenger bringing the "euangélion" = good tidings, i.e., Messenger. Planetary movements were translated into certain forebodings; the angels moved round the earth, partly in their capacity as messengers, partly as heavenly intelligence in order to report to the "Omniscient" all the news and happenings worth knowing. Ordinary errands are made not by heavenly officers but their orderlies (*Dai-koku-sama*, the Japanese God of Wealth, commands 84,000 angelic batmen!).

After the gods angels are the mightiest potentialities, hence the many instances of their being considered God's own sons (cf. Job 1, 6 with Satan still among them; 2, 1; 38, 7); a mutilated fragment in Gen. 6, 2-4, even relates that the mighty sons of God "*came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them," and these children in turn were the giants of yore. (Ps. 29, 1) (?) These heavenly beings were not yet winged but had to use Jacob's ladder; they looked just like ordinary men (Gen. 18, 2) whom the perverted men of Sodom even meant to "know" sexually. (Gen. 19, 5.)

For the favour of being allowed to behold the Glory of God, these celestial courtiers have to repay with song recitals to praise and extol their employer in order to keep this conceited, peevish dictator in good spirits. As

* Their mother—Anâth, "Queen of Heaven" (Jer. 44, 17-25; 7, 18)—Jehova's wife, was later blacklisted by the bible redactors (see *The Freethinker*, September 4, 1949), and Almighty God had to suffer this at the hands of Ezra, Nehemiah and Co.

the "Host of Heavens" they sometimes have to actively intervene in the battles of men (Judg. 5, 20); Joshua 5, 13-15, one such angel introduces himself as "captain of the host of the Lord." He has "his sword drawn in his hand" and though his army comprises "horses and chariots of fire" (2 Kg., 6, 17), their C.-in-C. was obviously unable to think of tanks, jet-planes and A-bombs. His official title is "Jahvèzebâ'ôth," Lord of the Host of Heaven, though sometimes this army used to pitch their camps on earth (Gen. 32, 2E). His A.D.C.—the "Angel of Jahvèh—who can be delegated to dream negotiations (Gen. 31, 11) and may even make arrangements (Gen. 22, 11)—is himself a redeemer (Gen. 48, 16); he was considered by several Fathers to be the second person in the Trinity.

Religion is the spiritual by-product of the circumstances prevailing under the conditions of private property; prior to that, all dead were worshipped as ancestor spirits. Now they become differentiated into lower and higher orders. The pious souls only gather around the Lord as saints (Zech. 14, 5; Deut. 3, 2), assembled like the Heavenly Host, to the right and left of His throne (1 Kg. 22, 19). Selected angels, like Gabriel, may stand in front of Him and behold His face (cf. Matth. 18, 10); the others are simply messengers and orderlies, guardians and privates. The higher ranks may act as intercessors (Job. 33, 23) and mediators (Ez. 8, 2; 10, 2). And finally there are the Seven Angels of Evil (Enoch 21, 1), or 7 Unclean Spirits, in accordance with the Persian *Daevs*, servants of Angrô-Mainyus (Sin-Minded).

The names of the 7 chief angels (cf. Rev. 1, 21) have never been firmly established. After the destruction of their temple and their ensuing dispersion, the Jews were compelled to be in contact with socially higher advanced communities; as a result, their rigid theocracy became somewhat moderated through the introduction of tribunals who sat twice a week (Talm., Shabbath, 192b). Consequently, God had to do likewise (Sanhedrin, I); the president of the heavenly court of justice is called *Metatron*.†

At the same time, he corresponds to *Mithra*, the Persian sun god and redeemer, who gradually assumed such influence in the *diáspora* that there were serious deliberations (Sanhedrin, 38b) whether *Metatron*, too, ought to be worshipped. As a matter of fact, he was the Jewish counterpart of Jesus, though *Jahvèh*, the despot, could not permit him to sit BY him.

P. G. ROY.

† "Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; only IN THE THRONE (*meta-thronos*) will I be greater than you." (Gen. 41, 40.)

(To be concluded.)

PACT WITH ALLAH

THERE was a time when Christians and Mohammedans were sworn enemies; there was the assumption that the crusades were undertaken in order to liberate the Holy Sepulchre. When then innocent people were killed off by the thousands, the Catholics at least had the illusion of doing it in good faith for a holy cause. Whilst nowadays crusades are being waged against the "Red Peril," to defend the claims of influence and power of the Catholic Church against the impious aims of those who refuse to resign themselves to the calamities of this "Vale of Tears"; and to this end Christians and Mohammedans find themselves in perfect accord. Mohammed and Jesus Christ have become reconciled in the name of Oil.

Recently (after a notable indiscretion), the political chronicle of the Vatican has registered an exceptionally important step: it seems that between the Holy See and the Arab League an agreement has been stipulated to the effect that the two creeds undertake to set up a "United Front" to combat Communism in Egypt, Arabia and Asia Minor. The negotiations were the outcome of previous parleys the Ambassador of Egypt at the Holy See had had with His Holiness, after having received his initiative instructions from King Faruq. Pius XII showed himself highly agreeable to this very idea; as is known, he acrimoniously commented that it was far easier to find a common language with the heathen than with certain Christians (this remark was made with regard to the struggle of the American protestants against the claims of the Roman hierarchy).

At the moment we have not received the particulars of that Catholic-Arab agreement, but it has become known that the Arab League is not the sole participant; in fact all religious leaders of Islam want to join, starting with the Chancellor of the Mussulman University of El Ezhnar who is a sort of a sovereign pontiff of the Arabs.

This report goes to show once more, if this be necessary, the true aspect of modern Catholicism. They have made common cause with the Nazis and the Fascists of any land and shade, so why should they not accept the "Infidels" as comrades-in-arms in a united front against Atheism? Will they stop at that or won't they rather extend their battle-front and enlist next the Papuan cannibals or the French Existentialists?

P. G. R.

(Englished from "Don Basileo," Rome).

CORRESPONDENCE

THE COMFORTS OF RELIGION

SIR.—Mr. John Rowland, in his letter to "The Freethinker," dated August 20, 1950, betrays that he is in the familiar frame of mind of the freethinker who is looking for the "comforts of religion" outside the recognised channels.

"Rationalism" and "Freethought," as expounded by the N.S.S. and R.P.A., are defined by these bodies and have nothing in common with, say, the "rationalism" of Thomas Aquinas, which also comes round to a theological position.

Secularism (a word I prefer) rejoices over the results of the valuable work of its pioneers, in the liberal outlook of the bodies Mr. Rowland mentions, but dares not sheathe the sword while the divisions of opinion between itself and the enormously powerful Roman Catholic Church are, if anything, more rigid and threatening than they were fifty years ago.

Protestantism is not what it was, and it is very doubtful whether many modern Quakers and Anglican Modernists would rush in to join us in a campaign against the Roman Catholic Church for truth.

Freethinkers are surely not so sensitive as to be annoyed or worried by anything Mr. Rowland has to say. On the contrary, I hope that most of them find his contributions to the paper as stimulating and provocative as I do. We would also welcome contributions from freethinkers among the Unitarians, the Society of Friends and the Modernist wing of the Church of England?

There is one point in Mr. Rowland's letter which puzzles me, that is when he brackets the advocacy of the sale of contraceptives in automatic machines as one of several possible irritants likely to produce a religious rash. Because certain Freethinkers have views that Mr. Rowland dislikes, that is no reason why they should be identified with a, presumably, taut and inflexible "line of freethought." Let us leave lines of thought to the totalitarians, in whose hands they are proving troublesome enough.—Yours, etc.,

"M."

"SAYING WHAT YOU MEAN"

SIR.—I would like to place on record the entertainment I derived from Mr. Effel's article, "Say What You Mean." It was an amusing and legitimate piece of criticism, revealing a sense of humour, which is perhaps man's most saving grace. As I read on, apprehensive that one of my own humble contributions might have been put to pillory, I was relieved to find Mr. Effel was after bigger fry. I suggest, Mr. Editor,

that you might engage him as a permanent critic, to pull us all up when we wander from the strict path of plain English.

I am sorry, however, that he is offering no prizes for reconstructing very obvious blunders like, "what that naughty child wants is a good spanking," because I feel I might qualify. I gather his implication is that "wants" should be substituted by "needs." If so, I think, in this instance, Mr. Effel's terminological criticism has gone a bit astray.

Mr. Effel will, no doubt, recall those school textbooks where missing parts of defective verbs, or what not, were indicated by the parenthesis "(wanting)." I submit that the primary meaning of "want" is the sense of something lacking, and that its use, in the sense of wishing or desiring, is a modern colloquialism. While not myself approving of corporal punishment, I think the meaning of the sentence is clear and conforms with plain English. It implies that failure to put the child across the knee would result in something lacking in his education.

But as the subject wants more space than I can reasonably ask of you, Mr. Editor, I will not elaborate further. Besides I hardly think it needs it. I will only add that I hope Mr. Effel will inform us if and when his kittens have eaten themselves! Yours, etc.,

P. C. KING.

OBITUARY

PETER LAWRIE

It is with regret that I report the death of Peter Lawrie at the early age of 49 at his home in Campsie Street, Glasgow, on September 12.

He was a well-known and respected figure in the Springburn area of Glasgow, where his active interest in Freethought, Socialism, youth and sports organisations will be sadly missed. To his widow and relatives we extend our deepest sympathy. A Secular Service was held on Friday, September 15, at the Western Necropolis, where Mr. R. M. Hamilton officiated.

M. I. WHITEFIELD.

LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

OUTDOOR

- Accrington.—Friday, Sept. 29, 7-30 p.m.: Mr. J. CLAYTON, A Lecture.
- Blackburn Branch N.S.S. (Market Place).—Sunday, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.: Mr. J. CLAYTON, A Lecture.
- Kingston Branch N.S.S. (Castle Street).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. J. BARKER.
- Manchester Branch N.S.S. (Platt Fields).—Sunday, 3 p.m.: Messrs. C. McCALL, L. SMITH, R. BILLINGS and G. WOODCOCK. (St. Mary's Gate, Blitzed Site).—7-45 p.m.: Messrs. C. McCALL, L. SMITH, R. BILLINGS and G. WOODCOCK. (Alexandra Park Gates).—Wednesday: Messrs. C. McCALL, L. SMITH, R. BILLINGS and G. WOODCOCK. (St. Mary's Gate).—Lunch-hour Lectures every weekday, 1 p.m.: Mr. G. WOODCOCK.
- Nottingham Branch N.S.S. (Old Market Square).—Saturday, September 30, 6-30 p.m.: Messrs. E. ELSMERE and T. M. MOSLEY.
- North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead Heath).—Sunday, 12 noon: Messrs. A. CALVERLEY and F. A. RIDLEY (Highbury Corner).—7 p.m.: Mr. L. EBURY.
- Rishton.—Saturday, September 30, 6 p.m.: Mr. J. CLAYTON, A Lecture.
- Sheffield Branch N.S.S. (Barker's Pool).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. A. SAMMS.
- West London Branch N.S.S. (Hyde Park, Marble Arch).—Sunday, 4 p.m.: Mr. C. E. WOOD.

INDOOR

- Bradford Branch N.S.S. (Science Room, Mechanics' Institute, Bradford).—Sunday, 6-45 p.m.: Mr. T. M. MOSLEY, "What is Truth?"
- Conway Discussion Circle (Conway Hall Library, Red Lion Square, W.C. 1).—Tuesday, October 3, 7 p.m.: "The Schuman Plan." Mr. H. L. BEALES, M.A.
- Glasgow Branch (McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street).—Sunday, 7 p.m., Mr. R. H. ROSETTI: "Man's Animal Ancestry."
- Merseyside Branch (Coopers Hall, 12, Shaw Street, Liverpool, 6).—Sunday, 8 p.m.: Discussion—"What Does Freethought Mean to Me?"
- South Place Ethical Society. (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C. 1).—Sunday, 11 a.m.: "Tolerance," Prof. J. C. FLUGEL, D.Sc.

★ FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF ★

- AGE OF REASON.** By Thomas Paine. With 40 page introduction by Chapman Cohen. Price, cloth 3s.; paper 2s.; postage 3d.
- AN ATHEIST'S APPROACH TO CHRISTIANITY.** A Survey of Positions. By Chapman Cohen. Price 1s. 3d.; postage 1½d.
- THE BIBLE HANDBOOK.** By G. W. Foote and W. P. Ball. Price 3s.; postage 3d. Ninth edition.
- THE BIBLE: WHAT IS IT WORTH?** By Colonel R. G. Ingersoll. Price 2d.; postage 1d.
- BRADLAUGH AND INGERSOLL.** By Chapman Cohen. An Appreciation of two great Reformers. Price 3s.; postage 3d.
- CHALLENGE TO RELIGION** (a re-issue of four lectures delivered in the Secular Hall, Leicester). By Chapman Cohen. Price 1s. 3d.; postage 1½d.
- CHRISTIANITY—WHAT IS IT?** By Chapman Cohen. A criticism of Christianity from a not common point of view. Price 2s.; postage 2d.
- THE CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS.** By W. A. Campbell. With a Preface by the Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson. Price 2s.; postage 2d.
- DETERMINISM OR FREEWILL?** By Chapman Cohen. Price cloth 2s. 6d.; postage 2d.
- ESSAYS IN FREETHINKING.** By Chapman Cohen. First, second, third and fourth series. Price 2s. 6d. each; postage 3d. The Four Volumes 10s. post free.
- THE EVOLUTION OF THE PAPACY.** By F. A. Ridley. Price 1s.; postage 1½d.
- THE FAULTS AND FAILINGS OF JESUS CHRIST.** By C. G. L. Du Cann. (Second Edition.) Price 4d.; postage 1d.
- THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION.** By Chapman Cohen. New Edition. Price 6d.; postage 1d.
- GOD AND EVOLUTION.** By Chapman Cohen. Price 6d.; postage 1d.
- GOD AND ME** (revised edition of "Letters to the Lord"). By Chapman Cohen. Price, cloth 2s. 6d., postage 2d.; paper 1s. 3d.; postage 1d.
- GOD AND THE UNIVERSE.** By Chapman Cohen. A Criticism of Professors Huxley, Eddington, Jeans and Einstein. Price, cloth 3s. 6d., postage 2d.; paper 2s., postage 2d.
- A GRAMMAR OF FREETHOUGHT.** By Chapman Cohen. An outline of the philosophy of Freethinking. Price 3s. 6d.; postage 4d.
- THE HISTORICAL JESUS AND THE MYTHICAL CHRIST.** By Gerald Massey. What Christianity owes to Ancient Egypt. Price 9d.; postage 1d.
- HENRY HETHERINGTON.** By A. G. Barker. A Pioneer in the Freethought and Working-class Struggle of a Hundred Years Ago. Price 6d.; postage 1d.
- HOW THE CHURCHES BETRAY THEIR CHRIST.** An Examination of British Christianity. By C. G. L. Du Cann. Price 9d.; postage 1d.
- INFIDEL DEATHBEDS.** By G. W. Foote. Revised and enlarged by A. D. McLaren. Price 2s. 6d.; postage 3d.
- LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, An Anthology for Freethinkers.** By William Kent. Price, cloth 5s., paper 3s. 6d.; postage 3d.
- MATERIALISM RESTATED.** Fourth edition. By Chapman Cohen. Price 4s. 6d.; postage 3d.
- MISTAKES OF MOSES.** By Col. R. G. Ingersoll. Price 3d.; postage 1d.
- THE MOTHER OF GOD.** By G. W. Foote. Price 3d.; postage 1d.
- THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY HANDBOOK.** (General Information for Freethinkers.) Price 6d.; postage 1d.
- PETER ANNET, 1693—1769.** By Ella Twynam. Price 2d.; postage 1d.
- PRIMITIVE SURVIVALS IN MODERN THOUGHT.** By Chapman Cohen. Price 3s.; postage 3d.
- PSYCHO-ANALYSIS—A MODERN DELUSION.** By Frank Kenyon. Price 5s.; postage 3d.
- SHAKESPEARE AND OTHER ESSAYS.** By G. W. Foote. Price, cloth 3s.; postage 3d.
- SOCIALISM AND RELIGION.** By F. A. Ridley. Price 1s.; postage 1d.
- SPAIN AND THE CHURCH.** By Chapman Cohen. A chapter from "Creed and Character," by Chapman Cohen. Price 1d.; postage 1d.
- SPEAKING FOR MYSELF.** By Lady (Robert) Simon. Price 2s. 6d.; postage 2d.
- THEISM OR ATHEISM.** The Great Alternative. By Chapman Cohen. Price 3s. 6d.; postage 3d.
- THERE ARE NO CHRISTIANS.** By C. G. L. Du Cann. Price 4d.; postage 1d.
- THOMAS PAINE AND THETFORD.** Six postcards illustrating Paine's birth-town, including a portrait of the great reformer. Price 9d.; post free.
- THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CHURCH.** By Colonel Ingersoll. Price 2d.; postage 1d.
- WHAT IS RELIGION?** By Colonel R. G. Ingersoll. Price 2d.; postage 1d.
- THOMAS PAINE, A Pioneer of Two Worlds.** By Chapman Cohen. Price 1s. 4d.; postage 1d.
- WILL YOU RISE FROM THE DEAD?** By C. G. L. Du Cann. An inquiry into the evidence of resurrection. Price 6d.; postage 1d.

PAMPHLETS for the PEOPLE

By CHAPMAN COHEN

What is the Use of Prayer? Did Jesus Christ Exist? Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to Live. The Devil. Deity and Design. Agnosticism or...? Atheism. What is Freethought? Must we have a Religion? The Church's fight for the Child. Giving 'em Hell. Freethought and the Child. Morality without God. Christianity and Slavery. Gods and their Makers. Woman and Christianity. What is the use of a Future Life? Christianity and Ethics. Price 2d. each. Postage 1d.

Complete Set of 18, Cloth Bound. Price 5s. Postage 3d.

THE PIONEER PRESS 41, GRAY'S INN ROAD LONDON, W.C.1.