

Ten cents a copy



Vol. VI: No. 4

HAWTHORNE, CALIFORNIA

July-Aug., 1931

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 THE DEVIL AGAINST GOD

Both God and myself, as you doubtless all know,
 Were chronic old bachelors, long time ago:
 Indeed, if I do not most sadly forget,
 We are both of us chronic old bachelors yet.
 I know that I am, and I cannot recall
 Such fact as God's being married at all.
 And yet, I suppose, 'tis unknown to no one,
 That Jesus was this same old bachelor's son;
 That Mary, betrothed though she was to another,
 Became of this bachelor's child the fond mother.
 And now if God was, indeed, Jesus's pa,
 And never was married to Jesus's ma,
 I am sure I cannot for the life of me see
 How such a relation could possibly be
 And not be adult'rous, as much as 'tis when
 Wives are now made mothers by bachelor men.
 Hence God is convicted, you plainly do see,
 Of adult'ry, which is not e'en charged against me.

---JOHN R. KELSO: "The Devil's Defense"

(Reprinted from "Atheist Poetry", published by the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, Inc., 307 E. 14th St., New York City.)

<p>Christian Civilization</p> <p>When Christian missionaries went out to civilize the natives in some of the South Sea Islands, they took a simple, healthy people who had always lived naked under the tropical sun of the South Seas, and dressed them up</p>	<p>in white men's clothing. They civilized the Islanders all right. But when they got through there were no natives left. They were all dead of tuberculosis, the civilized man's disease, previously unknown in the Islands.---Bruce Calvert in "The Open Road".</p>
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Madness or Method in Christianity

By F. C. OBERLAENDER, Vienna, Austria

"Though this be madness, yet there's method in it"-Shakespeare in "Hamlet".

From time to time, we are exhorted by well-meaning though badly advised people to "cease attacking true Christianity" and to "go back to the teachings of Jesus". "We admit," these people say, "that dogmatic religion has few inducements to offer to thinking people, and that even persons who have taken a fancy to the supernatural and incline toward metaphysics cannot but feel repelled by its ridiculous superstitions. But if you would only take the trouble to get acquainted with the true Christ and true Christianity, they would most certainly appeal to you, even if you should happen to be agnostics or, worse still, atheists."

Well, then. So far, so good. We have always had our suspicions that what is taught from theological chairs, and dealt out from the pulpit and from Sunday schools, is NOT true Christianity, and that the Christ of the pulpit is NOT the Christ of the gospel.

Let us see, then, what the true Christ and true Christianity are. First there is the person of Jesus Christ. A most doubtful person indeed. He himself wrote no books---he was illiterate, as far as we can gather---and no books or historical testimonies tell anything of him, except four highly doubtful collections of myths and legends known as the four gospels, compiled, as far as can be ascertained, in the second or third century of the christian era by anonymous authors and portraying the story of an itinerant Jewish rabbi and preacher living in the country of Judaea during the reign of the Roman emperors, Augustus and Tiberius. Of the four gospels, at best one only is genuine, the other three having been ascertained to be copies of the original and fakes of a later origin. This itinerant rabbi called himself the messiah and the son of god (which was, of course, resented by the priesthood) and was later crucified for his alleged seditious and anti-religious activities. Of course, what the theologians and the

churches allege about Jesus does not matter any more than what Greek or Roman authors wrote about Jupiter and Juno and Aphrodite and the whole dissipated lot of minor gods and goddesses that peopled the Greek Olympus, or what Indian medicine-men told their tribes about Manitou. But apart from the theologians, a number of real scientists and historians have endeavored to separate, in the gospel, the historical from the mythical and the legendary, and to reconstruct, from the data thus available, a Life of Christ. In doing so, they had, of course, to proceed most critically, and to discern between what at first sight was recognizable as mere fiction and the fabrication of sly priests, and what might be regarded as historical facts. Foremost amongst these scientists, were the learned German, David F. Strauss, and the Frenchman, Ernest Renan, each of whom wrote a Life of Christ. Being scientists, they of course saw in Jesus Christ a mere man, but modern research has gone further than they---so far, in fact, as to challenge the very existence of Jesus. This is what Dr. Drews did, who sees in Jesus an entirely mythical person and fabrication of priests, and who would concede him no more reality than to King Arthur of the Round Table.

We need not go so far though. We may safely admit, and take it for granted, that some nineteen hundred years ago an itinerant preacher named rabbi Joshua ben Joseph (which is the real name of Jesus) walked the earth in the Roman province of Judaea. All throughout the history of mankind, but particularly in the times of social unrest and religious doubt, there have arisen among men, and will always arise, men who claim to be in possession of some supernatural remedy for man's many ailments. Specimens of them we can see even in our so-called enlightened times---vide Mary Baker Eddy and Aimee Semple McPherson. Mostly they are quacks, or impostors, or madmen, or a mixture of all three. There was exactly such a time two thousand years ago. The old pagan faiths were crumbling, and even the belief in old bewhiskered Jehovah was shattered. To this were added the terrible social conditions of the world, the horrors of slavery, the tyranny of the priests, the general distress and the oppression and depletion of the provinces by greedy Roman governors, the bloody wars and revolts, the invasion of warring nations with their wholesale slaughters, all of which made the people despair of the world. They turned to all sorts of mystic creeds of

Asiatic and Buddhist origin, to the cults of Mithras and Isis and countless others. They were willing (much as they are today) to lend their ears to every impostor, quack or madman, who tricked them into the most absurd beliefs, the most absurd always gaining upon the others.

This was the opportunity for self-styled "sons of god" and "redeemers" of all kinds, particularly with the little Hebrew race dominated by a tyrannical and zealous priesthood, which for centuries had been groaning under the successive foreign yokes of Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, and which had for centuries nourished the hope for the appearance, upon earth, of a god-sent messiah and liberator of the people. Thus the way was paved for Jesus of Nazareth (or Bethlehem or Capernaum), the son of a Galilean carpenter, who proclaimed himself, or rather was proclaimed by his followers, the promised messiah.

Whether to rank this rabbi Joshua ben Joseph as a quack, an impostor or a madman, we are at a loss. For a man to imagine himself the son of god, as Jesus did, a certain amount of obsession certainly is necessary. Still we must try to understand Jesus in the light of his time and surroundings and against his

"background". He seems to have believed in himself and his supernatural mission with a naive belief. We shall do him justice if we imagine him as a kind of radical and soap-box orator of two thousand years ago, a man who revolted against the priesthood and the scribes and the propertied classes ("no more shall a rich man go to heaven than a camel through the eye of a needle"), who mingled with the poor, with fishermen and with the despised publicans and with loafers and street girls, and who finally met with the fate of many would-be benefactors of the world before him and after him.

This, then, is the true Christ of the gospel, to whom we are urged to go back. But would it be worth while for us? A man striving to help suffering humanity, a revolutionist of any time ought to be dear to our heart--but WAS Jesus a revolutionist? In a restricted sense, he certainly was a revolutionist in that he revolted against the selfishness of men and against pharisaism and dogmatic religion--in short, against the very forces which today use him as a cover. He revolted against religion in order to save religion, but religion must not be saved--it must be destroyed, if mankind is to be served, and to supersede one re-

ligion by another is expelling the devil by Beelzebub. Jesus would give to mankind a religion with high ethics, whereas what man needs is ethics without religion, alias superstition. You cannot found true ethics on a lie, be it even a pious lie like that of an omnipotent and all-merciful god-creator of the universe. But of course, we must not remonstrate with Jesus. How was a poor illiterate Galilean, brought up in the ignorance of his time and in the rigid faith of the old testament, to know any better? It is true that, long before his time, Greek scientists and philosophers had gained deep insights into the universe which had led them to repudiate all religious belief, but he stuck stubbornly to the old beliefs and to the old madness. A holy madness it was, perhaps, but still madness. And because mankind has nothing to expect from madness, holy or otherwise, we refuse to go back to Christ. Better champions of mankind have arisen since, and not faith but reason and knowledge are our cynosure.

So much for the person of Christ. But, so we are told, it is not the person of Christ, mythical or historical, that matters. It does not matter whether he was god or god's son, as the churchmen allege, or whether he was a mere man, as serious sci-

entists regard him, or whether or not he existed at all. For the teachings of Christ and christianity and the church which he is alleged to have founded---all of these exist, and it is with these that we have to deal. Well, let us deal with them quite without bias and impartially. We are not concerned here with the monstrous accumulation of absurdities forming the dogmatical system of the church: we will try Christ upon the merits of his pure, undiluted teachings as contained in the gospel. What, then, are the teachings of Christ?

What he taught was an incoherent and largely self-contradictory but on the whole ethical faith---not a doctrine, much less a system---that was evolved later and worked up into the wild-cat company called the "Church". Christianity as taught in the gospels is essentially a doctrine that turns its back on this world, and refers us to the other world. It does not care to make this a better world for man to live in, seeing that the real better world is awaiting us beyond. In the civilized state of man, it sees a state of danger, a state where man errs from god, and jeopardizes his soul. The pure Christian faith demands that man should suffer, and lead a miser's life, and deny himself all the pleasures of life and all happiness on

this side of heaven, in order to make sure of going to the other side. (The Christian faith of the churches, though not identical with the pure faith of the gospel, demands the same, but only from the poor and from the working classes). The pure Christian faith glorified pain and suffering and therefore it was only a step, only too frequently taken, to inflict pain and suffering upon others, in order that their souls might be saved. (This was the avowed purpose for which the church burned heretics). The ideal of true Christianity is the primitive man, the cave-dweller, the hermit in the desert, praying day and night, passing his life in idle meditation, living on grass and wild honey and mortifying his flesh. The best christian is he who turns his back on the world and on sinful civilization and withdraws into the desert or into a monastery. True Christianity would most lief have us lead the lives of poor Galilean fishermen and peasants of two thousand years ago, as long as "our souls are saved".

No civilization, no material or ethical progress can possibly accrue to mankind from such a faith. What has humanity to expect from a faith which, as the German philosopher Nietzsche put it, chose an instrument of torture and death, namely, the

cross, for its emblem? Ever since, mankind has been tied to a cross. True, if we dig deep enough through the dead heaps of gross superstitions and absurd beliefs, we may be able to unearth from the gospel certain ethical standards, and maxims for moral behavior. But it is hardly worth while digging when we can derive better and higher ideals from purer sources, not polluted with superstition. For the ethics of Jesus and the gospel are rendered worthless, and definitely spoiled, through being fatally mixed up with the bugbear and bogey of a personal god rewarding the good and punishing the wicked. We need no god belief to inspire us with the ideals of liberty and human brotherhood. On the contrary, we believe that god-belief is only liable to destroy them, as it has done throughout the history of mankind.

We are quite prepared to give the true Christ of the gospel his due. We do not approve of all that Christ said or did (as, for instance, when he rebuked his poor old mother: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?"), but on the whole his person, as revealed in the gospel, has a strong human appeal, and his was certainly a laudable but vain effort to introduce ethical standards into a world which until then had

mostly ignored them. In time to come, when religion shall have been overcome, and the figure of Jesus cleared from the slugs of superstition and supernatural beliefs, he should even be entitled to a niche in our hearts as a precursor, though a vague and remote one, of truly human ideas, and should rank with the thousands of other men who strove, and gave their lives, for the betterment of man. But as long as Jesus and the gospel are tied up with dogmatical religion we will have nothing to do with either. For the gist of all that has been said is the following: We repudiate dogmatical religion because we regard it as madness brought into a system. It was then hinted that we eventually might revise our opinion if we only went back to the teachings of Jesus and to true Christianity. Well, we have given them a fair and unbiased trial and we have found that while the method may be absent the madness is still all there. Madness with or without method seems, then, to be the choice. A poor choice indeed, and we must be excused if, confronted with this choice, we would have neither, and cling to reason and knowledge instead of madness of the one kind or the other.

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The Gentle Jesus

By HENRY H. ROSER

An astonishing and incomprehensible phase of the irrepressible conflict between the atheists and the fundamentalist and evangelistic Christians has been the attitude assumed by the latter, and, I fear, also by some higher critics and freethinkers, that, although modern Christianity, as we know it, is justly liable to severe criticism of its creeds, its conduct and standards, and its discreditable record in history, nevertheless liberal thinkers and atheists should accord to the reputed founder of Christianity, Jesus, a wonderful and unique personality, and concede to his "teachings" the supreme place of honor among the codes of the greatest philosophers of all time; that, although he might not be the "son of god" or "divine" in any sense of the word, yet, as a mere man, he is entitled to the greatest respect and admiration, as the apotheosis of the highest ethics and morality, and in a metaphorical sense, the "savior" of mankind.

That orthodox Christians should advance this argument is proof that they are willing to go to any length to bolster up their decay-

ing religious creeds, and Jesus is chosen as the scape goat. The freethinker who seizes this alluring bait, although well-grounded in his rebellion against superstition, finds it difficult to divest himself entirely of the absurd and fantastical dogmas instilled into his youthful mind by the morons and bigots who had the charge of his religious training.

It is extremely doubtful whether any such person as the Jesus described in the four gospels ever lived. Scientific students and some of the higher critics now assert that their researches negative his existence. Secular history knows no such a character, and Josephus, who was a countryman of the alleged Jesus and extremely meticulous in his narration of details, makes no reference to Jesus, except in one paragraph which, it is now generally agreed, was interpolated by some zealous scribe or friar.

However, mythical or not, the character, Jesus, is fanatically worshiped by millions of deluded people, and it has become vitally necessary to appraise his claims and those of his sponsors to supergoodness, virtue and piety.

In support of these claims, we are referred to certain passages in the four gospels. It is significant to note that many other passages which disprove these contentions of the Jesus-lovers are never quoted. Priests and preachers, Sunday school superintendents and missionaries carefully avoid them as they would a pestilence. Yet, these must be considered, if we are to arrive at a just and correct judgment as to the personality of Jesus.

There is no authority whatever for the claim that he "instituted" the Christian church. This was consummated many years after his death by some of the most zealous of the missionaries, and ever since that time his personality has been enveloped in a maze of fables, concocted tales and traditions such that it is extremely difficult to arrive at any logical conclusions. No provision whatever was made to perpetuate in authentic form the facts with reference to his existence and life work. Apparently, he never "wrote a book" or anything else, no sermons, no letters, not even his name. The four gospels purporting to be biographies were written many years after his death by many scribes and disciples whose identity is unknown,

They constitute very dubious records, contradict, duplicate and nullify one another, indicating a

multiplicity of authors. We are constrained, for the purpose of this discussion, however, to assume that he lived and that the four gospels are records of his life work.



A futile attempt to modernize religion.

Jesus is there pictured as an itinerant preacher or evangelist, expounding his erratic philosophy to those who would listen, just as street preachers do today. He is supposed to have been a carpenter by occupation, but it is not known that he ever did one day's work. The apocryphal book, "The Infancy of Jesus", relates how he assisted his earthly father by stretching and shortening boards.

The record of his sayings discloses a crazy patchwork of maxims, aphorisms, fables, fantasies, platitudes and lurid imprecations, which stamp him, from a psychopathic point of view, as a man of Any lofty sentiments to which he

parancric, and a confirmed egoist. Any lofty sentiments he gives utterance to were stolen almost bodily from the philosophy of Confucius, Buddha and other great thinkers of the pagan nations. Many of his fulminations remind one of the cruel Jehovah of the old testament, who poured out the vials of his wrath upon his "chosen people" and drowned the whole world in a moment of passion.

He reaffirmed the "law and the prophets," thus endorsing the old blood-thirsty and superstitious regime, but his gentile followers wandered far afield, and established a new religion and a new church whose bloody record marks a turbulent path across the centuries. Matt. 5:17.

As the "vicars of Christ," the popes established the infamous "Holy Inquisition" for the extirpation of heresy. Victims were flayed, broken upon the wheel, mangled with pinchers, thumb-screws, iron boots filled with hot lead, iron virgins, and numberless other instruments of torture and frequently the martyrs were burned or buried alive. This was only carrying out the injunction of Jesus: "But these thine enemies, that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me". Luke 19:27. The trail of the Church has been fairly littered

with shattered lives and families, minds deranged and mankind degraded. All of which is the legitimate outgrowth of the so-called "teachings" of the gentle Jesus.



By-products of christianity.

Lecky, Buckle, White and Gibbon give extended accounts of orgies in the monasteries and nunneries during the middle ages, fornication and incest amongst the friars and priests, the slaughter of the Crusades, and the profligacy and lewdness of the "holy" popes.

Jesus commended the poor in spirit (Matt. 5:3), meekness (5:5), promised reward in heaven for persecution (5:12), extolled cowardice and advised agreeing with one's adversary quickly (5:25), told his followers to turn the other cheek (5:39), to give no thought for the morrow but pray to the "Father" for daily bread (6:11,31), to resist not evil

(3:39); "if any man sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also; who-soever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain" (5:40, 41); approved castration for the kingdom of heaven's sake (19:10-12), "make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness: that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations". Luke 16:9. This last injunction the churches have faithfully obeyed.

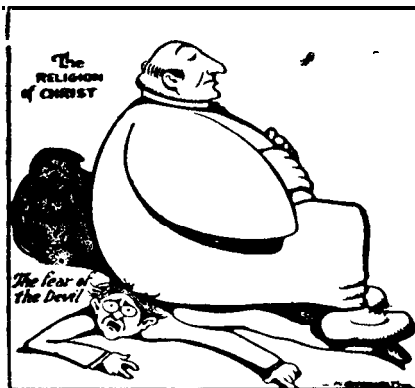
Jesus had no home (Matt. 8:20) but lived with friends in Bethany and had no clothes excepting a Mother Hubbard garment and a pair of sandals. He picked up a precarious living, eating figs and plucking grain as he wandered over the country. Matt. 12:1. He curses a fig-tree for not bearing fruit out of season. Mark 11:13. He told his disciples that he would make them fishers of men and the preachers have caught many suckers since that time. Matt. 4:19.

His sponsors call him "Prince of Peace", but he declared:

"Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

"For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother and the daughter in law against her mother in law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." Matt. 10:34-37.



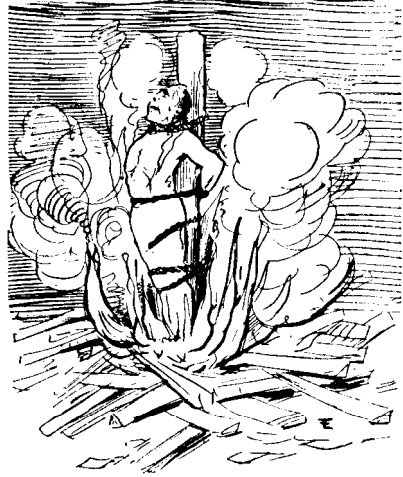
Religion crushes mankind through fear.

The slaughter, carnage and butchery of the religious wars depicted on the bloody pages of the history of the Christian era constitute irrefutable proof of the truth of this remarkably frank admission. To an inquiring one he said: "Honor thy father and thy mother (Matt. 19:19), and when his mother came and told him there was no wine for the wedding, he angrily exclaimed: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" John 2:4. He then calmly proceeded to turn six stone pots full of perfectly good water into perfectly good wine, thus affording some justification for bootleggers and racketeers, both religious and otherwise, to this day.

"The children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth;" "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment" said the gentle Jesus. Matt. 8:12 and 25:41. Also: "If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:26. This atrocious saying has disrupted many families and caused endless suicides, murders and other tragedies. "And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death." Matt. 10:21. Nice picture? The church has fulfilled this prophecy.

"If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 18:19. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye will receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:23,24. "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive." Matt. 21:22. No prayer to a spirit has ever been answered, proving that Jesus was both a deceiver and a falsifier. He drove the money changers from the Temple (Matt. 21:13), but told the Pharisees to render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's. Matt. 22:21. He declared that a rich man can not enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 19:23,24), but also: "Unto every one that hath shall be given; but from him that hath

not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him. Luke 19:26. How comforting! "There are some of them that stand here, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the



Damned to everlasting fire--Mark 16:16

Son of man coming in his kingdom." Well, the Son of man hasn't showed up yet.

Many other passages might be cited to show the absurdities, falsehoods and inanities that Jesus was guilty of, proving that he was not a god, but subject to all of the infirmities of mankind, nor any different from the Billy Sundays and Sam Joneses who have encumbered the earth since.

Christians do not and can not comply with the contradictory rules of conduct laid down in the gospels. Voltaire, Ingersoll, Bradlaugh and Paine have unfolded a standard of ethics which we may all safely and wisely follow.

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Owned, Edited and Published by
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R. 4, Box 720 Issued Bi-Monthly
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California. 10c per copy

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Science tells us that when a person eats a heavy meal the blood rushes to the region of the stomach to warm the food and stimulate digestion. Upon the other hand, when the stomach is empty, the blood rushes to the brain and by its warmth stimulates thinking. According to this, the past two years should have been good years for thinking. As a matter of fact, the public libraries of the big cities report a large increase in attendance and

in the circulation of books, showing that some people are reading and thinking. Few people, however, use the facilities offered by our libraries as much as they should. Man is said to be a thinking animal. If he cannot or will not think, then he is only animal. Like other animals, he is subject to the laws of evolution, chief of which, perhaps, is the law of the "survival of the fittest".

There was a time, ages ago, when brawn and muscle made an animal, or a man, or a race, fit to survive. That time has largely passed away. Today, only the clever, thinking creatures have a chance to survive against others of their own species, or in contest with other species. This is the age of brain-controlled effort.

Mechanical invention has replaced muscular power. The animal, or the man, or the race, or the nation which uses its reason to direct and control its conduct is the one best fitted to survive in the increasingly sharp struggle for existence. The discoveries, experiences and the thoughts of other men and women are to be found in their books. When we study what they have done, and then apply to that study our own thought and experience, we shall be better able to direct our own conduct, than if we remain in ignorance of the stored up knowledge of the world's thinkers.

IS THE BIBLE INSPIRED?

By W. H. WILLIAMSON

There are few subjects upon which intelligent people are so ill informed as on their religion. Children are led to religion and told to drink of its waters with the threat that if they don't they will surely die. They have no choice in the matter, and parents merely do to their children as they were done by.

Those who have lived in a religious atmosphere know the torture of religious doubt. In nearly all other problems that arise, one can freely set out the difficulty: but religious doubt is a sin; it is something born of the devil; it is something to be hidden; it is unsympathizable. Some "why" or "how" has crept into the mind and shaken the religious content. Hows and whys must go out by praying and fasting if need be, but go they must. We dare not struggle with any such question and accept the logical consequences.

Today, when men no longer need fear the stake if they disagree with the priests, they still cling to the teaching that they received in their childhood, and refuse to inquire whether it is true or not. Fear still oppresses them. Many, who feel that they do not and cannot accept all that the church teaches, still bow down in the House of Rimmon,

and pay tribute to custom and ancient creed.

The fear of truth is the worst fear a man can have. It checks intellectual adventure and all fine soaring. It is pitiful to think that their intelligence should be warped, and that men should refuse to weigh the evidence before them, or to use their reason because of some ghostly fear that refuses argument. There is a satisfaction gained from the pursuit of truth that is to blind acceptance of the undemonstrable as light is to darkness.



"The Inspired Word"

What would the priest say to a man who hesitated to believe that Jonah lived three days in a whale's belly? He could say: "The story is in the bible; the bible is the word of God, therefore the story is true." Then

the doubter would reply: "How do you know that the bible is the word of God?"

"The church has said so," would be the reply of the priest.

"And how does the church know?"

The priest has no valid answer. The church asserts that the bible is the word of God, and in that way gains authority for it. But the church does not offer any evidence that the bible is God's word. There is no just cause or impediment why the seeker after truth should not try to find out for himself whether the bible is the word of God or not.

If the bible is true and is the word of God to man, then a man who neglected its teaching would be a fool: it would be the most precious thing man holds. But if the priest is wrong, if the bible is the work of man, then let us know the truth and not be afraid. But, above all, let us not be hypocrites: and do not let us doubt and pretend that we believe.

It is obviously worth while to examine the claim of the church that the bible is the inspired word of God.

If the bible was written by men, it must contain many errors; it will probably have myths and tales borrowed from other peoples and other religions. It will express the perverse, igno-

rant, stupid, yet possibly sincere views of the period. It will be savage and blood-thirsty, moving and beautiful. In other words, it will reflect man through the ages.

But if it was inspired by an all-wise, all-loving, all-powerful, omniscient God, it will be a book that has none of the errors, contradictions, foolish borrowings, blood-thirstiness, savagery, and monstrosities of men.

Any reasonable person can tell the difference between a letter concerning a complicated matter dictated by the head of the firm and one written by the office boy. Any person of common sense who will fearlessly read the bible to see whether it was written by God or by men, will be able to say unhesitatingly that it is not God's word but man's word. -- From "Thinker or Believer?", published by Watts & Co., 5 & 6 Johnson's Court, Fleet St., London, E.C. 4.

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THE RETORT COURTEOUS

About a hundred sixty years ago, Benjamin Franklin wrote and published a tract entitled, "Remarks Concerning Savages of North America". From it, Edgar L. Hewett, D. Soc., LL D., Director of the School of American Research of the Archeological Institute of America, quotes the following excerpt, after explaining that the commissioners from Virginia had informed a commission from the Six Nation Confederacy that "they would be pleased to provide for the education of a limited number of Indian youths. The government would see that they were well provided for and instructed in all of the wisdom of the white race". The Indians politely considered the offer in council and replied, according to Franklin, as follows :

"We know you highly esteem the kind of learning taught in those colleges, and that the maintenance of our young men while with you would be very expensive to you. We are convinced, therefore, that you mean to do us good by your proposal, and we thank you heartily. But you, who are wise, must know that different nations have different conceptions of things: and you will therefore not take it amiss if our ideas of this kind of edu-

cation happen to be not the same as yours. We have had some experience of it. Several of our young people were formerly brought up at the colleges of the northern provinces; they were instructed in all of your sciences; but when they came back to us they were bad runners, ignorant of every means of living in the woods, unable to bear either cold or hunger, knew neither how to build a cabin, take a deer, nor kill an enemy; spoke our language imperfectly; were therefore fit for neither hunters, warriors nor counselors---they were therefore totally good for nothing.

"We are, however, not the less obliged by your kind offer, although we decline to accept it: and to show our grateful sense of it, if the gentlemen of Virginia will send us a dozen of their sons, we will take great care of their education, instruct them in all we know, and make men of them."

4A Open Forum

The Los Angeles branch of the 4A (American Association for the Advancement of Atheism) meets every Friday at 8 p. m. in Room 218, 224 South Spring St., Los Angeles. Lectures by popular speakers are followed with questions and discussion of the subject of the evening by volunteers from the audience.

THEOLOGICAL DICTIONARY

By GRACE VERNE SILVER

ALTAR: In ancient times, the butcher's block on which the burnt offerings were roasted; now a receptacle where the parson puts his sermon notes, bible and, occasionally, the sacrament.

BALAAAM'S ASS: The first ass that ever preached a sermon. However, it is now a very common accomplishment of asses, and attracts but little attention. Num. 22:21-29.

CRUSADES: Seven distinct attempts by Christendom to recover possession of the sepulchre of Jesus and of the Holy Land from the "Infidels" (the Jews and Mohammedans). Although god was always with the crusading armies, millions of men, women and children were slaughtered or died of wounds or disease and went to heaven, but the Infidels eventually won out and have retained possession of the tomb ever since.

DELILAH: A Philistine court-
esan with whom the famous Samson fell in love. Samson was a judge of Israel for twenty years, but needed considerable judging himself, as he was guilty of wholesale murder and arson, and a few other crimes. Samson was a Naza-

rite, wore long hair, with seven locks, annointed of the lord. Delilah put him to sleep, called in a barber to shave his head, and then treacherously delivered him over to the Philistines, who put out his eyes. Judges 16:21.

EXCOMMUNICATION: A papal edict padlocking the gates of heaven: a sort of theological quarantine against unfaithful Catholics. A display of penitence, accompanied by cold cash, usually suffices to placate both the pope and the virgin Mary and god does whatever they order.

FAT: All the fat parts of offerings were jehovah's portion; the Jews were forbidden to eat either fat or blood, which accounts for the priests being so corpulent. Lev. 3:4-17.

GABRIEL: Literally, "man of god". An archangel, appointed chief of staff and orderly to jehovah. On the resurrection morn, Gabriel, as bailiff ex officio, will blow a great blast on his trumpet, whereat all the dead will arise, including missionaries eaten by cannibals, and be escorted to the Judgment Seat. No lawyers will be permitted at the trial. Rev. 20:11-15.

HALLELUJAH: A war whoop shouted by an ardent Christian worshiper about the time the

holy ghost descends upon him: very pleasing to Jehovah, as he knows then that the religious brew is beginning to boil.



• HALLELUJAH !

INSANITY: An eclipse of the reason, more or less permanent: sometimes accompanied with convulsions, brought on by religious fervor.

JEHOSHAPHAT: Son of king Asa; reigned as king of Judah twenty-five years; served god faithfully and was rewarded with riches and honor. Used as an exclamation of surprise or astonishment. II Chron. 17:3-5.

KARKOR: A place east of the Jordan river where Gen. Gideon (publisher of the famous Gideon bible) surprised and slaughtered the army of the

Midianites and captured their chiefs. Judges 8:10.

LEVITES: Members of the tribe of Levi, especially designated and set apart by Moses as a hereditary priesthood. They are the only qualified butchers among the Jews and thus constituted the first Butchers' Union. I Chron. 23:13, 24-32.

MANGER: A feeding trough celebrated in sacred annals as the birth place of Jesus. His parents (the Holy Ghost and the virgin Mary) were so poor that they could not furnish better accommodations. This is the only known instance of a babe born in a stable. Luke 2:4-7.

NEBO: A mountain which overlooked the promised land: Moses had a bird's eye view of it and then died and was buried on Mount Nebo, as related by him in Deut. 34:1-8, aged one hundred and twenty years. In spite of his heroic services for forty years, Jehovah refused to allow Moses to enter the Promised Land.

ONLY SON of GOD: Jesus Christ: so-called because, with the exception of the sons of God who came down and married the daughters of men, (Gen. 6:2), and about forty other saviors who were also sons of God, J. C. was the only one.

PURGATORY: Imaginary kingdom in the next world, discovered by the Vicar of Christ, from which he derives vast revenues. A theological half way house or quarantine station for wandering souls: God's Clearing House for departed souls, superintended by the pope.

QUICK: Theologically speaking, all human beings who shall be lucky enough to be alive when Gabriel blows his horn. The dead ones will have to get out of their graves the best way they can. Those whose ashes have been scattered to the four winds will find considerable difficulty in pulling themselves together. Acts 10:42.

RAVEN: A black, carnivorous, ill-omened bird, not allowed to be eaten by the Jews: one was sent out of the Ark by the famous skipper Noah (Gen. 9:7). Jehovah commanded a flock of ravens to bring bread and meat to Elijah the Tishbite, who was encamped in the jungle at the brook Cherith. Like most prophets, Elijah was too lazy to work. I Kings 17:4-6.

SUNDAY: The sabbath observed by the Christians. Jehovah ordered the Jews to observe the seventh day on pain of death (Ex. 31:15) as a memorial that god rested from his arduous labors on that day, but in 321

A. D. Constantine the Infamous overruled Jehovah and enjoined the observance of Sunday upon the ground that god should have rested before he started to work.

TUBAL-CAIN: Grandson of Methushael; forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron. Gen. 4:22.

URIM: Sacred instruments used by Mormon seers under god's direction: always in tune.

VERILY: A bye word often used by Jesus and his disciples to impress on their hearers that upon that particular occasion they were telling the truth.

WAGES: Jehovah severely denounced those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and fatherless (Mal. 3:5). Soulless corporations, please take notice.

KIPHOID: Shaped like a sword. A term used in anatomy.

Y. M. C. A.: The Young Men's Christian Association was organized by George Williams in London in 1844 as a religious society to fortify its members in the Christian faith. Like all other religious bodies, it has become thoroughly commercialized and makes their bodies strong and their minds weak.

ZYGOMA: The cheek bone. All heathen have high cheek bones and Christians low ones.