(continued from previous page)

"Well, that is not very many in the history of man. The Queen Elizabeth would hold them all."

"You don't know how many it is. Nobody does. But even if you were right it is too many to scoff at."

"When did I do that?"

"You are always doing it. You laugh at everything that is sacred."

"Would you be more definite. Name something sacred that I scoff at."

"Religion."

"Religion is a big word. Which one do you mean?"

"There is only one."

"I think there are hundreds. But if we consider only your religion——"

"There you go at once. Scoffing at Christianity."

"I think you had better try again. Or let me finish what I started to say."

"I don't want you to finish. There was mockery in your voice. You were sneering at my faith."

"Do you sneer when you name Mohammedans; or Buddhists; or followers of Confucius or Zoroaster?"

"Those are dead religions. This is the Christian era."

"How many Christians in two thousand years? What percentage of mankind?"

I did not wait for the answer. Neither did Elsie, who suddenly staggered, swayed, and fell on her chest with her legs spread on either side.

* * *

AUGUST 18

SIXTY years ago no one swam in Lake Wakatipu. It was so cold that to dive into it was to be seized by cramp and drowned. So everybody believed. Then an intelligent schoolmaster went down to the lake with a thermometer and proved that the average temperature through an average summer was very little below the temperature of the sea at St. Clair. After that visitors began to swim, local residents joined them, and cramp and sudden death disappeared. Now girls seeking fame as swimmers try the journey from side to side, and one day no doubt will try from end to end.

But I find it more difficult than it used to be to surrender to the thermometer. When it says frost I can still shiver, but I can't warm up by noticing that the mercury is rising. The hypnotist is losing power, the patient belief. But I can, I find, warm faster than the air if I meet another unbeliever. If my feelings or readings are questioned or denied; if someone says it is cold when I know it is two degrees warmer than it was at the same time yesterday; if I say before I see the figure that there has been a record frost and some nark answers, "Oh, I don't know: I think it was colder yesterday," and then calmly goes to the thermometer; when anything like that happens heat can rise rapidly to the very crown of my head. It was not so when the test of a frost was the weight of a draught horse on a rutted road.

(To be continued)

A Personal Science

PSYCHOLOGY is the most personal of the sciences. All other sciences, in greater or less degree, try to classify our experience of the world and establish causal relations between separate events — whereas Psychology looks inward at the mind and heart of man, that jungle within, which I, as a poet, am hopelessly in love with.—James K. Baxter, in an NZBS talk on "Psychology and the Arts."