

# THE Freethinker

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*This King Shakespeare, does not he shine, in crowned sovereignty, over us all, as the noblest, gentlest, yet strongest of rallying-signs.*—THOMAS CARLYLE.

## Humanity.

It is frequently claimed, and more frequently insinuated, that Jesus Christ was the first cosmopolitan. "He came of the Jewish stock," it is said, "and yet he had no trace of the Jew in him." Certainly he has no trace of the Jew in him as he is painted by Christian artists and presented by Christian teachers to non-Jewish and even Jew-hating nations. But there is a very decided "trace of the Jew in him" in the New Testament. To the Canaanitish woman he said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." To the twelve apostles he said, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." It was Paul who, finding he could not make headway against the apostles who had known Jesus personally, exclaimed, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles." That exclamation was a turning-point. It was the first real step to such universalism as Christianity has attained.

But even in the case of Paul it is perfectly idle to suppose that his cosmopolitanism extended beyond the Roman Empire. The very fact of the Roman Empire was the secret of his cosmopolitanism. Moral conceptions follow in the wake of political expansion. The morality of a tribe is tribal; that of a nation is national; and national morality only develops into international morality with the growth of international interests and international communication. Now the Roman Empire had broken up the old nationalities, and with them their local religions. The human mind broadened with its political and social horizon. And the result was that a cosmopolitan sentiment in morals, and a universal conception in religion, naturally spread throughout the territory which was dominated by the Roman eagles. Christianity itself was at first a Jewish sect, which developed into a more cosmopolitan system precisely because the national independence of the Jews had been broken up, and all the roads of a great empire were open to the missionaries of the new faith.

When it is argued that the common brotherhood of man was revealed by Paul in his teaching of the common fatherhood of God, it is sufficient to say that this was disproved by Paul himself; for, in his sermon to the Athenians, he enforces his argument that all men are God's children by reminding them that "certain also of your own poets have said, For we also are his offspring."

The idea of "our common humanity" is not due to the Christian religion. Max Müller said that it is a purely Christian conception, and that there was no trace of it until Christ came. But his argument was really an etymological quibble. Certainly the Greeks knew nothing of "humanity," simply because they did not speak Latin. But they had an equivalent word in *philanthropos*, which was in use in the time of Plato, four hundred years before Christ.

Those are either reckless or ignorant who declare that the idea of human brotherhood owes its origin

to Christ, Paul, or Christianity. To say nothing of Buddha, whose ethics are wider than the ethics of Christ, and confining ourselves to Greece and Rome, with the teaching of whose thinkers Christianity comes into more direct comparison—it is easy enough to prove that such defenders of Christianity are deceived or deceiving. Socrates being asked on one occasion as to his country, replied, "I am a citizen of the world." And that was four hundred years before Christ. Cicero, the great Roman orator and writer, in the century before Christ, uses the very word *caritas* which St. Paul adopted in his famous thirteenth of Corinths. Cicero, and not Paul, was the first to pronounce "charity" as the tie which unites the human race. After picturing a soul full of virtue, living in charity with its friends, and taking as such all who are allied to it by nature, Cicero rose to a still loftier level of morality. "Moreover," he said, "let it not consider itself hedged in by the walls of a single town, but acknowledge itself a citizen of the whole world, as though one city." In another treatise he speaks of "fellowship with the human race, charity, friendship, justice." Where, we ask, shall we find in the New Testament a cosmopolitan text as strong, clear, and pointed as these sayings of Socrates and Cicero—the one a Greek, the other a Roman, and both before Christ?

From the time of Cicero—that is, from the time of Julius Cæsar and the establishment of the Empire—the sentiment of brotherhood, the idea of a common humanity, spread with certainty and rapidity, and is reflected in the writings of the philosophers. The exclamation of the Roman poet, "As a man, I regard nothing human as alien to me," which was so heartily applauded by the auditory in the theatre, expressed a growing and almost popular sentiment. The works of Seneca abound in fine humanitarian passages, and it must be remembered that if the Christians were tortured by Nero at Rome, it was by the same hand that Seneca's life was cut short. "Wherever there is a man," said this thinker, "there is an opportunity for a deed of kindness." He believed in the natural equality of all men. Slaves were such through political and social causes, and their masters were bidden to refrain from ill-using them, not only because of the cruelty of such conduct, but because of "the natural law common to all men," and because "he is of the same nature as thyself." Seneca denounced the gladiatorial shows as human butcheries. So mild, tolerant, humane, and equitable was his teaching that the Christians of a later age were anxious to appropriate him. Tertullian called him "Our Seneca," and the facile scribes of the new faith forged a correspondence between him and their own St. Paul. One of Seneca's passages is a clear and beautiful statement of rational altruism. "Nor can anyone live happily," he says, "who has regard to himself alone, and uses everything for his own interests; thou must live for thy neighbor, if thou wouldst live for thyself." Eighteen hundred years afterwards Auguste Comte sublimated this principle into a motto of his Religion of Humanity—*Vivre pour Autrui*, Live for Others. It is also expressed more didactically by Ingersoll—"The way to be happy is to make others so"—making duty and enjoyment go hand in hand.

G. W. FOOTE.

(To be concluded.)

## God and Morals.—II.

(Concluded from p. 291.)

If what has already said be true, it follows that the Theist's argument concerning the *existence* of morality is on all-fours with his argument that adaptation in the animal world is a proof of design. In the last case the argument is rendered invalid by the fact that animal life could not exist at all unless it were adapted to its environment, by the fact that by far the larger number of animals born die because they are not sufficiently well adapted, and also by the fact that the operation of Natural Selection shows us the machinery by which the special balance of forces that we call adaptation has been secured. And with a mere change of words, all that is true of structural adaptation is true of morality—which is only adaptation in another direction, and to a special medium.

For the essential distinction between the adaptive process that goes on in fitting the color or structure of an animal to its environment and the adaptive process that meets us as morality is that the latter is an adaptation of ideas and feelings to others of a like kind. And as with adaptations, in other directions the moral life becomes more perfect as the individual is better adapted to the general life around him. But some degree of adaptation is essential, otherwise the selective process that meets us in the lower animal world is duplicated and the morally ill-adapted are eliminated. This elimination is secured in various ways, but it is this which supplies the answer to the Theistic plea that because morality gains ground there must be a moral driving force behind the universe. The only question is, What is the cause of this developing adaptation? Or, in other words, what is the mechanism of improvement?

The nature of the process is really given when we call man a social animal. If we can conceive an absolutely anti-social man, it is evident that the chances of perpetuating the type are extremely small. And even in cases where anti-social feelings express themselves in particular directions, their repression is assured. To take an extreme illustration, a society, no matter how rude its structure, could no more tolerate murder, as an habitual occurrence, than an individual could feed himself on prussic acid. Killing may be tolerated, but it must be under certain specified conditions, and cannot be exercised beyond a certain point, or the tribe ceases to exist. And what is true of homicide is true in its degree of all other offences against the feelings or customs of the tribe. There are certain rules in the game of social life that must be observed if the individual is to remain within its compass. And it may be noted that these rules are enforced with much greater rigor in primitive societies than in more civilised ones. It is quite fallacious to think of the savage as free and the civilised man as bound down by social and legal codes. Quite the contrary is the case. The life of the savage is regulated in all its pettiest details by a host of customs and laws that leave him scarcely any room for initiative. The civilised man or woman moves through life with a freedom that would be incomprehensible to a savage. Paradoxical as it may sound, it is yet true that civilised man owes his freedom of action to those laws which to a hasty observer seem to cripple his movements.

This, however, by the way. The main point is that from the earliest times there is an elimination of the anti-social spirit that is parallel to the method by which in the lower animal world adaptation is secured between an animal and its environment. Observance of the social code is secured by the destruction of those whose nature leads them to ignore it.

Then, added to the pressure of its recalcitrant members, we have the outside pressure of group upon group. As the relations between individuals

lead to the development of individual characteristics, so the relations between groups—whether of a friendly or unfriendly nature—lead to the development of certain group characteristics. Real participation in group life means more than an abstention from injurious acts—it involves a positive contribution to its welfare. This disposition is not merely strengthened by contest with other groups, it is a primary condition of survival in the struggle. Other things equal, we cannot but conceive that, given a competition between groups, that group will survive in which the members display the greater cohesion, the better discipline, and the greater readiness to sink themselves in the common welfare. A social discipline sets in which selects individuals because of their capacity for adaptability to the social structure. The opposite type irritates the social tissue, much as a foreign substance does when introduced into the individual organism, and in both cases a reaction is set up making for its removal. In this way group disciplines group, one group displacing the other in virtue of its greater capacity for united action and the possession of a keener social consciousness.

In addition to these two processes, there is another of a highly important character. In all except its elementary aspects the environment to which character must be adapted is an environment of ideas and ideals. Certain ideals of loyalty, obedience, truth, kindness, etc., surround each individual from the moment of birth; and, from the earliest years, the nature of each is being moulded in accordance with these ideals. A Frenchman or a German feels himself dishonored in refusing a duel; an Englishman would feel himself a fool for engaging in one. Perhaps the most convincing illustration of the power of ideals on conduct—quite irrespective of their quality—is furnished by the suppression of suttee in India. A European would be likely to think that in suppressing the burning of widows on the death of their husbands, those who were doomed to be burned would render the greatest assistance. As a matter of fact, some of the strongest opposition came from the widows themselves. There is endless difference in the form of these social ideals, but their effect in disciplining individuals is everywhere the same. But while this is so there is a point beyond which even the power of ideas and ideals cannot go. Behind social regulations are natural laws or forces, and modes of conduct which endanger the welfare of the group cannot persist. Natural Selection is at work here as elsewhere; and as man becomes more conscious of the nature of social processes, a more certain check is given to modes of conduct and ideals of life which, while they may not actually threaten social security, yet also restrict social growth.

Of course, it must be understood that while I have, for the sake of clearness, separated these factors of conduct, there is no such separation in actual fact. All these phases are active together, although not always so. But the essence of the moralising process is the adaptation of individual ideas and feelings to social requirements under penalty of elimination. This process has, again, a two-fold aspect. On the one hand it establishes moral feelings on a firmer basis by driving them deeper into human nature. And on the other hand it gives them a clearer expression by spreading them over a wider area. From the family moral feelings spread to the tribe, from the tribe to the nation, and by sheer growth they leap the barriers that nationalism would erect. Mr. Norman Angell in his remarkably interesting work, *The Great Delusion*, has rightly pointed out the fallacy of treating nations as an organism. There is not a civilised nation in the world that is to-day self-contained or self-supporting. Scientific and other developments bring all nations into mutual contact, and makes each more or less dependent upon all. We utilise each other's discoveries; we share each other's knowledge. Economic interdependence develops and binds different peoples together in a common fortune or misfortune. As with the growth from uncellular to multicellular

organism, nations are fast losing their character as organisms and taking on that of organs in an organism constituted by the whole of humanity.

And this means—what? Well, if it means anything at all, it means that the feelings which once found expression within the tribe, and later within the nation, must begin to express themselves in the relation between nations. It means that as individual human nature had to become adapted to the group, and the group nature to the nation, so the nation, in virtue of its own growth, must become adapted to a humanity that is realising itself as an organic unity. No absolutely new quality is created at any stage. It is simply that a wider expression is given to qualities already existing. When the human environment was narrow, moral feelings expressed themselves over a sharply restricted area. As the environment broadens, the moral feelings undergo a corresponding expansion. The growth of population, of knowledge, a thousand and one inventions and discoveries, serve to bring nations together, and, despite the superficial distinction of language, or creed, or nationality, to make clear the fundamental identity of their nature and needs.

There is, then, no mystery about the fact of morality—or, rather, the mystery only exists for those who make it. Morality is as much a natural fact as the law of gravitation. Every association of human beings involves it. Even a society of professional pickpockets cannot exist without a code of rules regulating their association. The old adage, "honor among thieves," is a witness to this. Whether the rules be few or many, admirable or detestable, they are there; and so long as the association is maintained, so long must the rules be observed. Properly regarded, moral laws are to the body social what physiological laws are to the individual organism. And as with the fact of morality, so with its growth. Just as in the animal world the better structures—due to sheer variation—displace those not so well adapted to their surroundings, so the more socialised nature tends to prevail over the less socialised. The non-moral and the immoral are so much grit in the social machinery that interferes with its orderly working. The growth of human society is thus on the side of a strengthening of morality, because morality is only another name for that balance of internal forces by means of which each member is adjusted to the necessities of the social structure. It is but one more example of the workings of the general principle of evolution. And he who sees an intelligent aim in evolution is either distorting language or fails to appreciate the nature of the principle with which he is dealing.

C. COHEN.

### The Resurrection.

CHRISTIAN apologists assume that at the root of unbelief there is hostility; but the assumption is entirely groundless. Secularists cannot be described as enemies of God, the supernatural, or the miraculous, because enmity implies the existence of the objects hated. To say that an Atheist cherishes ill-will and malevolence towards God is to be guilty of a glaring contradiction in terms. He may wonder how anybody can be so blind as to love the Jewish or the Christian Deity; but to him they are both non-existent, and he has no feeling whatever towards them. And yet nothing is commoner than the assertion that Atheism is purely an emotional attitude—the refuge of rogues and cowards. "You know well enough that God exists," Atheists are often told; "your higher nature speaks for him all the time; but you are the slaves of your lower nature, and the thought of his holiness and justice is disagreeable to you, and you try to convince yourselves that there is no such being by openly denying him." It is only a few here and there who have the honesty to acknowledge that there are absolutely sincere Atheists. It naturally follows, of course, that unbelievers in God are

likewise unbelievers in miracles. But to say that they harbor a feeling of hostility to the miraculous would be to grossly misrepresent them. Their disbelief in it is merely an intellectual attitude into which they are forced by the facts of history. There is no reason whatever why they should dislike, say, the idea of a resurrection from the dead. Indeed, there are respects in which such an idea would be most fascinating to many of them. The reason why they do not cherish it is the total lack of evidence that it has ever been converted into a fact.

This is especially true of the disbelief in the resurrection of Jesus. There is now a rapidly growing number of Christians who have surrendered the belief in his physical return to life. How they can have done that and yet remained Christians is an insoluble mystery to outsiders. But to charge them with having swerved away from the miraculous because the thought of it was not pleasant to them would be to do them a great injustice. They have given up the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection because criticism has forced them to the conclusion that the accounts of them are wholly mythical. At the same time, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that the position they accept is utterly illogical. It is impossible to retain the Gospel Jesus as anything but a Divine Being tabernacling in human nature, to whom the miraculous was perfectly natural. The Rev. N. S. Talbot, M.A., of Oxford, has an excellent article in the current number of the *Hubbert Journal*, entitled "A Study of the Resurrection," in which he argues very cogently that there is a wholeness in the Gospel presentation of Jesus which logically necessitates his being accepted as portrayed, or not at all. He says:—

"It is undeniable that modern thought in its sensitiveness to the difficulty of miracle has labored to extricate from the body of Christian tradition a gospel freed from the offence of the miraculous. In particular this has meant a swerving away from the miraculous beginning and climax of the Christian story, so as to arrive at a simple residual amount of teaching to be grouped round the human, though no doubt inspired, figure of Jesus of Nazareth."

Having thus stated what the Modernist position is, he proceeds to criticise it thus:—

"So far as I can judge, the synoptic records are emerging from the ordeal of minute criticism with their main unity proved incapable of dissection. By this I mean that, apart from the attribution of parts to different sources and authorities (indeed, noticeably in spite of this), there yet remains a wholeness in them which cannot be splintered into parts. It is the wholeness of the personality of Jesus. That means a mediated wholeness: for the person of Jesus is only given to us through the wholeness of the apostolic conception of him. Further, the wholeness of their conception of him is derived from the dramatic *action* of Jesus.....It does not seem to be an artificial unity which the writers pieced together, but rather a unity into which they had been so wrought by events that they could not help the material they used reflecting the unity of the Personality central to the events."

Mr. Talbot's argument is in the main sound, and the New Theology, in the light of it, stands utterly condemned. The Resurrection matches the Virgin Birth, and both are confirmed by the miraculous life. The Jesus of Dr. Schmiedel's creation is a wholly impossible character. We must take the Gospel Jesus in his completeness, or reject him altogether. That is to say, if the Gospel Jesus is not historical, a historical Jesus cannot be constructed out of Gospel material. Drs. Paul Schmiedel and Arnot Neumann have written most interesting works upon what they *imagine* the historical Jesus was like, and Renan's *Life of Jesus* is a perfect masterpiece; but any characterisation of Jesus other than that of the Gospels is simply a *construction*. If a human Jesus ever lived, he is now absolutely irrecoverable. The only New Theologian who is consistent on this point is the Rev. Dr. Anderson, of Dundee. He has the courage to endorse the conclusions of Mr. John M. Robertson in his *Pagan Christs*. Orthodoxy, too, is consistent in that it swallows the whole New Testament without a qualm. Mr. Talbot

has no hesitation whatever in accepting the Gospel Jesus as a fully historical person; and to him the Resurrection presents no difficulty, but is the only reasonable climax to the earthly life of the Son of God.

Now, wherein does the alleged resurrection of Jesus differ from the resurrections with which mythology abounds. It is recorded of ever so many Deities and God-men that they were the Saviors of the world, who were slain and rose again on the second or third day. Why should the former be taken as a literal fact, while the latter are dismissed as purely legendary? Why should Krishna's resurrection be rejected as a worthless myth, while that of Jesus is hallowed as a supernatural event? The majority of modern Buddhists verily believe that Buddha rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, and one would like to know what makes the Buddhist belief less tenable than the Christian. It is quite true, perhaps, that apart from this belief there would have been no Christian Church. It is often asserted that the Church rests securely on the fact of the resurrection; but the truth is that she rests on the belief in a risen and ever-living Christ, and now that that belief is dying she is likewise in the process of decay. But of what value has the Church been to the world? What good has she accomplished? What proof has she ever adduced that she is the body of an infinite and omnipotent Savior? Is not her history written in blood? She has revelled all through the ages in wars and persecutions, in scenes of cruelty and slaughter. The risen and living Lord has never once shown himself yet, nor afforded a single evidence of his existence. He is fully as mythical as Krishna and Osiris and Dionysus, and even in Christendom his star is on the wane.

There are several theories of the Resurrection held by different schools of theology; but the only theory worth mentioning is that it was a resurrection of the body, the theory of the empty tomb. Professor Peake asks, "If the body did not rise, what became of it? We have good grounds for believing that the grave was empty." Have we? What are they? Dr. Neumann, who is quite as competent a judge, says thus:—

"Paul, and with Paul, history had no information about the empty grave; neither was aware that the women took such a prominent part in the events of Easter morning. Again, if the emptiness of the tomb, which at present is made by so many the foundation-stone of their belief, had been a well-known fact in those days, not only would Paul have known of it, but he would have been certain to use the fact as evidence to be laid before the Corinthians. But, apart from this consideration, the accounts of the Resurrection given by the Gospels, when they come to speak of the places, the persons, and the things that happened, reveal a whole chorus of contradictory voices and statements."

But the very fact that theories of the Resurrection have arisen and are cherished by different theologians proves conclusively that there is no knowledge on the subject. Further, the perpetual attempts made to establish the fact of the Resurrection are an additional evidence that the event never occurred. Had Jesus been the Son of God, who became incarnate and died and rose again in order to redeem a lost world, there would have been no need to prove the Resurrection. His activities in the world, resulting in the setting of all things right everywhere would have precluded even the possibility of unbelief. A reorganised society, the whole human race rid of all that makes for misery, and strife, and divisions, would have been his all-sufficient witness. Instead of that, he has afforded not a scrap of evidence that he lives at all. The work done in his name has been of such a nature that, if he lived, it would damn his character for ever.

J. T. LLOYD.

## The Ferrer Debate and its Lessons.

THE vote of the Spanish Cortes on the proposition for revision of Ferrer's trial ended in a sort of Pyrrhic victory for the murderers of the newest martyr of Freethought. All the eloquence, all the facts, and all the arguments during the fifteen days' debate in the Cortes were unquestionably with the Republican, Radical, and Socialist orators; but all these intellectual and moral advantages availed as nought against the abject attitude of Canalejas—inspired, no doubt, by the dynastic dangers of political honesty towards the fire-eating bravos of the Army. Cross and mitre, the soldier's sword and the bishop's crook, gained their temporary victory by the brute force of numbers. But their triumph is not one for rejoicing; it was, in fact, a moral defeat for the forces of reaction, a deadly blow to the moral credit of the Church, as the debate clearly showed in fuller light than ever the unscrupulous character of Maura, La Cierva, and their tools in compassing the death of Ferrer.

If the friends of religion in Spain are satisfied, we on our part are no less contented with the net results of the debate. Very few people expected that the victory for justice and Ferrer would be gained in one short, sharp campaign; but, on the other hand, very few people imagined that the ghost of Ferrer would again rise to drive another ministry from power, or that the Spanish people would scarcely have anything else in their newspapers to read about during quite a fortnight than the magnificent oratory of Melquiades, Sallilas, or Lerroux in vindication of Ferrer and in denunciation of the turpitudes of Maura and La Cierva. After these speeches, which reached the high water mark of parliamentary oratory, there can be no shadow of doubt left in the mind of any impartial student of Spanish affairs that the return of Maura to power is for ever impossible; that if revolution is to be averted the unholy alliance of the Sword and the Crozier in Spain will have to be broken, and both Church and Army brought into due submission to the civil power; and that the figure of Ferrer will remain as the beckoning spirit calling the Spanish race to the fulfilment of its high mission as a great national factor, alongside of the Portuguese and the French, in working out a purely secular ideal in civilisation.

In all my experience of over thirty-five years in connection with the Freethought movement, no event has occurred of such transcendent international importance to us as a party as the recent debate. In former years grave injustice to the standard-bearers of Freethought—whether in the shape of fine or imprisonment—could be safely buried away by the venal press in a few contemptuous lines of comment, and the public conscience was as yet quiescent to demand any fuller satisfaction of the wrong done. But Spain—that romantic and unhappy land where Christianity has worked itself out to the fullest demonstration of its incompatibility with civilisation and progress—has furnished us with the classic instance of the revolt of the intellectual *élite* against the domination of that baleful Church which stands as the highest embodiment of Christian consistency and the *reductio ad absurdum* of the claims of Christianity as the friend and furtherer of intellectual liberty.

The fall of the first Canalejas ministry—the third ministry which the avenging shades of Ferrer have overwhelmed with disaster—did not stay the progress of the revision debate in the Cortes. Since my article in the *Freethinker* of April 16 was written, proof of the infamy of Maura and La Cierva and the formulation of the evidence of Ferrer's absolute innocence, have been placed beyond all reasonable doubt by the matchless eloquence of Salvatella, of Emiliano Iglesias, of Alejandro Lerroux, of Pablo Iglesias, and many others—men who, in satire, as it were, upon the pessimist view that is sometimes taken of the Spanish character—have taught the Parliamentary Radicals and Freethinkers in every

"I've said it afore, and I'll say it again, that if the angels don't get no more pleasure out of their eternal job than a barrel organ gets when you turn a handle, I'd sooner never come to be one."—Eden Phillpotts, "*Demeter's Daughter*."

country a superb lesson, not only of courage in brave speaking, but of conspicuous ability in the mastery of a great and complicated question of domestic politics. On reading these glorious speeches, it would seem as though the burning indignation which fired the soul of Spain at contemplating the tragedy of Montjuich had lit with flame the tongues of her orators, and consumed all the timid trimming commonplace of thought out of the speeches of her public men.

Canalejas met by a point blank No the demand of the Republicans to revise the military code of procedure under which Ferrer was condemned, as also the demand to abrogate the iniquitous "law of jurisdictions," in virtue of which every citizen who is wanting in respect towards the Army is liable to be brought before a military court and made subject to its draconian methods.

The "sort of law" which in Spain is called military law will perhaps be better understood if we mention the fact that a journalist and artist in Barcelona, named Sagristo, who, on October 7 last—the first anniversary of Ferrer's sentence—had published three designs in memory of the Martyr of Montjuich, was brought before a Council of War and condemned, under the Law of Jurisdictions, to *twelve years'* solitary confinement, although the Army Prosecutor only asked for a sentence of one year. Even the Captain-General of Barcelona, Weyler—the Man of Cuba—considered the sentence a monstrous one, and referred it for revision to the Supreme Council of War at Madrid. The War Council, in fact, reduced the sentence to that of nine years' imprisonment. From that sentence there is no appeal except to the royal clemency, but all the world knows the quality of Alphonso's mercy after his contemptuous defiance of the general entreaty of civilisation in the case of Ferrer. The tribunal which brought forth such an abortion of justice as this was the very tribunal which, with a light heart, passed on Ferrer to his executioners. When we know that military law in Spain, in the piping times of peace, can visit nine years' imprisonment upon an artist who satirises an act of judicial murder, we can see how easy it was for the Clerical party, under cover of the panic of 1909, to wreak its vengeance upon the founder of the Escuela Moderna. Luckily for the future of Spain, the Progressives there of every *nuance* are determined that, come what may, the civil power shall yet reign over the military caste. The revision of Ferrer's trial has now become the rallying cry of all the men and movements in the Peninsula who feel the hatefulness of the national stigma of mediæval subordination which is branded upon her by the ferocious temper of the Church. The liberation of Spain is now assured. It will come about, it may be, with dramatic thoroughness at no distant date, and the historian of the future will point to the recent debate as one of the crucial turning points in the career of a great people.

As the number of Englishmen who read Spanish is not too great, I am happy to say that one of the most magnificent addresses in the Cortes—that of Melquiades Alvarez—has now been translated verbatim into French, and published in pamphlet form.\* As my friend Lorand says, the speech is worthy of comparison with the classic models of Cicero. The great orator (one of the brightest ornaments of the Spanish bar) spent a whole month in minutely dissecting the dossier of the Ferrer case. The speech shows in form and substance that the trial of Ferrer was a tissue of iniquity and monstrous absurdity, and that *even* accepting as true the testimony adduced and all the relevant facts alleged against Ferrer as proved, the fact remains clear that he was completely innocent of the crime for which he was professedly shot—that being the chief and leader of the insurrection. Some of our readers, no doubt, will be glad to be placed on the track of this superb oration, which constitutes an original contribution to the literature of the subject.

When the Cortes resume their deliberations, the Ferrer case will again be uppermost. The occasion will arise when the petition from the Freethinkers of Bohemia is presented to the Cortes. Bohemia, the land of John Huss, rivals Italy, the land of Bruno, in its devotion to the memory of Francisco Ferrer. The blood of Ferrer shed at Montjuich has been the fruitful seed of Freethought amongst the Czechs, who have been stirred to the very depths of their soul by the spirit of the Spanish Martyr. According to *El Pais*, the petition for revision by the Bohemian Freethinkers is no perfunctory document. It forms a bulky volume, luxuriously bound, and contains many hundreds of pages covered with thousands of signatures, with the description of the professional or other status of each of the signatories. Noteworthy is the number of women whose names appear amongst the petitioners. From all this it is clear that it was easier for the bigots to kill Ferrer than to bury him.

The ferment in international public opinion caused by these events and discussions will doubtless bring a huge concourse of Freethinkers to Brussels on October 13 next. On the Sunday following the anniversary of that historic date the monument to Ferrer's memory, to which reference has already been made in these columns, will be presented by the *Œuvre*\* Ferrer to the City of Brussels. The monument will probably be erected in the Place Sarlet-le-Chokier, and will bear the following inscriptions:—

"To the Memory of Francisco Ferrer, shot at Montjuich, the 13th October, 1909, the Martyr of Liberty of Conscience."

On the one side of the monument the following inscription will be found on a bronze plate:—

"And I find myself in presence of a completed case, in which the prosecution, on the lookout simply for accusations.....has not far a single moment sought out the truth" (Captain Golceran pleading for Ferrer on October 9, 1909).

On the other side will be another inscription:—

"Rationalist teaching can, and should, discuss everything, by placing the children at the outset on the wide and direct road of personal investigation" (Francisco Ferrer, Letter of January 24, 1907).

Finally, the following memento:—

"Erected by international subscription. Inaugurated October 13, 1911."

Now that the *Œuvre* Ferrer has thus far carried out its arrangements, it is to be hoped that international subscriptions will flow into its funds, and that a vast international concourse of Freethinkers from every land will testify by their presence their respect for the memory of the Martyr and their appreciation of the splendid parliamentary campaign which has been so nobly conducted in the Cortes in vindication of the great apostle of Rationalist education.

WILLIAM HEAFORD.

## Christianity and Social Reform.

A CERTAIN section of Christians are constantly declaring that all the social reforms that have been wrought in this and other civilised countries during the past fifty years have been brought about in obedience to the teachings of Jesus Christ; and among those who are most persistent in this kind of declaration are certain "Labor leaders" who give up some of their Sunday afternoons in order to conduct semi-religious meetings at various chapels and mission halls throughout the country. It is a very easy thing to say that Jesus was a great social reformer, and no doubt it gives some of the Labor leaders a rare amount of satisfaction, because it commits them to nothing very definite, and they are not

\* Madrid, P. Orrier, editor (pp. 32).

\* Secretary, Professor Eugène Monsour, 67 Avenue Milcamps, Brussels.

likely to be called upon to furnish proof in support of such statements by their credulous Christian followers.

If, however, they were asked to state which, among the many teachings attributed to Jesus, they consider, if put into practice to-day, would be most likely to promote social reform, they would find it rather difficult to select passages in support of their contention. And for this very obvious reason. Jesus was essentially a religious teacher, and most of his teachings had reference to the preparation for the next world, and not to the performance of duties in this life. In fact, he taught the neglect of this life, and the concentration of our thoughts on the next. We were admonished to "labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (John v. 27).

It would be difficult to imagine how any man who acted upon this principle could engage in any work for the social improvement of his fellows. If he made no effort to get food for himself, or his wife and family, is it likely that he would devote any of his time to ameliorating the conditions of his fellow-man? Besides, Jesus carried his doctrine of seeking the kingdom of heaven first, as a primary duty, to its logical conclusion. He showed what this doctrine involved by boldly declaring that men should "Take no thought for your life what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on.....But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. v. 25 and 33). In face of such a teaching as this, it is ridiculous to talk about Jesus being the greatest social reformer who ever lived. What did he do to remove the poverty or misery of those by whom he was surrounded? Nothing. He told them that poverty was a desirable state of existence. It was a blessed thing to be poor. "Blessed be ye poor," said Jesus, "for yours is the kingdom of God" (Luke vi. 20). He also thought it was a good thing to possess poverty of spirit as well as poverty of person. "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 8). He also taught the doctrine of the non-resistance of evil. "Resist not evil; if any man smite thee on the one cheek turn unto him the other and let him smite that also" (Matt. v. 39). Now, it must be perfectly obvious to anybody that thinks that you cannot begin to make any reforms whatever, whether social, political, or religious, while you are endeavoring to display a meekness and poverty of spirit, and are not prepared to resist evil wherever you find it. The illustrious Charles Bradlaugh was a great reformer, but there was no poverty of spirit about him. He resisted evil wherever he found it. Nor did he consider poverty of spirit a virtue; on the contrary, he regarded it as a crime. He said:—

"Manliness of spirit, honesty of spirit, falness of rightful purpose, these are the virtues; but poverty of spirit is a crime. When men are poor in spirit, they do the proud and haughty in spirit oppress and trample upon them; but when men are true in spirit and determined (as true men should be) to resist and prevent evil, wrong, and injustice whenever they can, then is their greater opportunity for happiness here and no lesser fitness for the enjoyment of further happiness in some maybe heaven hereafter" (*What Did Jesus Teach*, p. 1).

These Labor leaders, therefore, cannot follow the teachings of Jesus without destroying the very spirit within them that would prompt them to desire social reform.

But let us look for a moment and see what are the great social reforms that have taken place in this country during the last fifty years. And, first, let me say that you can have no real reform among the masses until they are first educated enough to understand the need and value of reform. So the first real measure of social reform among the masses was the passing of the Education Act in 1870, when it was made possible, for the first time in the history of this country, for every child, however poor, to be taught to read and write and know something of the history of the country in which he was born. Did

the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus unani- mously support and hail with delight this very beneficent measure?

Certainly not. On the contrary. Some of them offered strenuous opposition to it, and one of the bishops in the House of Lords said that the rising generation of men would not be content to be servants and do the ordinary work of the world, but as soon as they were educated they would all want to be masters, or words to that effect. Up to the year 1870, the Church had had the education of the children of the country entirely in its own hands, and yet it had so neglected its duty that nearly half the children of the country were being brought up without any education at all. The masses of the people were nearly all steeped in ignorance, and many of them could neither read nor write; and poverty and misery of a most deplorable character were found to exist in all industrial centres. Thousands of children went to school every day in a half-starved condition, and although Christians taught that if we prayed to "Our father which art in heaven, give us this day our daily bread," our heavenly father would not let his poor, helpless children suffer. But he did, nevertheless; and until a lot of good, charitable people, composed of profes- sioning Christians, Jews, Freethinkers, and Nothing- arians, etc., out of the goodness of their hearts, established a fund to feed the hungry school children, nothing was done.

Mr. John Hodge, one of the Labor Members, speaking at Browning Hall last Labor Day, said that the Churches were waking up, and that you could not go to any of—

"The Church Congresses, the Baptist Conference, the Congregational Conference, the Wesleyan Methodist Conference [he left out the orthodox Church of England Conference] but you find that they are discussing social questions. As a matter of fact, the aim and object, as it appears to me within recent years of various Christian denominations, is to try and establish Christ's kingdom on earth instead of looking for it away in the skies." (Applause.)

Well, is it not rather late in the day for Christians to begin to discuss social questions now? And to try to realise Christ's kingdom on earth, when Jesus taught most emphatically that his followers were to seek first the kingdom of heaven and take no thought whatever concerning the things of this life. Were not the Christians of the Dark Ages, from the tenth to the sixteenth century, more consistent followers of the meek and lowly Jesus than the Labor leaders of to-day? Jesus was a poor wanderer on the earth, without home and habitation, indeed, with "nowhere to lay his head." The Labor leaders to-day do not attempt to follow their Master in this respect. They have decent incomes, which they frequently augment by contributing articles to the weekly journals; they live in comfortable, well-furnished houses; they have good food to eat and good raiment to wear; in fact, they may be said, without exaggeration, to fare sumptuously every day. How can such men honestly claim to be followers of Jesus? And when they endeavor to ameliorate the conditions of their fellows, when they try to make the hours of labor shorter and the rate of pay higher for the worker than it was in former years, they are carrying on a meritorious work, but one for which they will find no sanction in the teachings of their Lord and Master.

It was found, soon after the Education Act was passed, that vast numbers of the poor of this country were living in wretched, dilapidated dwell- ings, often in one or two-roomed tenements, herded together like cattle, with rooms that were small, staircases narrow, and with scarcely any ventilation. In large houses, let out in tenements, it was often possible to find as many as thirty persons living together under conditions more fit for wild beasts than for human beings. And this state of existence was found not only to obtain in London in the early eighties, but in most of the industrial centres through- out the whole of the country. And this after eighteen hundred years of the Christian religion in this

country! It was also found that there was a great deal of drunkenness among the working population. Did Christianity do away with either the poverty and misery of the people or with their drinking habits? It is sometimes said that you cannot make people sober by Act of Parliament; that you cannot make them virtuous by legislation. But that statement is not quite true. You can improve the morals of the people by Act of Parliament. Experience has demonstrated that. The enforcement of the Education Act has very much improved the morals of the rising generations. The Licensing Act has also tended to make the people much more sober than they were in former years. And these Acts of Parliament were not made by Christians alone, or in obedience to the specific teachings of Christianity; they were made by Jews, Atheists, Unitarians, and a vast number of Nothingarians, who, if they were counted as non-Christians, would certainly outnumber all the professing Christians of all the various sects put together. In other words, it is humanity and not Christianity that is responsible for the improved conditions of to-day. In another article I will endeavor to demonstrate that the County Council and the various municipal authorities throughout the country have done more for the social improvement of the people than all the sects of Christianity put together. And these bodies, as we all know, are not composed exclusively of Christians, but of persons holding every variety of belief and unbelief, and may be said, therefore, to represent every section of the thinking portion of humanity.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

### Acid Drops.

We intend to deal with Mr. William Archer's book, the *Life, Trial, and Death of Francisco Ferrer*. Meanwhile we must register a public smile at Mr. Archer's remark that Ferrer's "dogmatic rationalism was a somewhat arid creed." We fancy Mr. Archer wrote that for the gallery. Ferrer was not dogmatic, and plain truth always seems "arid" to the superstitionists. Ferrer's enemies (and murderers) had a much more arid creed than his. They held the doctrine of everlasting hell, in which the majority of human souls are destined to eternal torture. It is understood to be dreadfully *dry* in the bottomless pit. One victim there tried to get a single drop of water for his parching tongue—and failed. Ferrer would never have put his worst enemy in a place as dry as that.

Mr. Archer doesn't appear to like Ferrer. He seems to regard the martyred Spanish reformer as not overstocked with mental and moral virtues. But he admits "his one supreme virtue—a high and unflinching courage." Mr. Archer doesn't see that he answers himself. High unflinching courage is made up of many virtues. It is not like physical courage, which is for the most part a mere impulse of the blood. It implies self-knowledge and self-control—devotion to an object which triumphs proudly over the instinct of self-preservation—a lofty disdain of the malice and crimes of unscrupulous foes—an imaginative appeal to the more enlightened verdict of posterity. The courage that Ferrer displayed at his Gethsemane and Calvary was the consummate expression of all sorts of precious qualities.

There was a curious inconsistency in the *Athenæum* review of Dr. D. A. Gorton's new *History of Medicine*. In the first place, the reviewer remarked that even the history of medicine tends to confirm the truth of the saying that "There are no bounds to the folly and stupidity of mankind." The noble art of healing has too frequently offered a display of "credulity and empiricism" or "quackery and imposture." This remark was followed by a more general one of the same character:—

"Whenever mankind is confronted with the unknown and incomprehensible—and this, unfortunately, is still the case in the practice of medicine—there seems to be a tendency, deeply ingrained in human nature—to use faith as a substitute for knowledge, or, in fact, to consider them as identical."

This, of course, is a dig at the "credulity of empiricism," the "quackery and imposture" of another profession—that of the clergy. Yet, at the end of the review, Dr. Gorton

is severely rebuked for "the flippant manner in which he constantly refers to sacred subjects." "We do not expect a man of his education and culture," the reviewer says, "to speak of the author of the third gospel as 'Dr. Luke.'" Why not? It is a special feature of the more modern Christian Evidence that Luke *was* a physician. Besides, it is not easy to see why a little "flippancy" of that kind—if indeed it be a flippancy—is so reprehensible, while a reference to clerical "quackery and imposture" is quite legitimate.

We have often referred to the wonderful power of accommodation possessed by the Christian clergy. They are always wrong with regard to the present, and always right with regard to the past. The first statement is a fact; the second is their own theory of themselves. They fight every new truth and damn its author and propagators; when it triumphs, in spite of their opposition, they accept it and preach it themselves; finally, when all the world is converted, they swear they discovered and gave it to the world themselves. Thus it is that the clergy, as a body, are doing next to nothing for the world at any given moment, and even opposing its progress; yet, if you look backwards over the page of history, they claim that they and their religion must be credited with every good thing it records. The most farcical part of this performance is the middle part—the clergy's patronage of what they had opposed. It was noticed by the late Professor John Nichol in his interesting little book in the "English Men of Letters" series on Thomas Carlyle. When, after the publication of *Frederick*, Carlyle was recognised in Germany as the first of English prose writers of the day, not only England but Scotland shared the recognition. "Scotland," says Nichol, "now fully awake to her reflected fame, made haste to make amends. Even the leaders of the sects, bond and 'free,' who had denounced him, were now eager to proclaim that he had been intrinsically all along, though sometimes disguised, a champion of their faith. No men knew better how to patronise, or even seem to lead, what they had failed to quell." Precisely. The Church is like a great bully; it cringes to the powerful and persecutes what it regards as the weak.

"Justice, in spite of the fact that the Bishop exercised jurisdiction until well on in the nineteenth century, has not always reigned unchallenged in the Isle of Ely. Aged vicars will tell you with bitterness of the evil done to the peasantry by Enclosure Acts that swept away waste common spaces and gave unsuitable and inaccessible 'town' lands by way of compensation—and very little of that. Riots followed and peasants marched, headed by respectable tradesmen. Then came retribution. A Hanoverian regiment (this was after Waterloo) arrested the rioters, and five were sentenced to death. The Bishop, as chief administrator of justice (the last to exercise his palatine rights), 'entered the cathedral in solemn procession to the strains of the anthem, "Why do the heathen rage?" with his sword of state borne before him (by his butler), and escorted by 50 of the principal inhabitants bearing white wands.' Yet so strong was the sympathy for the rioters that the Bishop could not get a cart to carry them to the gallows for less than five guineas."—*Daily Chronicle*.

Mistakes will happen in the best regulated families. But that was an odd one in the *Westminster Gazette* the other evening. Mr. Spender, the editor, is writing anonymously *The Comments of Bagshot*, and the blunder we refer to occurred in the following passage:—

"You say that artists and writers are notoriously conceited people. But not the great ones. For the life of me, I cannot think of Shakespeare or Milton or Bunyan or the prophet Isaiah as conceited men, though I can just think it of Micah or Habbakuk, who, as Renan said, was 'capable de tout.'"

As Renan said! It was Voltaire who said it. And as he said it the observation was a most subtle and delicious *mot*. Voltaire had put something into Habbakuk's mouth which he never uttered, and the fact was pointed out to him by a candid friend. The great sceptic, thus cornered for once, escaped on the wings of a delightful witticism. "*Cet Habbakuk*," he said, "*était capable de tout*"—"That Habbakuk was capable of anything."

We hope Mr. Spender will forgive us. No doubt it is very unpleasant for the editor of the *Westminster Gazette* to be corrected by the editor of the *Freethinker*. To borrow a phrase from Thomas Hardy, it is one of life's little ironies—which even great men must suffer.

According to the Constantinople correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*, the Mussulmans of Crete have sent there

300 photos of Turks who are said to have been killed or mutilated on the island by Christians. Their object is to provoke energetic interference on behalf of the oppressed Mussulmans. But this is not likely to be permitted by the Christian Powers.

The induction of the new vicar of St. Andrew's Church, Plaistow, was the signal for a Protestant Alliance raid. One of their preachers protested in a loud voice "against the induction of that man." Then he sat down, and that man was inducted. The principal part of the comedy went on outside. The vicar's friends and the Kensitites had a free fight for possession of the Protestant Alliance banner, which was torn to shreds. Happily nobody was seriously injured. There never is, we believe, in these clown and pantaloon performances.

The Mayor of Exeter (Mr. A. T. Loram), presiding at the annual meeting of the Exeter Auxiliary of the London Missionary Society, took a gloomy view of the prospects of missionary enterprise. This is what we find in the local *Express* :—

"The Mayor, in an impressive speech, reminded those present of the apathetic attitude of the Christian Churches at the present time towards foreign missions. He had come to that meeting with a considerable feeling of down-heartedness. It was his opinion that some thirteen or fourteen years ago there was a far greater endeavor to strengthen the Church of God in other lands than at present. And yet they all knew there was never a greater need for effort in the mission field."

Rev. W. Hinkley, a subsequent speaker, who dealt with mission work in India, said, "he sympathised very heartily with the remarks of the Mayor. It was a sorrow which they all must share—and he urged them to double their efforts." The reverend gentleman shook his head over the unrest in India that marked the clashing between East and West. Most of it, he said, was caused by the Brahmin priests; who evidently refuse to let the Christian priests rob them of their business without a struggle. Wicked Brahmin priests! How dare they? They remind us of the Frenchman's account of a certain large animal:—"This animal is very malicious; if you attack him he defends himself." Shocking!

The clergy of Herne Bay, like the clergy of all other places, are warm Protectionists. They resented the military band playing in the new Pier Pavilion as early as 7 o'clock on Sunday evenings; it was wicked competition with the churches and chapels, who were transacting business at that hour; accordingly they requested the District Council to let the band begin playing at 8. This, however, the District Council declined to do; and some uncomplimentary remarks made in the course of the discussion have drawn from the clergy the following reply:—

"From the report of the remarks made at the council meeting it is evident that some members of the council quite misunderstand the ground of our contention.

We have no thought of suggesting any idea of competition. We have no desire to see an alteration of time to suit those who attend a place of worship. Judging from the program, the concerts usually arranged cannot consistently be called sacred. What we maintain is that the worship of God is a matter which comes first, both as regards importance and also as to its claim on public recognition.

We feel that the time arranged for these concerts publicly disregards religion, and the fact that other seaside resorts adopt a later hour causes us to believe that the exception made for this town is to brand it as a godless one."

This is worthy of Jesuits. It is perfectly obvious that it is "competition" which the clergy dread. They want church and chapel to come *first* simply because they don't want any members of their congregations to have to choose between the gospel-shop and the band. The 8 o'clock rule on Sunday evening is adopted at several seaside places. Worshipers come out of the house of God and promenade at the bandstand with gilt-edged volumes, bound in black, under their arms or in their hands. That is why the clergy, if they cannot stop Sunday music altogether, fight like trojans for the 8 o'clock regulation.

Under the new Associations Bill in Spain the religious orders will be obliged to make a return of all their property and revenues every three years. They will be obliged to pay all rates and taxes, and be subject to the ordinary law with regard to public instruction and the sanitary condition of school buildings. Foreigners will not be allowed to establish and control religious associations. All this looks fairly reasonable, but it is gall and wormwood to the Catholic leaders.

Some plain speaking was heard at the Conference of the Representative Church Council of the Scottish Episcopal Church held at Perth on Thursday, May 4. When the subject of Home Missions was under discussion it was admitted that people absolutely declined to take any interest in it. That was bad enough, but there was worse behind. Rev. John M'Bain, of Glasgow, threw down a veritable bombshell. We take the following from the Glasgow *Evening Citizen* :—

"They had to face a mass of people who were in hopeless poverty, and the gulf between the poor and wealthy classes was almost impassable in Glasgow. The late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had told them there were 12,000,000 people on the verge of starvation, and yet they went to the people to try to get them into the Church. Those people had no money to get clothes. He was bound to say that in Glasgow the work was a colossal failure. His experience was that in Glasgow they had men who were professing no religion at all, priding themselves on being Agnostics, who were doing excellent work for the people from the material point of view. He made bold to say that his experience was that those who prided themselves on being Agnostics had done more for the poor of Glasgow in the past ten years, from the outward point of view, than any Christian men."

The Dean of Edinburgh advised that "they should not allow those men described as Agnostics to have the field in doing social work." Yes, but how are you going to drive them out?

The great fire at Bagnor, Maine, U.S.A., burnt out an area two miles long and an eighth or to a quarter mile wide. Seven churches were completely destroyed. "Providence" neglected every one of them. They fared no better than drink saloons, gambling hells, and brothels. "One thing befalleth them."

More "Providence." A rock rolled down upon a procession to a mountain chapel by a band of pilgrims. One girl was killed while walking by the side of her fiancé, and several others were seriously injured. "His tender mercies are over all his works."

The Chief Constable of Brighton has hit the Sabbatarians hard by officially declaring that the Sunday opening of cinematograph theatres has brought about a marked improvement in the order of the town and the well-being of the young people. This is a good deal more than the churches and chapels did.

Emigration and drink were the chief causes assigned for serious decreases in church membership at the Nottingham District Primitive Methodist Synod. Emigration we understand, but *drink!* We thought that membership of a Christian Church was a sure safeguard against all such vices. It seems that we were mistaken.

The Pope never neglects the wealthy. Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Schwab, parents of C. M. Schwab, the steel magnate, celebrated their golden wedding on April 23. Special services in their honor were held at the church they attend, and amongst the cabled blessings was one from the poor old Prisoner of the Vatican.

Samuel Hunt, who was charged at Feltham with attempting to commit suicide by taking veronal, was found by the police in a lodging-house at Staines, with a Prayer Book fastened to his chest and a silver cross tied round his neck. No doubt he thought those heavy articles would help him in his aviation trip to glory.

Jesus Christ taught that if a man stole your coat you were to offer him your cloak too. But the Vicar of Egton is of a different opinion. He has just secured twelve months' imprisonment for Frank Robinson, who broke into the vicarage and stole a gold ring and other articles, besides finding the church keys, with which he managed to regale himself with sacramental port besides helping himself to eighteen shillings from the safe. He will not steal for a bit, but he can get communion port in prison—once a month.

Rev. Gilbert Sparshott Kaweney, of Chislehurst, left £26,537. Rev. Henry Warwick Hunt, of Shermaubury, Sussex, left £20,557. After these poor servants of the poor Carpenter of Nazareth, the Rev. Edward James Russell, of St. Anne's-on-Sea, who left £1,276, is hardly worth mentioning.



**Mr. Foote's Engagements.**

(Lectures suspended for the present.)

**To Correspondents.**

**PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1911.**—Previously acknowledged, £233 3s. 9d. Received since:—W. J. McMurray, 2s. 6d.; Mr. F. Kuetgens and Mrs. Kuetgens, £2; A to Z, 10s.; Uddington "Saints," 5s.; H. Shaw, 2s. 6d.; C. F. Simpson, 10s. 6d.; Joseph Bryce, 8s.; Postman, 2s. 6d.

**W. G. TOWN.**—Pleased to have your letter, to which we refer elsewhere. Six weekly copies shall be sent as requested.

**T. FISHER.**—See paragraph. Thanks. Glad you are so interested in the debate.

**J. A. G. SEALE.**—Papers duly received, with letter and subscription, which is passed over to shop manager.

**ELIZABETH LECHMERE.**—Glad you are so pleased with Mr. Foote's share of the debate.

**W. P. BALL.**—Thanks for welcome cuttings.

**J. F. AUST.**—Sorry we cannot recommend you such a book. "Short and concise" is not the way in which most people set about controversy.

**YOUNG COLQUHOUN (Rhodesia).**—Stock answers to stock Christian arguments might, as you say, be useful; but most of them would need to be much longer than we could print in this column. One argument you mention could be answered briefly: namely, "That it is belief in God and the hereafter that keeps men from becoming unprincipled scoundrels." The reply to that is, "Read the police news." As to "What atheists of note have 'gone back to God' on their deathbeds?" the answer is "None."

**J. C. GOODFELLOW.**—It is a "side issue," as you say, and did not at all affect Mr. Lloyd's argument. Still, the point is interesting, and it is well to cultivate accuracy. We think Mr. Cohen's articles merit all your praise.

**E. KERNS.**—Quite so. The ultimate battle is between Catholicism and Freethought. We note what you say about Cecil not being one of the epicene class of names, the feminine form being Cecilia. But we shall have to shut down this discussion.

**A to Z** subscribes to the President's Honorarium Fund—"as a slight acknowledgment of the debt I owe you for the freedom I enjoy, and the many pleasant hours I have experienced when absorbing the products of your pen."

**W. STEWART.**—An excellent letter. Thanks for your spirited action.

**UDDINGTON "SAINTS."**—The little maidens shall have a photo. of Mr. Foote when he gets some new ones done. Thanks for good wishes.

**DAVID MACCONNELL.**—After reading your letter, which is interesting enough in its way, we have concluded to spare our readers' intellects by allowing no more debating excursions in the bog-land of Scottish names. Palgrave gives "Jean" and not "John," and attributes the verses to Lady Nairn. We ourselves should never have attributed the poem to Robert Burns. It is pathetic, but it lacks his electricity, and even his form; for Burns was a great stylist in his own dialect, though some people never notice it.

**J. McMURRAY.**—We hope your efforts to promote the circulation of this journal in Belfast will be successful. It is pitiable to hear that wholesale newsgagents are attempting a boycott, by only taking the *Freethinker* to strict order, and refusing to take back returns. We have always sent out the paper from our publishing office on "sale or return."

**H. G. FARMER.**—Shall appear. Always pleased to hear from you.

**J. EDELL.**—We are replying to your letter by post. Your suggestion may prove feasible, but we do not issue a weekly contents-sheet. We gave it up many years ago, as costing more than it was worth to us. We have, however, a permanent *Freethinker* poster, and that can be sent to you if suitable for your purpose.

**R. L. M.**—Miss Vance was at home ill when your letter arrived, so she could not act in the matter. Your letter, too, being sent on to our place of residence away from London, did not reach us till we were up to our eyes in *Freethinker* work. If we miss you, you will understand, and write us again.

**H. SHAW** writes: "The debate is splendid. Eternally grateful for your printing it. I am distributing copies to people I think it will influence in our direction."

**JOSEPA BATES.**—Glad you are so pleased to see the debate being published in our pages; also that your lecturing tour through Lancashire is proving so successful. Thanks for cuttings.

**C. F. SIMPSON.**—Cheque apportioned as you instruct. The President's Honorarium Fund is not "closed" yet. We should much like to see it closed by the end of June. We may have more to say on this matter very shortly.

**W. H. HARRIS.**—Greeting reciprocated.

**JOSEPH BRYCE.**—We are writing you on the matter.

**DEBATE REPORT FUND.**—G. Crookson, 5s.

**POSTMAN.**—Pleased you think ours "the best and truest of work." You come very near the expression used in one of George Meredith's letters to us in the days when we were even worse boycotted and harassed than we are now.

**G. CROOKSON.**—We did not note the date of the *Times* containing Mr. Stead's letter on the Anti-Mormon Crusade. It must have

been Thursday or Friday, April 27 or 28, we think. With regard to the rest of your letter, we understand and appreciate. **CHARLES KEEFE.**—Miss Vance posted you tickets for the "Social," but they came back with the envelope marked "gone away."

**E. B.**—Thanks for cuttings.

**LETTERS** for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

**LECTURE NOTICES** must reach 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

**ORDERS** for literature should be sent to the Manager of the Pioneer Press, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C., and not to the Editor.

**THE Freethinker** will be forwarded direct from the publishing office, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One year, 10s. 6d.; half year, 5s. 3d.; three months, 2s. 8d.

**Sugar Plums.**

Delegates and visitors who are attending the National Secular Society's Annual Conference at Birmingham on Whit-Sunday should communicate with Mr. J. Partridge, 183 Vauxhall-road, with respect to the hotel or other accommodation they may require. We hope Branches both in London and in the provinces are taking steps to be represented at the Conference. Individual members are also free to attend and will be very welcome. The Conference Agenda will appear in our next issue.

Mr. Partridge will also be glad to hear from delegates and visitors who wish to join the Whit-Monday excursion to Stratford-on-Avon. The sooner he hears from them the better.

"A pleasant social gathering took place on Thursday evening at Anderton's Hotel. Mr. Quinton ably presided over the festivities, which consisted of music and dancing and a musical sketch (contributed by Mr. Hayward), which was greatly appreciated. Mrs. Allen and Mr. Alec Hardisty were the vocalists and Madame Saunders the pianiste. Mr. Foote's appropriate and excellent address was listened to with the greatest attention, and a pleasant evening's amusement terminated shortly after eleven o'clock, many of those present expressing a desire that these enjoyable socials might take place more frequently."—KATHLEEN B. KOUGH.

Many well-known Freethinkers were present at the Anderton Hotel "social," including Mr. Cohen, Mr. Moss, Mr. Heaford, Mr. Roger, Mr. Cowell, and Mr. Thurlow. Mr. Lloyd was kept away by a bad cold. Another absentee was Miss Vance, who, we are sorry to say, had been seriously ill and was but slowly recovering. The President's speech contained a very kind message for her, which he said he was sure the meeting would endorse; a prophecy which was enthusiastically fulfilled on the spot. We are happy to add that Miss Vance is still on the road to recovery, but we should like to see her progress a little more rapid. We shall have to prevail upon her to "go easy" for a good while after she is able to resume work. Fortunately she has devoted friends in Miss Kough and Miss Stanley, who are doing her work for her, and will continue to do so while she is taking care of herself—if she will only do that.

We have heard of gentlemen exchanging hats. On Thursday last, at the social evening at Anderton's Hotel, two ladies exchanged shoes! The lady who discovered the mistake has left a shoe at Miss Vance's office, and it will be posted to whoever claims it—and returns the other.

An "Open Letter to the Wood Green Council—and a capital one too—re the exclusion of the *Freethinker* from the Public Library table, appears in the *Wood Green Sentinel*, with the following editorial footnote:—"When this petition has been presented we hope that this time something may be said on the subject in the presence of the Press. The public ought to know on what grounds a public body bases its action." The open letter is to be presented as a petition to the Council. Sympathisers can sign it at the Branch Sunday evening meetings.

The Christian Evidence people are wonderfully fond of freedom; if you took them at their word you would almost believe that they invented it; but if you watched their actions you would soon wonder if they understood what it meant. On Sunday evening, for instance, they brought up one of their extra-special lecturers to Wood Green, so that he might urge people not to sign the *Freethinker* petition. In reply to a question, he admitted that he did not read the

paper he was denouncing; whereupon (we are told) a lady presented him with twopence in order that he might buy a copy and read out anything in it that could reasonably be called objectionable. We understand that the C. E. orator was to "come again next Sunday." But he'll want more than a week to find what he is expected to bring.

Mr. H. Shaw, of Leabrooks, near Alfreton, has secured an advertisement for us on the curtain of a local theatre, where hundreds of Christians go on Sunday evenings, after divine service, to see the pictures. The size of the advertisement is 6 feet by 3. It runs: "Read the *Freethinker*—the liveliest paper in the world—Edited by G. W. Foote—Can he had at all newsagents." The theatre is open every night for two performances. Mr. Shaw is defraying the cost himself for the first year, after which he hopes the new Alfreton N. S. S. Branch will keep it going.

The Vivisection Investigation League has been incorporated at New York, its headquarters being at Room 5,032 Metropolitan Building. Mrs. Clinton Pinkney Farrell is the President and Miss Maud R. Ingersoll is on the Board of Directors—on which also we are glad to see the name of Mr. Poultney Biglow. While disseminating true information on the matter, the League will likewise "exert itself in favor of any legislation that will tend to improve existing conditions in regard to the practice of vivisection." Mrs. Farrell, speaking, we take it, for the whole Ingersoll family—up and down, and right and left—in sending us the prospectus with her card, says on the latter: "Our heartiest thanks for your splendid interest in the animal cause."

We have pleasure in making the following extract from the letter of a lady (Mrs. Josephine Kuetgens) who encloses a subscription from herself and her husband to the President's Honorarium Fund:—

"I have long wished to write you a few lines to assure you of my and my husband's admiration. I only hesitated because I did not want to take any of your valuable time away, but the renewed proof of your exceptional courage [in connection with the debate] has brought any hesitation to an end. As for the *Freethinker*, it is no exaggeration to say that we could not now imagine our life without it; and as, on its arrival, we both want it first, I always take two copies, and pass them on or leave them in the train, hoping they may fall into right hands."

Such letters are encouraging.

A Todmorden correspondent tells us that he first became acquainted with the *Freethinker* in January of this year. "It is a grand paper," he says, "and I only wish I had made its acquaintance some years ago." This correspondent has been a Salvation Army officer, but saw the light in Grant Allen's *Evolution of the Idea of God*. "We have a small body of men up here," he says, "who are fighting for Free-thought." We are very glad to hear it, and we hope they will not be discouraged by the slow progress of reason in a country where Christianity has addled people's brains in childhood with superstition, after breeding mental docility by centuries of persecution.

Goldsmith's delightful comedy, *She Slops to Conquer*, was performed by the Gerard Wynne Company at the Broadway Theatre, New Cross, London, S.E., on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, May 2 and 3. From a program sent us we see that the orchestra was under the direction of Mr. H. Geo. Farmer, whose name will be remembered by a good many of our readers as an occasional contributor. The last item on the musical part of the program was one of Mr. Farmer's own compositions, the "G. W. F. March." We should like to hear it. We know the theme is one that Mr. Farmer would not treat indifferently.

Mr. W. W. Collins sends us his pamphlet on *Ferrer and His Enemies*, published by the New Zealand Rationalist Association at one penny. Like all that Mr. Collins writes, it is able and eloquent; and it effectually disposes of the slanders with which the Catholics seek to cover their murder of the great Spanish martyr of Free-thought. Incidentally we perceive that the "glorious free press" is pretty much the same in New Zealand that it is in the old country. The *Press* allowed Mr. Nolan, a Catholic, to say the vilest things about Ferrer, but left out all the strongest passages of Mr. Collins's reply. Hence this pamphlet—which is to some extent an act of self-defence.

"Abracadabra's" article cannot be fitted into this week's *Freethinker*. We are sorry to break the continuity of the series, but there is no help for it. The reason is obvious.

## "Theism or Atheism?"—III.

### A Public Debate

BETWEEN REV. DR. WARSCHAUER AND MR. G. W. FOOTE.

#### SECOND NIGHT.

Chairman: Mr. C. COHEN.

(Continued from p. 301.)

MR. C. COHEN: I feel to-night something like the man who had a cheque payable on identification, and he took his portrait to the cashier of the bank to show that he was the proper one to receive the money. To some of you to-night I ought, at least, to begin by saying I am myself, and not the gentleman who was announced to take the chair at to-night's proceedings. Unfortunately, Mr. Burrows has been unable to attend, and I have been asked to officiate in his stead. Fortunately, however, the Chairman's duty on these occasions is nearly always that of timekeeper, and I have no very serious fears that the Chairman's function will receive any considerable expansion on the present occasion. There have been cases where the two debaters have had a lot of trouble to keep the Chairman in order, but it seldom happens that the Chairman has much trouble to keep the debaters in order. There is one thing, however, I would like to say. I was sorry to see last night, and I am quite sure that Dr. Warschauer and Mr. Foote were equally sorry to see, that there was a tendency on part of the audience to interrupt. I now beg that nothing of that kind will occur this evening. I have no doubt a great many people feel that if they were on the platform they could do much better than either of the speakers. Well, I do not question they could; but I want to point out the fact that they are not on the platform is the misfortune of all of us, and as we all share in the misfortune let us bear it with equanimity. (Hear, hear.) So if any gentleman, I suppose I ought to say in Caxton Hall, any lady, feels that way inclined, I hope they will limit themselves to feeling it, and not expressing it. There is only one other word I have to say, and that is, that the order of to-night's proceedings will be the same as last night's, with the exception of Mr. Foote leading off instead of Dr. Warschauer. There will be an opening speech of thirty minutes on either side; there will be four subsequent speeches of fifteen minutes each. I shall call the attention of each speaker to the fact that twenty minutes of his time has elapsed. I shall again call his attention three minutes before the half hour is up, and then I shall remind him when it is time to sit down, and there will be three minutes' notice before the quarter hour has expired; and as we all want to get on with the business, I have much pleasure in asking Mr. Foote to open to-night's proceedings with a speech of thirty minutes. (Applause.)

MR. FOOTE: Mr. Chairman, Dr. Warschauer, and may I say to-night, friends? Late last night, in turning over in my mind what had been said from this platform, and recollecting the assumption, which seemed to run all through Dr. Warschauer's speeches, that his idea of Theism might be accepted as the universal one, and that his argument (for he adduced but one in favor of Theism) was accepted by all apologists of Theism, I could not help going back in my mind to that most exquisite and pathetic book, the great Newman's *Apologia*, and to that portion of perhaps the most magical piece of writing in the whole book, in which he referred to the scholastic and semi-scientific arguments advanced to prove the existence of God, and ended by saying, in substance, that he knew them and he understood them, but they did not enlighten him and they did not warm him. His whole being, he said, was full of the idea of God, but when he looked outside himself into the busy world of Nature and human nature, and saw there no reflection of the Creator, the impression made upon him was as though he looked into a mirror and saw no reflection of his own face. Surely, after that extraordinary utterance on Newman's part, we cannot in England even assume that there is unanimity amongst Theists as to the arguments which justify one in accepting Theism; or, as in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases one ought to put it out of a thousand for retaining Theism—for I never yet met a man in the whole course of my life who had been converted from Atheism to Theism by any of the arguments presented by its apologists. (Hear, hear.) The arguments in favor of the existence of God are not reasons for accepting Theism but excuses for retaining it. They are never advanced until faith begins to weaken. These arguments are, as Carlyle pointed out, I think in the fine essay on Diderot, addressed to those who still retain the faith; and, said Carlyle, they never do change the minds of those who have abandoned it; and what is more, he said they never ought to.

Now, you will recollect also that I said last night that Professor Knight, in his *Aspects of Theism*, had repudiated

the design argument as utterly fallacious. I was challenged on the spot by an interrupter, who, of course, ought to have left it to the representative of his side in the debate. Still I think I am entitled to clear that challenge out of the way by giving Professor Knight's own words. He says, on p. 65 of *Aspects of Theism*, and perhaps I ought to be very precise and say the 1893 edition:—

"To infer the existence of a personal Divine Agent from the observation of the mechanism of the universe is invalid. Where is the link connecting the traces of mind discernible in Nature with an agent who produced them? There is no such link, and in its absence a Divine Personality remains unattested."

Again, he says on p. 69:—

"No study of the existing arrangements and dispositions of Nature's mechanism can carry us beyond the mechanism itself."

And, finally, on p. 75, he says:—

"The teleological argument must be pronounced fallacious."

Now, if that does not bear out what I asserted respecting Professor Knight last evening, language has lost its significance. And this leads me to a most important reflection. Theology is not a unanimous voice: it is a chaotic Babel. I once thought of compiling a little treatise to be called "The Suicide of Theology." On one side of double columns I would print the declaration in favor of each theological argument by a leading divine; on the other side I would print as firm a declaration against it by another leading divine; and when one had completed the whole list of Theistic arguments, with authorities on one side in their favor and authorities on the other side against them, one might fairly see that theology had either committed suicide itself, or had had a happy dispatch from its own representatives. (Applause.)

I should like to point out that the greatest of all biologists—the Newton of biology, Charles Darwin—(applause) who began life a devoted Christian, who passed on through various stages of scepticism to what he called Agnosticism, but which shows no substantial difference whatever from the position of the Atheist—Charles Darwin, the Newton of biology, has stated that he saw no more design in Natural Selection (which he demonstrated to be the operative agency, or, if you please, method, or process in evolution) than in the way in which the wind blew. Now, if Darwin knew more about Nature than either a poor unscientific person like me, or even a very scientific person like Dr. Warschauer, if Darwin could see no design in Nature, it is idle for inferior persons to stand up and assume that the thing is perfectly patent to all persons who will open their eyes. Will you allow me to add that Dr. Russel Wallace, in his latest Theistic book—*The World of Life*, distinctly disclaims belief in what is commonly called Theism—certainly in the God that Dr. Warschauer presents from this platform? Dr. Wallace states his view that the purposeful power in Nature, whatever it may be, need be nothing at all like the Deity as presented by the various religions of the world, including Christianity. (Hear, hear.)

Well, now, what is the use of saying there is agreement in the Theistic camp? There is no more agreement in the Theistic camp than there is in the Christian camp, and the disagreement increases with the progress of time and the advance of discussion. In science, the more people discuss and investigate, the nearer they come to common conclusions; in theology, the more they investigate and the more they discuss, the wider are their differences and the more irreconcilable are their disagreements. (Loud applause.)

I agree thoroughly with one expression in Dr. Warschauer's address last night. He said we must start from the known, but I observed he was very soon plunged into the unknown. I will start from the known too. Now, I say that whether we understand Nature completely or not, we are in Nature, a part of Nature. If we do not understand Nature completely, it is the only thing we understand at all. What Dr. Warschauer called the steadfastness of Nature, but what I prefer to call the regularity of Nature, is a fact; whether we discuss the *why* as distinguished from the *how* or not. Whether there be a God or not, whether there be any spirit behind what is commonly called the matter of the universe or not, there the universe is. Its regularity is a fact, and upon that basis we can carry on all the business and all the pleasures of our life—without any accidents other than those which are the result of our own ignorance of Nature and our incapacity of foreseeing all her processes. Nature, I say, is there; and Dr. Warschauer and I are in it. Our welfare lies in studying it and making the best use we can of the knowledge thus gained; and whether there be any supernatural help or not, we know that science is a practical providence. All the prayers in the world would never carry a man from Europe to America, but science will do it. (Hear, hear.) Even when we resort to such a novel agency as wireless telegraphy, we are still moving in Nature, still using

the forces of Nature, still employing our knowledge of Nature. And I may be allowed to say, I think, in passing, that the first hero of wireless telegraphy, the operator on board the liner *Republic*, which was saved and all on board by the operator—the hero—Jack Binns, is an Atheist. (Applause.)

Here we are, then, in Nature; here we are in a Nature of absolute regularity. What are called the laws of Nature are only the regular methods of her natural operations. But a Theist comes along and says, "Yes, that is how Nature works; but there is another question: Why does Nature work that way?" and I reply, I do not know, except that I believe that everything happens according to the inherent qualities and powers, or forces if you please, of the things which are involved; that this applies from the lowest inanimate world up to the highest animate world, and that nothing but infinite knowledge could solve an infinite problem. If the universe have a secret behind it, if the universe is controlled and has ever been controlled and ever will be controlled by any being having the power to create her and to control her, you will never arrive at that being's secret existence by applying the pincers of a syllogism. You will have to wait, as a Catholic will tell you, until the Deity reveals himself. Nowhere can reason be the basis of religion. Religion must rest upon the basis of faith. (Applause.)

You say God made the world—using the world in the old Latin sense of the term. Why should the universe be made? Why has it not always existed? "Oh," you say, "it could not always have existed; it must have had a beginning." Very well; God made it, you say; that was the beginning; but you have only put the problem of existence one step further back. (Hear, hear.) If God made the universe, who made God? (Applause.)

I deny that human experience furnishes us with any idea of creation. The man of science will tell you that matter cannot be created as far as he knows, and what is more, cannot be destroyed (hear, hear); and although I do not wish to dogmatise upon infinite things, I do say that in matter we have an existing indisputable cause. The Newtonian law of parsimony forbids us to resort to hypothetical causes while actual causes, known to be in operation, are adequate to produce the phenomena. I prefer—I repeat the phrase Dr. Warschauer quoted—to believe, if I must believe, that the matter which cannot be created never began to be; that the matter which cannot be destroyed will never cease to exist, rather than the other proposition that matter was created by a spirit; the spirit being utterly unknown to any of us except in the theory that he created it. (Applause.)

Even if we assume the possibility of creation, for the sake of argument, we should not then be compelled to accept the Theists' theory, because a theory is no good merely because it appears to meet one aspect of the problem; it must meet all aspects of the problem, and it must justify itself by what logicians call verification. Your God, you say, made the universe; he controls it; he is the spirit of evolution. Well, I say for my part that I am not in love with evolution. I say for my part that three-quarters of what you call "social progress" seems to me to be nothing of the kind. When I look at the slums of our great cities and the awful faces of misery and degradation there, and then look at the abundant wealth and lust and pride of this West-end of London, I want to know what difference 2,000 years of even the Christian religion has made in the disparities of fortune in this world. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

Last night I drew attention to the fact that although the Deity is alleged to have been making eyes for millions of years, heaps of eyes were turned out still in a way which would disgrace any human artisan if he had been the same time in business. (Bravo! Applause.) You have short-sighted eyes, long-sighted eyes, color-blind eyes, eyes with all sorts of maladies and defections from the norm. One sign of our modern civilisation is the multiplication of medical establishments for the treatment of disease. The disease springs from what? Microbes. Who made the microbes? God. God made the man and God made the microbes; it is pull Devil, pull baker, and the Devil take the hindmost. Well, what I have to say is this: if this is a mark of divine wisdom I prefer human philosophy. The God of this process is a being who is feeling his way along; he has not completed his own self-culture yet; and I do not wonder at such a theologian as the Rev. George Bernard Shaw (laughter) saying God is in the making, and is still under process. If you want to know what God is (Shaw declares), stand up and say "I am God." That is Atheism. That means that God did not make man, but man made God. Let me end this part of my argument by saying that history furnishes the proof that man did make God, and all the gods; the gods of all the world are the reflex of the people who worship them. When the people are savage their gods are savage; when the people are barbaric their gods are barbaric; when the people are civilised, after the

difficulty of civilising themselves—for I see no help from what is called heaven—they have the extra task of dragging their gods up to date. Men go ahead, and presently they turn round and say, "There they are again; we must go back and drag them up." (Laughter.) Man reforms the gods; I defy anybody to show me a single instance in which the gods reform man. I believe that when the true Bible is written it will read, instead of "In the beginning God made man in his image; male and female created he them," it will read "In the beginning and since, man made God in his image; male and female created he them." (Loud applause)

DR. WARSCHAUER: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Foote, ladies and gentlemen,—When Mr. Foote rose last night to reply to my first address, it pleased him to represent himself as counsel for Atheism, in order to make it plain or to give reason why he should not answer certain questions of mine, because, he said, I had not the right to put him in the witness-box and cross-examine him as a witness. Now, as a matter of fact, though that figure of speech was a very pleasing one apparently to a large number in this audience, I think, if we must have recourse to these forensic phrases, that really the facts lie rather differently. If Mr. Foote will allow me to say so without his being offended, last night he was the defendant; he had to defend that case; and though I am not the person to pronounce a judgment, I do not consider that he did so very effectually. To-night I am in the position of the defendant, and I will try to do what I conceive Mr. Foote did not do, namely, follow him and answer the case which he has put before you, and so defend my side.

Mr. Foote began by saying that I was under the impression, that the idea ran through my speech, that my idea of Theism was accepted as the universal one and was held by all the apologists of Theism. It never occurred to me remotely to suggest or imply any such thing. I do not speak here as the representative of any school of Theism, let alone of all the people who call themselves Theists. My sole business was to lay before you what I conceive to be sufficient reasons for arriving at Theistic conclusions. I only claim to speak for myself, just as Mr. Foote would not choose to be under the limitation of speaking as the echo of the late Charles Bradlaugh. We each speak for ourselves and only for ourselves. Then my friend went on to refer to Newman's *Apologia* and to Newman's confession that the scholastic argument which he read for the existence of God did not warm him. That is certainly true. Arguments addressed to the intellect only have not the power of warming, neither is that the intention of purely intellectual arguments. Had I been here in my capacity as a preacher of religion I should have tried, perhaps very ineffectually, not to address myself to your intellectual faculty, but to have awakened your spiritual faculty. (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: Will you allow me to ask you to observe one rule to-night? Please show your approval if you like, but keep your disapproval of anything to yourself. (Hear, hear.)

DR. WARSCHAUER: I should naturally not have addressed to a congregation arguments that are merely meant to convince unbelievers. That is surely so obvious that even a Freethinker's somewhat irresponsible sense of humor might repress itself when such a statement is made. Newman said that he did not see in Nature any reflection of a Creator. That was Newman's great misfortune. Newman was a pure sceptic who threw himself into the acceptance of an ecclesiastical form of authoritative religion because of that scepticism of his. We know that scepticism of the most utter kind, and an acceptance of what some of us regard as a superstitious form of religion, are not so far apart as might seem to be the case. Extremes meet! I have known of eminent Secularists becoming equally eminent Theosophists. (Laughter.) Newman was a pure sceptic, and that he failed to find any evidence of God in the world outside was a misfortune for him, but it does not invalidate my argument. I was interested to hear Mr. Foote's quotations from Professor Knight. May I say without disrespect to Professor Knight that he is perhaps not amongst the most shining luminaries in the world of philosophy? He is not in the front rank of philosophers, never has been, never will be. That he should throw over teleology and the design argument is interesting, but beyond that I do not think that it carries any particular conviction, because men fully as eminent as Professor Knight, and rather more so, both in science and in philosophy, keep to the validity of the design argument. May I quote to you the words of one who was not a scientist, perhaps, but a man of the keenest insight, a man who certainly was not orthodox in any way. I mean John Stuart Mill, who said, "It must be" (you see he uses emphatic language for a calm, reasonable person) "it must be that the adaptations of Nature afford a larger balance of probability in favor of creation by intelligence." Well, now, I think that for every single individual who has

heard of Professor Knight there must be a good hundred who have heard of John Stuart Mill (hear, hear), and I take it to be likely that long after Professor Knight's productions have been forgotten John Stuart Mill will still have attentive readers.

But I go on to another point, because I must not linger over these initial issues that have been raised. Mr. Foote is under the impression that theology alone apparently has the privilege of not speaking with an unanimous voice. All theology has at least the advantage, or at least it is its characteristic, to speak with perfect unanimity in affirming the existence of God. That is the main point. All other differences, however serious, sink and fade into insignificance by the side of that one affirmation in which all schools of theology absolutely agree. (Applause) Does Mr. Foote really imagine that differences of opinion are the peculiar privilege of theologians? May I ask whether Mr. Foote sees eye to eye with Mr. McCabe? I have reason to believe the contrary, but I speak, of course, under correction; and, of course, I have no right to ask the question of Mr. Foote, as he explained last night. In theology, Mr. Foote says, the more people discuss matters the more disagreement do the varying schools of theology manifest. Now, I think an ounce of experience is worth a whole ton of assertion, and I will take an ounce, a small grain of experience from something I know. Seven years ago, it was my singular good fortune to bring out a small book in answer to Mr. Robert Blatchford, a book called *Anti-Nunquam*. Well, I suppose we have our differences, our different schools of theologians, but the *Church Times* and the *Joyful News* and twenty or forty other organs, all representing different denominations, were rather unanimous in expressing their opinion of that book. So that you see, here was a book chock-full of theology but it commended itself to High Churchmen and Low Churchmen, to Methodists and Presbyterians, down to any Gospel Mission. So I think that my ounce of experience is of rather more value than the ton of assertion with which we have been bombarded.

Now, Mr. Foote says that we are in Nature, and science tells us how Nature works; but if we ask why Nature does work then he has no answer to give—except that everything works according to its inherent forces. He put it a little more elaborately, and I will put it a little more simply. According to Mr. Foote, everything happens as it does because that is the way it happens. Now, that may be, of course, an explanation satisfactory to Freethinkers, but we Theists are of a little more inquiring disposition. (Laughter.) I quite understand that the mere notion of being of an inquiring disposition appeals to the humor of part of this audience. That is all; that is all. Mr. Foote said that we shall never arrive at the existence of the Being, if there be such an one, who has created the universe, because only an infinite mind could solve this infinite problem. Only an infinite capacity could drink a river dry, but yet a finite capacity could drink a real glass of that real river water. (Applause.) If the finite cannot comprehend the infinite, the finite can have sufficient apprehension of the cause of the universe. We never imagine that we can comprehend God, because if we could comprehend him we should be God. We could not believe in a God whom we could comprehend. I am surprised, I am amazed, that a controversialist of Mr. Foote's experience should put such an old, stale question as "If God made the universe, who made God?" That is the kind of question which renders one almost hopeless of the logical faculty of certain people. (Hear, hear.) It seems that Freethinkers are like the Bourbons, they learn nothing and they forget nothing. We say that God is the first cause. Now, to demand a cause for the first cause is only to assert that the first is second—which is absurd; which is absurd; and a third time, I repeat, is absurd. To demand a first cause for a first cause is only to assert that the first is also second; to suggest that the first cause must be also an effect is simply a contradiction in terms. I leave that to my friends on the other side. I have no use for purely contradictory statements. But I will give you again the considered opinion of a man of science—Romanes—made at a time before he had embraced Theism. I mean at the time when he wrote *Mind, Matter, and Monism*. He said, "The very conception of causality involves the idea of finality as existing somewhere." You must get at a first cause, and that first cannot also be second. The first cause cannot also be an effect. But does my friend Mr. Foote say that an uncaused cause is inconceivable? I quite agree with him. There are many, many things inconceivable. Let me give you an instance of something inconceivable—and, you see, I am an unscientific person—but I will give you a quotation from a man of science—Professor John Fisk. He said:—

"It is not only when we try to speculate about Deity that we find ourselves encompassed with doubts, and are made to realise how very short is our mental tether in some directions. If you look at a piece of iron, it looks as if its particles must everywhere be in contact with one another;

and yet by hammering or by great pressure, or by intense cold, the piece of iron may be compressed so that it will occupy less space than before. Evidently, then, its particles are not in contact, but are separated from one another by unoccupied tracts of enveloping space. In point of fact, these particles are atoms arranged after a complicated fashion in clusters, known as molecules. Now, are these atoms divisible or indivisible? If they are divisible then what of the parts into which each one can be divided? Are they also divisible, and so on for ever? But if these iron atoms are indivisible how can we conceive such a thing? Can we imagine two sides so close together that no plane of cleavage could pass between them? Can we imagine cohesive tenacity too great to be overcome by any assignable disruptive force, and, therefore, infinite? These difficulties serve to show that our power of conceiving ideas is strictly limited by the nature of our experience."

Let us admit that an uncaused cause is inconceivable. That does not prove that it does not exist. You cannot even conceive of an atom being either divisible or indivisible and yet one of these two. I suppose it must be the case only you cannot conceive of it. Well, in matter, said Mr. Foote—and I am amazed at the statement—we have got a sufficient cause adequate to produce all the phenomena. I suppose this is what Mr. Foote calls natural causation. What is natural causation as opposed to God? I do not think my friend even defined it last night, and I will return, with your permission, to one of my unanswered questions: Is not all that is intelligible in an effect proof of some intelligent cause; must not the cause be adequate to produce its effect? Mr. Foote says natural causation is sufficient, but causation is a meaningless term apart from a causative agent, just as personality is a meaningless term apart from a person. I say how could natural causation produce intelligence if it were not itself intelligent? (Hear, hear.)

Now, I am not going to give you an example of astounding intelligence—oh, yes, it is astounding, but it is not even human intelligence; it is the intelligence of a bee, whose brain is no bigger than a pin's point, and which can yet execute twenty intelligent operations. In times of excessive heat, when there is danger of the honeycomb becoming dissolved, the bees will glue themselves with their feet in the entrance of the hive, and revolve themselves with exceeding swiftness so as to produce an air-current to keep the honeycomb from melting. Now, I say you are asking too much of natural causation if you want to account for this astounding intelligence in the pin-point brain of a bee. What is this natural causation, anyway? Natural causation seems to be, shall I say, a kind of eternal nothing, operating from all eternity. It is blind; it is unconscious; it is aimless; and yet this blind, unconscious, aimless force happens to produce, or, at any rate, does produce the painting of a Raphael, the sculpture of a Praxiteles, the poetry of a Homer, the genius of a Newton and Darwin, the brain of a Plato—Plato, whom we still regard as one of the supreme philosophers, in spite of Mr. Foote's somewhat unhappy attempts to discredit Plato by calling him a forgotten back number like Jeremy Bentham. (Applause.) Well, if natural causation, being blind and purposeless and unconscious, can do all that, then I say you Freethinkers ask us Theists to accept too big a miracle; you presume upon our credulity. (Loud applause.) You think we can swallow a lot; but we cannot swallow that. We cannot swallow a blind, unconscious, impersonal something or other producing what is conscious and intelligent, and willing, and purposive and righteous to boot. There is nothing in an effect, and cannot be, but what has been already in the cause. So, then, this attempt to banish intelligence, will, and purpose from the first cause by talking at large about natural causation is only another evidence of—to borrow a phrase of Mr. Asquith's—the incurable sloppiness of what calls itself Freethought, but is so often neither the one nor the other.

I have already given you a quotation from a great man who was by no means orthodox, John Stuart Mill, who, after all, arrived at the conclusion that the evidence was in favor of creation by intelligence. Now I will give you a quotation from the man whom my friend, Mr. Foote, using the language of strictest moderation, called the Newton of biology. I mean the supreme biologist, Charles Darwin, who has done more, not only for biology but for human thought in all departments, than whole hordes and wildernesses of other men put together. (Hear, hear, and applause.) I am glad you applaud the name of Darwin because I also hope you will applaud these words of Darwin which I am now going to read to you. Mr. Foote said that Darwin—

Mr. Foote: I gave my references before I read the passage.

Dr. Warschauer: Mr. Foote said Darwin saw no design in Nature. Now, I suppose Darwin wrote a book called the *Origin of Species*. I suppose the book reached the sixth edition. I suppose there is in that book a p. 249. The words on the page read:—

"There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers having been originally breathed by the Creator into a

few forms or into one, and that whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity from so simple a beginning, endless forms, most beautiful and most wonderful, have been, and are being, evolved." (Applause.)

That was the considered opinion of the Newton of biology in the sixth edition of his epoch making work on the *Origin of Species*. Well, my friend Mr. Foote told us something about Alfred Russel Wallace this evening. Does Mr. Foote deny that there is a passage in Alfred Russel Wallace's last work which goes through exactly the same process of speaking of the attributes of God as that which I adopted last night; speaking of the cause of phenomena as conscious, as purposive, and as personal? I have read that passage but I am not able to reproduce it from memory, and I can only pledge my word that that passage is there. Now Alfred Russel Wallace is our most distinguished man of science. Alfred Russel Wallace has devoted fifty years and more to the study of these phenomena, and if Alfred Russel Wallace still believes that the cause of the phenomena of the universe is conscious, intelligent, and purposive, then I can only leave the decision of the issue not between a poor man like myself and Mr. Foote, but between Mr. Foote and Alfred Russel Wallace. I can only leave that to the judgment of this audience. (Applause.)

Mr. Foote, at the very close of his speech, began to lanch out into an allusive treatment, and allusive it was only, of the problem of evil. I am not going to answer a question of so vast import in the minute or two which remains to me, but when Mr. Foote says what difference has 2,000 years of Christianity made in the world, I would point him to such an authority, and I think such an unorthodox authority, as Mr. W. E. H. Lecky. In Mr. Lecky's pages he will find such a vindication of the work performed by Christianity since it came into the world as will form a most effective answer to his indictment. However, I shall now close, because I shall have another opportunity of dealing at greater length with this part of the speech, which I think that both you and I are at one in regarding as one of the utmost importance. (Hear, hear, and applause.)

(To be concluded.)

## Correspondence.

### "THE LAND O' THE LEAL."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I venture to say a few words on this subject. I may begin by saying that as I read all Mr. Lloyd's articles I read the one in which he made reference to Lady Nairne's verses. Mr. Lloyd erred in using the name "Jean," which is a woman's name, instead of the name "John," which is a man's name.

The matter can be settled by reference to a small book published about a dozen of years ago, the title-page of which I transcribe in full:—

"*Lady Nairne and Her Songs*, by Rev. George Henderson, M.A., B.D., Monzie Free Church, Perthshire. Paisley and London, Alexander Gardner, publisher to Her Majesty the Queen."

In pp. 61 to 65 of this book what may be called the history of the song ("The Land o' the Leal") is given; there is also a supplementary sheet, giving a facsimile of the original manuscript in Lady Nairne's handwriting. In the *Harp of Perthshire*, by Robert Ford, published about twenty years ago, there is a considerable amount of information about "The Land o' the Leal" given, and Mr. Ford states that the facsimile of the original song (which he also gives) is, through the kindness of Miss Steuart, the sole surviving niece of Lady Nairne, given to the public. The first verse of the song as given in Lady Nairne's writing is:—

"I'm wearin' awa', John,  
Like snow when it's thau, John,  
I'm wearin' awa' to the land o' the leal."

It is quite evident from this that the speaker in the song is a wife speaking to her husband. Lady Nairne wrote the song in the latter end of the year 1797, or in the spring of 1798, when she was in her thirty-second year.

When Lady Nairne lived it was considered *infra dignitate* for a lady of high position to write for publication, and it was perhaps this, coupled with an inherent modesty, that made Lady Nairne publish, or permit publication, under an assumed name. It will be seen from the above that Mr. Charles Jordan did not make a blunder when he said that the song "represents a Scottish matron on her death-bed taking a last farewell of her beloved husband." The difference between the words John and Jean did not affect the sense in which Mr. Lloyd used the reference to "The Land o' the Leal."

J. C. GOODFELLOW.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday, and be marked "Lecture Notice" if not sent on postcard.

### LONDON.

#### INDOOR.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES HUMANITARIAN SOCIETY (Fife Hall, Fife-road): 7, F. A. Davies, "The Light of the World."

#### OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 3.15, Miss K. Kough, "Christian Science"; 6.15, Mr. Allison, "God."

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15, F. A. Davies, "The King and the Bible."

EDMONTON BRANCH N. S. S. (The Green): 7, Mr. Dawson, "Christianity and Medical Science."

FINSBURY PARK: 11.30, C. Cohen, "What is the Use of Religion?"

ISLINGTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Highbury Corner): 12 noon, Ivan Paperno and Walter Bradford. Newington Green: 7.30, Ivan Paperno, a Lecture. Highbury Corner: Wednesday, at 8, Ivan Paperno, a Lecture.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (Ridley-road): 11.30, W. Davidson, "Christianity and Cannibalism."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill): 3.30, C. Cohen, "The Aims of Secularism."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford): 7, R. H. Rosetti, "Sir Oliver Lodge's Reason and Belief."

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Jolly Butchers Hill, opposite Public Library): 7, Mr. Moss, "The Flight of the Gods."

### COUNTRY.

#### OUTDOOR.

LAINDON, ESSEX (opposite Luff's Hairdressing Saloon): Saturday, at 7, R. H. Rosetti, "God."

PRESTON (Town Hall Square): Joseph A. E. Bates—Thursday, May 11, "The Christian Credulities"; Friday, May 12, "The Elements of Christian Worship." At 7.30.

WIGAN (Town Square): Joseph A. E. Bates—Sunday, "The Logic of Materialism"; Monday, "The Christian Valhalla"; Tuesday, "Adventures of the Gospel Jesus"; Wednesday, "Kingcraft—Past and Present"; Thursday, "The Salvation Army: Some Ethical and Economic Considerations." At 7.30.

## BUSINESS CARDS.

Short advertisements are inserted under this heading at the rate of 2s. per half inch and 3s. 6d. per inch. No advertisement under this heading can be less than 2s. or extend beyond one inch. Special terms for several continuous insertions.

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Secretary—MISS E. M. VANCE.

This Society was formed in 1898 to afford legal security to the acquisition and application of funds for Secular purposes.

The Memorandum of Association sets forth that the Society's Objects are:—To promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action. To promote freedom of inquiry. To promote universal Secular Education. To promote the complete secularisation of the State, etc., etc. And to do all such lawful things as are conducive to such objects. Also to have, hold, receive, and retain any sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of the Society.

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The Society has a considerable number of members, but a much larger number is desirable, and it is hoped that some will be gained amongst those who read this announcement. All who join it participate in the control of its business and the trusteeship of its resources. It is expressly provided in the Articles of Association that no member, as such, shall derive any sort of profit from the Society, either by way of dividend, bonus, or interest, or in any way whatever.

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, consisting of not less than five and not more than twelve members, one-third of whom retire (by ballot) each year,

but are capable of re-election. An Annual General Meeting of members must be held in London, to receive the Report, elect new Directors, and transact any other business that may arise.

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