

# THE Freethinker

Edited by G. W. FOOTE.

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## FREEDOM.

*The sheep of the priests, and the cattle  
That feed in the penfolds of kings,  
Sleek is their flock and well-fed;  
Hardly she giveth you bread,  
Hardly a rest for the head,  
Till the day of the blast of the battle  
And the storm of the wind of her wings.*

—SWINBURNE.

## The Catholic Faith.

THE Athanasian Creed opens with these words: "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith, which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." At the close of this famous Creed we read: "This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved." Everybody knows that the Athanasian Creed is a succinct statement of the highly metaphysical doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, and of how Incarnate Deity became the Savior and Judge of the world. However incredible such doctrines may seem to be, there are millions of people who profess to believe in them, and to be saved in consequence. Such was the Catholic Faith in the fifth century, and beyond a doubt it was a growth, a gradual and legitimate development, the germ of which had been dropped into specially prepared soil in apostolic times. We read about the sowing of the seed in various books of the New Testament, and we can watch the subsequent growth and development until the final stage is reached in the Athanasian Creed. That Creed has remained unchanged to this day. All departures from it are departures from Christianity itself. If Christianity is true, all unbelievers in the doctrines stated in this Creed are doomed to an eternity in penal fires. On this point there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. The apostle Peter, "filled with the Holy Ghost," uttered the final word when he thus addressed the Jerusalem authorities:—

"He [Jesus Christ] is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner. And in none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved."

Now, in the light of such teaching the history of the Church can be fully understood; even its hateful policy of pitiless persecution becomes intelligible, and is not only excused, but justified. Those who fervently believe the Catholic Faith would be guilty of treason against their Lord and their own conscience were they not to persecute, even to torture and death if necessary, all who pervert or openly deny it. The very fact of its acceptance necessitates that treatment of its rejectors as the most merciful policy that can be followed towards them. In a growingly unbelieving country like ours, the Church lacks the power to be true to its own convictions, or to pursue the only logical policy towards either mis-believers or unbelievers. The consequence is, that the logically persecuting Church has become the humiliatingly apologetic Church. The other day,

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Father Bernard Vaughan was the special preacher at the silver jubilee of the St. Edward's Catholic Church, Newhall. This reverend Father is an accredited and popular representative and interpreter of the Catholic Faith; and yet in his sermon, reported in the *Burton Evening Gazette* for Friday, June 16, he adopted an exceedingly apologetic tone while speaking of non-Catholics in the congregation:

"There were many indulgent friends there that night—fellow countrymen and country women—who were not of the Catholic household of faith, and who, perhaps, would not appreciate to the full what he said, but in a measure they would certainly follow him, because, as St. Augustine so well said, 'Naturally speaking, all are drawn to the Catholic Church.'"

Six hundred years ago, non-Catholics would have been burned, or beheaded, or shot; but now they are genially referred to as indulgent friends. Father Vaughan is doubtless as true a Catholic at heart as was Torquemada; but the conditions are so radically altered that neither the Catholic nor the Protestant Church can embody the persecuting spirit in the old cruel deeds. In theory, non-Catholic Christians are still contemptible schismatics, deserving of no toleration whatever; but in practice, in Protestant Britain, they are, "indulgent friends," who are patiently put up with because they cannot be annihilated.

Let us consider a few points in the Catholic Faith as interpreted by Father Bernard Vaughan on the aforesaid occasion. His allusion to the coronation of King George was not at all of a flattering character. The report represents him as saying:—

"Who cared about Jesus Christ? Why, they would have the Press filled from the first page to the last about the gee-gaws, the toys, the trifles connected with a procession which would be over in a very short time, but the King of Kings and Lord of Lords was only known to the few."

In that extract Jesus Christ is God Almighty himself, who loves sinners "more than the fond mother dotes upon her only child," who needs them more than they ever need him; and yet after two thousand years, this incarnate Savior of the world is "only known to the few." Think of it:—

"Outside there was no room for him. In the house of commerce, the marts of industry, our great legislative assemblies, at the corn exchange, in the great centres of activity and energy, in the press and in the modern novel, there was no room for him.....Nobody knew and nobody cared."

Has it never occurred to the reverend gentleman that, if such a Savior really existed, the language just quoted would be positively derogatory to him? If the knowledge of God means eternal life, does it not follow that ignorance of him is synonymous with eternal death? But surely those who do not know him cannot be blamed, any more than the few who do can be praised. If mankind are lost and cannot save themselves it stands to reason that they will continue to be lost until someone who is both able and willing takes the initiative, and actually saves them. If there were a God who loved and needed us more than we could ever need and love him, there would be none in ignorance of him, and he would make room for himself everywhere. His Spirit would fill and transcend the whole world with its purity, sympathy, and love. His need of us would kindle within us such a need of him as would make his absence a literal impossibility. An unknown God of



love and salvation is a glaring contradiction in terms, and Father Vaughan's language makes only for the most thorough-going Atheism. His very presentation of the Savior renders belief in him both logically and ethically absurd and mischievous.

Besides, the reverend gentleman's teaching makes God far too cheap and common. "He is at your beck and call," he said, "to come to you by day and by night. Is not the parish priest bound to bring him to you if you ask him, whether he lives in a garret or a palace?" Who it is that is described as living in a garret or a palace, whether the Savior or the parish priest, we cannot surmise; but we are confident that no all-willing and all-powerful Redeemer is at the beck and call of anybody, for we have known people who sadly needed him and fervently besought his aid, to whom he made no response, and who perished in consequence. We challenge any parish priest to bring him to a single fallen man or woman. *He cannot do it, because there is none to be brought.* The consequence is that there is no room for Jesus Christ in the world, and that, in the Father's own words, "nobody knows and nobody cares" about him.

While the Catholic is the only genuinely Christian Faith, it is yet a Faith that utterly fails to commend itself to the human reason, and that because it is fundamentally irrational. Take Father Vaughan's following version of it:—

"In the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar He [God] had made a memorial of his wonderful works, and in the Holy Eucharist He repeated his life of three and thirty years when He tarried in their midst—when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.....In the mystical life of the Blessed Sacrament, Jesus Christ repeated his sojourn at Bethlehem, where He was found wrapped in swaddling clothes. Here he was found that evening on the altar swathed in the form of wheaten bread, with a poor priest ministering to him. This was the house of bread, and here he had chosen to dwell."

The curious thing is that, though there is the element of blood as well as of bread in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, Father Bernard Vaughan makes no direct allusion to the former. According to the words attributed to Jesus at the institution of this Sacrament, only his body is in the bread, while his blood is in the wine. At the Catholic celebration of it, the people partake of the body of their Lord only, while the priests alone drink his blood. This is not fair, for the Master himself says that without eating his flesh *and* drinking his blood there can be no eternal life, and here the priests appropriate the most precious portion of their Lord to themselves. But the interesting and at the same time ludicrous statement is that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is to be found on the Catholic altar "swathed in the form of wheaten bread," and that he does not enter this wheaten bread until the priest blesses it. Who can believe such sheer nonsense? One does not wonder at the rumor that multitudes of priests do not believe it themselves, or that some popes regarded the Christian doctrines as a collection of "cunningly devised fables." And, certainly, one does not wonder at the rapid growth, in all Catholic countries, of a strong and vigorous anti-Catholic sentiment. The priest's claim that he can bring God to all who ask for him, and that he alone can do it, is so palpably false to all who think, and the tyrannical power which he has invariably exercised over the hearts and lives of all who have been foolish enough to take him at his own valuation has been so hurtful to moral character, that all thoughtful people are resolved to do their utmost, by all legitimate means, to put a complete end to his baneful reign.

Yes, the Catholic Faith stands wholly condemned at the bar of reason and conscience. The trend of the best thought is against it. France and Portugal have already broken with it, and are slowly shaking themselves free from the cruel oppression that accompanies it. Even in Spain the Church is quaking with fear, while in Italy the anti-clerical party is irresistibly strong. The city of Rome itself

shelters thousands of avowed unbelievers. The Catholic Church does no longer modify and adapt itself to changing conditions, like the Protestant; but it is losing public support everywhere. The priest may be still feared; but the number of those who love and trust him is steadily decreasing. The circumference of the Church is contracting, and it will continue to contract until the centre itself has vanished. Freethought is thus achieving magnificent victories all along the line; and the utter decay of superstition is as certain as to-morrow's sun-rise.

J. T. LLOYD.

## Public Opinion.

A CRITIC of Robert Louis Stevenson's recently issued—in separate form—*Lay Morals* records his amusement at finding the following passage:—

"As a matter of experience, and in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand, he (the father) will instil into his wide-eyed brat three bad things: the terror of public opinion, and, flowing from that as a fountain, the desire of wealth and applause. Beside these, or what might be deduced as corollaries from these, he will teach not much else of any effective value: some dim notions of divinity, perhaps, and book-keeping, and how to walk through a quadrille."

There is an air of superiority about the criticism offered, the writer being amused at a young man—the passage was written in Stevenson's earlier days—venturing to teach parents how to bring up their children. Yet it may well be that youth is more of a recommendation than a disqualification for the expression of a judgment on this topic, particularly when the observer is a person of ability. In later years the best are apt to fall under the influences against which Stevenson's criticism is directed. In youth one's sympathies with all that is noble and unselfish is stronger, and there is, therefore, a greater readiness to set conventionalities at defiance. The question of getting on in the world has not emerged, and the young reformer's troubles are all ahead of him. Later he may be affected in turn by the same forces that have affected his own parents, and practise the customary philosophy towards his own children. But this does not prove that his first view of life was inherently wrong. It only illustrates the corrupting influence of social forces which tends to make all parents partners in a conspiracy against the higher life of their children. The social mesh is fine-drawn, and its folds are wide-flung. Fortunate and few are those that escape it.

For my own part, what strikes me about the passage is not its immaturity, but its profound truth. And the truth it expresses is one that affection often prevents our seeing, and still more often prevents our giving to the world. Naturally we shrink from making the more intimate side of our life public, not because we are ashamed of what it may reveal, but simply because we distrust the nature of its reception. Conduct that we know was prompted by the deepest affection may appear to the outsider as callous or coldly calculating. And time itself creates a glamor around a child's recollections of its parents, as it creates a glamor around a parent's recollection of a dead child. Other people's parents may have been short-sighted or narrow-minded; our own parents, we tacitly assume, were free from the common faults of parentage, and illustrated nothing but its virtues. Detachment of mind is the rarest of qualities when we are called upon to judge a matter in which our emotions are concerned.

What is the average parent's concern for his child? He desires to keep it healthy—that is understood. He desires, in addition, to give it a good education, and to see it well settled in life. It is here that the crucial matter arises. For the education is, in the main, dominated by the ideal of getting on. If a girl, she is getting on when she "marries well," an expression which means, in our religious society,



marries a husband of a certain income which carries with it a certain position. And if a boy, he is getting on when his father can see before his son a good round yearly sum which shall enable him to stand well in the opinion of his fellows. There are very few parents who would not regard it as something of an infliction to be burdened with a son who showed a strong tendency to devote his energies to idealistic pursuits that had a small cash value or none at all, or who was careless whether social conventions were observed or broken. He would not be going the right way to get on in the world; and while a parent blessed, or cursed, with such a son might readily and with a certain pride admit the ability of his offspring, he would most probably ask pathetically, What is it all going to do for him? One of the commonest features in the biographies of the world's great leaders in art, science, and literature is the parental opposition that has had to be overcome before the boy could pursue the bent of his genius.

There is nothing wrong in the ideal of getting on, provided it be the right kind of getting on. But in our most religious society—still religiously strong even though doctrinally weak—getting on has a purely cash significance. There is, when a man dies, far more sincerity in the query, How much did he leave? than in that of, What good did he do? The faults of a rich man may be ignored, those of a poor one are seldom overlooked. A Carnegie scattering public library buildings—with his own name well advertised over the doorways—will bulk larger in the public estimation than a great thinker who lives his life in honest and honorable penury. There is, perhaps, no period in the world's history when money has been worshiped more than is the case to-day, and certainly there are no countries in the world where the possession of money gives greater power and distinction than in those which make the most ostentatious display of their faith in Christianity.

Naturally, then, the parent who desires his son or daughter to get on in the world—and all desire this more or less—is led to inculcate in his child that terror of public opinion of which Stevenson complains. To act on the opposite plan is to close many avenues of "getting on." It may ostracise them even as children; it will still more fatally hamper them in maturity. You cannot get on, in the commercial sense of the word, and flout public opinion, for public opinion is sleepless and omnipresent. It will, save in exceptional cases, wear you out. If it does not conquer you in youth, it will wait for maturity, when added responsibility urges caution, or for later life, when enfeebled energies are less capable of resistance. Social forces not only takes each individual and operates upon him direct, it utilises parental affection, which should be the guardian of the highest interests of the child, and converts it into an instrument of oppression and of suppression. Less careless parents would, because of their unconcern, leave more room for the growth of individuality if the possibilities were there. It is those who are most concerned who play most effectually the part of unconscious conspirators against the child's highest interests.

What Stevenson did not notice is that the responsibility for this condition of things is less an individual than a corporate responsibility. We are all, more or less, creatures of our social environment. It is this which determines the prevalence and the perpetuation of ideals. If parental solicitude emphasises the necessity of getting on, and expresses getting on in terms of submission to public opinion, and an exaggerated respect for wealth and power, it is because the social environment demands it. If, to quote Emerson, "The English, in common, perhaps, with Christendom, do not respect power, but only performance; value ideas only for an economic result," it is because the society into which we are born places a low estimate on ideas, and values scientific knowledge only as they can be applied to commercial purposes. The pity of it is that this sacrifice of the spiritual to the material—to use a convenient

antithesis—is really not necessary to the right ordering of social life. Nay, it stands directly in the way of its right and truly profitable ordering. If a single generation could have its eye turned from the successful commercial man as its ideal, or could be brought to regard the play of new ideas as something that should be encouraged, public opinion would cease to exert its stupid tyranny, and parents would be less careful in training their children to become so many unintelligent copies of those around them. The development of individuality would then become the prime concern of educationalists, and critical and independent opinion recognised for what it really is—one of the most beneficent and powerful of all the social forces.

As matters are it is simply astonishing what little pride people really take in their opinions. A man will be proud of the home he lives in, the books or pictures he possesses, or the wife and children he has. He will be proud of his proficiency at running, boating, riding, or shooting; but the very last thing he will manifest a pride in is his opinions. On the contrary, if they are not of the common order he will hide them as though they deserved to be hidden, or express them as though they were a confession of some ugly taint. And, as a natural consequence, he will quite fail in the duty of bringing up his children to feel a pride in their opinions—a proceeding not without its nemesis, as is witnessed by the many cases in which the children of advanced but timid thinkers bury in oblivion that portion of their parent's life of which they have good cause to be proud. His efforts in training his child will be directed, not towards the development of a strong personality, but to the cultivation of an unproductive mental uniformity. The action of the adult is thus the outcome of his early training, as the training is itself the expression of that pressure which society exerts upon its units.

We say lightly and easily that the children of to-day are the citizens of to-morrow; we do not realise that the kind of citizens that this to-morrow will possess is largely determined by the parental training these children receive. Nor do we realise, as Stevenson pointed out, how ill fitted the majority of parents are to develop the higher qualities of the children under their control. Children will have impressed upon them the observance of the ordinary social virtues, honesty, sobriety, industry, cleanliness, order, etc., but the ethics of the intellectual life will be sadly neglected, if not completely ignored. And without this even the commoner virtues are robbed of part of their efficiency. Courage and self-respect lie at the root of most that is really good in a civilised society, and how are either to develop so long as children are taught to consider the opinion of others as of primary importance, or rank the successful millionaire as of greater social importance than the thinker? Self respect and self development go hand in hand. Every man owes a duty to others, but a man's first duty is to himself, and it may well be found that ultimately the profitable discharge of the first is dependent upon our complete recognition of the second.

C. COHEN.

### A Christian Jew.—III. A Study in Pathology.

#### VIII.

MY object is to show that Mr. Warschauer deliberately sought to prevent or avoid the publication of the debate. Nursing a grievance would enable him, as he thought, to do this. But the grievance of being "interrupted" and treated "discourteously" needed some fortifying. He therefore found another grievance in the fact that I "refused to answer his questions." Let us look into *this* grievance a minute.

According to the conditions of debate, signed for us by our several representatives on the joint-committee of management, nothing was contemplated



but set speeches on either side. The right of the disputants to ask each other questions, and especially a continuous number of questions, cannot exist without a definite clause in the articles of agreement. Mr. Warschauer contends that his asking me to reply to eight questions at the end of his opening speech is on all fours with his congregation's asking him questions after his addresses. But there is no real analogy between the two cases. The questions put to Mr. Warschauer arise out of his address. The congregation ask questions about what they have heard. Mr. Warschauer's eight questions were all prepared and type-written beforehand. They did not arise out of anything I had said. I had not opened my mouth. The pretence that the questions were intended to enable me to understand him better is simply impudent. The questions are controversial questions. I refused to receive them. I declined even to listen to them. I closed the ears of my mind when he read them. I listened carefully to his speech, and I was ready to answer it, as he had a right to expect. His questions were one of his many impertinences. And I should have told him so in the plainest language if the large majority of the audience had not been on my side,—a fact which was a silent appeal to me for the greatest possible consideration. I did, however, make my position perfectly clear. In handing him back his eight type-written questions, I said:—

"I beg to say that there is nothing in the conditions, the signed conditions, of the debate which would entitle Dr. Warschauer to put questions to me or me to put questions to him. We are to speak for half an hour each. One states his case, the other replies to it. I repeat that my function is that of counsel for Atheism. I do not want to put him in the witness-box, and he shall not put me."

I thought that was plain enough. But I did not calculate on the perverse and unscrupulous ingenuity of a converted Jew.

Mr. Warschauer started his second speech with reckless distortion of what I had said. Although the audience applauded my attitude towards his questions, he said that I had "thrown myself upon their indulgence," and that he was "sorry for a cause which cannot answer plain questions when they are plainly put." Not a word in reply to the substantial objection I had raised against his attempted procedure. His addendum, "the questions grew out of my lecture," was sheer fatuity. A child might see that questions which grew out of his lecture were for him to answer and not for me.

In my next speech I adhered to my original position. I told Mr. Warschauer that his questions were "utterly out of place." My duty was to reply to his speech—and I had done it. The notion that I shrank from answering questions was absurd. I answered them after every lecture I delivered. And I added:—

"I have no coyness in answering questions at the proper time and in the proper place. If Dr. Warschauer would like a Socratic debate, I am his man. The discussion shall be nothing but question and answer. We will then see who is coy in answering questions."

Mr. Warschauer's love of questions (*his* questions) and answers (*my* answers) did not lead him to accept that offer. He was bent on something very different. In his penultimate speech he had the impudent mendacity to say "Mr. Foote confessed himself unable to answer these questions." My reply to this came in due course:—

"I did not say I was incapable of answering his questions. (Applause on the part of the audience.) I said I refused to accept them. I said that I was quite prepared to answer questions at the proper time and in the proper place, and I offered Dr. Warschauer the opportunity of a Socratic debate."

Will it be believed that, in his final speech, Mr. Warschauer had the cool audacity to say: "I did not say that he was incapable of answering my questions"? He did say it. What is more, he has the insolence to repeat it on the cover of the *Atheist's Dilemma*—which is the converted Jew's report of the debate—for himself and opponent. "This book," he

says, "contains the eight questions Mr. G. W. Foote could not answer."

Mr. Warschauer is willing to make a commercial use of my name on his cover. He is not willing to show me the civility of speaking the truth about me. He couples my name with his own lie for the sake of a little profit.

"The eight questions that Mr. G. W. Foote could not answer" on the cover become "Eight questions Atheism cannot answer" on the title-page. Mr. Warschauer's modesty is a match for his manners and his veracity.

## IX.

Mr. Warschauer's paper-backed volume contains thirty-nine pages of large well-spaced type. He charges sixpence for it. He calls it "An account of a debate with Mr. G. W. Foote." There may be ten lines of mine in it—in instalments. The rest is Mr. Warschauer's. It is obviously a very fair and impartial production.

The volume has a Preface, which shows Mr. Warschauer's ignorance of the Freethought movement. He fancies it confines itself to "the science of Genesis, the natural history of Jonah, the morals of Jacob, David, and Solomon." He says that Agnosticism is "often of a very shallow character"—which is perhaps better than having no character at all. He calls his debate with me "a somewhat extraordinary, but certainly instructive experience." I agree with him. It was. But when he says he gives "an account of it" in this publication,—containing, as I have said, some ten lines of mine—in instalments, and those only quoted from the summary report in the *Christian Commonwealth*—and nearly thirty-nine pages of his own—he invites the reply that I also have given an account of the same debate in the form of an honest verbatim report, for which I paid money; a report containing all that he said, as well as all that I said—so that the reader has the full and proper means of forming a just judgment.

That is a way of mine. When I was dealing with the famous "Atheist Shoemaker" case I printed in the *Freethinker* all that the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes and George Jacob Holyoake had written on the subject in the *Methodist Times*. But not a word of my reply was allowed to appear in Mr. Hughes's journal. That is the way of the Christians. And it is doubly natural to such a Christian as Mr. Warschauer—a Christian Jew.

## X.

Mr. Warschauer understands downright insolence. He does not understand sarcasm or irony. He quotes quite seriously, as a proof of my incapacity, my statement that I "did not pretend to have the wonderfully trained intelligence of some of the gentlemen with whom I found myself in opposition." This is worthy to go with Mr. Dawson's taking me quite seriously when I spoke of Mr. Warschauer's referring me (as if I did not know of it!) to "such recondite and almost inaccessible works as Lecky's *European Morals*." Is it religion that makes these men so dense? Or is it a gift of nature?

## XI.

Mr. Warschauer prints the whole of his opening speech in the debate. That was easy, for he read it from manuscript. He prints no speech of mine. The few sentences he quotes are garbled. He is utterly silent as to the reason I gave for handing him back his eight questions. He tells his readers—that is, the Christian public as distinguished from the Freethought public—that "Mr. Foote declined to answer the questions put to him, on the avowed ground of his inability to do so."

I do not say that Mr. Warschauer lies. That is too tame a way of putting it. I call his attention to another converted Jew, and I suggest that Mr. Warschauer ought to be the successful applicant whenever Ananias's resignation causes a vacancy.

## XII.

There is no end to Mr. Warschauer's impudence. I suppose that long practice has shown him how easy



and safe it is to presume on Christian bigotry and credulity. He tells his readers that I indulged in "such elegancies" as referring to Jesus Christ as "a back number." The fact is it was Mr. Warschauer himself who introduced that "elegancy." Quite gratuitously—for it had nothing to do with the argument—he sneered at the great Bentham as "a bick number." He was so much in love with it that he repeated it the second night. And this is how I rebuked him:—

"I want to know what Dr. Warschauer means by picking out everybody who does not agree with him and calling him a back number.....And mark how you invite retorts by labelling great Freethinkers in this manner, for I might have said last night, and as it has been repeated to-night, I do say that if back numbers are to be reckoned in this way some of us regard Jesus Christ as a very back number."

Personally, I hope I should never be silly enough to attempt to dispose of a man's argument by calling him a back number. I only referred to Jesus Christ, in rebuking Mr. Warschauer, in order to show him the danger of setting a bad example. The "elegancy" was his own.

### XIII.

With a great air of frankness, Mr. Warschauer says in his Preface that he had "no wish to anticipate the reader's verdict." He has given the reader no grounds on which to form a verdict. I have. I have given my readers *the debate*—the whole debate, and nothing but the debate. Mr. Warschauer has given *his* readers his own opening speech—without my reply, and sixteen pages of his own talk about the debate after it was over. Such is the sense, such is the honor, such is the decency of the Christian Jew.

If I thought I could ever sink to that level I would blow my brains out at once. Mr. Warschauer is different. He belongs to a race that is tenacious of life and values longevity as the greatest blessing.

### XIV.

Mr. Warschauer's action all along, as I think the reader sees by this, was designed to dodge the publication of the debate—at least as far as the Christian public is concerned. The knavish thing he has put before the Christian public is meant to occupy the field and keep out the honest article.

I tried all I knew to get Mr. Warschauer to agree to some form of honorable publication. I offered to let the debate be issued for both of us by a neutral publisher, or to publish it at my own risk and pay him half of any profit that might be realized. He would not answer "Yes" or "No." His policy was to stop the publication of the debate without positively refusing his consent. He did not reckon on my determination and ability to get the debate published in spite of him.

If the Christian papers had any sense of fair play I would reprint this long article in pamphlet form and call it *Dr. Warschauer's Dilemma*. But I am confident they would not advertise it or refer to it in any way. I am speaking from experience. It is really their detestable bigotry that gives Mr. Warschauer's cunning its only advantage.

I may have to reprint the debate in book form out of mere self-defence. We shall see presently.

Meanwhile I have to add this. I have cast my mental eye over the English dictionary and I can discern only one word that sums up Mr. Warschauer's leading characteristics. Christian Jew is enough for those who understand that peculiar phenomenon. But there is a short, sharp, expressive word that all can understand. It is CAD.

G. W. FOOTE.

### A SCHOOL-BOYS' ESSAY ON "THE ARMY."

The Salvation Army is mostly in the street. The women in it cover up their hair in funny sorts of bonnets, which stick out in front to keep the rain off their faces. Sometimes they have names on their hats like sailors. They make a deal of noise. The worsted two are called captain and lieutenant. They tell people about Jesus and make collections.—From the "Macnamara" Collection.

### THE BISHOPS.

Our known zeal for the Church will not permit us to remain silent on some severe observations of Bentham on the wealth acquired by the clergy, in apparent contempt or defiance of the scriptural maxim that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." The fault insinuated, if we are not egregiously mistaken, is in fact the sublimest virtue of our priests. Considering the great danger of wealth, they zealously strive to strip the people of so grievous an impediment to the salvation of souls. In performing this meritorious service, they of course sacrifice themselves; but in this there is no kind of inconsistency. It is their heroism to suck the poison out of our pockets—to save us, and perish! The public purpose and the personal practice of men may obviously be in complete opposition, without any kind of inconsistency. The intention of soldiers is to protect us from violence; but for this very end the soldier himself falls by the sword. The physician is of all men the least careful of his health. Or an apter but homelier illustration: the clerk at the White Horse Cellar or Golden Cross puts the whole world in train to travel, he individually being perhaps the most stationary person in London. Just so it is with our reverend clerks. They expedite us without even stirring a step towards the same goal themselves. For this they surely merit our gratitude rather than sarcasms. When a Bishop dies worth £400,000, we should regard him as an absorbent of a poison that would have swollen up ten men to a needle-eye impracticability. Here is a clear saving of nine souls out of ten. In Ireland there are whole populations whose cows, pigs, and potatoes are so carefully looked to by the clergy that they would march through the eye of a needle by generations abreast; while in the Church there are camels in abundance a vast deal too corpulent to go through a bodkin, and which will find only one pair of gates wide enough for their bloated proportions. Still, we repeat, the greater their merit. The mouse in the meal cask, who lived so well as to grow too large to repass the hole, and who thus fattened himself into a prisoner, was merely a gluttonous creature; but he would have deserved a far different, a divine character, had he devoured the meal to keep some fellow mice of a safe size—*Albany Vonblanque*.

### MR. HUNTINGTON BUYS A BIBLE.

Henry E. Huntington has just paid \$50,000 for a copy of the Bible, a Gutenberg edition which was one of the first Bibles ever printed from types.

What a beautiful thought it is that this wealthy man cares so much for the holy word. Just think of \$50,000 worth of love for it. This sum would have given one hundred working men and their families more than their average income for an entire year, but Mr. Huntington loved the sacred text so much that it was more to him to own it than to alleviate poverty. It would have purchased at least 200,000 meals for 200,000 hungry men, women, and children, but, as Mr. Huntington realised, a single copy of God's word is of more moment than many filled stomachs. Oh, many and many are the good and helpful things which could be done with \$50,000, but how trivial they seem as compared with a Gutenberg Bible.

Presumably the closing sentences of this brief screed should be devoted to a panegyric of the Gutenberg Bible, yet these will not be, for it so chances that I believe that one empty stomach is of more moment to humanity than many Gutenberg Bibles; that the opportunity given one harassed being to live must count for more in the final scheme of things than numberless first editions.

While men hunger, women lack a home, and children know not what comfort means, it seems unnecessary to be counted among those who stand in admiration of Mr. Huntington's Gutenberg Bible.—*A. J. Waterhouse in the "San Francisco Star."*

### "KING LEAR."

It is worth observing with what ease Shakespeare has arranged every detail of the play so as to give edge to his indictment of the forces that make sport of man's nothingness. The plot, which deliberately rejects the Christian interpretation of the universe, is set in a pagan environment. The heavens are invoked in a pagan terminology, as Nature, or under the names of the classic deities. Pains are taken, contrary to the usual disregard of anachronism in the plays, to avoid the introduction of Christian language or Christian sentiments.—*E. K. Chambers*.

Teacher: Tommy, why don't you close your eyes during prayer?

Tommy: Because we are told to watch and pray.



## Acid Drops.

The Day of Intercession at Queen's Hall did not bring fine weather for the Coronation—which was what the people, and we daresay the King, most cared about. During the long wrestling with the Lord the following message was telegraphed to Buckingham Palace:—

"Two thousand five hundred Christian people gathered in the Queen's Hall for United Prayer desire to express to the King and Queen an assurance of their loyalty, and their determination to help them in the duties of government by continued prayer."

That will help the King immensely. It must have been the best bit of news his Majesty received during Coronation week. He's all right now.

The Bishop of Ripon was one of the speakers at Queen's Hall. One thing he said sounded very business-like. He assured his audience that "if a nation were true to its God, God would be true to it." Give and take. You scratch me and I'll scratch you. One good turn deserves another. Excellent! It is so good to see the Christian God right up to date and well dosed with the spirit of commercialism. We are reminded, indeed, of the old story of Jacob, the only human being (pure and simple) that God "loved." Jacob's piety was a calculation. He said that if the Lord fed him, clothed him, prospered him, and kept him safely, then the Lord should be his God; and he further promised that if God found him unlimited capital he would give God ten per cent. of all his profits. It was a wonderful bargain.

The Bishop of London rejoiced that England (he said nothing about Scotland, Ireland, and Wales) was still a Christian country. And she would remain so while she kept her Sunday—the Bishop said, and we incline to agree with him,—for people who will let the Churches spoil their one day's leisure for them are just fit to be Christians.

Coronation Day's *Daily News*, which reported the bunkum of the clerical orators at Queen's Hall, reported the following under "Recent Wills": Very Rev. Canon Thomas Davis, of Listowel, Co. Kerry, R.C. parish priest, left £5,749; Rev. Humphrey William Bretherton, of Eccleston Rectory, Chorley, Lancs, left £41,060. While the clerical business flourishes, while there's money in it, religion is sure to be "the secret of England's greatness."

Another poor apostle of the poor Carpenter! Rev. Canon George Francis Turner, of Bath, left £15,870.

Still another poor apostle of the poor Carpenter! Rev. Charles Herbert Kenrick, of Barnstaple, left £51,811. Fancy getting through the needle's eye with that load

Swinburne, in one of his splendid early poems, "A Song in Time of Order," makes the revolutionist exclaim again and again,—

"While three men hold together  
The kingdoms are less by three.

Kingdoms are really inward, not outward. A throne is dead wood, but sovereignty is first in the minds and hearts of the people, who are trained from infancy in the superstition of kingcraft—of which priestcraft is the cunning ally and protector. That is why Swinburne, in the same poem, makes the revolutionist say:—

We have done with the kisses that sting,  
The thief's mouth red from the feast,  
The blood on the hands of the king  
And the lie at the lips of the priest."

Only a poet worthy of the name could write like that. A strongly expressed idea in each line, every word but one a monosyllable, and the music of them like the ring of a great hammer on a mighty anvil. How different from the wretched stuff that has been put forth by the poeticles of a later day in honor of King George's Coronation! Little occasions produce little men—and little poets. Great poems can only be written by great poets—on great themes.

Mr. Harold Begbie's Coronation verses—we cannot call them a poem—address the Deity as "great God of Gods." King of Kings is intelligible and classical. God of Gods is sheer nonsense—unless Mr. Begbie is a Polytheist.

Flunkeyism and gush can hardly have been carried further than they were in the London newspapers the morning after the Coronation. They actually tried to conceal the fact that there was any rain. One writer in the *Daily News*

incautiously let the great black cat out of the bag. He confessed that people were saying that the pageant was all military. It was soldiers, soldiers, soldiers—rifles, bayonets, swords, and drums. That is what a lot of people mean by "empire." At least, it is all the people get when the "empire" is paraded before them. Other sections of the national life were represented at Westminster Abbey. Peers and peeresses were there, and the "classes" generally. The millions on whose labor all the "classes" rest were out in the streets. This fact was so obvious that the *Daily News* writer couldn't help noticing it. And this is what he said:—

"One felt the pride of Empire as one watched the governing classes, their countenances beaming with satisfaction, stream past in their hundreds. Success was there, and wealth, and station, but less obvious were those elements which make for the happiness of millions, the healing arts, the heroism that saves rather than destroys life, and the patience that instructs the young. Look first on Society, here proudly preening its feathers, then look at the pinched, pale faces on the pavement, and you will realise why, to more than one beholder, the scene seemed to lack somewhat."

Yes, and a good deal more than "somewhat" was lacking. Self-respect was lacking. The mob of workers applauded the parasitic classes, who live upon them and treat them with insolence. The Monarchy binds all the parasitic classes together. It is their symbol. And the Church consecrates the Monarchy—blessing the drones in the name of God.

At last we have a perfect man in the person of a perfect king. From the newspapers—and in particular the religious papers of last week—we learn that George the Fifth is an amalgam of all the virtues that characterise an ideal humanity. He has "world-wide knowledge," for he has made a tour of the whole of the British Empire. He has a "remarkably retentive memory"; he is a "voluminous reader and a constant reader"; he possesses "a love of order and devotion to work"; he is "absolutely indifferent" to personal danger; he is "frank, manly, warm-hearted," with "a high conscientiousness, a weariless industry, and a profound constitutional instinct." He is "self-reliant," and once he has decided on a course "there is certainly no human being who could induce him to deflect by a single hair's breadth." Strength, knowledge, self-reliance, conscientiousness, order, kindness, ability, courage, domesticated, what more could one ask for or expect in a king? Renan expressed the opinion that the wisest and best monarch who ever sat upon a throne was Marcus Aurelius; had he been alive to-day he would have given the Roman emperor second place.

The Rev. Blatherskite Rattenbury gives as one reason for rejoicing that the King is truly a representative monarch, because during the Coronation service the following words are said:—

"Sirs, I here present unto you King George, the undoubted King of this realm: wherefore all you have come this day to do your homage and service. Are you willing to do this same?"

The people will then cry "God save the King," and, observes the sapient Rattenbury, if they did not say so the service would come to an end. Well, suppose the people did not cry "God save the King"? Suppose someone were to object, what would happen? He would be promptly lugged off by the police and charged with brawling, or high treason, or some other offence. As a matter of fact, the Coronation service does not make George the Fifth king. He is king by the death of his father. He represents his father; the people of England simply agree to the representation.

The object of the Coronation in Westminster Abbey is to show that the King receives his ultimate right to his throne from Holy Mother Church. It is not until he has been holy-oiled by the Archbishop of Canterbury that the Crown is allowed to be placed upon his royal head. And the first prayer in this performance proves what's what. Listen to this:—

"Grant unto this thy servant, George, our King, the Spirit of wisdom and government, that being devoted unto thee with all his heart, he may so wisely govern this kingdom, that in his time thy Church and people may continue in safety and prosperity."

Church first—with a capital C. People second—with a small p.

We wonder where the Archbishop of Canterbury bought, or otherwise obtained, the holy oil with which he anointed King George V. at Westminster Abbey. One would really like to know—if it wouldn't be giving the game away. Was it olive oil, or colza, or paraffin? Or was it a mixture made up according to some ecclesiastical prescription? And what is done with the quantity left over after making the sign of



the cross with it on the King's head and dabbing other parts of the royal person. If these are trade secrets, of course we shouldn't think of pressing for information; but if the Church in general, and the Archbishop in particular, have nothing to lose by making a clean breast of it we should like to have the mystery cleared up. We should also like to know, if possible, what effect the holy oil has upon the person anointed. Does it make him wiser, more virtuous, or better looking? We submit that as the nation pays for this ceremony it is entitled to know what it is getting for its outlay.

Where the anointing ceremony went on is called in the official program "the theatre." This is a most appropriate title. The whole thing was a play—not a tragedy nor a comedy, but a farce; and if anybody present took it seriously he (or she) must be pretty nearly fit for a lunatic asylum. We never heard of greater tomfoolery. That one man should perform it, and another man undergo it, in the twentieth century, almost makes one despair of one's species.

Some day or other, let us hope, there will be an exhibit in an archaeological museum: "Ampulla of Holy Oil, together with Spoon—once used by Archbishops at the Coronation of Kings of England; also Sword, Spurs, Cross, Sceptre, Orb, Ring, and Bible, used on the same occasions."

Coronation is a religious ceremony and naturally solemn, not to say dull; one needn't look, therefore, for any wit or humor in it. But humor is sometimes unconscious, and that was the sort of humor displayed in the decoration of Chiswick police-station, one item of which was a big board over the doorway, bearing the inscription "Welcome."

Bacup has been agitated over the Sunday-school procession on Coronation Day. Rev. W. Johnson, the vicar of St. Saviour's, refused to have anything to do with it because it included Roman Catholics and Spiritualists; and the St. Mary's (Roman Catholic) School refused to join on account of the hymns. A happy family still!

The *Church Times* is shocked because an article in the *Nation* has the "effrontery" to state that the vast majority of English people were present at the Coronation ceremony as at the scenes in a play, and not as at the solemnities of sacramental mysteries. Shocking! But then the truth usually does shock somebody. After all, is the whole thing any more than a huge and costly theatrical performance? Is not every step carefully and elaborately rehearsed? In true stage style there are preliminary rehearsals, succeeded by a full dress rehearsal. How each shall stand, what each shall say, how long each shall be about it, is regulated beforehand. Even the spontaneous cheers of the Westminster schoolboys are rehearsed a full week in advance. And the newspaper articles describing the enthusiasm of the people *en route* are probably in type a day or so before the procession sets out. Dense crowds assemble to see the procession pass. Naturally; and if Tyburn tree was still in existence, and public executions the rule, as dense a multitude would have turned out to see Crippen hanged.

For some weeks the Nonconformist preachers and papers have been complaining of the lack of recognition shown them by those responsible for the Coronation arrangements. They have demanded proper recognition for the Free Churches, and one wonders why? The State Church is there because it is the State Church, and while one may not believe in a State Church, so long as there is one its ministers may logically claim a place as State officials. If anyone is to publicly oil the King's head, the task is theirs. If anyone is to publicly pray over the King, the task is theirs also. But what business have people who on principle protest against the State patronage of religion to demand that their religion shall receive State notice? It is a proof that what animates dissenters is not principle, but jealousy. They do not quarrel with the State patronage of religion so long as it is their religion that is patronised. The *Christian World* says: "The Coronation of a British king should demonstrate the essential unity of the Empire in the matter of religion." Well, for those who really believe in State neutrality in matters of religion, the coronation of the King should leave religion alone altogether. If Dissenters really mean what they say when they protest against State religion, they should hold that George the Fifth ought not to be crowned as a Christian at all, but as a secular monarch of a secular State. The religious opinions of the King should not concern his subjects, and the religious opinions of his subjects should be no concern of the King. The truth is, however, that Nonconformists are as ready to sell themselves in this

matter as they were ready to sell themselves over the Education Act of 1870.

Sir J. Compton-Rickett says that "To-day Jesus needs in His Church good business men who deal with religious work as they do with their business." We do not think the actual state of things falls far short of this ideal. Many of the conditions that obtain in the commercial world obtain also in the Churches. To begin with, there is the fact of competition, which is keen enough in all conscience. The way in which half a dozen chapels and a couple of churches compete for the patronage of a given group of people reminds one for all the world of so many commercial travellers touting for orders. And innuendoes against competing firms, with stealthy aspersions on the quality of the goods supplied, is carried to as great an extent as it is in the shadiest of commercial circles. And when we come to advertising, we really think that many who are actually in business would do well to spend a term in connection with some chapel in order to master the art of securing the largest possible advertisement with the smallest possible outlay. We have in mind, while writing, the shadier sides of commercial life. In its higher branches business men could act as teachers to the Churches in the arts of faithful dealing and honorable speech.

For unctuous impudence the following from the *Methodist Times* beats anything we have seen for some time:—

"It is extraordinary how Mohammedanism threatens the peace of the world. The world's sky is clear of war-clouds at the present moment, save in two directions. One is the only Mohammedan state in Europe—Turkey, and the other is the only independent Mohammedan state in Africa—Morocco. While all the Christian nations, in theory at any rate, preach peace, war is a part of the religion of Mahomet—a recognised form of religious propaganda."

With the European craze for bigger armies and navies, none of which are directed against non-Christian peoples, with our own list of wars with Christian nations, to say nothing of the wars of other nations, it takes a Christian to talk calmly about Mohammedanism threatening the peace of the world. Moreover, best part of the trouble in Morocco is ultimately traceable to Christian exploitation of the country, while with Turkey it is again the greed and mutual jealousies of Russia and Austria, leaving out other nations, that is largely responsible for the trouble in the Turkish dominions. As for war being a part of the religion of Mohammedanism, that is one of the slanders sedulously circulated by Christians. True, Mohammedanism has had its wars of religious propaganda, but in this respect a Christian should be the last one in the world to cast stones.

The Rev. Thomas Philips can think of no power that can recreate society from top to bottom but the grace of God. Naturally, Mr. Philips, as a parson, is quite convinced of the efficacy of the article in which he deals. No one would expect him to cry stinking fish. The important thing is whether other people agree with him, or, still more important, whether there is any necessity for recreating society from top to bottom. There is really no need to recreate society, and only the fool or the quack talks or thinks of doing it. Society is in need of liberation, not creation. It needs liberation from obsolete forms, outworn opinions, and dead creeds. Deliver society from those, and the power of man will do more in a generation than the grace of God could do in a millennium. At present man fritters his energies on useless subjects, and squanders his available materials on senseless objects. Deliver man from this folly, and all the rest is a question of time.

Mr. Philips believes that the reason why the democratic creed of America is that every boy—we suppose he means any boy—may become President of the United States is because of the doctrine of grace held by the Pilgrim Fathers. Well, we may remind Mr. Philips that in France any boy may become President of the Republic, and that can hardly be to either the credit of the Pilgrim Fathers or of the doctrine of grace. And we would also suggest that in America the possibility of anyone becoming President is not quite so clear. For instance, it was not possible for the late Colonel Ingersoll to have become President. And the chief, if not the only, obstacle to this was his Freethought. The Christians of America would have drawn the line at having an avowed Freethinker for a President. One who kept his opinions to himself they might have tolerated, and gladly pardoned the hypocrisy. And this result may fairly and safely be placed to the credit of the doctrine of grace and those who uphold it.

Mr. Lloyd George is not discussable in our columns as a politician. As a religionist we are bound to say that he talks nonsense worthy of the most wretched street-corner preacher.



That such a man should talk in such a way shows once more that religion is the very principle of unreason. On Sunday afternoon he said some absolutely imbecile things in the Welsh Baptist Chapel, Castle-street, London, W. One observation of his had some truth in it; namely, that "all the poverty of London was really at the door of religion." But this is true in a way that Mr. George does not contemplate. Religion addles people's brains in their childhood, and disposes them to accept things on trust instead of through knowledge and reflection; and that state of mind clings to them, for the most part, through the rest of their lives, so that they become easy to bamboozle and oppress. But what Mr. George means is this, that it is the business of the Christian Church to solve and settle social problems. We beg to tell him, however, that the Christian Church is incapable of doing it. The only social idea the Christian Church ever had is the idea of "charity," which complicates and worsens nearly every evil it touches. Science and justice are the two great agencies of social reform, and who ever found them in the Christian Church?

Mr. George, according to the *Chronicle* report, asked "Where did self-sacrifice come from?" And his answer was "From the Christian religion." There was no self-sacrifice, therefore, in the world before the Christian religion appeared. Why, the early Christian "fathers" knew better than that. Mr. George is fourteen hundred years behind St. Augustine. Self-sacrifice came from no religion. It came from Mother Nature. It springs originally from the principle of parenthood—and especially of maternity. Mr. George's mother displayed it, and would have done so without the Christian religion or without any religion whatever. The prolonged infancy of the human species is the primary secret of all moral culture. Mr. George evidently doesn't know what is a commonplace of modern sociology. Which comes of talking politics most of his time and spending the rest in conventicles.

There are men, Mr. George said, who conscientiously believe [is there any other form of belief?] that they will never be able to save the people until they have destroyed religion from the world. But he called that a destructive mistake. Were it not for the spirit of religion social reforms would never be brought about. Indeed! It was not the pious Mr. Lloyd George, nor any other member of the pious Liberal Cabinet, who brought about Old Age Pensions. Thomas Paine started the idea, and propounded a scheme for effecting it, in his *Rights of Man*. For a hundred years it was a commonplace amongst Freethinking reformers. When it was taken up by John Ruskin his fellow Christians—if he was a Christian then—laughed at him as a man of genius with a bee in his bonnet. And when did pious politicians take it up? When the nation had become converted to the idea; or, to put it in other words, when the growth of social sentiment had made it impossible for the majority of people to feel easy while aged workers were thrown upon the national scrap-heap. Religion! Why the same religion, and more of it, existed in England a hundred years ago, and hundreds of years farther back than that. But where were the social reforms?

We give Mr. George's last whirling words in full:—

"If the Christian Church were destroyed the country would be turned into a burned-up wilderness, and there would be nothing between the people and what was called force. There was nothing between the people and tyranny but the spirit of the Christian Church."

Now it is sufficient to remind Mr. George of one thing. The greatest battles for English freedom were fought in the nineteenth century. It was not a ten years' civil war like the one decided by the sword in the seventeenth century. It was a hundred years' civil war, and it was decided by human intellect and courage against perhaps the most sordid tyranny in modern history; a tyranny blessed by the Christian religion and supported by all the Churches. And eight at least out of every ten heroes who fought on the side of freedom in that prolonged and awful struggle were Freethinkers. The Blasphemy Laws were worked mercilessly against them because it was seen that they were the men who really meant business when they spoke of political and social reform. Byron and Shelley, as poets—Paine and Godwin, as publicists, inaugurated the century's fight, and Bradlaugh closed it. And these men, and scores of others, were all Freethinkers—and all Republicans. Nothing but the Christian Church to stand between the English people and tyranny! It would be truer to say that nothing but the Christian Church stood between the English people and freedom.

Rev. Robert Hughes Wilkinson Parnell, patron of the living of Staverton, Gloucestershire, brought an action for libel against the Rev. George Allen Fisher Pearson, vicar of

Staverton, and obtained a verdict with £10,000 damages. Evidently the household of faith in that locality is not a happy one. Whatever the libel—and it seems to have been bad enough—the £10,000 is on the face of it a ridiculous figure. The explanation is that the defendant filed his petition in bankruptcy before going into court. The jury made the damages "substantial" on the invitation of plaintiff's counsel, who told them that the plaintiff would get nothing. The judge asked counsel if he was satisfied. The latter replied that "he thought the amount of the damages would be sufficient to show to the world that there was not a word of truth in the defendant's libels." On that ground why not make it a million?

We have informed a correspondent this week that there is no impartial History of the Protestant Reformation in England. Read the Protestant account of it, and you would fancy that all the Catholics were devils. Read the Catholic account of it, and you would fancy that all the Protestants were devils. You might be tempted to follow the example of Voltaire, who, when he heard two old women black-guarding each other, said "I believe them both." But that would perhaps be too severe. Certainly, however, you might draw this sure conclusion that there is nothing like religious bigotry for distorting history. And of all religions in the world Christianity is the greatest sinner in this respect. It seems utterly impossible for a Christian to take anything like a fair view of any matter in which his own or any other religion is involved. Even a "liberal" paper like the *Daily Chronicle* published the following editorial paragraph recently:—

"At Windsor Castle may be seen two objects of small intrinsic value, which Queen Victoria is said to have valued more highly than most of the costly gifts showered upon her during her long reign. The first is an old and much worn Bible which General Gordon carried with him throughout his great campaign in China. It was presented by Gordon's sister to her Majesty, who had it preserved in a beautiful casket of crystal and enamel. The second object is a fitting companion to the first. It is the Koran formerly used by Gordon's murderer the Mahdi. It was given to Queen Victoria by Lord Kitchener."

One would think from this that the Koran was a sort of text-book of murder, whereas everyone who has read it is perfectly well aware that it cannot vie with the Bible for a moment in bloodshed and brutality. Gordon, too, being a Christian, is treated as having a right to go anywhere as a soldier, fighting and slaying, as long as he carried the "Blessed Book" with him. China or Egypt, what does it matter? He is a good Christian, doing the Lord's work everywhere. But the Mahdi, being a Mohammedan, and living in his own country, is a vile tyrant and usurper. And when Gordon is killed, as heaps of other men are killed, in the capture of a besieged town, the General of the other side is a "murderer." This is how Christians write history.

Bishop Ingram feels pleased at having put on the market lately "sixty-four splendid young clergymen, most of them six feet high." Evidently as the Church runs short of brains it will try to secure a reputation for weight. And we quite understand Bishop Ingram placing more emphasis on weight and size than on intelligence.

Rev. E. Dalton, of Hull, the new President of the Primitive Methodist Churches, tells his sheepfold that he is "afraid they have left politics too much and too long in the hands of unbelievers." This is a new idea. Freethinkers find themselves boycotted in politics. Mr. Dalton thinks that they boycott the Christians.

Great is the pride of race, especially when fortified by religion. Out in South Africa, if a woman shoots a colored man for assaulting her, it is justifiable homicide; if she shoots a white man for assaulting her it is murder. The case is similar in America. White criminals are allowed due process of law. Lynching is reserved exclusively for colored criminals.

A Unitarian church at Carlisle is to sold to the Corporation for the purpose of electricity works extension. What a change!

Sir Francis Drake's widow went to church to get married again soon after his death. On the way to the church a great stone from the sky fell upon her train, and stopped her just in time. She took it as a message from Drake, reproving her for her faithlessness. "The stone," says his latest biographer, Lady Elliott Drake, "is still preserved at Coombe Sydenham, where it is an object of great veneration and respect." Something like the stone brought to America from Mount Ararat in order to show the truth of Noah's Flood,



**Mr. Foote's Engagements.**

(Lectures suspended for the present.)

**To Correspondents.**

**PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1911.**—Previously acknowledged £253 11s. 9d. Received since:—R. Young, 10s.; D. Mackenzie, 2s. 6d.; C. H. M. Grönn (Australia), £1 2s.; J. B. Palphreyman, 2s. 6d.

**THE VANCE TESTIMONIAL FUND.**—Previously acknowledged, £29 10s. Received since:—Definite Article, £1; W. P. Pearson, 2s. 6d.; R. Young, 5s.; W. H. Hicks, 10s. 6d.; Mathematicus, 10s. 6d.; H. R. Clifton, 2s. 6d.; S. E. Noakes, 2s. 6d.; J. W. Gott, 10s.; The Fincken Family, £2 2s.; M. J. Charter, 10s. 6d.; G. R. Harker, £1; John Grange, £1 1s.; W. Palmer, 2s.; V. Whitty, 2s. 6d.; T. C., 1s.; J. B. Palphreyman, 2s. 6d.; J. H. Gartrell, 10s.

**W. J. LEWIS.**—Sorry we do not know of such a doctor in your locality. Glad you have derived advantage from reading the *Freethinker*.

**J. LUCAS.**—Always glad of matter on which we may write an article or a paragraph.

**R. TAYLOR.**—H. M. Reade was connected in a small way with the Secular party in the early eighties. We have repeatedly stated that in the *Freethinker*. But the way was so small that we never heard of him until he posed as a converted infidel some twenty years afterwards. He is nobody, and his writing is simply nothing; but he has assurance and push, and has persuaded a number of Christians that he is a valuable supporter of "the faith." Take away the stupid "converted infidel" part of his pamphlet, and what is left to attract a moment's attention? Thanks for your good wishes, and your efforts to promote our circulation.

**T. G. THOMAS.**—"Gallant little Wales." Evidently, also, "Superstitious little Wales." What would Julius Cæsar think of the intellectual progress of the world in two thousand years if he could come to life again and see Welsh Calvinistic Methodists solemnly praying for a change in the weather?

**V. M. HARDY.**—Apparently one of the many soul-saving troupes that perambulate this country. Not worth special treatment in our columns, as you recognise. Glad to have your thanks for the help you derive from the *Freethinker*.

**"DEFINITE ARTICLE"** sends one pound for the Vance Testimonial Fund, and wishes he could make it fifty. "I do hope," he adds, "that the Fund may approach dimensions somewhere near to Miss Vance's deserts."

**JOHN HAYES.**—Does not the question answer itself? If Adam and Eve were the first man and woman, their children must have intermarried, and Cain must have had offspring by his own sister. Not that the question is of any real importance—for the whole story is legendary.

**(MRS.) S. E. BARNBY.**—(1) The circulation of the Bible is artificial. It is pushed. A great society, with an immense income and an army of paid officials, exists to push it at home and abroad. It sells Bibles at less than cost price, which is giving away to the extent of the difference. We believe it gives away a considerable number absolutely. (2) Trade Union reports have often complained of the industrial conditions, especially as regards wages, under which these Bibles are produced. (3) It is a piece of Christian egotism that no man has ever made such an impression on the world as "Christ"—which, by the way is not the name of a man at all, but the name of a god. Guatama, the Buddha, existed centuries before Jesus, and his followers outnumber the Christians even now. Mohammed is another case. His followers obey him. They are teetotalers, for one thing. But what one moral virtue must a Christian practise? And how could anyone tell he was a Christian except by hearing his profession of faith or seeing what church he attended?

**W. H. JACKSON.**—There is no impartial History of the Protestant Reformation in England. Cobbett's book is valuable from a certain point of view. He was not a Catholic, but he gave what may be called a Catholic account of the movement. Perhaps it might be called the shady side of the Protestant case. Froude and Cobbett together might serve your turn.

**H. J. HYETT.**—See paragraph. Thanks.

**W. H. JACKSON (Australia)** writes: "My affection for your paper grows stronger every week. I desire to thank you and your talented staff for many pleasant hours of intellectual enjoyment."

**C. H. M. GRÖNN (Australia)**, renewing his subscription to the *Freethinker*, says "Many thanks for your splendid publication." This correspondent sends us a printed letter by the Rev. John Urquhart, of Canterbury, Victoria, in which it is said that the Bible teaching that "the sun is younger than the earth" is true, and that "astronomy now proclaims it from the housetops." They must have a very funny science on the housetops where Mr. Urquhart resides.

**W. P. ADAMSON.**—The letter is anonymous, and very likely concocted. Hardly worth notice.

**E. ROBEY.**—Thanks, but what does it mean?

**W. PALMER.**—Thanks for encouraging letter.

**G. D.**—In our next.

**H. R. CLIFTON.**—We note that you were "closely associated with Miss Vance in Freethought work in North London twenty years

ago" and "can testify to her great zeal for the cause and her fine ability."

**W. P. BALL.**—Since you have taken the trouble to answer the Rev. J. Warschauer's eight questions your article shall appear. But we think you pay him too much honor, and you yourself practically concur in that opinion. Thanks for cuttings.

**EDMONTON BRANCH.**—Tuesday is too late for paragraphs.

**F. A. DAVIES'** present address is 66 Maybury-street, Tooting, S.W.

**H. R. Y.**—We deal with Mr. Warschauer's volume this week. Thanks.

**A. J. FINCKEN**, after much praise of Miss Vance as an uncompromising fighter, says: "I raise my hat to her, and shall always think of her as *one of the best*." This letter is accompanied by the requisite voucher.

**JOHN GRANGE** sends Miss Vance his deepest sympathy (with subscription) and thanks us for our defence of Atheism in the recent debate. A friend of Mr. Warschauer's told Mr. Grange prior to the debate: "I fear, if pinned, he will prove somewhat nasty." He knew the gentleman.

SOME correspondence stands over through want of space.

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**A Correction.**

OUR attention has been drawn to a paragraph in our issue for April 23 (p. 263) referring to the Rev. A. Tildsley, of the Poplar and Bromley Tabernacle. The paragraph was written on the basis of an interview with Mr. Tildsley in a newspaper which we did not keep, and the identity of which we have forgotten, although it may be traced hereafter. Either from misreading the interview, or from some confusion in the interview itself, or from some other cause, we were led to state that the cinematograph scenes from the Life of Moses, the Life of Christ, etc., in which Mr. Tildsley was interested, were presented at his Sunday morning service and would probably be introduced in the evening—with a charge of threepence and sixpence for admission. There is nothing disgraceful in cinematograph scenes from the Bible, even in a place of worship—and a charge for seats, acting practically as a charge for admission, is made in many Catholic churches on Sunday—while pew-rents and seat-holdings are only charges for admission on a wholesale scale. But the matter is, not unnaturally perhaps, viewed otherwise by Mr. Tildsley. We are assured that he has never run a cinematograph show at his Sunday services at the Poplar and Bromley Tabernacle, or made any charge for admission to them. We were therefore led into a blunder—which had nothing malicious in it, for we did not know Mr. Tildsley from any other minister in East London. Our blunder has caused Mr. Tildsley annoyance. We very much regret it, and we tender him our sincere apology.

G. W. FOOTE.

**Sugar Plums.**

The Queen's (Minor) Hall has been engaged by the Board of the Secular Society, Ltd., for Sunday evening lectures during October, November, and December.

A Pittsburgh subscriber, remitting for another year, says: "I originally subscribed through the *Truthseeker* for six months as a trial, but I would dislike to be compelled to do without your paper. It contains 'good stuff' in every issue."

The New National Freethought Society of South Africa, which we mentioned some time ago, desires us to state that its postal address is Box 1210 Cape Town; and that its meeting room is at 134 Long-street—meetings being held there on the second and last Monday in each month.



## Some More Great Believers.

"No great man ever wrote a great and convincing book in favor of Christianity. Copernicus, Sycho Brahé, Kepler, Galileo, Bacon, Shakespeare, Newton, Halley, Descartes, Huyghens, Laplace, Herschel—none of them wrote anything in favor of Christianity which satisfied even the Christians who came after them, although some of them were ardent believers. David Brewster, Michael Faraday, and the present Professors Stokes and Dawson were, or are, ardent Christians. What figure did they, or do they, cut in regard to Christianity? There is nothing from the pen of any of them on religion that is worth perusal.

If great men who are Christians wrote better on that subject than much inferior men, I should be impressed with the fact. But I will venture to say that the greater the man the more worthless will be whatever he is induced to write in defence of his religion. If this is not so, it is in the power of the believer to overwhelm me with facts to the contrary."—JOSEPH STUBBS, *Freethinker*, Oct. 6, 1895.

"As there is abnormal joy in heaven over the recovery of the lost sheep, so there is more noise in Methodist parlors over the alleged return of one Atheist shoemaker to the fold, and in church drawing-rooms over the reversion of one Romanes, than is made on all the platforms of Rationalism over the withdrawal of the bulk of the working classes from the churches, and over the muster-roll of heretics from Gibbon to Grote, or from Hobbes to Spencer. It has come to this with Christianity, that the adhesion of any man over sixty, or, above all, the return to pietism of any public man or woman who had parted company with the faith, is a crowning mercy."—J. M. ROBERTSON, M.P. "The Case of Dr. Romanes," *University Review*, April, 1897.

IT has often been our lot to be the recipient of the personal opinions of the acquaintances we make. It generally takes some such form as the following. They say:—

"Oh, yes, I don't believe in the Bible. I believe in evolution and all that, you know; but I really do think there is something at the back of it all; some creative intelligence to set it going in the first place."

And so on, and so on; some even having the vanity to believe that this "something" takes a very great and abiding interest in their own particular affairs. It requires all the politeness at our command to suppress a yawn, and to reply: "I don't care a fig what you believe; all I am interested in is what you can prove."

Similarly, it is only a weariness to the flesh for the Freethinker to be told that he ought to believe in something because some great men have believed in it. We should have to believe in Spiritualism with Lodge, Crookes, and Wallace; in Roman Catholicism, with Volta, Ampere, and Pasteur; in Sandemanianism, with Faraday; and in Wesleyanism, with Dallinger; to cite only a few varieties of religious belief.

Then, as we have seen in the case of Newton, when a great man turns from the special research by which he has made his name and fame, to write upon religion, the result is generally a farrago of nonsense.

Addison is a prominent example of this failing. He wrote an *Essay on the Evidences of Christianity*, and Macaulay observes:—

"It is melancholy to see how hopelessly he gropes his way from blunder. He assigns as grounds for his religious belief stories as absurd as that of the Cock-lane ghost and forgeries as rank as Ireland's Vortigern, puts faith in the lie about the Thundering Legion, is convinced that Tiberius moved the senate to admit Jesus among the gods, and pronounces the letter of Abgarus king of Edessa to be a record of great authority. Nor were these errors the effects of superstition, for to superstition Addison was by no means prone. The truth is that he was writing about what he did not understand."\*

As we shall see later on, Addison was by no means a solitary example.

Then, again, it is no use telling us that so-and-so believes in God. We want to know what he means by God. Many people use the word "God" who do not believe in the existence of any such Being. For instance, Lafcadio Hearn, writing to his friend Henry Watkin, uses the word "God," but he hastens

to explain—"When I write God, of course I mean only the World-Soul, the mighty and sweetest life of Nature, the great Blue Ghost, the Holy Ghost which fills planets and hearts with beauty."\* And later on, in a letter to the same friend, he explicitly affirms, "I do not believe in God—neither god of Greece nor of Rome nor any other god" (p. 141). The words God and Holy Ghost, were, to Hearn, merely poetical metaphors.

Mr. Robert Blatchford is another instance of an unbeliever who uses the word God. Being asked to explain his use of the word, he replied:—

"What do we mean by using the form 'By the help of God'? We do not know. We suppose it sounds more idiomatic than 'by the help of the gods.' Of course, we do not believe that fate or fortune or the gods will, or do, help us. But one cannot keep saying, 'By good luck.' The fact is, these old terms have a literary value. They come clean off the bat, though God knows they mean nothing."†

Even among those who believe in a God—apart from those who put out their thinking to be done by the parson and the priest—there are scarcely two who think alike upon the subject. We cannot illustrate this point better than by a comparison of the religious ideas of Rousseau and Voltaire. Both lived in the same period; both rejected Christianity; both believed in a God; but Rousseau regarded Voltaire's religious opinions with horror, and Voltaire regarded Rousseau's with contempt.

While the encyclopædists were laboriously extending and systematising human knowledge, Rousseau, in the morning sunshine, on the terrace at Les Charmettes, was evoking a Beneficent Author for the beauties of nature which lay spread before his eyes. For him, says John Morley:—

"God became the highest known formula for sensuous expansion, the synthesis of all complacent emotions, and Rousseau filled up the measure of his delight by creating and invoking a Supreme Being to match with fine scenery and sunny gardens."‡

In a word, continues Morley, "he was religious. In being so, he separated himself from Voltaire and his school, who did passably well without religion."

"It was Rousseau, and not the feeble controversialists put up from time to time by the Jesuits and other ecclesiastical bodies, who proved the effective champion of religion, and the only power who could make head against the triumphant onslaught of the Voltairians. He gave up Christian dogmas and mysteries, and throwing himself with irresistible ardor upon the emotions in which all religions have their root and their power, he breathed new life into them, he quickened in men a strong desire to have them satisfied, and he beat back the army of emancipators with the loud and incessantly repeated cry that they were not come to deliver the human mind, but to root out all its most glorious and consolatory attributes" (p. 206).

Rousseau declared that a man who did not believe in God and a future state should be banished the country.

Rousseau's God was entirely a creation of his emotions, he never even pretended to advance any scientific proof of his existence.

Voltaire's God was more of a philosophical conception. There is a world of difference between a God evolved from the emotions for the purposes of worship and religion, and a God designed to fill up the spare gaps in our knowledge of the universe—a glorified mechanic who starts the cosmic machine and endows it with evolving laws. The first is believed in by an act of faith without evidence; the second is merely an unknown quantity held in reserve to explain the unexplainable, and only comes into operation when the known laws and causes are considered inadequate to compass the phenomena of nature. Thus the more science progresses and explains the processes of nature, in terms of purely natural laws, the less the philosopher finds for God to do, until God becomes a useless fifth wheel in the

\* Macaulay, *Critical and Historical Essays*, 1854: vol. iii., p. 362.

\* *Letters from the Raven*, 1908; p. 86.

† *Clarion*, February 3, 1911, p. 5.

‡ Rousseau, John Morley, p. 52.



machine—itsself requiring an explanation of how it came to exist—until to-day the philosophers, who still believe in such a being, have removed him several solar systems away in space and limited his operations to uncounted ages ago in time. It was a true saying of Caro's, "Science conducts God with honor to its frontiers, thanking him for his provisional services."

Voltaire was a philosopher—the most open-minded, the least prejudiced, the greatest Freethinker who ever lived on this planet. He appears to have believed in a God for two main reasons. The first was the Design argument, which since then has been finally disposed of by Darwin, who showed that the design we see in nature is the result of the natural selection of the fittest to survive in the struggle for existence. Voltaire would have been one of the first to recognise the force of Darwin's epoch-making discovery.

The second was the supposed need of a moral governor. He observes:—

"It is evident that in morals it is most important to recognise a deity. It is certainly for the interest of all men that there should be a divinity who punishes what human justice cannot repress; but it is also clear that it is better not to recognise a God than to adore a barbarous deity to whom human beings are sacrificed, as has been done by so many nations."\*

As John Morley remarked, "It was not the truth of the Theistic belief in itself that Voltaire prized, but its supposed utility as an assistant to the police."

But his belief in a Divine Providence received a rude shock when Lisbon was destroyed by an earthquake in 1755. It also destroyed Voltaire's belief in the optimistic philosophy of Bolingbroke, that this is the best of all possible worlds, which had been done into verse by Pope in his famous *Essay on Man*, condensing it in the well-known couplet:—

"And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,  
One truth is clear—whatever is, is right."

Voltaire's poem on the earthquake of Lisbon, says Morley, is "one of the most sincere, energetic, and passionate pieces to be found in the whole literature of the eighteenth century." It is certain that his belief in a moral Providence was shaken to its very foundations. Voltaire, says Morley,

"Whose imagination, already sombered by the triumphant cruelty and injustice which raged around him, was suddenly struck with horror by a catastrophe which, in a world where whatever is is best, destroyed hundreds of human creatures in the smoking ashes and engulfed wreck of their city. How, he cried, can you persist in talking of the deliberate will of a free and benevolent God, whose eternal laws necessitated such an appalling climax of misery and injustice as this? Was the disaster retributive? If so, why is Lisbon in ashes, while Paris dances? The enigma is desperate and inscrutable, and the optimist lives in the paradise of the fool."†

Voltaire was a philosopher, his method was "straight to the fact." "A single fact," he declared, "is worth more than a hundred antitheses," and here was a fact which he was unable to square with his conception of God, and he admitted it.

Rousseau, on the contrary, was a creature of emotions, and his God the offspring of emotion. The Lisbon earthquake did not affect him. He declared Voltaire's conduct "revolting in a man crowned with good things of every sort, and who, from the midst of his own happiness, tries to fill his fellow-creatures with despair, by the cruel and terrible image of the serious calamities from which he is himself free."‡ "As if," says John Morley—

"any doctrine could be more revolting than this which Rousseau so quietly takes for granted, that if it is well with me and I am free from calamities, then there must needs be a beneficent ruler of the universe, and the calamities of all the rest of the world, if by chance they catch the fortunate man's eye, count for nothing in our estimate of the method of the supposed divine

government. It is hard to imagine a more execrable emotion than the complacent religiosity of the prosperous.

Voltaire is more admirable in nothing than in the ardent humanity and far-spreading lively sympathy with which he interested himself in all the world's fortunes, and felt the catastrophe of Lisbon as profoundly as if the Geneva at his gates had been destroyed. He relished his own prosperity keenly enough, but his prosperity became ashes in his mouth when he heard of distress or wrong."

Although Voltaire seems to have remained a Deist to the end of his life, he no longer believed that God took any interest in the welfare of mankind. In that incomparable satire, *Candide*—in which he covered the optimistic religion of Bolingbroke and Pope with ridicule as with a garment—he makes the dervish reply to *Candide's* objection that there is a horrible amount of evil on the earth, "What signifies it whether there is evil or good? When his Highness sends a ship to Egypt, does he trouble whether the rats aboard are comfortable or not?" That is, we are of no more importance in the eyes of the Almighty than the rats in the hold of a ship are in the eyes of a shipowner.

In spite of Voltaire's polemic against Atheism, the religious have always instinctively felt he was the enemy of all religions, and have generally described him as an Atheist.

Lamartine, the historian—himself a Deist and an enthusiastic admirer of Voltaire—after a magnificent tribute to the devotion, the genius, and courage displayed by him in his brilliant warfare for the independence of human reason and Free-thought, observes:—

"One thing was wanting to him—the love of a God. He saw him in mind, and he detested those phantoms which ages of darkness had taken for him, and adored in his stead. He rent away with rage those clouds which prevent the divine idea from beaming purely on mankind; but his weakness was rather hatred against error than faith in the Divinity. The sentiment of religion, that sublime *résumé* of human thought; that reason which, enlightened by enthusiasm, mounts to God as a flame, and unites itself with him in the unity of the creation with the Creator, of the ray with the focus—this Voltaire never felt in his soul."\*

That is why Rousseau declared that "Voltaire, in seeming always to believe in God, never really believed in anybody but the Devil," and denounced him as "that trumpet of impiety, that fine genius, and that low soul."†

So that it is possible to believe in a God without having a religion. We repeat that it is no use telling us of great men who use the word "God" unless we know what they mean by the expression.

It is nothing less than a pious fraud to cite these names as believers, to countenance people in their belief in the Bible God. Professor Tyndall is constantly cited by Christian Evidencers as a believer, on the strength of his having once publicly used the word "God"; but what belief had he in common with the ordinary believer? His Belfast Address is nothing less than a breviary of Materialism, and was violently denounced as Atheistic by all sections of the religious world.

Sir Ray Lankester is another scientist cited as a believer, upon the ground that he once spoke of the "Almighty" and "Eternal." Yet when Lord Kelvin attributed a specific action to this "Eternal," in the creation of life, Sir Ray Lankester, as a biologist, wrote to the *Times* to publicly repudiate any such creative interference with the laws of Nature.

Dr. Wallace, it is true, believes in some kind of creative intelligence; but in his *Autobiography* he has denounced "the orthodox religions of the day" as "degrading and hideous." Yet the names of these great men are used to bolster up a mass of superstition which they regard as impure and revolting. But when men start out to defend God, they seem to throw honesty and fair play to the winds. They make false suggestions and suppress

\* Hamley, *Voltaire*; 1898; p. 182.

† Morley, *Rousseau*, p. 208.

‡ Morley, *Rousseau*, p. 208.

\* Lamartine, *History of the Girondists*, vol. i., p. 156.

† Morley's *Rousseau*, pp. 209-215.



vital evidence. In the effort to justify God, they quibble with words; they shuffle and prevaricate like a Philadelphia lawyer; and all the while they profess to believe that men cannot be truthful and honest without belief in a God!

W. MANN.

## The Apocalypse.—XIV.

(Continued from p. 395.)

COMMENCING chapter xix., the writer of the "Revelation" says: "I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelujah; salvation, and glory, and power, belong to our God..... for he hath judged the great harlot which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and he hath avenged the blood of his saints at her hand" (Rev. xix. 1, 2). This statement was suggested by passages in 2 Esdras and Enoch. One of the latter reads:—

"I heard the voices of those upon the four sides magnifying the Lord of glory"—

"Then were the hearts of the saints full of joy, because the consummation of righteousness was arrived, the supplication of the saints heard, and the blood of the righteous avenged by the Lord of Spirits" (Enoch xl.; xlvii.).

A little further on in the same chapter the writer of the "Revelation" says that he heard the voice of the multitude saying: "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready," etc. (Rev. xix. 6—8). In chapter xxi. the same veracious writer says that an angel said to him: "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the spirit to a mountain.....and he showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God" (Rev. xxi. 9, 10).

In one of the "holy books," the writer, Esdras, says that he beheld and spoke to a woman in a field, who afterwards changed into a city, which city an angel informed him was Zion, that is to say, Jerusalem. This city is also spoken of as a bride.

2 Esd. vii. 26.—"For behold, the time shall come, and it shall be, when these tokens, of which I told thee before, shall come to pass, that *the bride shall appear*, even the city coming forth, and she shall be seen, that now is withdrawn from the earth."

In several chapters in the book of Revelation the writer represents the nations as uniting their forces to make war against the Almighty, or, what is the same thing, against the Lord's chosen people—with the result that all the combined nations are "utterly destroyed." The various statements respecting this great war must now be noticed.

In Rev. xvi. 13—16 we are told that there came out of the mouths of the Dragon, the Beast, and the False prophet "three unclean spirits, as it were frogs," which "go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty," and that these combined armies assembled in "the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Mageddon." The last-named place means simply the "Mountain of Megiddo," the latter being a notable battle-field mentioned in the Old Testament. According to Josh. xi., a coalition of Canaanitish kings, under Jabin king of Hazor, were defeated by the Israelites under Joshua at the "waters of Merom," near Megiddo. A second account of this battle is given in Judg. iv., in which Barak (who lived many years after the time of Joshua) defeated the armies of the same Jabin under his general Sisera, an achievement celebrated in an ancient song—Judges v.

"The kings came and fought; then fought the kings of Canaan, in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo," etc. (Judg. v. 19).

According to an account in later times, the good king Josiah was slain in a battle fought in "the valley of Megiddo" (2 Chron. xxxv. 22). In the Septuagint the name Megiddo is written "Mageddo," the Greek form being Mageddon. "Har" is the

Hebrew for "mountain," and probably refers to Mount Tabor in the plain of Megiddo, where Barak assembled his forces. In the Apocalypse, however, nothing is said of any fighting at Har-Mageddon.

The next reference to the great war is in Rev. xvii. 14, in which it is said of "ten kings," or princelings: "These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them"; but no particulars are mentioned.

The third reference to this war is in Rev. xix., in which the writer says:—

"I saw the heaven opened; and behold a white horse, and he that sat thereon called faithful and true. ....And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood.....And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses.....And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations.....and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. xix. 11, 14, 15).

According to this narrative, it would seem that "the armies that followed" the personage on the white horse were merely onlookers, not fighters, for the writer goes on to say:—

"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet.....and the rest were killed with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which came forth out of his mouth."

Thus, the leader of the armies of heaven did all the killing himself. In 2 Esdras xiii. we have an account of a Son of man who, unaided, destroyed "a multitude of men without number," gathered from "the four winds of heaven, to make war against him." This feat was, however, performed by the sending out of his mouth "as it were a flood of fire," which burned the multitude to ashes. Setting aside this account, the passages in the "holy books" which the Apocalypticist followed appear to have been the following:—

Isa. lxiii. 3, 4.—"I have trodden the winepress *alone* .....yea, I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my fury; and *their blood is sprinkled upon my garments*.....For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and my year of redemption is come."

Isa. xi. 1—4.—"There shall come forth a shoot out of the root of Jesse.....and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him.....he shall smite the earth with *the rod of his mouth*, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

Here we come again to the Lion of Judah, the great king like David, who was to subdue all the surrounding nations. The "rod of his mouth" is transformed into the "sword which proceedeth out of his mouth," the latter weapon being doubtless considered the more effective.

The last apocalyptic reference to nations making war against the Lord God or his chosen people is found in Rev. xx. In this chapter we are told that "the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan" was bound and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years (Rev. xx. 1—3); at the expiration of which time "Satan shall be loosed.....and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them" (Rev. xx. 7—9).

The "beloved city" and the "camp of the saints" referred, of course, to Jerusalem and its environs. There was thus to be a second war in Palestine and a second siege of the holy city by a far more formidable foe than the Roman legions—by the combined forces of the nations drawn from "the four corners of the earth." But the mention of "Gog and Magog" is a clear indication of the source of the writer's inspiration, viz., Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix., two chapters devoted to the vengeance of the Lord



God upon "Gog of the land of Magog" and his allies. The following are a few short extracts:—

"Thus saith the Lord God: Behold I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal..... and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen.....Persia, Cush, and Pat with them; all of them with sword, shield, and helmet: Gomer and all his hordes; the house of Togarmah, and all his hordes: even many peoples with thee" (Ezek. xxxviii. (3-6)).

"Thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost parts of the north, thou, and many peoples with thee.....a great company and a mighty army: and thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land.....And it shall come to pass in that day, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel.....I will plead against him with pestilence, and with blood: and I will rain upon him, and upon his hordes, and upon the many peoples that are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone" (Ezek. xxxviii. 15-22).

"Behold, I am against thee, O Gog.....Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy hordes, and the peoples that are with thee.....And I will give unto Gog a place for burial in Israel.....and seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land" (Ezek. xxxix. 1, 4, 11, 12).

Professor Sayce identifies Gog with Gugu or Gyges, the king of Lydia, about 670 B.C. Lydia, Meshech, Tubal, and Togarmah were large provinces in Asia Minor, which appear to have been regarded by Ezekiel and the people of Canaan as "the uttermost parts of the north." Neither Gog, nor his allies, ever invaded Palestine; though such, no doubt, was greatly feared by the inhabitants; hence the judgment pronounced against him, which is nothing but ancient bluff. Ezekiel has even gone so far as to call the birds and beasts of prey to supper on the corpses of the slain. He says:—

"Thus saith the Lord God: Speak unto the birds of every sort, and to every beast of the field.....Come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth.....And ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God" (Ezek. xxxix. 17-20).

After reading the foregoing ridiculous statement made by the crack-brained Ezekiel, the Apocalypticist, who, no doubt, thought it a most appropriate sequel to such wholesale slaughter, took up his pen and wrote as follows:—

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come and be gathered together, unto the great supper of God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men [of war] both free and bond, and small and great" (Rev. xix. 17-18).

Among the comestibles provided for the carnivorous animals by Ezekiel are "horses and chariots," the latter, of course, being an error in the text. In the Septuagint these two dishes are "horses and riders," which the Apocalypticist renders "horses and them that sat thereon."

As regards the great war of the nations against the saints and the Almighty, it will no doubt have been perceived that the writer of the "Revelation" had no plan of his own, and that by following the "holy books" he makes one account clash with another, and even flatly contradict it. After writing down "Har-Mageddon," he never refers to that place again. Har-Mageddon is in the north of Palestine; Jerusalem, in the "Gog" war, is in the south. In one account the nations are destroyed by the sword of the leader sitting on the white horse; in another account they are burnt up by fire from heaven. This war, like everything else in the book, is made up of scraps having no connection with each other.

ABRACADABRA.

(To be continued.)

It is a remarkable and noteworthy fact that while Buddhism, and Taoism, and Confucianism have been much written upon, the history of Islam in China is almost completely unknown. This is partly due to the fact that though the Chinese annals are clear about the Persian and Babylonian religions which travelled across High Asia, in the remote past, to the shores of the Yellow Sea, only to perish, none of their books, as far as has been ascertained, record a single word about the introduction into China of the Mohammedan faith. Yet it has been well said that this faith has taken deeper root than any other foreign faith; and there can be no doubt that, for steadfastness of purpose, and influence on the social and moral character of the Chinese, it has had no foreign equal.....Many people know in a general way that Islam spread over Central Asia during the ninth and tenth centuries during the period of Mussulman conquests, but it is not generally known that within a century after the Hegira [July 16, A.D. 622] the Mohammedan sect was powerfully established in China, and that from those early days very far-reaching politico-religious, as well as commercial, relations gradually grew up between the Chinese and Arabs.....An Arab-Tartar admixture thus becomes common along the border regions of China, and it is recorded that Arab missions show the remarkable nature of the new faith which they introduce, by declining to kneel to the Chinese Emperors, on the ground that the men of their State kneel only to Heaven, and do not kneel to a king. It was in the eighth century that this remarkable gospel first reached China.—Putnam Weale, "The Unknown God."

A HIDDEN GOD.

Every Theist must admit that if a God exists, he could have so convinced all men of the fact of his existence that doubt, disagreement, or disbelief would be impossible. If he could not do this, he would not be omnipotent, or he would not be omniscient—that is, he would not be God. Every Theist must also agree that if a God exists, he would wish all men to have such a clear consciousness of his existence and attributes, that doubt, disagreement, or disbelief on this subject would be impossible. And thus, if for no other reason, because that out of doubts and disagreements on religion have too often resulted centuries of persecution, strife, and misery, which a good God would desire to prevent. If God would not desire this, then he is not all-good, that is, he is not God. But as many men have doubts, as a large majority of mankind have disagreements, and as some men have disbeliefs as to God's existence and attributes, it must follow that God does not exist, or that he is not all-wise, or that he is not all-powerful, or that he is not all-good.—C. Bradlaugh, "Plea for Atheism."

PRIESTCRAFT.

Yes, Priestcraft (eldest-born of mental night)  
Has ever stood between mankind and light.  
Let Socrates stand forth; let Christ appear;  
Galileo and fearless Bruno hear;  
Give voice to all the foremost Shades sublime  
Of modern, middle, or of ancient time,  
And ask of Bradlaugh (latest but not least);  
Was not—is not the enemy the Priest?  
And what are priests? In every land the same—  
A parasitic class, whose one great aim  
Is, leech-like, to attach itself to power,  
When by that means it can its order dower;  
But failing this it poses as the friend  
Of poor, weak, sickly man—and yet its end  
Is just the same: self dogs its daily tread.  
It stoops to fleece the living through the dead;  
For when its wiles in earthly methods fail,  
It dares to offer Paradise for sale.

—S. PULMAN, *Forum Echoes.*

Obituary.

It is with deep regret that we record the death of another London Freethinker, Mr. Emil Scherer, of Barnsbury. Mr. Scherer was 69 years of age, and his death was exceedingly sudden. He had been a life-long Freethinker, though of late years he had taken no active part in Freethought propaganda. He was buried on Tuesday, June 20, at the Islington Cemetery, when a Secular Service was conducted by Mr. J. T. Lloyd. We tender the bereaved family our warmest sympathy.



## 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.

#### OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): James Rowney, 3.15, "Secularism"; 6.15, "The Creation and Fall."

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): F. A. Davies, 3.15, "The King and the Bible"; 6, "The World, the Flesh, and the Devil."

EDMONTON BRANCH N. S. S. (The Green): 7, Mr. Rosetti, a Lecture.

ISLINGTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Highbury Corner): 12 noon, Ivan Paperno, a Lecture. 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, R. H. Rosetti, "Jesus Christ, the Unknown Jew Boy."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford): 7, Miss Kough, "Christianity and Woman."

WOOD GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Jolly Butchers Hill, opposite Public Library): 7, Mr. Marshall, "Gods."

### COUNTRY.

#### INDOOR.

RHONDDA BRANCH N. S. S. (Gwalia Restaurant, Tonypanyd): 3, Discussion.

#### OUTDOOR.

Huddersfield BRANCH N. S. S. (Market Cross): 8.45, Geo. T. Whitehead, "I and my Father are one." Saturday, at 8, Geo. T. Whitehead, "Debts of Demos."

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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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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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