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*Children are afraid of being left in the dark ; men are afraid of NOT being left in it.—LANDOR.*

## Various Matters.

THE newspapers have been having their say over the death of that great personality who was once Mr. Speaker Peel. Living as they do upon sensationalism, they all made the most of his dramatic appearance, stern and robed, when he was called in to stop an abominably riotous scene in the House of Commons. He did it—he did it magnificently. Members who were desecrating the legislative chamber with shrieks and howls and curses, and blows and wrestlings, shrank abashed before that august embodiment of law and order and good government, as well as of the very spirit and traditions of free debate in the house of the people's representatives. It was the personal triumph of a man of resolute mind, knowing exactly what he had to do and how to do it, over hundreds of other men—some of them very able—whom passion had turned into a mob. But it had no particular importance in English history. In this respect it was unlike a far greater triumph of Mr. Speaker Peel's; a triumph, by the way, which none of the newspapers, as far as I can see, have so much as noticed. Such is their view of what is transient and what is durable.

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There were two great figures in "the Bradlaugh struggle," as it used to be called. Bradlaugh himself was the first. The second was Mr. Speaker Peel. Of the dead Bradlaugh one may say "this was a man." Of the now dead Mr. Speaker Peel (what is a Viscount?) one may say "this was a man." Each could plant his feet upon the rock, as if they grew into it, and defy the world to move him. And when men of that kind appear in the world a sanative and stimulating blast of moral ozone passes into the atmosphere of humanity.

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The baiting of Bradlaugh had been going on for years. He had fought an amazing battle all the time—for there was no interval of peace. Power, money, social influence were arrayed against him; and misrepresentation and calumny assailed him from behind. Every day saw him advancing towards victory; every day saw his enemies retreating. By the end of 1885 he was morally victorious. He had beaten all his foes to a standstill. The one thing that still remained between him and his seat was the mere power of numbers in the House of Commons itself. It could act illegally, because there was no court that could bring it to book. It was sovereign within its own precincts. And the irresponsible brute force which kept Bradlaugh out during the Gladstone administration was still at the call of the bigots, and none the less ready to respond because the Tories were then in power. Everything was ready for the renewal of the comedy-tragedy when the fresh Parliament assembled on January 13, 1886. But they were met and foiled by a MAN.

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A MAN! What a great word that is! Shakespeare himself could find no greater for Hamlet's praise of his dead father or Mark Antony's praise of "the noblest Roman of them all":—

" the elements  
So mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world, ' This was a man ! ' "

Not "this was a hero" but "this was a man." All is included in that august designation.

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Mr. Speaker Peel—the new Speaker of a new Parliament—was made of sterner stuff than his predecessor, who had allowed the House of Commons to play football with the Bradlaugh question. He had made up his mind that this scandal should cease under his control of the House. Bradlaugh went up with the other elected members to take the oath and his seat, and the bigots, represented by Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Mr. Raikes, and Sir John Kennaway, had written begging the Speaker not to let Bradlaugh do it. Mr. Speaker Peel rose in his place before anyone was sworn and laid the matter before the House in embryo. Not even the appeal of the Government behind the scenes availed to move him one jot from what he held to be his duty. The MAN was there—and this is what he said:—

" We are assembled in a new Parliament. I know nothing of the resolutions of the past. They have lapsed; they are void; they are of no effect in reference to this case. It is the right, the legal statutable obligation of members, when returned to this House, to come to the table and take the oath prescribed by statute. I have no authority, no right, original or delegated, to stand between an honorable member and his taking of the oath. I have been further asked whether, when the House is completed, and after a quorum has been constituted, it would be competent for a motion to be made intervening between the honorable member for Northampton and his taking of the oath. I have come clearly and without hesitation to the conclusion that it would neither be my duty to prohibit the honorable gentleman from coming, nor to permit a motion to be made standing between him and his taking of the oath. The honorable member takes that oath under whatever risks may attach to him in a court of law. But it is not for me—I respectfully say it is not for the House—to enter into any inquisition as to what may be the opinions of a member when he comes to the table to take the oath. I am bound, and the House is bound, by the forms of this House, and by the legal obligations and rights of members. If a member comes to this table and offers to take the oath, I know of no right whatever to intervene between him and the form of legal and statutable obligation."

The grand, grave oracle had spoken, and its words were clear, firm, and inevitable. Bradlaugh took the oath at the table. One or two leading bigots attempted an interruption. But the "Order, order" of Mr. Speaker Peel was irresistible. The interrupters sank into their seats—and the Bradlaugh question was ended in the House of Commons. That was Mr. Speaker Peel's great achievement,—not his cowing a rabble of legislators in a physical fight. The latter was a passing sensation; the former stands, and will stand, in the Constitutional History of England.

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In announcing last week the death of Dr. E. B. Foote, of New York, I said that he deserved far

more than a brief passing notice of his decease. The space that was lacking to me then is open to me now. It is not sufficient to contain all I would like to say about my dead friend, but it enables me to pay at least a part of the debt I owe his memory. I may be able to add a portrait of him shortly.

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Dr. E. B. Foote was called "junior" so long that it stuck to him, in American circles, to the end. His father, Dr. E. B. Foote, senior, was the author of *Plain Home Talk*, which has enjoyed a phenomenal sale in the United States, and no mean sale in other parts of the English-speaking world. I met both father and son when I visited America in 1896. Colonel Ingersoll was easily the first personality I met with over there, but I think Dr. Foote senior was the second—unless he went halves in the position with Mr. E. Macdonald, of the *Truthseeker*. Dr. Foote was in every way a stalwart. He must have been a very notable man, physically as well as mentally, in his prime. He was then visibly breaking up, and only the ruins of his former self. But his mind was open and alert, and his interest in human affairs generally, and progressive affairs particularly, was unabated. He took to me and I took to him; it was as though we had known each other half a lifetime. When I returned home we kept up a most friendly correspondence. I felt his loss when he died. But the event brought me a new friend in Dr. Foote junior. He who filled his father's place in so many respects filled it also in that. He wrote to me almost as a brother. He did indeed sometimes use that word. He was proud to think that there was possibly some blood relationship between us. To the very last, writing from his sick room, he would say how glad he was, although he was laid low, that I was still in the thick of the fight for Freethought and keeping up the reputation of the "Foote family" in the world. My letters to him required some delicacy in inditing, for they had always, more or less, to contain a note of condolence. His was a beautiful and generous spirit. He appeared to have no vices of any kind. He was not even ambitious. Selfishness and vanity had no part in him. Good nature and moral equanimity shone in his eyes and sat upon his face. He was a born giver, not a receiver. I think he was the most likely man in the world to do no harm and all possible good. Having no personal indulgences, he was free to devote a large part of his income to advanced movements. His name has often appeared in my own pages as a subscriber. He occasionally sent me donations which he did not wish to be acknowledged. Nor was this at the expense of his help to advanced movements in America. His generosity was known from New York to San Francisco. Latterly his inherited love of freedom had induced him to take the Treasurership of the Free Speech League, which is making a serious effort to stem the tide against liberty of discussion in the land where it ought most to prevail. Dr. Foote will never be forgotten by those who knew him. In my own memory he will always occupy a peculiar place. Want of the physical vitality which nature showers on pigs and fools gave his life a certain frustration. Nature so often treats her elect children in that fashion that I feel I may best end these notes with a verse from Swinburne:—

" For thee, O now a silent soul, my brother,  
Take at my hands this garland, and farewell.  
Thin is the leaf, and chill the wintry smell,  
And chill the solemn earth, a fatal mother,  
With sadder than the Niobeian womb,  
And in the hollow of her breasts a tomb.  
Content thee, howsoe'er, whose days are done:  
There lies not any troublous thing before,  
Nor sight nor sound to war against thee more,  
For whom all winds are quiet as the sun,  
All waters as the shore."

G. W. FOOTE.

## The Primitive Mind.—II.

(Continued from p. 675.)

IT is not difficult to find examples of the persistence of the primitive type of mind and of the primitive outlook in contemporary life. The real difficulty lies in the selection. Our social life is full of it. From the throne—that stronghold of primitive ideas and barbaric ceremonial—downward, we meet with frequent reminders that our veneer of civilisation is of the thinnest possible kind. The Coronation of George the Fifth is not, for example, such a distant event that people will have forgotten its significance. There was not merely an orgy of barbaric ceremonial, in which the primitive forces of religion and militarism played so prominent a part, but there was evidenced a degree of king worship far more worthy of a time when kings were accepted as the representatives of God on earth than of a people with any solid claim to the title of civilised. All our culture and education and representative institutions have not served to wipe away the feeling that a king differs in some undefined respect to ordinary mortals, and that any question of his ability or value is next door to an attack on the character of Deity. One need only observe the sheep-like, sanctimonious manner with which the National Anthem is received in public to see how closely the reverence for a king is associated with the primitive feelings. In this respect the reception of "Rule, Britannia," is instructive. Tawdry as is the sentiment of the air and the words of the song, people receive it with their heads up and an attempt to look like men. With "God Save the King" the head is lowered, the demeanor is repressed, and an expression of satisfied inanity steals over the faces of the listeners.

Another example lies to hand in much of the current talk concerning patriotism and love of country. It is not that one need question the good of love of one's country; criticism is concerned more with the form in which it finds expression. And the truth before us is that love of one's country is still mainly expressed in the primitive and tribal form, which, in practice, is not loving one's country at all. The late Professor C. H. Pearson said that we could "scarcely give the name of patriotism to the devotion of a tribe to its chief, or to the bitter hatred of one race for another." But why not? As a matter of fact, this is patriotism in its simplest form, and it is what patriotism is understood to mean by the mass of people to-day. It does not matter that the tribe is larger and scattered over a wider area, or that the chief has become a king, it is the same thing. Wherein lies the superiority of the view of a man like Professor Dicey, who, in upholding the right of our protecting "British interests" everywhere, says that "The only qualification I admit is that the country we desire to annex or to take under our protection shall be for the manifest advantage of the British Empire." In what respect does this differ from the ethic of the primitive tribe? Even Professor Pearson's conclusion that "Patriotism seems to be based on the reasonable acknowledgment of two facts in our nature: that we owe a duty to our fellow-men, and that we cannot reasonably perform it to the race at large," is very little better than the crude jingoism of Professor Dicey. Both ignore the all-important consideration that the growth of the world is such that it becomes increasingly difficult to discharge our real duties to the society in which we live without considering the welfare of other societies with which we are brought in contact. Neglect of this truth shows how largely the primitive view still obtains.

What is the most primitive form of the patriotic sentiment? It is simple devotion to the tribe, with a complete callousness to the welfare of all outsiders. It need not be disputed that at one stage of human culture this is a good thing. So long as groups of people are self-contained and self-supporting, it is well that the feeling of social solidarity

should be cultivated. And it so happens that this sense of tribal unity is often expressed by hatred of all outsiders. It is the kind of feeling expressed by schoolboys in their vendettas against children of other schools, or in the dislike of the inhabitants of one town for the inhabitants of another town. And fully nine-tenths of the loud-mouthed patriotism of our own day is just of this order. It is the boy grown to a man, the primitive tribesman become a member of a nation without any fundamental change of idea or of outlook.

Professor Pearson says we ought not to call patriotism the devotion to a chief or hatred of another tribe. But that is really the major part of current patriotism. Indeed, once we dispense with this hatred of others and devotion to a chief, we not only cut away the motive power of much of the current patriotism, but we introduce elements that altogether destroy its effective character. If James Russell Lowell was right when he said that it was "an abuse of language to call a certain portion of land, much more, certain personages elevated, for the time being, to a high position, our country," it is evident that a great deal of what passes muster for devotion to one's fellows, is a pure counterfeit. If patriotism is not devotion to land or leaders, what is it? Is it devotion to institutions? We do certainly hear a great deal about the value of British institutions, and of a sort of divine injunction to carry them all over the world. But if this patriotism is good for one group it should be good for all. And is a Russian or a Spaniard to prefer the institutions of his own country to that of others, and to fight for their maintenance? If so, and our institutions are really superior, is he not injuring his fellows in keeping them out? And if ours are not superior, is he not equally injuring his fellows by introducing them?

As a matter of fact, we refuse to praise the man who prefers the institutions of his own country merely because they are his own. We call him narrow, stupid, retrogressive. We do not admire unreasoning devotion in the people of other countries, so why should we regard it as a virtue in ourselves? But once we deprecate this mode of thinking, what have we done? Have we not declared that it is neither the region in which one happens to be born, nor even the language one speaks, nor yet the institution we have inherited, that demands our deepest service, but concern for the welfare of humanity. The value of institutions, and ultimately the quality of our endeavors, is to be determined still, as in the primitive tribe, by their influence on the lives of our fellows. But modern developments enlarge the sphere of fellowship, and so involves an ever-widening survey of life and its relationships.

For what is the one dominant lesson of social evolution? It is, in a word, the growing interdependence of the whole human race. The tribal form of the patriotic spirit, such as is still represented by a man like Lord Roberts, was all right while a tribe was self-supporting, and while another tribe could be oppressed or blotted out without its disappearance affecting any but its own members. It is a far different thing to-day when every country in the world is connected with every other country by all kinds of visible and invisible threads—mental, moral, social, and commercial. There is no country in the world that is to-day self-supporting; and, therefore, the problem is not how to advance one's own country without regard to others; now it involves a recognition of the truth that genuine security and real development in any one case involves security and development for all. Some centuries back the Turks and the Balkan people might have carried on their war without other countries—geographically distant—being concerned. To-day every State in Europe is shaking in its shoes lest it be dragged into the conflict. The logic of events compel us to feel the changed conditions, but mentally we repeat the primitive formulæ without recognition of their ghastly unfitness. We will not realise that, as the tribal patriotism has developed into nationalism, so

nationalism must one day lose itself in humanitarianism.

The adjunct of patriotism and nationalism is militarism. Without it nationalism could hardly be maintained for long, and patriotism would lose all its aggressive character. And how crudely and aggressively primitive this is. It is the one occupation in life in which a man is never permitted to grow up; where he has no voice in what he shall eat, how long he shall sleep, or play, or rest, or work; where he is not encouraged to think for himself. He is not even encouraged to develop the feeling of the crudest tribal solidarity. His devotion must be to the chief immediately above him, or to that intangible thing "orders."

Some few years ago there was a row in the press over Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman's reference to our "barbaric method of warfare." The press indignantly repudiated the description, and declared we were waging a "civilised warfare." As though there could be any such thing. In what way is a fight between modern gunboats more civilised than a fight between canoes? How is a maxim gun more civilised than a bow and arrow? How is a British soldier pushing a bayonet into a "fuzzy-wuzzy" more civilised than a "fuzzy-wuzzy" pushing a javelin into Tommy Atkins? There may be differences in cost, in deadliness; but why call one more civilised than the other? That the modern soldier may feel no particular ill-will against his individual enemy does not make the matter any better; quite the contrary. The primitive savage had at least the excuse of a cordial hatred of the one he tried to kill; the modern soldier lacks even that apology. He de-civilises himself to order, and imagines he becomes a more civilised individual. It does not even matter that a war here and there may be absolutely necessary; it would still remain a method of barbarism.

Our intelligent press has been recently laughing at Mr. Norman Angell and his theories. Mr. Angell argued, and I think proved, that no civilised country could gain any real benefit from war owing to the relations that existed between them. What is the use of all your theories? said these sapient critics; Turkey and Italy went to war, the Balkans are now aflame, and other countries will fight when it suits them. Well, Mr. Angell never said that people would not and could not go to war any more; he only said that all the supposed benefits of war, moral or financial, were imaginary. If they once accrued from warfare, this was no longer the case. And when people quite realised all that was involved in this position warfare would cease. But meanwhile people do not realise it. Our political leaders do not realise it. The mass of the people do not realise it. They are both dominated by ideals that really belong to a low culture stage. They are still looking at life from a primitive point of view. Their ideal is still that of the predatory, fighting tribe, even though they use million-pound warships and steal whole countries at the time. They are trading upon primitive feelings, adopting primitive methods, and aiming at primitive ends. With enlightenment will come civilisation. Meanwhile our knowledge is being largely utilised to gratify the passions of the primitive horde.

(To be concluded)

C. COHEN.

### A Strange Vagary.

ALL supernatural beliefs are equally groundless; but some are more preposterous than others. They are all equally unbelievable, but vary in degrees of absurdity. One of the most absurd is embodied in the following verse, quoted by Mr. R. J. Campbell in a recent sermon:—

"Upon God's throne there is a seat for me;  
My coming forth from him hath left a space  
Which none but I can fill. One sacred place  
Is vacant till I come."

Many divines assure us that the conflict between religion and science is at an end; but nothing could

be further from the truth. So long as the sentiment expressed in that verse persists, religion and science are bound to be at war with each other. It is beyond doubt that in one form or another the doctrine of the Fall has been the common property of nearly all religions. The Genesis story is one of a thousand variants. In India, Persia, Babylonia, and Greece, as well as in Palestine, the same tale was told from earliest times; and it survives in Christendom to-day. Christianity is based upon the Fall. The idea is that humanity has lost something which Christ is willing and able to recover. Science offers a flat contradiction to such a doctrine, adducing abundant evidence that humanity has risen, not fallen, and that it is higher now than it ever was before. A Biblical theologian cannot possibly get away from the Fall, nor can the scientist escape the Rise; and it naturally follows that the two can never be at one. Speaking of the various versions of the Fall, in a sermon which appears in the *Christian Commonwealth* for October 23, Mr. Campbell says:—

"Frankly, I believe there must be a certain foundation in fact for all these expressions of a common feeling concerning a higher origin for man than the present conditions of his life in this world indicate. Probably that foundation is the feeling we all have of the presence of the eternal in our hearts; it does not follow that as individuals we have ever lived before, but simply that the eternal, the state of being in which time is not, in which sin, pain, and death cannot exist either, is ever making itself felt within the soul and reminding it of what it is and whence it came."

Mr. Campbell falls into the usual pulpit error of speaking in the name of all, whilst what he says is only true of fellow-believers, and by no means of all of them either. There are millions who have no sense of the eternal in their hearts, no feeling of affinity with anything outside or beyond Nature, no consciousness of the pressure upon them of Infinite Spirit; and Mr. Campbell has no right to speak in their name, unless by some miracle he resolves to tell the truth about them.

Mr. Campbell is so deeply buried in mysticism that it is extremely difficult to ascertain what his views on any subject really are. His utterances are so vague and ambiguous that they are capable of various and even conflicting interpretations. What he means by the Fall it is quite impossible to tell. One infers from some of his expressions that he does not regard it as a sinful act for which man can justly be held responsible, but, rather, as an evil fate forced upon him for some inscrutable purpose. He believes that the Bible contains so many references to "restoration" because the writers had a vague feeling in their heart that "somehow their race had lost something, had come down from a former eminence, had been dispossessed of a good to which it was rightfully entitled." More than this, there is in the Bible, specially in the New Testament, a suggestion of—

"The belief that the whole human race had fallen from a higher state than the one we know now, or become subjected to the dominion of evil and ignorance for some inscrutable reason, and that this catastrophe, with all its train of miserable consequences, would shortly be fully compensated for by the redemption to be wrought out by our Lord Jesus Christ."

Then he tells us that all versions of that belief agree in one thing:—

"Namely, that either in this world, or in some higher world, man was originally innocent and happy, whereas he is now the victim of a sort of blight or evil spell which renders him unable to realise or recall his former blissful state. And doubtless you have all heard of the Hindu saying that the indentation in the middle of the upper lip of every human being is due to the angel who stands at the gate of birth smiting every soul thereon, lest it should tell what it knows after it leaves the heavenly spheres to be born on earth, and that that is why every child comes into this world crying."

It is really immaterial in what form the doctrine of the Fall be held because in all its forms it is wholly irrational and absurd. Wherein did the Fall

consist? Apparently in the process of becoming embodied in matter. Before it enters the body every soul is innocent and happy "in the totality of the life of God." It occupies its own seat on the Divine throne. Prior to its incarceration in flesh it exists as a pure spirit "in that state of being in which time is not," and in which space is unknown. And yet we are expected to picture innumerable hosts of unembodied spirits seated together on a throne with God in the centre. In its essence this is Plato's doctrine, in which that inimitable stylist verily believed. Now, these innocent and happy souls are cruelly driven down to earth to be imprisoned in gross, vile bodies, for some "inscrutable reason." Is it possible to conceive of a God of justice and love committing such a horrible crime? Is it reasonable to believe in the existence of such an Almighty Monster? We do not believe in the vileness of matter; but Plato and Paul did, and so do all their disciples everywhere. For some inscrutable reason, it pleased God to doom innocent and happy souls to a life of degradation, suffering, and sorrow in this vale of tears; and in the very act of entering their clay-houses they are smitten with blindness and loss of memory so that they have no idea who or what they are, whence they came, or why they are here. The divines assure them that they are here as exiles, which fact, if fact it were, would only enhance the injustice and cruelty of their fate. Why are they in exile, poor things? What did they do to deserve to become the victims of this awful blight or evil spell? Mr. Campbell does not know.

Now Christianity steps in with the object of restoring them to the blissful state in which they once lived. Evidently God realised that he had acted cruelly and unjustly, and resolved to make amends, to the best of his ability. So he sent his only begotten Son down to earth to make all necessary arrangements for the return of the captives to their happy home; and having completed his work here, he told them that he was going back by himself to effect all requisite preparations for giving them the heartiest of welcomes later on. Unlike Paul, Mr. Campbell says nothing about sin in this amazing sermon; and there is no room or need for Christ's atoning death in his system. What he maintains is that God is in our debt until we find ourselves at home once more. There is at this moment a vacant seat for every one of us on God's throne in heaven to which we are rightfully entitled. Mr. Campbell speaks with the authority of a man who has "been given a few words to say," and as the giver of these words is clearly God, their message is infallible and final. Here it is:—

"Listen. It is well for God to be in your debt, for he is a good payer; all you have ever invested with him is well invested, and will be yours with compound interest by-and-bye when your soul is ready to take up its rights."

Is it any wonder that thoughtful, intelligent people are turning their backs upon such vagaries in ever-increasing numbers? Is it in the least astonishing that scientists adopt a mechanistic interpretation of the Universe, and that their disciples are multiplying by the thousand? Those vacant seats in the spiritual world exist only in the preacher's fancy, and in that of those with whom his emotional appeals are effectual. Mr. Campbell talks about God and the soul and the empty seats with the familiarity that breeds contempt, for they are subjects concerning which not a single shred of knowledge is obtainable. The rights of the soul are myths woven on fancy's loom, the only rights that are real being the rights of man as a citizen of this world, and these are rights accompanied by corresponding duties, which when rightly done are enjoyed as privileges.

We prefer the story of man's past as told by the President of the British Association, because he bases all his inferences upon ascertained facts. Mr. Campbell builds air-castles, the beauty of which is that they have no foundations; but air-castles are uninhabitable and possess no practical value what-

ever. Under the spell of religious emotionalism, when intoxicated with abnormal excitement, it may be easy enough to sing—

“ Somewhere or other there must surely be  
The face not seen, the voice not heard,  
The heart that not yet, never yet—ah, me!  
Made answer to my word,”

but indulgence of that kind enfeebles the mind and disqualifies one for the serious work of life. The wisest course is to drop all the vagaries of theology, and begin to study the problems of life in the light of the latest knowledge scientifically acquired.

J. T. LLOYD.

### The Man of God.

OTHER men are said to be known by the company they keep, but the Man of God is known the world over by the clothes that he wears. He is essentially a tailor-made man. He professes, of course, to be God-appointed; but the only evidence of his divine calling is that supplied by the Tailor. It is true he often supplements this supposed call by a brief turn at a theological treadmill, which, owing to Heaven's neglect to furnish him with any special endowments, is supposed to qualify him for posing as a Man of God. But the only result of this ministerial preparation appears to be the production of a sombre visage and a sing-song funereal voice. The training, from an intellectual point of view, is usually scarcely sufficient to distinguish him from a fourth-form schoolboy. It is the clothes alone that are the sign and seal of his guideship to the land of Nowhere. Of course, there are other classes of men whose dress indicates their social position or profession; but such official dress or uniform, as a mode of distinction, always possesses an authoritative or social sanction. In the case of the Man of God, however, no such sanction exists; its adoption possesses no other authority than priestly arrogance and presumption.

The Man of God is fully alive to the social value of the tailor's art. The common or garden tailor, who caters for the needs of the nobility and gentry, is not considered capable of fitly clothing the person of the Man of God. The nobility, gentry, and clergy, in other requirements, may be served by the same tradesman, but not in the all-important matter of Clothes. Nothing less than a specialist in the art will satisfy the religious whims and studied ostentation of the Man of God. The ornamentation of his fleshly form must be executed with care and skill. Just as baby-linen and ladies' corsets are the special study of certain habit-makers, so clerical clothing is a particular branch of the Tailoring trade, in which the cutting and making of all garments is done by Experts. So runs the advertisement. And, indeed, the variety of the apparel worn by the Man of God, and the fantastic shapes of the things in which he arrays himself, would bamboozle the poor ordinary tailor only accustomed to make common coats, vests, and trousers.

The tailoring art has been vastly improved since the first tailors sewed fig-leaves together to hide their naked forms, the while the Devil was admiring the beauty of nudity over the garden wall. The development was certainly necessary to the pageantry of religion. Adam, in a fig-leaf, could not sustain the role of a Man of God: Eve would see through the farce at a glance. If Adam had tried any religious mummery on Eve, she would have simply poked him in the ribs—the bare ribs—and told him not to play the humbug. Clothes are absolutely essential to the mystery-business, if it is to be carried to any great length, and the deception maintained. The greater the variety in the material and in the number of showy garments, the more likelihood of the performance being a success. And so the men of God, with a true business instinct, have improved upon the fig-leaves, and introduced diagonals, serges, tweeds, cords, fine linen, wool poplins,

silks, and every conceivable species of cloth that the ingenuity and the vanity of man could devise. The simple aprons in which our “first parents” admirably beheld each other have been discarded for clerical stocks, clerical hats, clerical collars, clerical robes, clerical surplices, clerical cassock-aprons, clerical hoods, clerical stoles, and clerical scarves, not to speak of clerical pyjamas, clerical shirt-studs, clerical bootlaces, and the numerous other articles of apparel that go to make up the Man of God. Poor old Adam, whose highest dream of ornamentation was a couple of empty Nestle's Milk tins tied through the lobes of his ears, would have been utterly bewildered by the long list of clothing materials with which the Man of God seeks to improve his personal appearance.

It will thus be seen why “The Cloth” has become such a common synonym for the Man of God and his profession. Just as we speak of The Stage in reference to the drama and its artists, so The Cloth has come to be accepted as the most appropriate designation of the priestly office. It shows how absolutely dependent the Man of God is upon the tailor for the success of his religious representation. The clothes are part of the paraphernalia of his mumbo-jumbo show. They lend a suggestion of reality to his fictitious claims. They are the trappings intended to perfect the illusion of his performance. They serve as the outward and visible sign of a simulated power and secret knowledge. They are the peacock's fantail, ostentatiously calling attention to their wearer's vanity and self-esteem. They are the advertisement of his quack medicine for sin—a disease, like his remedy, of purely theological creation. The Cloth is undoubtedly the most fitting emblem that could possibly be chosen to represent a profession whose very duties are problematic, and whose chief function would seem to be the laudation of their own order. Well might the Clothes say to the Parson: “Without me ye are as naught; without kingdom or power or glory.”

Although ladies' corsets and clerical robes are, in the making, matters of separate specialisation, yet there has ever been a subtle affinity between the wearers of each, which would suggest that the sentimentality of sex is greatly aggravated by the mysterious sexual magnetism inherent in the clerical cloth. It is a commonplace that the congregations of the reverend gentlemen are very largely composed of ladies, who, if they cannot hang lover-like upon the priest's arm, at least hang upon his lips, as if he were an oracle that understood the secret depths of the female heart. And whenever a Man of God, who has not made a matrimonial choice, comes to be the shepherd of a flock, the marriageable ladies of all ages, from the seventeen-year-old choir girl to the aged spinster watching the sunset of life, buzz round their spiritual spouse like flies round a honey-pot. Even the married ladies of the congregation often display a sentimental sex weakness for their pastor that they would regard as highly improper towards the wearer of a Harris tweed. There may be some deep psychological explanation of this weakness, but most probably it is to be found in the Man of God's distinctive garb. It is the same kind of fatal fascination that leads another class of females to dote upon the red coat of Tommy Atkins. When Peggy goes off with a soldier, it is always the fine clothes that play the most important part in the elopement. It is for this reason that the Man of God is so easily able to exploit female weakness. The Cloth has often procured him a wealthy wife in place of the humble domestic who would otherwise have been his portion; and where he has been unable to form a successful matrimonial alliance, he has had the alternative of working upon the superstitious fears of wealthy invalid ladies, and falling a place in their hymeneal affections, has been compensated for his loss by a place in their will. But in either case the stepping-stones to his success are the coat and collar of his caste.

Someone has said that a man should never be judged by the coat he wears, and especially is this

true of the black garment of the Man of God. If an honest heart may beat beneath a threadbare coat, so also an artful and designing villain may lurk beneath the respectable carefully-cut tailor outfit of the men of God. Their history shows that there is scarcely any act, however heinous or immoral or beastly, that has not been perpetrated by these self-appointed representatives of heaven. As the sign of a holy life of renunciation, of moral superiority or of exalted virtue, the black coat of the priest of God has long ago been proved to be a mere pretence, an artful sham. And not only has it often been the "sheep's clothing" encasing a hideous wolf, but the wolf has actually pleaded the counterfeit as an excuse for his exemption from the common law, notwithstanding that his deeds were evil.

Like the flowers that bloom in the spring, the Man of God toils not, neither does he spin—at least the only thing he spins is yarns, for the obfuscation of his congregation,—yet Solomon in all his glory was never arrayed in lawn sleeves or a shovel-hat. A bishop in gaiters and an apron would doubtless have produced a sensation among the ladies of Solomon's harem. The spiritual brides of the Man of God delight to see their pulpit idol dressed in uncouth and fantastic garments. They even compete with the expert tailor, and make the minister's gown—the most ungainliest "cut" of all—with their own hands, and present it as a gift, with feelings in which the religious and sexual emotions are curiously mixed. What possible difference this tailoring decoration is supposed to make is not to be gathered from his discursive efforts. It cannot be said that he puts on righteousness as a garment. For when in the pulpit he lifts up his eyes and thanks God that he is not as the guilty sinners in the pew, all history witnesses to the fact that the only discernible difference is in the clothes he dons.

How indispensable the Clothes are to the Man of God may be seen from this truth: that while the doctrines he preaches may come and go, the clothes go on for ever. If you want a hell in which to torment eternally the whole of the human race, except the few individuals of your own sect, he will declare and contend by argument that such a doctrine is part of God's revealed will. But if the horrible doctrine of hell be repugnant to you, he is equally ready to maintain that it is not, and never was, taught in the Scriptures. There is no permanency in anything he teaches; even the conception of God he will modify to meet the needs of the age. He will play fast and loose with the doctrines he teaches, and drop the more repulsive of them as enlightenment increases; but there is one thing, upon which his very life depends, and to which he therefore tenaciously clings—the Clothes that distinguish his profession. "I cling to Thee" would be a most appropriate motto for the Man of God to hang upon his outfit.

Why take ye thought for raiment? is a very suggestive question applied to the parson and his clothes. The answer is that if he did not take careful thought, and allowed attention to his clerical garb to lapse, the office which it signifies would also speedily lapse, and the Man of God would find himself, like Othello, with his occupation gone.

JOSEPH BRYCE.

#### BETTER THAN AN ALIBI.

Colonel G. M. Quarles, a tobacco planter in Christian County, Kentucky, had a darky man servant named Mose. Mose was driving his boss into town one day when he suddenly remarked:—

"Marse Garrett, dey had me up befah my church las' night fur dancin'."

"I don't suppose you were guilty—were you, Mose?" asked the colonel.

"Yas, sub; yas, sub," said Mose. "I was guilty of dancin', and they proved hit on me, too; but I come clear. My friends stuck to me close; and, after dem other niggers had done testified ag'inst me, my friends all got up and testified dat, tho it was true I danced, I was so drunk at de time I didn't know what I was doin'. So I come clear—and the preacher scused me!"

#### Negative and Positive.

To do "positive" as well as "negative" work is the advice that is sometimes given to the League by friends who think that it spends too much time on destructive criticism, and who would rather, as they say, see it "building up" than "pulling down." We do not at all object to the advice—if we may know exactly what it means. But there is an assumption often implied in such advice to which we do object, viz., the idea that "positive" work is in some unexplained way more meritorious than "negative," and that a fighting society, like ours, is necessarily doing better service when it is constructive than when it is destructive.

There seems to be a good deal of confusion of thought on this point, arising, doubtless, from the dislike which many people feel for what they call "attacking" the opinions and practices of others. They forget that if you wish to substitute good institutions for bad, you must first, in some way or other, "attack" the bad ones, otherwise you can allege no reason for the change, and no change will take place. You may "attack" rudely and unwisely, in which case you injure your own chance of victory (that is a consideration which does not here concern us), but "attack" in some form or other you must. If a new house has to be built on the site of an old one, the old one must first be pulled down. How, then, are the workers who pull down the old house acting less worthily than those who will build up the new? Yet from the disparaging tone in which some persons allude to "negative" work it is evident that they regard it as inferior, and it is the fallacy underlying this assumption that we desire to expose. In a recent article in the *Freethinker*, Mr. G. W. Foote observed that the man who thus extols the positive at the expense of the negative "might as well suppose that the pioneers of civilisation who hew down virgin forests have no conception of the happy homesteads they are making room for." Mr. Foote himself, one of the clearest thinkers of the day, asks whether all this talk of negative and positive work is not "a kind of cant." We think it is—it being understood that we use the word "cant" in no offensive sense, but simply as implying one of those contagious forms of speech which people go on repeating without inquiry.

Let us speak more particularly of the League and its work. It has been suggested, for example, that instead of only attacking the cruel forms of sport, we should devote time to brightening the life of the people with pastimes of a more refined nature—village dances, and so forth. But obviously such "positive" work would have to be done not instead of, but *in addition to*, the "negative" work of denouncing the cruelty of blood-sports; for it is not found that in countries where such pastimes still flourish the treatment of animals in "sport" is less barbarous than elsewhere. Now, if the League had such superabundance of money and workers that it could afford to organise innocent pastimes as well as to condemn cruel ones, there would not be the least objection to thus extending its activities; but, of course, the very fact that it incurs bitter obloquy by daring to speak the truth about blood-sports condemns it to comparative poverty, and it would therefore be a great error of judgment to turn its energies from a field in which they are sorely needed.

We are not going to be so foolish as to say that criticism is more valuable than construction, because that would be an error the converse of the one with which we are dealing, and our very point is that the "negative" and the "positive" are equally necessary and equally useful. What is needed is a wise sub-division of work—the right work being done by the right person—not a futile appraising of one kind of work at the expense of another; and a society which should find its vocation mainly, or even altogether (though that is not our case), in what is rather absurdly called "negative" work, would have no reason to be ashamed. For the whole truth of the matter is summed up in this—that all work which is necessary is equally valuable, and the so-called "negative" is ultimately equivalent to the "positive," because no one can pull down successfully unless he is inspired by the vision of what will afterwards be built up.—*The Humanitarian*, October.

Early in September, an Indian woman walked into the chief police-court in Calcutta, and, saluting the magistrate, asked him in broken English, "Why did God create man?" She repeated the question several times; but, as a reply was not vouchsafed, she answered it herself by saying, "I will tell you; man was created by God for the sole purpose of making money." As this explanation was regarded as a proof of the woman's insanity, she was marched off to the lock-up, for disposal of her case in due course. It is fortunate for us in England that we can ask why God created man without running the risk of being locked up as lunatic.—*E. B.*

## Acid Drops.

What ideas the Christians have of Providence! Especially English Christians! One is reminded of Heine's saying that if you talk with an Englishman on most things you are sure to hear some sense, but if you talk to him on religion you are sure to hear nonsense. There is Mr. Harold Spender, for instance, who is a capable journalist, though rather heavy-handed,—who wrote as follows in Monday's *Daily News* :—

"A Christian schoolmaster—the tale was told me at the time by an eye-witness—went stark-mad after the massacre of his school at Adana, in Asia Minor, in 1907. Standing amid his slaughtered babes, he shouted for hours one solitary refrain: 'There is no God! There is no God!'

"Kirk Kilisse, Koumanovo, Serbie, and now Uskub—all these events give the answer to-day. Slowly, indeed, but surely, is unfolded the scroll of judgment—

'The moving Finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on —'

—perhaps, to-morrow, to Adrianople, and, the day after, to Constantinople itself."

Mr. Spender really thinks, unless he is writing sheer hypocrisy for the palate of his readers, that it is a divine action to let a man's children be slaughtered before his eyes, just in order to avenge their slaughter some five years afterwards. Two bloody deeds make one moral action! What a religion!

Mr. Spender must be a very dull and shallow person if he imagines that Omar Khayyam's "Moving Finger" has any relation whatever to the imbecile Theism of the ordinary British religionist. The "Moving Finger" is not Providence but Fate.

Preachers in some churches are praying for the success of the Balkan States in the present war. This has troubled the conscience of some of the worshipers, who fear it is an infraction of English neutrality. We admit this is a very serious and weighty point. Consider: if the Christian Deity does help the Balkan States, the Turks ought to be beaten out of hand. If God does not help them, he is so far aiding the Mohammedans against the Christians, and his goodness to his followers is reduced to zero. If the Balkan States, the Turks have, from a Christian point of view, a legitimate complaint against England. If the English Government defends itself by saying that it did not use either army or navy or influence against Turkey, but merely asked God Almighty to give her a walloping, its only defence is that the Power invoked was not worth troubling about. It is a very serious position all round, and the only prospect of safety lies in the Turk saying that so long as England remains neutral in other directions, she is quite willing to tackle the Deity along with the Balkan States.

Seriously, the prayers and the expressed doubt of their advisability are all part of the hypocrisy and humbug generated by religion in a civilised State. We do not suppose that anyone seriously believes that God will have anything to do with settling the dispute in the Balkans. In all the calculations as to the probable outcome of the war, even in the religious papers, no one counts God. The calculations are all based on the number of men available, the state of the arms possessed by them, the fighting quality of the men, and the ability of the countries engaged to stand the strain of a war. If one were to say to a Christian, "It is true the Balkan States have God," there is not a Christian in England who would, on that basis, wager half-a-crown on the defeat of Turkey. He would say the struggle was hopeless. And yet the old religious cant must find expression. Men are not over honest with themselves in many directions; but religion has an easy first place in encouraging the minimum of intellectual self-respect.

"New Master of Jesus." This shocking headline appeared over a paragraph in the *Observer*. It was terribly shocking. Had the Savior of the World passed under somebody's—and a new somebody's—thumb? We breathed again when we found that the paragraph referred to the appointment of a new Master of Jesus College, Cambridge.

Mr. Wheatley, the superintendent of the St. Giles' Christian Mission, received some straight talk the other day from Mr. Biron, the magistrate at the Clerkenwell Police-court. A man named Thomas Kelly, a homeless ex-convict, was charged with breaking three panes of glass at the Mission premises. He did not dispute the window-breaking, but he pleaded the way he had been treated in excuse. It was evi-

dently a bad case—for the Mission. "Instead of investigating," Mr. Biron said, "your Christian Mission makes misstatements to prevent the man getting help.....You were not even asked for monetary assistance, but every obstacle is put in the man's way by your society, and it has almost succeeded in depriving him of any possibility of assistance." It was to Scotland Yard rather than the St. Giles' Christian Mission that the magistrate looked to for help to this prisoner in distress.

Mr. Theodore Taylor, M.P., has been indulging in a confession of faith. The essence of his religion, he says, is "I know I am a sinner and that I need a Savior. I believe in God our Father, who made this beautiful world." We do not know whether Mr. Taylor is a sinner or not, but as he is engaged in politics, we will take his word for it. We are also willing to agree that, being a sinner, he needs improving. So far there is not much room for discussion. But we do not see that it follows from this that Mr. Taylor is also right when he launches out into a theological disquisition on Jesus Christ, and God the Father making this beautiful world. If a man commits a burglary, this gives no reason for accepting him as an authority on the structure of heavenly mansions. Mr. Taylor should stick to what he is most certain of, namely, his own sinfulness and the necessity for improvement. Although it is just possible that he is exaggerating even there.

The late Father George Tyrell, whose books on Modernism, particularly *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, caused orthodox Catholics, and even the Pope himself, so much trouble and apprehension, left an Autobiography which has just been published in two volumes at what is now considered a reasonable price for such books—the two books, like the Meredith letters, costing no less than twenty-one shillings. We cannot afford to purchase such books at that price, except in very occasional instances, but we see by some of the reviews that he speaks out plainly on many features of the Catholic Church, to which he belonged. "Most priests," he says, "are grossly ignorant of the very text of the Bible—a feature that distinguishes the modern church from the mediæval very unfavorably." It is almost needless to say how little science was imbibed in the course of their education:—

"The chief use of this smattering of science is to teach the more prudent to hold their tongues on subjects they know so little about, and to save us from such venturesome statements in public as that of a certain Father, who informed his audience that, according to science, some of the stars were nearly as big as the world, and were hundreds of miles away."

No wonder Father Tyrell thought the Catholic Church was doomed unless it made an effort to put itself more abreast of the intellectual and moral progress of the age.

Not a single newspaper (as far as we are aware) out of the number to which we sent copies of last week's *Freethinker*, has noted the fact that George Meredith's last letter was probably written to us, and certainly not to Mr. Watts-Dunton, as stated in the *Letters of George Meredith* edited by his son. Apparently they are all, as far as they are concerned, going to let the lie pass into history.

The newspapers that have reviewed the Meredith Letters have carefully covered up—when they have not deliberately misrepresented—his religious convictions. "With the exception of the *Chronicle*," a friend writes us, "no one reading the reviews, who was not a reader of the *Freethinker*, would get any clear idea as to Meredith's religious convictions." Precisely so. That was intended. And it shows the depth of degradation to which English journalism has sunk. We doubt if such conduct would be tolerated, or even possible, in any other country.

Canon Inge has been warning people against crediting the stories of marvellous cures worked by Christian Science. We cordially endorse the warning, and have often advised the same healthy scepticism. The Canon goes on to say that he is a member of a committee specially formed to investigate these stories, and up to the present the committee had not found a "scrap of evidence of any phenomenon which suggested supernatural intervention." So far, good. Dr. Inge can be as rational as a Freethinker when dealing with religious beliefs that he himself does not hold. We should like him to adopt the same plan in relation to his own beliefs. Has he any knowledge of any phenomena that would satisfy a committee of investigators that it involved supernatural intervention. As a priest of the English Church, Canon Inge is committed to a wholesale belief in supernatural intervention? He believes that at various

times there has occurred, and their still occur, manifestations of a supernatural power on all-fours with that believed in by faith-healers and Christian Scientists. Has Dr. Inge any better evidence for his belief than Christian Scientists have for theirs? Is there not something in the New Testament about casting the beam out of one's own eye before setting to work on one's neighbor?

Let us suppose that the story of Jesus, his birth, miracles, death, and resurrection had just been received in England, and that a committee of able and intelligent men had been formed to visit Judea and examine the evidence for its trustworthiness. Is there any doubt as to what the character of their report would have been. It would have run somewhat in this wise:—

"Your committee have carefully examined all the evidence available as to the truth of the alleged supernatural events said to have occurred in Palestine and in the person of a young carpenter. We have examined witnesses and tested records, and our conclusion is that the whole story is a tissue of absurdities and unproved statements. We consider it absolutely incredible that such a series of events could actually have taken place without their attracting widespread attention, but many whom we have examined are simply unaware of any such happenings. We not only fail to find any corroboration of the story as given, but the events belong to a region of myth and legend that quite renders it unworthy of credence. We are further convinced that its circulation as truth reflects small credit upon either those who have given the story publicity, or upon those who have been credulous enough to believe it."

If Christians could only clear their minds of prejudice, they would realise that every criticism of supernaturalism in the present tells with tenfold force against supernaturalism in the past.

The Kalem Company has spent £20,000 on a film depicting the life of Jesus Christ "From the Manger to the Cross." The Virgin Birth is too delicate a matter for public exhibition, so it is judiciously omitted. Also the story ends at the Crucifixion, for the Resurrection is an extremely ticklish matter and might easily make the public laugh. A private performance of this interesting, if dangerous, show has been given in London, in order to introduce it to the clergy, who were the only persons invited. Many clergymen refused to witness the production at all, and others raised certain objections, but the majority were favorable. The occupants of the episcopal benches seem generally hostile. In reply to the question, "Do you approve of cinematograph reproduction of the Life of Christ?" the Bishop of Liverpool replies "Most certainly not." The Bishop of Hereford replies, "Subject too sacred for doubtful handling, so cannot approve." The Bishop of Manchester's answer is: "No." The Bishop of Lichfield's answer is also "No." So is the Bishop of Exeter's. Bishop Welldon says: "Should think such pictures objectionable." Rev. Charles Brown says the show is "entirely revolting and calculated to do harm." Yankee Dixon also believes it "will do an immense amount of harm." We quite agree with him. That is why we hope the show will go forward. Stories of the Life of Christ are all very well, when they are left to the imagination, and not presented to the eyesight. Depict them to the vision, and the absurdity of so many of them becomes quite aggressive. We are sorry to read, therefore, that from "Manger to Cross" is not to be shown in any picture palaces, but is to be confined to town halls, churches, institutes, and similar places of public resort. We should be pleased at the widest possible exhibition of these pictures—especially the more miraculous ones, such as curing the deaf and dumb and blind, multiplying loaves and fishes, and raising the dead. We incline to believe it might lead to a far wider sale of our *Bible Romances*.

Captain Faber has given notice of a question to the Home Secretary asking whether his attention has been drawn to this matter, and whether there is any power of censorship over the display of cinematograph films. These "captains" are nearly always old-fashioned. The Home Secretary's reply will be awaited with considerable interest.

Rev. R. J. Campbell objects to the suicide of Judas. He hints that it "savors of the melodramatic" and would be "best left out." That is Mr. Campbell all over. He preaches a fanciful God and an ideal Christ. He is a mere picker and chooser from the Bible. What he chooses to select is the word of God; all the rest is somebody else's word. He forgets that what he selects another picker and chooser may reject.

Rev. F. B. Meyer is horrified at the idea of profane individuals, actors and actresses, playing their respective

parts in the cinematograph drama of the life of Jesus. He says it is "terrible to think that any mortal man has imitated—I must be excused for saying it—for commercial purposes those sacred events." Commercial purposes! Fancy a clergyman raising an objection to salaries for work! Don't *they* draw salaries? And are not some of them the greatest blood-suckers on earth?

Rev. Dr. Charles Brown keeps Dr. Meyer company in this objection. "The idea," he says, "of play actors imitating the mystery of Christ's Passion to get money is blasphemous." Getting money is the crime! How about the clergy then—who get money for preaching "Blessed be ye poor"?

The Prophet of Nazareth would probably be much astonished if he could see a publication that has just reached us. It consists of forty quarto pages, and is an "Abridged Price List" of the vast variety of goods offered for sale at the Salvation Army's new Trade Headquarters in Judd-street, King's cross. The patrons of the Boothite enterprise can purchase a toothbrush or a mangle, a pair of boots or a washing machine, at prices which, if they don't seem low, leave at least a profit to be carried over to the soul-saving business. An Introduction tells us that the New Trade Headquarters were "dedicated"—that's the word—by William Booth on June 1, 1911. We presume a note is made of the fact in heaven. But why on earth does not the writer of the Introduction take some lessons—at an evening school would do—in good English? He speaks of the Army's "most reliable and dependable goods. "Reliable" is a bastard word. If used at all it should be "rely-on-able." And "dependable" means *hangable*.

Sir Robertson Nicoll solemnly informs the readers of the *British Weekly* that he does not approve of Mark Twain. If Mark were alive, we should not be surprised to learn that he did not approve of Sir Robertson Nicoll, and we are fairly certain that his recital of the fact would have been much better reading than that provided by the editor of the *British Weekly*. He admits that Mark Twain "burned with.....a righteous and intense wrath against every form of wrong and oppression," but against this must be set the fact that he was not a Christian. Had he kept this fact to himself, Sir Robertson Nicoll might have overlooked even this—at all events, he would not have let the world know that so prominent a writer was a Freethinker. It is, indeed, characteristic of Christians that they prefer the Freethinker who lacks the courage and the sense of duty that leads him to speak, to the one who is bold enough and honest enough to let the world know exactly where he stands. They can tolerate heresy *plus* hypocrisy, they cannot bear heresy *plus* honesty.

Of course, Sir Robertson Nicoll does not say this in so many words. He says that Mr. Paine—Mark Twain's biographer—"erred in giving so many of Mark Twain's blasphemies." This can only be because Sir Robertson Nicoll thinks that Mr. Paine should have kept this information to himself. But a biographer's first duty is to present his subject as he was. Whether people find the picture attractive or otherwise is not his primary concern. It is one of the standing disgraces of current biographies that they do suppress aspects of their subjects' character that it would be well for the public to be acquainted with. On his own account, Sir Robertson Nicoll says:—

"I was and am repelled from Mark Twain by his habitual, incessant, and disgusting profanity. He swore often, but his swearing was not the worst of it. He was continually denouncing Christianity in all its forms. When his literary work was practically done he spent such time as he did not give to billiards in writing tirades against religion."

We have, of course, every possible respect for Sir Robertson Nicoll's sensitive and delicate disposition. It is doubtless of the kind possessed by so many Christians. It can stand any amount of abuse of other people's opinions, and cry like a frightened infant the moment their own opinions are attacked. We have a fair acquaintance with Mark Twain's writings, and the kind and quality of the "swearing" therein is of a kind that no healthy-minded parent would refrain from placing before his children. And we wish to say very deliberately that for clean, healthy teaching a volume of Mark Twain is worth all the numbers of the *British Weekly* ever issued. Twain had his faults and his limitations. The latter were not scanty in number, and they were very marked in character. But he was a clean, healthy man, with a natural love of what was clean and healthy around him. His influence on the world was wholly good. We wish we could say the same of Sir Robertson Nicoll.



### Mr. Foote's Engagements

Sunday, November 3, Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham-place, Regent-street, London, W. : at 7.30, "The God of Battles."

October 6 to December 15, every Sunday evening, Queen's (Minor) Hall, London, W.

### To Correspondents.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—November 3, Croydon; 10, Manchester; 17, West Ham; 24, Leicester. December 15, West Ham.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1912.—Previously acknowledged, £236 15s. 7d. Received since:—Wolverhampton Friends, 3s.; R. C. P., 2s. 6d.; W. R. Snell (S. Africa), £1 1s; W. Cromack, 5s.; Bertha Siger, 1s. 6d.; Andrew Shiel, 10s.

E. BURKE.—We wish a hundred Freethinkers throughout the country were using the local press as you are doing. Pleased you recognise the utility of lectures such as our recent one on "Religion and Marriage." You say that "the people need a bold lead on such large problems." We begin to think you are right. The audience seemed to think so too.

S. F. RIDEN.—See paragraph. Thanks. Glad you think so highly of the *Freethinker*.

HILARY BROWN.—When a Christian tells you what were "Charles Bradlaugh's last words" you should ask him who told him—for obviously he did not hear them himself. Bradlaugh did not say "Now for the great secret." He did not believe in any great secret—and he was unconscious for some forty-eight hours before his death. Freethinkers should keep a copy by them of Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner's account of her father's last hours in the pamphlet entitled *Did Charles Bradlaugh Die an Atheist?* The price is only a penny.

W. CROMACK.—You are remembered.

W. H. DEAKIN.—Thanks for good wishes. The postal card is unusual. We knew—by reading, of course—of the shrine. Some puritan ladies, perhaps missionaries' wives, sisters, daughters, or even mothers, seem to have roughly handled the statues.

R. H. ROSETTI.—We hope Mr. Davidson will have a good audience at the Workman's Hall this evening (Nov. 3).

J. MORGAN.—We cannot answer such questions by post. We suggest that you should ask the reverend gentleman's authority for his alleged quotation from Charles Bradlaugh.

MAY COLEMAN.—You owe us no thanks. It was our duty—and even our business.

E. B.—Much obliged for cuttings. Thanks for the reference. We will have a look at the book.

BERTHA SIGER.—All men are mortal, and no man knows when he shall die, but so far as intention is concerned you may depend on finding us in the old war for many a day yet. We agree with you that there ought to be more Freethought propaganda on the Tyneside.

W. P. BALL.—Your cuttings are always welcome.

JERL NIRRA.—Rather out of our line; thanks all the same.

L. L.—In our next. Thanks.

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

FRIENDS who send us newspapers would enhance the favor by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.

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

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

### Our Fighting Fund.

[The object of this Fund is to provide the sinews of war in the National Secular Society's fight against the London County Council, which is seeking to stop all collections at the Society's open-air meetings in London, and thus to abolish a practically immemorial right; this step being but one in a calculated policy which is clearly intended to suppress the right of free speech in all parks and other open spaces under the Council's control. This Fund is being raised by the Editor of the *Freethinker* by request of the N. S. S. Executive. Subscriptions should therefore be sent direct to G. W. Foote, 2 Newcastle-street, London, E.C. Cheques, etc., should be made payable to him.]

Previously acknowledged, £62 15s. 9d. Received since:—Wolverhampton Friends, 2s.; W. R. Snell (S. Africa), 10s.; A. V. Tomkinson, 1s.; W. H. Deakin (India), £2; Bertha Siger, 1s. 6d.; Three New Brighton Freethinkers, 3s.; D. W. S., 2s. 6d.

### Sugar Plums.

Mr. Foote's fourth audience at Queen's (Minor) Hall was the largest he has had there this season. It looks as though the hall will need to be elastic before the season ends. Mr. Foote was in excellent form from every point of view, and his lecture, which lasted a good deal over the hour, was very warmly applauded. Two auditors—a lady and a gentleman—left their front seats very early, but it was not because they had any objection to the lecture. They are good American Freethinkers over here on a holiday. The lady was taken ill and her husband had to go out with her into the fresh air. Thus they missed most of the lecture they very much wanted to hear. Mr. Victor Roger occupied the chair, and his pleasant appeal elicited several questions and some discussion.

"The God of Battles" is the title of Mr. Foote's lecture at Queen's Hall this evening (Nov. 3). The place ought to be crowded out.

Mr. Lloyd opens the ball at Croydon to-day (Nov. 3). The Public Hall, George-street, in which he lectures, is within easy access from the two railway stations. Mr. Lloyd's subject should excite mental curiosity. We hope the local "saints" will give his lecture all the publicity they can.

Mr. Lloyd's lecture at the King's Hall, Birmingham, on Sunday evening was well attended and listened to with rapt attention. Mr. F. E. Willis occupies the same platform this evening (Nov. 3).

Messrs. Gott and Jackson's services, under the Secular Society, Ltd., have been placed at the disposal of the Sheffield Branch for a week's mission commencing on October 28 and leading up to Sunday lectures by Mr. Cohen in the Foresters' Hall on November 3. It is a good while since a Freethought lecture was delivered in a Sheffield hall, and we congratulate the new N. S. S. Branch in raising its standard so promptly.

Mr. Cohen's audience crowded the Workman's Hall, Stratford, on Sunday evening, and his lecture was greatly enjoyed. Three critics mounted the platform in opposition and were satisfactorily answered.

Owing to the upset of the "profanity" prosecution and the weather, Mr. J. W. Gott had time to himself on Sunday, and he attended a big Socialist Demonstration at Burnley to sell Freethought literature. The crowd cleared him out of all his *Freethinkers*, *Bible and Beer*, and *Deity and Design*; indeed, a great many more might have been sold if a larger stock had been there. Mr. Gott advises other literature sellers to attend Socialist meetings in that way. It will popularise our principles and yield a good profit to the sellers. Mr. Gott will be happy to give "tips" to anyone who wishes to try.

We are able to give this week a full report of the latest "profanity" case at Leeds. Such reports occupy what some readers will consider a disproportionate space, but it is best to have them in detail, if you have them at all, and they will some day be of historic interest. The report is made up from Mr. Jackson's own notes. He had arranged for a shorthand note, but he tells us that the reporter was

badly placed, rather deaf, and out of practice. Mr. Jackson declares—and we can well believe him—that the press reports of the case were grossly inaccurate; his questions, and the detective's answers, being hopelessly mixed and distorted. He apologises to us (as N. S. S. President) for having lost his temper while representing the Society. He does right to apologise. But he is young and will outgrow the impatience that led him to take orthodox hooligans too seriously. They gave the provocation; he showed the natural (but impolitic) resentment. We say impolitic because when you lose your temper you never know what you are going to say. It may surprise you as much as other people.

Someone sent us a *Muswell-Hill Record* dated as far back as the middle of September. We saw nothing marked in it, and we wondered what the sender meant, but our eyes lighted on a letter from the Rev. Fred Hall, of Blackburn, whom we knew to be a very advanced Unitarian minister. We found his letter fully bearing out that description. He was replying to an orthodox critic, and his well-written and forcible defence of his opposition to the deity of Jesus and the doctrine of the Atonement might have been signed by any leading Freethinker. We understand that Mr. Hall is a blind preacher—not intellectually (far from it) but physically. All the more credit to him for defending his principles at such a distance from home. Nor must we forget to pay a tribute of praise to the *Muswell-Hill Record* for its impartiality.

The Wood Green *Sentinel* has what is unusual in English newspapers, a sense of fair play and a practice of impartiality. We have in mind at the moment the long discussion on the Salvation Army which has been going on in its columns ever since the death of William Booth. Mr. E. Burke led off very ably on the Freethought side, and the editor has allowed him to wind up in a final reply to his many critics. So far from being converted to Salvation Army aims and methods, Mr. Burke winds up by saying that "to occupy our time and find funds for reforming bad characters so far from being a meritorious thing is the shame and scandal both of religion and civilisation." One might call it making the best of the worst material—a policy that would speedily ruin the most flourishing business on earth.

There is a certain quaintness about the following extract from a reader's letter:—

"I am not yet eighteen years of age, and I have been a reader of your bright paper for two years. I have long wished to give something to help you to free others from the tyranny of superstition as you have freed me. My pocket money has been spent on Freethought literature and my bull-dog. Her show name is 'Flower of Freethought.' She has recently had a litter of puppies. I have sold them all, and with 10s. of the money I am going to help on the cause, dividing it up into 5s. for literature, 2s. 6d. for membership of the N. S. S., and 2s. 6d. for the President's Fund. This is my first subscription, but it will not be my last."

We hope not.

Some subscribers to our Fighting Fund have remarked that they do not see to whom cheques, etc., should be made payable. Unless otherwise stated, all such remittances should be made payable to G. W. Foote. It is as editor of the *Freethinker* that we make these appeals, and it is in the pages of this journal that we acknowledge all subscriptions we receive. This renders everything fair and above-board, and where we take the responsibility we also take the control. Ultimately, of course, the total amount is paid over to the National Secular Society, or whatever body we may be raising funds for, and our own cheque passing through such a Society's bank account ends our financial responsibility. Of course, we have other responsibilities as President of the N. S. S., Chairman of the Secular Society, Limited, etc., etc.; but those responsibilities are shared with other persons. Our responsibility for the funds, as appealed for and acknowledged in the *Freethinker*, is absolutely single. Subscriptions should be sent to us direct, and cheques, etc., made payable to us solely.

The "saints" are requested to do their best to circulate the "Pioneer Pamphlets" that are now being issued by the Secular Society, Ltd. These pamphlets are wonderfully cheap—too cheap, of course, for any profit; in some cases they will entail a certain loss. All the more reason for asking friends to buy a dozen or more and circulate them judiciously amongst the folk they meet in the intercourse of life.

## A Wayside Conversation.

HE was a powerfully built fellow, of coarse appearance, an ordinary navvy, one of those workers whose lives are as hard as the earth in which they toil. There was no refinement in manner, nor speech, nor clothes. Even the flesh of his face, his hands, arms, and neck was rough and hard. Nothing about him prompted wonder; no lovely eyes, nor wavy, luxuriant hair, nor slow-dying demeanor of aristocratic magnificence. He was simply the ordinary navvy, unpleasantly dressed, broad-shouldered, heavy of gait, free with his tongue; one of those people who, according to the Scriptures, will sail the airy expanses of heaven, wing in wing with Lord this, that, and the other thing.

His jaws worked continuously, and occasionally he spat. When he spoke his language was punctuated with words some of which are made specialities of in the Bible. His hands were overdeveloped; his ugly boots were string-laced; and his clay-bedaubed and patched corduroys were tied, navvy-fashion, with pieces of tarry-rope.

When I saw him first, I wished he could be, directly, and as he was, removed to the celestial dining-saloon.

He looked up from his reclining place on the road-bank as I approached, and grunted "Mornin', mate," when I sat down. He was not averse to a "fill," but preferred black thick.

Without any more to-do, he said, "You look as if you could manage a bit of spellin'. What d'ye make o' this?" Then he read, stumbly, the following paragraph from the half-sheet of newspaper in which his morning-meal had been wrapped:—

"The Rev. —, of St. Margaret's U. F. Church, yesterday reviewed, before a congregation composed entirely of working men from the construction works at —, the relationship between Christianity and Labor. He sketched for his uncommon congregation Christ's attitude towards the working class of Galilee, emphasising our Lord's great and incontrovertible sympathy for those whose days are spent in lowliness of toil, and said that in this sympathy the working class of to-day could find their chief support in life. He strongly denied there was any warfare between master and man, inasmuch as both were brothers in the Lord and the children of God. In conclusion, he said that what was wanted to-day was a proper recognition of Christianity by the workers of the country, and a proper interpretation of its great teachings by all. During the proceedings the men were allowed to smoke, and applause was not infrequent."

The navvy grinned, spat, and said, "Do I look like a brother of the Rev. Mr. —, and a child of God?"

"No," I replied. "But my familiarity with God the Father isn't of the positive kind; and from what I know of priests in general I'm afraid, no offence, the reverend gentleman might not deem it a compliment to recognise your brotherhood with him."

"H'm! These damned spouters get on my back. What was a navvy in Galilee to a navvy in Britain? He was a God's pet poodle to me and the boys. I've been on the roads since I was a kid; an' I only struck one Taffy that preached an' prayed to us when we were workin'. He used to tell us o' God's goodness; an' I kept my keekers open for it for years. The only God I ever saw was when Mick Levine got a pick in his brain. He was a consumptive, and had a hell o' a time. He slid off a ditch, an' fell on a pick. It went into his brain an' stopped his coughin'. We were up on the moors at the time, an' we stopped workin', an' buried him under the heather. When the boss came up, an' saw us, he cursed an' swore, like the Christian deacon he was, an' sent us all to hell for delayin' the work. And yet these mealy-mouthed swine have the devil's impertinence to tell us there's not a bit o' warfare between master and man, damn 'em! They're liars, the whole rotten gang!"

He had not worked himself into a rage: he spoke slowly and dispassionately, puffing the white smoke from between his lips now and then.

He went on: "Christianity's had nothin' to do wi' us ever since I first handled a shovel, no small time since. We never see it, or taste it, or smell it. We know nothin' about it. There's some folks that speak about the religion we got at mother's knee; that's blarney. Most o' us boys had no mother. Some o' us have a hazy idea there was a woman near us when we were youngsters; that's all. We wore born to muck around, not to be dandled, or learned religion. We grew up without it, and we'll grow down without it. Fact, we don't give a damn for the thing. We let it slide. What we want is another bob a day, and we're no' likely to get it from Religion. It wants, and gets, the bobs we want. And, blast it! As Rooney used to say, our relationship with Religion is a queer yin.

"As far as I can make out these kirks are full o' mugs, an' their sympathy's like the sewer that Bill Heron fell in an' got poison that gave him hell for a week, an' then cropped him. There was a Durham lad that said he'd prove he was speakin' fact when he called them 'God's lambs'; an' he went, just new off a job, an' in his togs, into a swell kirk on a Sunday mornin'. The first seat he went into was nearly full, an' when he sat down, he said the whole rick-ma-tick rose, an' passed him, an' sat down further in front. An' in a minute or two a beadle or somethin' came, an' asked him politely to move. He did. He told us the lambs funk'd it when they saw a dirty black sheep amongst 'em, an' near their white wool. He was a game lad that Durham boy; an' an Atheist he said he was, an' many was the fat laughs he gave us on the Sundays in the Model. Used to read a paper to us, an' tell us about it. Once one o' the bosses o' a Model we were livin' in came in on' a Sunday, an' the Durham lad was readin' to us, an' we were laughin' like to burst. Seems that boss was a kirky man. He got wild. We were, twenty-two o' us, chucked out, for desecratin' the Lord's Day, he said. Ay! we ken fine what their Lord's sympathy is like, fine; for it was a pourin' wet day, an' we had to pad it."

It was time for him to return to his toil; and, with a "good mornin' an' good luck," he bade me farewell.

As I walked along the road, and mused on the conversation I had enjoyed with my five minutes' companion, it struck me how succinctly he had put the whole hypocritical conduct of the Church to the workers. My own experience leads me to believe that, to-day, the people who occupy the pews belong, nearly entirely, to the middle class, the most conservative portion of humanity. And that the laborious pulpitan attempt to induce the workers to come amongst the flock is simply evidence of the straits in which the Church has discovered itself. Feeding starved minds and rough lives with the thin milk of heavenly consolation may have been suitable and successful two hundred years ago. But it goes against the palate of the modern worker. A rise of a bob a day is of more importance to him and his fellows than the hymn-sung sympathy of Christ. The platitudes and respectability of churchism are wasted on the worker. From the lowliness of his mental position he looks down upon, and despises, it.

In the incorrect, or narrow and restricted, sense his "materialistic" outlook upon life is impregnable. The Church is flinging its words into the wind in its endeavor to relate itself to the workers; and the hopefulness of the signs of the times, to the Free-thinker, lies in the workers' consciousness of the uselessness of religion.

The Durham lad who read from the Atheistic journal to his comrades in the Model is an opponent against whom Religion will spend all its verbal shot and shell foolishly and vainly, an opponent whom it professes to despise, but whom, secretly, it must fear.

ROBERT MORELAND.

## What Has Christ Done for the World?—II.

*A Lecture delivered in the Studebaker Theatre, Chicago,*

BY M. M. MANGASARIAN.

(Concluded from p. 685.)

IF we apply this key to the other fundamental teachings of Christianity we arrive at the same conclusion. The Bible, for instance, teaches that the ignorant, the uneducated, and the simple, are preferred to the wise and the learned. Does not one of the texts say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," which really means the intellectually feeble? It is repeatedly stated that "God hath chosen the foolish of this world to confound the wise." Just as God loves the poor in purse, he loves the poor in mind. Why? There are so many of them. When anyone objected that he was not learned enough or gifted enough to become a Christian, the priests forthwith assured him that he was just the kind of man that Christ had come to call. It was as an accommodation to the people that culture or intellectuality was declared to be unnecessary. For the same reason salvation was to be free, which was still another concession to the masses. With the same object in view, the politicians of the Church held out inducements to the morally deformed. "You do not have to possess any virtues of your own," said the priest to them; "the virtues of Christ are all yours for the mere asking." "Come just as you are," was the invitation which caught the ear of the masses and gave the Church the crowds. The boast of the Catholic Church that she owes her great success to divine favor is not well founded; she owes her prestige and power to the crowd, and I am explaining to you how she caught the crowd.

That theology is politics in disguise, and that the priest like, the politician, is after power, is evident also from the motives which influenced religion-makers to bring God down to the people instead of asking the people to ascend to God. It was to humor the masses that the gods were made to descend. But it was not enough for the gods to come down; to please the masses they had to come down to the level of the masses. That was why Jesus not only became a man, but he was also born in a stable, and as we shall see later, his mental equipment was as modest as the place of his birth. What was the motive? The masses would only accept the God who was "made to order," as it were, for them.

Why, again, does the preacher proclaim with such unctious, as though he enjoyed it, the doctrine of total depravity? It flatters the masses. That doctrine does away with all distinctions between one man and another. It practically wipes out all superiority by pulling the entire world down to the level where the masses feel at home, and where they can think themselves the equal of any, and can maintain that equality with the least possible effort. It is comforting to the crowd to be told that no one is better than they are. "In God's sight," says the preacher, "everybody is a sinner, and the greater the sinner the more pleased will God be to save him." This doctrine of the fall of man was never a part of Paganism. The idea is purely Asiatic. The motive was to provide a justification for the low tastes, the sordid lives, and the lack of ambition of the masses. What could anyone expect of a fallen humanity! The story that man was cursed in Paradise and then hurled down to the depths was concocted or framed to ease the consciences of all those who found morality beyond them. To strengthen the case of the multitude, a serpent was made to sting the human race, not only to death, but to eternal death, and not only did the bite of the beast kill the body, but also the soul. This made culture and character practically impossible, except, of course, by a miracle. What judge, then, could have the temerity to blame the masses for being what they are, in the circumstances? The doctrine of the fall of man is nothing but the excuse of the people for their mediocrity.

In the light of this explanation, we are in a position to understand also how the idea of a suffering god originated. As already intimated, the condition of the great multitudes of people in Asia, to a greater extent two thousand years ago than to-day, was miserable. Life offered nothing to them but trials and tribulations. Hunger was their inseparable companion and want had its hook in their flesh. Mentally, they were even more destitute. There was naught of art or beauty in their lives. It could not be said that they had any homes, for they lived in squalor. Their children were sad-eyed, their women prematurely old. Now, a laughing, dancing, happy God would never have appealed to such a people. A suffering God, on the other hand—a God despised of men like themselves, and clad in rags, homeless, and an outcast—one who was dispossessed, as Christ was supposed to be—was just the kind of God to strike their fancy. Where, then, did we get our idea of a suffering God? From a suffering people.

The intellectual limitations of Jesus also suggest that he was proportioned for the common people. The New Testament portrait of Jesus is that of a bourgeois Christ. He is the ideal of the average man. Shakespeare's heroes are intellectual aristocrats. They possess rare gifts; their speech is golden; their learning or culture is extensive. But Jesus is "meek and lowly," and one string is all he can play upon. The average mind feels at home in the company of the ordinary, but feels oppressed in the presence of genius. Compare the exclamations and sighs which the Gospel writers put in Jesus' mouth in the Garden of Gethsemane, at the most critical moment in his career, with the speech Shakespeare lends impassioned Othello in the death chamber of Desdemona, or to the brilliant Romeo with the fire of love in his heart, or to the melancholy Hamlet making music with his broken heart. Observe the bourgeois Jesus at Gethsemane, cowed before the gathering storm and seeking shelter from the tornado's thunder shaft; the color has fled from his cheeks, his eyes have lost their lustre, his tongue can scarcely turn in his mouth, and all he can say or do is to groan: "If it be possible let this cup pass from me." In all Shakespeare's masterpieces, storm and stress help to bring out the best that is in the hero of the play. Look at Macbeth—he has lost everything: he has been deprived of the inspiration of his wife—the woman whose genius kindled his ambition; he has been stained to the soul and bitten by terrible disappointments; and yet when Macduff appears upon the scene, with the sword in his hand and murder in his eyes, Shakespeare's hero, though he realises that his doom is sealed, that his candle is about to blow out, and his strut on the stage is over—still as defiant, as unabashed as ever, he cries, as he draws his sword for a fight he knows he cannot win:—

"Lay on Macduff! And damned be he,  
Who first cries hold; enough!"

That's the way to lose! And, behold Lear—homeless, deserted, broken down and broken-hearted—drenched to the skin by the fury of the storm, and chilled to the heart by ingratitude—yet he is every inch a king! And what a splendid fire burns in their eyes! What a shower of gold falls from their lips! Imperial Shakespeare! Thy children may never have lived, but they will never die! Shakespeare, however, is not so popular with the masses as is the Bible, because the Bible descends to the people. To appreciate Shakespeare the people must ascend.

But the key we have in our hands also explains the promises of religion as it does its punishments. We have often seen children teasing their parents with, "I want this, or I want that"—something which they have seen other children possess. And naughty children tease their parents to such an extent that the father or mother is compelled often to quiet the children by promising them the things they are crying for. In the same way the unfortunate classes, when they see a man with a crown of

gold on his head, and a throne to sit upon—living in a mansion and wearing gorgeous robes—like the child I spoke of, begin to cry for these things. In order to quiet the people, as well as to keep them under restraint, the priest promises them all they desire, and more: "You shall have a crown and a throne and a mansion and harps, also golden streets to walk in, up there, there!"—and he points to the skies, far, far away! As children dictate to their parents what to promise them before they will stop crying, the populace dictates to the priests the terms upon which it agrees to follow them. Thus it is that the priest, in order to hold the masses, builds over the real hell in which they dwell a false heaven. A false heaven! Has the Church or the theological Christ done more than that for the miserables of this world?

But what has the world done for the Church? The answer to that is to be found between the lines in my discourse. "All religions," says John Morley, "die of one disease, that of being found out." Criticism, or science, has "found out" religion. It has traced its dogmas to their sources. It has analysed and exposed the roots of its teachings to the sun, and the exposure has been fatal to them. The world has torn the visor from theology and discovered that it is nothing but politics. The world has removed the veil from the face of the gods, and behold! they are none other than the creatures of the crowd, born in the arms of misery and ignorance! The world, again, by destroying the false heavens built over real hells, has provoked man to be the architect of his own destiny. Finally, the world, meaning by it the secular, the scientific, and the human, has educated man to be his own savior! That is the message of Rationalism on this Easter morning—with the skies smiling, the fields flooded with light, and all nature quivering with new life.

Man, a savior; the earth, a paradise! What religion could have a better message than that? And yet people say that Rationalism is destructive. But destructive of what? If it takes away error, it is to make room for the truth. If it demolishes the fences, it is to facilitate movement. If it breaks the bars and lifts the iron doors off their hinges, it is to free prisoners. If it tears you away from the past, it is to give you the embrace of the future. If it pulls down the blinds, it is to let in the sunlight—just as the dawn, with the sharp edge of its knife, rips open the womb of the night to deliver the day! There is hope for the man, there is hope for the nation that can give up the old for the new. To throw away is also to acquire. It is the unthinking people who give up nothing. Give up, give up the supernatural for nature; the divine for the human; the worship of Gods for the Service of Man!

### Profanity Again.

At the West Riding Police Court, before Mr. C. M. Atkinson, on Tuesday, October 22, Thomas Alfred Jackson appeared in answer to a charge of "using profane language" in Victoria-square, Leeds, on October 4.

Detective-officer Thompson gave evidence that on the evening in question, as Mr. Jackson was about to commence a lecture, a body of about 150 students from Leeds University marched into the square, and swarmed upon the base of the statue from which Mr. Jackson was about to speak. The students remained for some seven or eight minutes, hooting, shouting, and cheering, and making a great disturbance. They departed, and Mr. Jackson commenced his lecture by referring to the students as "cubs," and went on to say that they had evidently come to "manifest the boundless contempt of their class for the ideals and aspirations towards self-government of the common people." Proceeding to refer to the cheers which the students had given for "Bonar Law," Mr. Jackson said, "Who the hell is Bonar Law, anyway?" "If, then, he is simply the figurehead of that Tory party which frankly despises us as the 'lower orders,' they only cheer him to show contempt for us." Proceeding, Mr. Jackson said, after referring to the fact that if Secularists or ordinary people had "carried

on " like them they would have been very soon interfered with; and further referring to the manner in which prosecutions for Blasphemy were defended in the name of "law and order," Mr. Jackson said, "To hell with law and order!" He also referred to Mr. Lloyd George as a "little God Almighty with a lot of savage worshippers who tore women's hair out by the handful if they committed the blasphemy of interrupting his divine speeches. If it had been a case of a Chinaman looking cross-eyed at a missionary's wife these same cubs would have been howling like hell for Dreadnoughts." At a later stage of his speech Mr. Jackson said: "To hell with religion; to hell with God Almighty; to hell with Jesus; to hell with all this blind, creeping, slavish superstition." Mr. Jackson concluded by saying that he "found it impossible to keep his feelings under control," so he "would conclude lest he might use language calculated to cause a breach of the peace." He had been much interrupted by friends of the students. At the conclusion of his address there was a lot of applause, mixed with expressions of disapproval.

Mr. Atkinson (the magistrate), in asking the defendant if he had any questions to put to the witness, said: "Confine yourself to the last statements. I don't want you to waste any trouble over the political references."

Cross-examined by the defendant, witness said that he had heard defendant speak in the square at least a hundred times. Defendant's manner was very different on this occasion from what it usually was; he appeared to be greatly excited—very angry at the conduct of the students. Witness did not hear somebody shout to defendant (while the students were crowded, shouting, on the plinth), "Give the word, and we'll clear them out of the square." He did hear great indignation expressed at their conduct. The expressions used by defendant (quoted in his evidence) were from different parts of his address. They were led up to by arguments. The words "To hell with law and order" arose out of a reference to Sir Edward Carson's intending to break the law—defendant had said Sir Edward Carson cared nothing for law and order. Witness thought that defendant had used the words as his own sentiment; he might have represented Sir Edward Carson as saying that. Defendant did complain that the very people who were eager to hedge Secularist speakers round with all sorts of legal restrictions were the very ones to show their contempt for law and order when they were at all directly affected. The "To hell with God Almighty," etc., passages were part of an appeal to the audience and the people to throw off the yoke of superstition and assert their manhood against all oppression.

Asked if he thought defendant's lectures were, as a rule, instructive and educational, witness said "Most certainly." The defendant in ordinary circumstances was perfectly fair and courteous to opponents and questioners.

The occasion in question was not one whereby the defendant's general methods could be judged.

Questioned by the Magistrate, witness (Thompson) said defendant had spoken in the Square several times since without any repetition of similar expressions.

The Magistrate at once turned to the defendant for his version, and he at the outset expressed himself as unable to recollect anything about the particular language he may have used on this occasion. He only knew that he was very angry, and in his anger might have said almost anything. He was surprised to hear from the witness what he was accused of having said, but Detective Thompson had given his evidence so fairly that he felt bound to confess that he thought it quite possible that in his anger he had made use of them.

He would notwithstanding like to press upon his Worship's consideration the whole question of the meaning of "profane language," and the danger of this act being used as a weapon whereby to intimidate public speakers.

Defendant then proceeded to argue at length that the word "profane" is used very ambiguously in legal enactments; in Acts relating to "profane cursing and swearing," and also to "blasphemy and profaners."

Defendant contended that improper expressions used in a public speech against the established religion should properly be proceeded against by procedure under the common law for blasphemy.

With regard to the particular occasion of this prosecution, he would urge that, although the expressions were stronger than what was considered as parliamentary, yet at the same time, considering the circumstances, no serious damage to public order would have resulted had the police passed it over as not worth serious notice.

He did think it rather tending in the direction of malice that the very first time he should—under extreme provocation at that—slip into the use of expressions of this character that the police should be ready and willing to pounce upon him and force the magistrate to give a decision.

After all, the expressions complained of were merely used figuratively, as they were in the everyday speech of the bulk

of the people in the audience. To suggest that a Yorkshire man or woman was to be shocked by hearing anything "sent to hell" was almost farcical.

He would ask his Worship to dismiss the charge as baseless, frivolous, and vexatious.

Mr. Atkinson, in pronouncing his judgment, said he thought the case had been very fairly presented by the detective officer and very fairly met by the defendant. As to the legal issue raised by the defendant, he admitted that there was a great ambiguity about the word profane, but at the same time he thought the meaning fairly clear in ordinary use. It would be, in his opinion, a grave injustice to send a man to take his trial charged with Blasphemy for words spoken in anger under such provocation as the defendant had received. Judged in the ordinary way, the language was undoubtedly profane, but, taking all the circumstances into consideration, he must say that the conduct of the students and their friends was far more calculated to disturb the peace and injure the cause of religion than any words that had been used by the defendant. The law said that profane language must not be used, and whatever his private feelings were he was bound to enforce it. The defendant would be fined 10s. and costs, or seven days. At the same time, he must say that, in his opinion, the occasion was largely brought about by the gross misconduct of other people.

### No Use for Sky-pilots.

(Translated from "Le Peuple" by J. L.)

AN inquiry was recently organised amongst the rank and file of the Dutch Navy to ascertain their opinion as to the desirability of keeping up the chaplains of the fleet. By a crushing majority, the sailors voted against them. Since this the journals who oppose religious performances for sailors in service on the warships cite other examples which corroborate the views expressed by the sailors who replied to the inquiry referred to. Here is one of the most typical instances which they relate: At a sermon officially announced on the vessels, with a muster of 1,000 men, one solitary sailor turned up. What is more, even this man declared that he was a Freethinker, and that he was there just to pass the time.

Another myth exploded—the unshakable faith of the sailor!.....Since we printed the above, we have found in the *Vrije Socialist* the interesting statistical details which follow, taken from the *Correspondentieblad* of the rank and file of the Navy, which made an inquiry among the men. They put the following questions to the sailors:—

1. Do you, generally speaking, find the services on board useful or necessary?—Answer: 1,927 No, 2 doubtful, 3 Yes, 2 abstentions.
2. Do you feel the necessity of attending church?—1,656 No, 2 doubtful, 1 Yes, 275 abstentions.
3. Have you personally ever felt the necessity of a special chaplain for the fleet, or have you felt any personal loss during your period of service?—1,913 No, 2 doubtful, 5 Yes, 14 abstentions.

The fourth question turned on the actual appointment of chaplains; 9 thought such appointments bad, 1,774 thought them unnecessary, and the rest abstained from voting. And these answers were quite independent of the special brand of religion to which these sailors belonged; amongst them all the Churches were equal failures. As a matter of fact 869 are of the (Dutch) Reformed Church, 413 Roman Catholic, 335 Protestants, 157 Lutherans, 55 belong to other confessions, 11 no denomination.

Finally, these two questions were put: 1. Had they ceased to believe in their religion, or were they entirely indifferent to it?—1,571 were indifferent, 66 had definitely abandoned their religion, 97 did not answer.

To the other question—Did they still consider themselves as members of their denomination?—168 replied No, 263 Yes, 91 did not reply.

Marvellous! isn't it, the faith of the sailor?

### Obituary.

It is with the deepest regret that we record the death of Mr. J. H. Beresford, of Huddersfield, a true friend and never-failing supporter of the writer and the movement for mental freedom; an avowed Atheist, and a great admirer of the leaders—past and present—of our cause. He seemed to have had but one regret—that the rights of man are so long in being realised, that the age of reason has been so long delayed. Atheism and Socialism have lost a whole-hearted adherent. Interred at Almondbury Cemetery, Tuesday, October 29.—G. T. W.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

### LONDON.

#### INDOOR.

QUEEN'S (MINOR) HALL (Langham-place, Regent-street, W.): 7.30, G. W. Foote, "The God of Battles."

CROYDON PUBLIC HALL (George-street, Croydon): 7.30, J. T. Lloyd, "New Light on the Origin of Life."

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (J. Baugham's, 56 Richmond-road, Barnsbury): 7.30, Business Meeting—Election of Officers, etc.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Workmen's Hall, Romford-road, Stratford, E.): 7.30, W. Davidson, "The Ladder of Life."

### COUNTRY.

#### INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (King's Hall, Corporation-street): 7, F. E. Willis, "The Inefficiency of Prayer."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Hall, 110 Brunswick-street): 12 noon, Class; 6.30, C. R. Clemens, "The Conflict between Science and Religion."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Secular Hall, Rusholme-road, All Saints): 6.30, C. Stewart, "Vegetarianism: The Diet of the Future."

SHEFFIELD BRANCH N. S. S. (Foresters' Hall, Trippet-lane): 3.30 and 6.30, C. Cohen, Lectures.

#### OUTDOOR.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE: Thos. A. Jackson—Preston Market Square): Nov. 3, at 3, "Why I am a Secularist"; at 6.30, "Blasphemy Prosecutions"; 4, at 7.30, "The Salvation Army"; 5, at 7.30, "Bible Stories." Bury (front of Circus): 6, at 7.30, "What must we do to be saved?" 7, at 7.30, "The Latest Thing in Gods." Rochdale (Town Hall Square): 8, at 7.30, "The Bible and Beer"; 9, at 7.30, "The Salvation Army."

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PROPAGANDIST LEAFLETS. New Issue. 1. *Hunting Skunks*, G. W. Foote; 2. *Bible and Teetotalism*, J. M. Wheeler; 3. *Principles of Secularism*, C. Watts; 4. *Where Are Your Hospitals?* R. Ingersoll. 5. *Because the Bible Tells Me So*, W. P. Ball; 6. *The Parson's Creed*. Often the means of arresting attention and making new members. Price 6d. per hundred, post free 7d. Special rates for larger quantities. Samples on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—N. S. S. SECRETARY, 2 Newcastle-street, Farringdon-street, E.C.

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Nov. 11, Mrs. T. BILLINGTON-GREIG:

"MODERN WOMAN AND THE CHURCH."

Nov. 18, Mr. DENNIS HIRD:

"THE SECRET OF EVOLUTION AS APPLIED TO MAN."

Nov. 25, Mrs. H. BRADLAUGH BONNER

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Chairman of Board of Directors—MR. G. W. FOOTE.

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.

The liability of members is limited to £1, in case the Society should ever be wound up and the assets were insufficient to cover liabilities—a most unlikely contingency.

Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings, and a subsequent yearly subscription of five shillings.

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

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

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

Being a duly registered body, the Secular Society, Limited, can receive donations and bequests with absolute security. Those who are in a position to do so are invited to make donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favor in their wills. On this point there need not be the slightest apprehension. It is quite impossible to set aside such bequests. The executors have no option but to pay them over in the ordinary course of administration. No objection of any kind has been raised in connection with any of the wills by which the Society has already been benefited.

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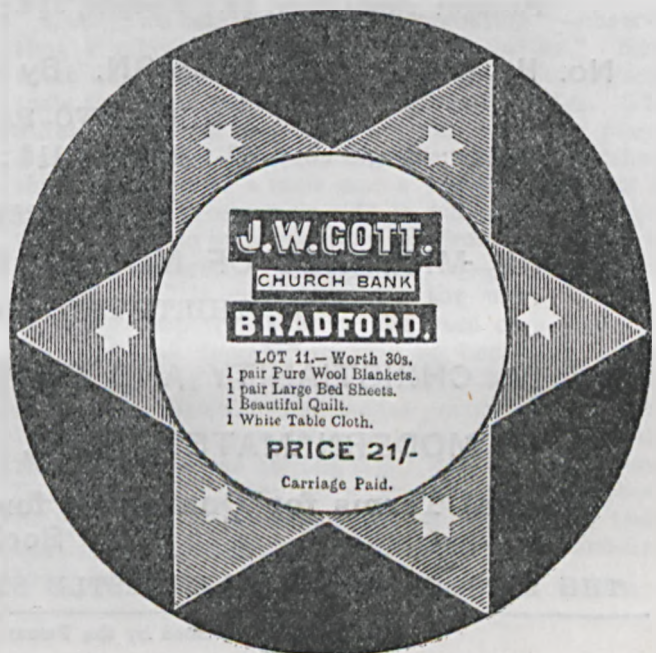
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