

# THE Freethinker

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*Plain truth will influence half a score men, at most, in a nation, or an age, while mystery will lead millions by the nose.*

—HENRY ST. JOHN, VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE.

## Another Stage Onward.

Another part of this issue will be found a report of the hearing of the Appeal against the decision of Mr. Justice Joyce in the Bowman case. That report taken from the *Daily Telegraph*, which, as before, is by far the best of all the papers that reported the trial. I had hoped that by this time the matter would have been quite decided; but as the Court reserved judgment, that hope, at least, is frustrated. The Master of the Rolls said that he trusted to deliver judgment before the Court rises for the Long Vacation, which is, I believe, somewhere about the end of the month; and everyone concerned must therefore pass his, or her, soul in patience. As the case is still *sub judice*, one is prevented from commenting on the proceedings with the freedom that would otherwise have been possible; but I may say, for my own part—I think for others also—that, though in suspense, I am not in any great doubt. Confidence in the cause of the Secular Society, indeed, and nothing occurred during the hearing of the case to weaken that feeling.

The hearing of the appeal commenced on Tuesday, July 13, before the Master of the Rolls and Lord Justices Pickford and Warrington. On Wednesday the Crown case, connected with the acquisition of land by the military authorities, intervened; and the hearing was only resumed on Thursday. The final speech was made on Friday afternoon. Apart from other considerations, this involved the spending of four days in the Law Courts—about the last place in the world that a person of sense and sensibility would select for a sojourn of so lengthy a duration. Most of the judges are naturally—perhaps properly—staidly gentlemen; but as I sat listening to the counsel in this and other cases, I felt that their lot was not an enviable one. It seemed such a depressing ending to one's life. Still, they have all practiced at the bar in their time; so that this is, perhaps, nature's method of punishing the judges for having inflicted the same kind of speeches on those other judges in their younger days.

The counsel engaged in the case were the same as on the previous occasion—Mr. Cave and Mr. J. A. Macnaghten in support of the Appeal, and Mr. Tomlin and Mr. M. M. Macnaghten for the Secular Society, Limited. Mr. Cave, in opening his case, naturally followed the line of argument pursued by him before Mr. Justice Joyce. Although his argument occupied nearly three hours, and was supported by an elaborate display of authorities, his case rested on two points that admit of very brief statement. First, the Secular Society, Limited, was an illegal association inasmuch as it purposed or covered an attack on religion. That, he held, was an illegal purpose, and one contrary to public policy. Second, if not

illegal in a positive sense—that is, in the sense of entailing punishment—it was illegal inasmuch as the law would not encourage such a purpose by assisting the enforcement of any contract in its favor. Mr. Cave laid the greatest stress upon this, probably feeling that, in view of the uniform decision of the judges since the Coleridge judgment, his first point was a very doubtful one. Practically he was asking the Court to declare Freethinkers, as such, outlaws. The law would not punish them, but it would not give them the same protection and assistance that it gave to other members of the community.

In the hearing before Mr. Justice Joyce the Society's counsel, Mr. Tomlin, was not called upon to reply. One naturally, therefore, awaited his reply with some little curiosity. A very few minutes sufficed to show that the Secular Society's case was in good hands. Mr. Tomlin's opening note was, in my opinion, an admirable one. He asked the Court, at all events for a time, to put on one side all thoughts of the ecclesiastical judgments and mediæval precedents cited by Mr. Cave, and look at the matter from a modern point of view. As he reminded Mr. Cave later, we were living in the twentieth century, not the fourteenth, and it was impossible to deal with such a case as the present one from the point of view taken up by Mr. Cave. Mr. Tomlin did not evade or ignore any of the issues raised by Mr. Cave. In turn he dealt with them all, but he placed them in their proper perspective, and in dealing with some of them he employed just that lightness of touch which they appeared to demand, and with a sufficient dash of humor that brought even the law into the confines of the palpably human. Mr. Tomlin's speech lasted about two and a half hours, and appeared to me quite conclusive.

Mr. Tomlin took Mr. Cave's first point last, but I prefer to reverse the order in describing the proceedings. Mr. Cave had based his argument of the Society's positive illegality on the strength of numerous cases—supported by citations from the Ecclesiastical Courts—dating from pre-Coleridge days. Many judges had declared that any attack on the principles of religion, seeing that religion was established by law, was illegal. Mr. Tomlin in reply argued that whatever the law may have been, the law now was as laid down by Lord Coleridge. But quite as deadly a reply to Mr. Cave was the taking of many of the cases cited and proving that the essence of the Coleridge judgment—namely, that the law would not punish a discussion of the principles of Christianity, provided it were done decorously—was an opinion towards which a number of earlier judges had inclined, some had openly expressed that opinion, and that Lord Coleridge's judgment was the summing up, a more authoritative and a more complete exposition of a long-standing tendency in English Common Law. This seemed a complete and effective reply to Mr. Cave's attempt to discount the value of the judgment of the late Lord Chief Justice on the occasion of the trial of the editor of this journal.

With regard to the second point, Mr. Tomlin took his stand upon the fact that the Secular Society,



Limited, was a properly and legally constituted body, with its purposes plainly set forth in a Memorandum of Association. He read nearly the whole of the articles, pointing out that not one could be considered illegal in either the wider or narrower sense of the term. And even if it were held that the Society was formed for an illegal purpose, while this might be a ground for winding up the Company, it could be no ground for withholding a gift. But in the main, he put forward the view expressed by Mr. Justice Joyce, that even though the Society expended its money on purposes which a court might consider illegal, that might be good ground for punishing the Society or the Directors for that particular offence, but it gave no ground whatever for withholding from a legal entity the right to secure and hold property. Moreover, money given to the Society was not given for any express purpose (Mr. Tomlin meant was not given to be expended on any one of the objects mentioned in the Memorandum of Association) and, therefore, if some of the objects of the Society were declared illegal, there was here no ground for withholding the gift; while the Society might wind up to-morrow and the whole of its funds pass into the hands of a perfectly unobjectionable legal charity. In brief, said Mr. Tomlin, a gift to the Society is on all fours with a gift to Mr. Foote—with the difference that in the latter case there is no legal guarantee of expenditure. Either Mr. Foote or the Incorporated Society may become punishable at law for their expenditure of a gift, but a gift cannot be withheld from either on that ground.

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This is as far as I feel justified in going for the present; but our friends will be enabled to judge for themselves what is the present position of the case. Other aspects of the trial must perforce wait until judgment is delivered. So far as I am concerned, I see no reason for withholding the fact that I await that judgment with all confidence. It would, of course, be easy to refrain from expressing any opinion, and then when the result is known to say, with an air of supreme wisdom, "I knew it!" And the law is proverbially uncertain. Still, I feel that the Secular Society will emerge triumphant. It never aimed, as some people have imagined it did aim, at evading the law. It only sought to comply with the law, but with the law as laid down in a more humane age and by more enlightened judges. Other people and other societies were driven by force of circumstances to defy or to evade the law. It is to the credit of Mr. Foote that he saw how some of the obstacles to the free discussion of opinion might be removed by exact compliance with the law. There still remain laws bearing upon the public discussion of opinion, and the removal of some of these is one of the purposes of the Secular Society, Limited. But this cannot by any means be construed as an illegal object. It would, indeed, as Mr. Tomlin said in one of his telling sentences, "be an extraordinary state of things if it was legal to try and get Parliament to alter the law, but illegal to try and get one's neighbor to alter his opinion." I have every confidence that Mr. Tomlin's will be the view taken by the Court of Appeal.

C. COHEN.

### Religious Revival and the War.

THE *Christian Commonwealth* is the organ of what used to be called the New Theology, which as a distinct, active movement, is no more. Possibly it would be more accurate to say that the New Theology has only ceased to be a controversial factor in the life of the Church. The views for which it stood are still being held and taught by a larger number of people than ever, but because the statement of them is much less aggressive and magisterial than it used to be at first, they no longer occasion any disturbance or alarm. The *Christian Commonwealth* itself is not the combative journal that it was six or seven

years ago. Traces of the old fighting spirit, however, are still discernible in its columns, particularly in its attitude to the Church. Three articles have just appeared in three successive issues, entitled, respectively, "The Church Before the War," "The Church During the War," and "The Church After the War." Let it be clearly understood that by the Church our contemporary means the organised repository of the so-called orthodox creeds, and that in such she is usually treated with but scant respect. Consequently, we are not surprised to read that "before the War the Church was in a precarious position"; that "she was approaching rapidly to that critical point beyond which any recovery would have been impossible"; that "criticism had undermined some of her treasured doctrines, and was directing a formidable attack upon the historicity of the personality of Jesus"; and that "in no country, with the possible exception of Russia, did the Churches either hold or represent the voice of the people." Such an indictment was severe enough, in all conscience. Equally scathing is the condemnation of the attitude of the Church during the War. She has signally failed to emphasise the essential unity of the human race, and has dwelt almost exclusively upon the ethical aspects of the present crisis. Both in Germany and Great Britain her representatives, with equal confidence, exclaim, "We are in the right; you are in the wrong." "The fact is," the writer tells us, "that the Church, during the War, has become altogether subservient to the Government, the State, and one of its agents in the effective prosecution of the War."

Now, we are bound to acknowledge our agreement with the *Christian Commonwealth* in its assault upon the Church, though astonished that the assault should come from such a source. In our estimation, there can be no more damning evidence against the divinity of the Christian religion than the fact that the theologians of Germany and of Great Britain affirm, with the utmost unanimity and enthusiasm, that their respective countries are fighting for God and righteousness, for Christ and his kingdom, and that the champions of each denounce one another most violently in the name of their common Lord. Gazing into the future, the writer of the article under consideration sadly confesses that "the fate of the Church appears to be hanging in 'the balance.'" He comforts himself with the belief that "religion is not dependent on the Church"; but much of his own argument tends to show that without some organisation like the Church, religion would die. He vainly imagines that the War is bringing about a wonderful religious revival, the origin of which is outside the Church altogether. He describes a military officer who came home recently on a short leave. His experiences at the Front quickened his spiritual emotions, though previously he had not been a religious man. Now he and his wife pray daily for each other, and while he was home on holiday they both went to church; and these are the observations suggested to our writer by the event.

"The officiating clergyman expounded the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, and during the service the Athanasian Creed was recited. We base no argument on this instance of extremely bad luck, but is the Church going to rise to the opportunity in this fashion? Is she so hard-set in her institutionalism that jetting and reconstruction are altogether impossible? Must she be taken as she is, or left? Must the new awakened religious life be homeless, or find a home, or create a home for itself? Is it to be allowed to fall back into the deeps from which it came? Is there a Christian statesmanship equal to the occasion?"

Evidently if religion is to live on it must have a home, and if the old house is not adequate to modern requirements, it must build a new one. The writer of these articles draws without compunction upon his imagination. He expatiates upon the horrors of the War, he describes the whole of Europe as being "at the present moment in the throes of an emotional disturbance without precedent in its history," and he informs us that "thousands upon thousands are being stripped of their possessions."



...and that if they are not conscious of a spiritual overshadowing, they are absolutely unhomed in a shelterless wilderness." Here we have the real and the imaginary, the actual and the fanciful unscrupulously put in juxtaposition, and all treated as being like real and actual. We vehemently resent the assertion that those who are not "conscious of a spiritual overshadowing are absolutely unhomed in a shelterless wilderness." We can testify from personal experience that such is not the case. Thousands upon thousands of Atheists there are of whom it would be a wicked lie to say that they are absolutely homeless "in a shelterless wilderness." It is easy to declare that "soldiers home from the Front tell us how the men read the Bible and pray in the trenches—often adding, 'and not the sort of men you would expect to do that either'"; but it is quite as easy to refer to other soldiers home from the Front who have an entirely different tale to tell. Even at the Front, Christians, not a few, have lost their faith, because they found it impossible, face to face with such brutalities and on such a scale, to believe in a God of justice and love as the Ruler of the world. But this is what our writer says:—

"This awful occasion has already redeemed myriads of both men and women from an almost life-long habit of frivolity, superficiality, materialism, selfishness. It would be absurd to pretend that all this has no religious significance, and is not directly related to the spiritual life.....In different ways we are all facing the issues of life and death; and at such a time something rises in most men from depths beneath emotion, or reason, or imagination."

This is a religious improving of the War, of which an ordinarily honest man is incapable. Can you fancy something rising from depths beneath emotion, or reason, or imagination? We challenge anyone to tell us what "something" is which is neither emotion, reason, or imagination. We frankly confess our total ignorance of it, nor have we ever met anyone who could give it. If our writer's teaching were true, there would be no escape from the conclusion that God is being who does evil that good may come, and who sends thousands to be blown to pieces that a few may be saved to Bible-reading and praying—a being, in short, whose government of the world has been a stupendous failure.

A week or two ago at the Swanwick Summer School of Social Service Unions the question was asked, "Did Christianity permit war, or did it not?" The Rev. J. M. Lloyd Thomas, of Birmingham, returned an affirmative answer, and Principal J. W. Graham, of the same Master, and each flatly contradicted the other. This shows how false is the claim put forth by clergymen that they have and speak the mind of Christ. What they all alike express is their own responsibility for it on the shoulders of a purely imaginary personage. Mr. Lloyd Thomas maintained that those who joined the War offer their whole resources and gave all to help Christ's cause, and therefore did more to advance his kingdom than the pacifists could do. Principal Graham expressed the conviction that it is beyond the bounds of possibility to fight righteously, and that the theory of the lamb against the wolf had never worked. The curious thing is that Mr. Thomas held that both answers were needed. To our mind, the discussion was worse than needless, because it meant playing with a momentous problem, which Christians cannot tackle rationally. If Christianity permits war, it follows that war is in harmony with God's will. If God wills it he has certainly some purpose to serve thereby. Some say that he is punishing us for national sins, and that the object of the punishment is to release us from their dominion. In other words, the Divine intention behind the War is the enthronement of Christ in the hearts of men and women. Granting that such is the case, the question arises, What about the millions put to death? Where do these come in? Probably not one in ten of them were saved men, and if the New Testament is to be relied upon, all the unsaved will burn for ever and

for ever in hell-fire. Did God punish them for their unbelief by cutting them off in the flower and prime of life? If so, they are doubly punished; first, by being suddenly deprived of the life of probation given them on purpose that they might believe and inherit life everlasting; and second, by being prematurely thrown into hell before their natural chance of salvation had been exhausted. Thus, from whatever point you may consider it, God's connection with the War positively dishonors him, and makes it flatly impossible rationally to believe in his goodness; and, naturally, whatever casts a cloud upon the Divine character inevitably injures the cause of religion. When, therefore, the writer of the articles in the *Christian Commonwealth* avers that the War is bringing people back to religion, he is at once guilty of insulting the intelligence and the moral sense of those people, and of discrediting God in the eyes of all whose thinking powers have not been hypnotised by the pulpit.

J. T. LLOYD.

### The Sleep of Death.

"Death, not armed with any dart,  
But crowned with poppies."

—JULIAN FANE.

"And the worst that we dread is, after a short, fretful, feverish being, after vain hopes and idle fears, to sink to final repose, and forget the troubled dream of life."

—WILLIAM HAZLITT.

SHAKESPEARE, the supreme genius of literature, has told us that "our little life is rounded with a sleep." The materialistic similitude of death to sleep is a thought which appears to have possessed a peculiar fascination for great writers, ancient and modern, but more particularly for Shakespeare, whom it always prompts to utterances of unusual sublimity. With this lofty thought is mingled a touch of simple pathos that strikes home to every heart, as, for example, in the saying, "Tired we sleep, and life's poor play is o'er."

Sleep! All that the human fancy can conceive of refreshing and delightful things is comprised in that gentle word. Poets in all ages and in all countries have sung its praises; but of all tributes uttered on this theme, the most striking, probably, is that which Cervantes puts in the mouth of Sancho Panza: "Sleep! It covers a man all over, thoughts and all, like a cloak. It is meat for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, heat for the cold, and cold for the hot."

Priests, on the other hand, have ever sought advantage from the fact that man is mortal. They have taught men that death was the most dreadful evil. All the terrors that theology could gather from savage nations were added to increase the horrors, and they invariably tried to paralyse reason with the clutch of fear.

The advent of Christianity deepened this terror. Never has death been the cause of such craven timidity as in the Christian world. To visionaries like Catherine of Siena or Emanuel Swedenborg it may have been different, but to the masses death has been, and is, the king of terrors, from whose approach they cower in an agony which Marcus Aurelius and Socrates would have scorned. These great Pagans invested death with dignity, but Christians fear death as children fear the dark. St. Paul tells us, since by man came death, the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death; but Marcus Aurelius bids us regard death as a friend:—

"What is it to die? If we view it by itself, and stripped of those imaginary terrors in which our fears have dressed it, we shall find it to be nothing more than the mere work of Nature; but it is a childish folly to be afraid of what is natural. Nay, it is not only the work of Nature, but is conducive to the good of the universe, which subsists by change."

Lucretius, the greatest Roman poet, writing, be it remembered, twenty centuries ago, tells us that death is dreamless rest:—

"Thou not again shall see thy dear home's door,  
Nor thy dear wife and children come to throw



Their arms round thee, and ask for kisses more,  
And through thy heart make quiet comfort go.  
Out of thy hands hath slipped the precious store.  
Thou hoardest for thine own, men say, and lo!  
All thou desired is gone. But never say  
All the desire as well hath passed away."

Omar Khayyam, the most splendid singer whose lyre sounded under the Mohammedan crescent, was as emphatic:—

"Oh, threats of hell and hopes of paradise!  
One thing at least is certain—This life flies;  
One thing is certain, and the rest is lies,  
The flower that once has blown for ever dies."

Most of the great poets have been Freethinkers, and it is gratifying to turn for a few moments from the paltry paradises and horrible hells of the priests to the sublime ideas of the poets. Shelley, in the opening lines of his *Queen Mab*, sings of death and sleep being brothers. Most of all, this great poet looks on death with longing and audacity in his immortal dirge, *Adonais*. Matthew Arnold introduces pure Secularism into his language concerning death. In his monody on Arthur Hugh Clough he tells us:—

"Bear it from thy loved, sweet Arno Vale,  
For there thine earth-forgetting eyelids keep  
Their morningless and unawakening sleep  
Under the flowery oleanders pale."

This feeling assumes at times tones of irony, as in his fine lines on the death of a favorite dog, entitled *Geist's Grave*:—

"Stern law of every mortal lot,  
Which man, proud man, finds hard to bear,  
And builds himself I know not what  
Of second life I know not where.  
But thou, when struck thine hour to go,  
On us, who stood, despondent by,  
A meek last glance of love did throw,  
And humbly lay thee down to die.  
Thy memory lasts both here and there,  
And thou shalt love as long as we.  
And after that thou dost not care!  
In us was all the world to thee."

Byron did not believe in immortality. How finely he apostrophised the longing for a future life:—

"Still wilt thou dream on future joy and woe,  
Regard and weigh yon dust before it flies.  
That little word saith more than thousand homilies."

In his letters, Byron noticed the deep-rooted Secularism in people which is for ever bubbling up and asserting itself in the most unexpected places. He mentions two touching epitaphs which he saw at Ferrara: "Martini Luigi implora pace," and "Lucrezia Picini implora eterna quiete." Small wonder they struck a responsive chord in the heart of the English Catullus.

Swinburne, who wore the imperial mantle of the great poets, has quite a materialistic view of death. In his superb *Ave Atque Vale*, in memory of Charles Baudelaire, he strikes the keynote:—

"Thou art too far for wings of words to follow,  
Far, too far, for thought or any prayer;  
What ails us with thee, who art wind and air?  
What ails us gazing where all seen is hollow?  
Yet with some fancy, yet with some desire,  
Dreams pursue death as winds a flying fire;  
Our dreams pursue our dead, and do not find.  
Still and more swift than they, the thin flame flies,  
The low light falls us in elusive skies;  
Still the foiled, earnest ear is deaf, and blind  
Are still the clouded eyes."

And again in the same splendid poem:—

"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."

It is of Prospero's metaphor of this sleep-rounded life of ours that Andrew Lang sings in his poem on *Omar Khayyam*:—

"So still were we before the months began  
That rounded us and shaped us into man.  
So still we shall be, surely, at the last,  
Dreamless, untouched of blessing or of ban."

George Meredith was contented with an earthly paradise, and he asks us with a fine touch of Stoicism:—

"Into the breast that gives the rose  
Shall I with shuddering fall?"

But no poet peers with such audacity as Walt Whitman into the "superb vistas of death." He

has treated this eternal theme of death with power and significance. The awful dreams that priests say may come in that sleep of death have no terror for this tan-faced poet of the West. The dead are made one with Nature, and death is presented as a friend, is "lovely and soothing," is always "gliding near with soft feet," and the body, weary with life, turns, like a tired child, and nestles close in the bosom of the eternal mother.

Great minds jump together, and the prose writers are not far behind the poets. William Hazlitt, in his essay on *The Fear of Death*, tells us that to die is only to be as we were before we were born, yet no one feels any repugnance in the last idea:—

"It seems to have been holiday-time with us then. We were not called to appear on the stage of life to wear robes and tatters, to laugh or cry, be lauded or applauded. We had lain snug, out of harm's way, and had slept out our thousands of centuries without wanting to be waked up; at peace and free from care in a long nonage, in a sleep deeper and calmer than that of infancy, wrapped in the softest and finest dust."

Thomas De Quincey, in treating of this subject, reaches the same splendor of imagination. What is life? he asks, and answers: Darkness and formless vacancy for a beginning, then a dim lotus of human consciousness afloat upon the waters, then a few smiles and tears, a little love and infinite strife, dust and ashes, and once more darkness circling round, making an island of our fantastic existence.

"Rounded with a sleep!" "These words created whole volumes in me," said Jean Paul Richter, acknowledging the power of the master mind of Shakespeare. Is it not a superb tribute, remembering that the highest minds have ever been fortified by the same thought? Freethought everywhere destroys the terror of death. For thousands of years priests have chanted the old, sad refrain of death as an enemy, but the Freethinker listens to far other strains. The contemplation of death as a deliverer, dis severed from terrors of the imagination, comforts him. Living without hypocrisy, he dies without fear:—

"Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

MIMNERMUS.

## Science and the Bible.—VIII.

(Concluded from p. 460.)

"Nothing in geology bears the smallest resemblance to any part of the Mosaic cosmogony, torture the interpretation to whatever extent we may."—REV. PROFESSOR BADEN POWELL, *Christianity Without Judaism*, p. 257.

"If we are to listen to many expositors of no authority, we must believe that what seems so clearly defined in Genesis—as if very great pains had been taken that there should be no possibility of mistake—is not the meaning of the text at all. The account is divided into periods that may make just as long or as short as convenience requires. We are also to understand that it is consistent with the original text to believe that the most complex plants and animals may have been evolved by natural processes lasting for millions of years, out of structureless rudiments of a person who is not a Hebrew scholar can only stand amazed and admire the marvellous flexibility of a language which admits of such diverse interpretations."—PROFESSOR T. H. BROWN, *Science and Hebrew Tradition* (1901), p. 64.

IN the following number of the *Nineteenth Century* Mr. Gladstone replied to Huxley, and, by further manipulation of the first chapters of Genesis, again attempted to bring them into agreement with the facts of science. Mr. Gladstone, as Professor White remarks, possessed "great skill in phrase-making and great shrewdness in adapting the meanings of single words to conflicting necessities in discussion, was wonderful power in erecting showy structures of argument upon the smallest basis of fact, and a faculty almost preternatural in 'explaining away' troublesome realities." His argument "was abundant and decorated with the rhetoric in which Mr. Gladstone is so skilled an artificer, and it towered above the average man" as a structure beautiful and invulnerable—like some Chinese fortress in the nineteenth century.



century, faced with porcelain and defended by cross-words." No man was more expert than Gladstone in the use of ambiguous words and phrases—which, indeed, are the stock-in-trade of the professional politician. But this quality, however valuable an asset in the political world, is absolutely valueless in the discussion of scientific questions, where its use only invites ridicule and contempt. As Professor Huxley remarked, in a later discussion with Mr. Gladstone,—

"when some chieftain, famous in political warfare, adventures into the region of letters or of science, in full confidence that the methods which have brought fame and honor in his own province will answer there, he is apt to forget that he will be judged by these people, on whom rhetorical artifices have long ceased to take effect, and to whom mere dexterity in putting together cleverly ambiguous phrases, and even the great art of offensive misrepresentation, are unspeakably wearisome. And, if that weariness finds its expression in sarcasm, the offender really has no right to cry out. Assuredly, ridicule is no test of truth, but it is the righteous meed of some kinds of error."†

In reply to Mr. Gladstone's further defence of Genesis, Professor Huxley observes:—

"I must honestly confess that notwithstanding long and painful strivings after clear insight, I am still uncertain whether Mr. Gladstone's 'Defence' means that the great 'plea for a revelation from God' is to be left to perish in the dialectic desert, or whether it is to be withdrawn under the protection of such skirmishers as are available for covering retreat."‡

Socrates is reported to have said of the works of Heraclitus that what he could understand was so good that he was disposed to believe in the excellence of that which he found unintelligible. On the contrary, says Huxley, in reading Mr. Gladstone's defence, "That which I do understand has appeared to me very much the reverse of good, that I have sometimes permitted myself to doubt the value of that which I do not understand." And as for Mr. Gladstone's disquisition upon the method and aim of the writer of Genesis, says Huxley, ironically, "I desire to cast no doubt upon, but, on the contrary, marvel at the exactness of Mr. Gladstone's information as to the considerations which 'affected the method of the Mosaic writer.'"

Of Mr. Gladstone's attempt to explain away the fact that reptiles existed, according to the geological record, long before birds, whereas the writer of Genesis places them after, Professor Huxley remarks,

"nor do I venture to doubt that the inconvenient intrusion of these contemptible reptiles.....into an apologetic argument, which otherwise would run quite smoothly, is in every way to be deprecated. Still, the wretched creatures stand there, importunately demanding notice; and, however different may be the practice in that contentious atmosphere with which Mr. Gladstone expresses and laments his familiarity, in the atmosphere of science it really is of no avail whatever to shut one's eyes to facts, or to try to bury them out of sight under a tumulus of rhetoric."

Of Mr. Gladstone's rearrangement of the order of creation, Professor Huxley remarks: "On the whole, it is seen to be rather more inconsistent with Genesis than its fourfold predecessor." And he further observes:—

"If I supposed the 'Mosaic writer' to be inspired, as Mr. Gladstone does, it would not be consistent with my notions of respect for the Supreme Being to imagine Him unable to frame a form of words which should accurately, or, at least, not inaccurately, express His own meaning. It is sometimes said that, had the statements contained in the first chapter of Genesis been scientifically true, they would have been unintelligible to ignorant people; but how is the matter mended if, being scientifically untrue, they must needs be rejected by instructed people?"

Dealing with the opening words of Genesis, "In

the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," he remarks:—

"Some say that the Hebrew word *bara*, which is translated 'create,' means 'made out of nothing.' I venture to object to that rendering, not on the ground of scholarship, but of common sense. Omnipotence itself can surely no more make something out of nothing than it can make a triangular circle."

Of the statement, "And the earth was waste ["without form" in the Authorised version] and void," which most people seem to think implies that the matter of which the world was to be formed was a veritable "chaos," devoid of law and order, he observes:—

"If this interpretation is correct, the nebular hypothesis can have nothing to say to it. The scientific thinker cannot admit the absence of law and order, anywhere or anywhen, in nature. Sometimes law and order are patent and visible to our limited vision; sometimes they are hidden. But every particle of the matter of the most fantastic-looking nebula in the heavens is a realm of law and order in itself; and, that it is so, is the essential condition of the possibility of solar and planetary evolution from the apparent chaos.

"'Waste' is too vague a term to be worth consideration. 'Without form,' intelligible enough as a metaphor, if taken literally is absurd; for a material thing existing in space must have a superficies, and if it has a superficies it has a form. The wildest streaks of mare's tail clouds in the sky, or the most irregular heavenly nebulae, have surely just as much form as a geometrical tetrahedron; and as for 'void,' how can that be void which is full of matter? As poetry, these lines are vivid and admirable; as a scientific statement, which they must be taken to be if anyone is justified in comparing them with another scientific statement, they fail to convey any intelligible conception to my mind.

"The account proceeds: 'And darkness was upon the face of the deep.' So be it; but where, then, is the likeness of the celestial nebulae, of the existence of which we should know nothing unless they shone with a light of their own? 'And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.' I have met with no form of the nebular hypothesis which involves anything analogous to this process."\*

The Professor concludes: "Until some further enlightenment comes to me, then, I confess myself wholly unable to understand the way in which the nebular hypothesis is to be converted into an ally of the 'Mosaic writer.'"

Thus did Professor Huxley, once for all, show the impossibility of reconciling the Bible with Science. As Mr. Benn observes:—

"Not merely in good temper, not merely in powers of sarcasm, not merely in literary skill, but also in erudition and logic, he proved himself Gladstone's master, and inflicted such punishment on the Old Parliamentary Hand as in the course of a long and varied experience had never befallen him from either side of the House of Commons."†

That eminently pious Christian, Professor Henry Drummond, in the article "Creation" in the popular *Chambers' Encyclopædia*, dealing with these attempted reconciliations of the Bible and Science, observes:—

"An attempt by Mr. Gladstone, so recently as 1885, elicited a reply from Mr. Huxley, who, in the name of modern science, not only repudiated the immediate theory but made it obvious that no reconstruction along that line was ever likely to square with acknowledged facts of science.....on the general question of gradual development *versus* specific creation, the consensus of mature scientific opinion is now so pronounced that anyone still clinging to the latter would find it impossible to impress his views upon his age."

Even that pillar of religion, Sir Oliver Lodge, contemptuously dismisses the story in Genesis. He says:—

"In the dawn of civilization God 'walked in the garden in the cool of the day.' Down to, say, the middle of the nineteenth century He brought things into existence by a creative *Fiat*, and looked on His work for a time with approbation; only to step down and destroy a good deal of it before many years had elapsed, and then to patch it up and try to mend it from

\* T. H. Huxley, *Science and Hebrew Tradition*, pp. 188-9.

† A. W. Benn, *History of English Rationalism*, vol. ii., p. 455.

White, *The Warfare of Science*, vol. i., p. 244.  
T. H. Huxley, *Science and Christian Tradition* (1902), pp. 111-12.  
T. H. Huxley, *Science and Hebrew Tradition* (1901), p. 167.



time to time. All very human, the endless rumble of the machinery is distressing."\*

So far from regarding the account as a beautiful poem, as some pretend to do, Sir Oliver only finds it "distressing."

The late Sir William Dawson was one of the last of the old school of geologists to attempt to reconcile the Bible with Science; and we had the novel spectacle of a defender of the science of the Bible being attacked by a Canon of the Church of England. For Canon Driver, the eminent Professor of Hebrew, dealing with Sir William Dawson's attempt to reconcile Genesis with Science, observes: "The two series are evidently at variance. The geological record contains no evidence of clearly defined periods corresponding to the 'days' of Genesis." Of the Mosaic account of the existence of vegetation before the creation of the sun, Canon Driver said: "No reconciliation of this representation with the data of science has yet been found." And again: "From all that has been said, however reluctant we may be to make the admission, only one conclusion seems possible. Read without prejudice or bias, the narrative of Genesis i. creates an impression at variance with the facts revealed by science." The eminent Professor ends by saying that the efforts at reconciliation are "different modes of obliterating the characteristic features of Genesis, and of reading into it a view which it does not express."†

On another occasion, when reviewing Sir J. W. Dawson's book, *Modern Science in Bible Lands*, Canon Driver observes:—

"His first chapter is an attempt, by the use of violent means, to force the cosmogony of Genesis into harmony with the teachings of modern science. The word *deshe*, translated 'grass' in Gen. i., should be rendered, he tells us, cryptogams (*i.e.*, flowerless plants—ferns, seaweeds, mosses, lichens, fungi). A reference to other passages where the same word occurs will show how impossible this rendering is. *Psa. xxiii. 2*: 'He maketh me to lie down in pastures of cryptogams.'"

And Canon Driver concludes:—

"The endeavor to reconcile the narratives of Genesis with each other and with science is prompted by laudable motives; but if it does not succeed by the use of legitimate methods, it must be abandoned; and unlearned readers should not be told that Hebrew words mean what they do not mean."‡

Many other eminent Church dignitaries can now be cited on the same side. Canon Cheyne, Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture at Oxford, in the article on "Creation" in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, finds "The basis of the story mythical." "It is out of the mould of primæval folklore that the great creation-myth has drawn its life" (vol. i., pp. 941-946).

Bishop Ryle, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, declares, "No attempt at reconciling Genesis with the exacting requirements of modern science has ever been known to succeed without entailing a degree of special pleading or forced interpretation to which, in such a question, we should be wise to have no recourse"§

The late Dean Farrar—the author of that soppy, but popular, *Life of Christ*—in an article "From the Creation to the Dawn of Human History," contributed to *The People's Bible History*, says of the first chapters of Genesis, "They are not, and were never meant to be, taken in all their details for accurate science or for literal history"; and, again, "The faintest semblance of harmony," he says, "between Genesis and physical science can only be obtained by a licentious artificiality and casuistry of exegetic invention."||

One of the latest pronouncements on the subject is by Professor Bonney—who is a Professor of Geology and a Canon of the Church of England—in his book, *The Present Relations of Science and Religion* (1913), dealing with the Deluge and the story of the Lord

forming man from the dust of the ground, speaks of them as "crude ideas," and observes:—

"We must frankly admit that at the present day no geologist of any repute would accept the narrative of the Deluge or that of Creation as actual and literal history. Records of both of these are to be found on the clay tablets which once formed part of an Assyrian library, and they may be traced back from the later days of that monarchy to the times when the Semitic had hardly begun to blend with the Sumerian race" (pp. 34-120).

It is not necessary to add more. If the verdict of Hebrew scholars and geologists who are in the Church will not convince the believer of the unscientific and untrustworthy character of the Bible, it is not likely that anything else will. He is like the old lady who declared that if the Bible had said that Jonah had swallowed the whale, she would have believed it.

W. MANX.

### Cartooning and Cant.

"AND still it moves," said the old revolutionist, Galileo, the astronomer, when forced to eat his own words; and still it moves seemed the only fitting thing to say when, by accident, coming across No. 1 of a new Review, I was suddenly reminded of some pages in the very early numbers of the *Freethinker*, and turned to my shelves to re-study them in a bound volume of *The Comic Bible*, by Leo Taxil.

*Hole's Review* is one of the very latest—and poorest—of attempts to exploit the War. It is founded and edited by a person who makes great claims to be heard on world politics, his greatest point apparently being that he once served under "the greatest journalist, and one of the greatest men of the past century."

Many good judges might demur to this valuation of Mr. W. T. Stead, though having a high regard for him; but the greatest—well, that's quite another story.

Our new teacher has other claims besides worship of W. T. S. He has been tailor's errand-boy and foreign correspondent, brass filer and insurance canvasser, sawyer and advertising agent, soldier and journalist, and various other things, but above everything, he has always "regarded language as a means, not an end." So now he is able to search the Press of Europe and give to us the thoughts, aspirations, and actions of the European peoples.

"The main object of the pages of the *Review*" will be to "interpret Europe to Britain," but "it is impossible to outline any policy.....for the simple reason that I am quite unaware of it myself."

"Call him only wise," said Helvetius "who has a clear 'Why' and 'How'—which might be a hard row to judge some by. Says our new teacher of Mr. Stead, "He was great because he was sincere—he was sincere because he was great"; and our latest epigram-maker forthwith lays the foundation of his future greatness by claiming at least one of the necessary attributes. "We are all sincere"—"We" being the "most enthusiastic staff it has ever been the lot of mortal to gather round him." "In the name of the Prophet—Figs!"

And now the reason for saying "and still it moves." At the end of the introductory address which is entitled "Progress and Regress," we have the following choice sentence:—

"In conclusion, I would like to say that while this will not be a 'high-brow' paper, it will most emphatically not be a 'low-brow' paper, and coarseness and vulgarity will never feature between these covers. It occasionally, a foreign cartoon seems to 'skirt the limit' it will be simply because its insertion is necessary to emphasise the idea which was in the mind of the cartoonist, and such idea will have to be very important to justify its insertion."

If this plea be valid it is a very marked proof of movement, if not progress. One must have a very inflated idea of the value of what this *Review* calls "Historiculture," to find a shred of amusement, in

\* Sir Oliver Lodge, *Man and the Universe*, p. 31.

† White, *The Warfare of Science*, vol. i., p. 246.

‡ *Contemporary Review*, March, 1889.

§ White, *Warfare of Science*, vol. i., p. 19.

|| See Review in *Review of Reviews*, June 5, 1896, p. 557.







The time has now fully come when even the British pulpit cannot deny that the Germans are, in their way, quite as religious as ourselves. Their faith in God knows no bounds; but Professor Thompson maintains that the real value of faith lies, not in its truth, not in the God behind it, but simply in the intensity with which it is held. Faith in the Devil would be as entirely useful as faith in God. The prayer for victory, however earnest and believing, will never be answered by any act of God; and if it does any good at all, it will do it by virtue of the faith behind it, not by any active interference of the being to whom it is addressed. Such is Professor Thompson's teaching in the following extract:—

"So long as the Germans believe that they are on God's side, and that they are defending their country against a league of zealous and unscrupulous rivals, this faith will do for them as much as the consciousness of truth and right will do for the Allies. It is not the rightness or wrongness of a belief which makes it successful, but its power of appealing to us."

With what violence the wrath of the orthodox divines will burn against this honest but dangerous traitor in the Christian camp.

Although war is favorable to religion, as the clergy are always telling us, military men do not trouble much about any forms of faith other than the Government brand. The Rev. T. N. Tattersall, a Baptist Army-chaplain, interviewed by the *Daily Chronicle* (London), said, "I was the only Nonconformist chaplain to 25,000 men."

The *Sketch* had a good joke recently, none the worse for being profane. It was entitled "Fatted Calf; War Price," and ran as follows:—"The Son: 'Farver, your prodigal son's come 'ome.' His Father: 'Oh, 'as 'e! Then he can go back until veal's less than two-and-six a pound!'"

A great undiscovered continent near the North Pole, referred to by many American papers, turns out to be a myth. We are glad there is one country where Christians cannot cut each others' throats.

There is a note of hysteria in some of the war-messages in the newspapers. A recent communication informed readers that a Russian general "received ten thousand bombs on his front." This is nearly as touching as the report of the battle of Santiago, published by an American paper, in which it was stated: "Admiral Sampson had a very narrow escape. He was hit on the head by a six-inch shell, which bounded off." The broad-chested Russian and the hard-headed Yankee are as wonderful as some of the Bible characters.

The Chairman of the Executive Committee for Agriculture (Cornwall County Council) writes to the press complaining that much hay has been spoilt that might have been saved by Sunday labor. They seem very staunch Sabbatarians in Cornwall, since the Chairman writes of the men reluctantly standing idle on Sundays, watching the destruction of the crops. He says it is clearly "not a question for laymen to decide whether Sunday harvesting should be practised; that is a question for the Church." We prefer to say it is for the common sense of those outside the Church. In many parts of England we fancy that the question has already been settled—and in the right way. The sooner the farmers of Cornwall shake off the fear of Church and Chapel, and rescue their crops from destruction, the better.

The clergy are up in arms against Sunday harvesting. These Christian gentlemen have not protested against the armies fighting on Sundays.

Canon Rawnsley thanks God that these latter days, these times of savage war, have come, and declares that the young men who have gone to the Front are treading in the footsteps of gentle Jesus, meek and mild. They have been baptised by the Holy Ghost and seen a heavenly vision, and by-and-bye they shall receive a crown of glory. To the majority of the soldiers this will be most startling news, and wholly incredible. Never was the pulpit "so sweetly mawkish and so smoothly dull" as it is just now.

It looks as if Billy Sunday will soon be talking to us all in choice American. The religious papers are full of puffs, one of which reads: "Billy Sunday. His life, evangelism, and message. 400,000 converts. The twentieth century Elijah. This book should be read by every Christian and intelligent person." We are glad the writer makes a distinction between Christians and intelligent persons.

The *Christian Endeavor Times* informs us that "Mr. Billy Sunday leaned over the pulpit, his soul in his eyes." We thought that the heroes of penny novelettes were the only men who kept their souls in such a place.

A correspondent sends us the following paragraph from the *Yorkshire Evening Post* of July 8:—

"With regard to the remarkable story which has been circulated, of how, during the retreat from Mons, British soldiers are said to have seen angels interposing between them and the advancing enemy, Mr. A. Blackburn, of 1 Ada-street, Keighley, writes:—

"I should esteem it a great favor indeed if any officer or soldier who saw this wonderful vision, will write to me or to the Rev. A. A. Boddy, All Saints' Vicarage, Sunderland, confirming the statement, as this vision surely could not have been invented."

We should not be at all surprised to learn that some people will send these gentlemen the "evidence" they require. But that will not remove the fact that the story began as a pure invention, and that the public were treated to manufactured evidence months afterwards.

While the Bishop of London, Dr. Horton, and many others declare that the War has been the means of incalculable good to multitudes of people who were previously indifferent to religion, and that a great religious revival is taking place everywhere, Canon Green, of Manchester, contradicts their assertion by confessing that "there is more danger to-day of fatal surrender of truths which are vital to the Catholic Faith than there has been at any time during the last three centuries." As a matter of fact, the Canon gives the direct to Dr. Horton's contention that present-day science is fundamentally in accord with the doctrines of grace. He is most distrustful of those men of science who seem to pose as allies of Christianity, affirming that they are more dangerous as alleged supporters than they were as positive antagonists. The fact is that the word of a parson cannot be accepted as truth. Men like Canon Peter Green form an exception to the rule, for which we should be duly grateful.

Dr. Horton says that the explanation of the fact of life must be sought in philosophy, not in science; but the reverend gentleman must be fully aware that philosophy has never yet succeeded in solving this problem. It is the science of biology alone that has the means of investigating the facts of life, and apart from such an investigation no intelligent explanation is possible. Dr. Horton may imagine that he knows and can explain what is yet insoluble to science, but to us his philosophy of life is a house built upon the sand, with which only the unthinking and credulous can feel the least satisfaction. The reverend gentleman is simply a *believer*, not a *knower*, and knowledge has already demolished thousands of beliefs.

At the Representative Church Council, the other day Lord Parmoor moved the following resolution:—

"That recent events emphasise the national duty of maintaining effective religious teaching in schools of all grades."

Presumably, "recent events" refer to the War; although how this can emphasise the need for religious teaching in the schools it is hard to say, and Lord Parmoor said nothing that would enlighten one on that point. Curiously enough the only nation engaged in this War that has Secular Education established in its schools is France. We wonder whether it is meant that France would have done better had it kept religion in the schools, or that France's disestablished religion was a cause of the War. Lord Parmoor hardly intend either of these things. And all the other countries, other than France, have religion in the schools more or less. It would seem as though Lord Parmoor had not reflected upon the resolution moved by him, and, being at a Church Congress, it was perhaps thought a legitimate occasion on which to make capital out of the present situation in the interest of religion.

"She has gone to heaven; thank God for that." So said George Marshall, of Walworth, after murdering a woman who kept house for him. Probably Marshall regards himself as an instrument of "Providence."

While singing in the choir at Holy Trinity Church, Wandsworth, one of the choristers died. As it was not a Freethought hall, there is no moral.

A necklet of oriental pearls was sold at the Warb Post sale for £5,000, and another rope of pearls fetched £1,000. This happens in a country where a pauper-god is worshipped.



To Correspondents.

PUBLISHER'S HONORARIUM FUND, 1915.—Received from March 15: Previously acknowledged, £102 11s. 7d. Received since:— T. Raff (Western Australia), £2 2s.; J. M. Murray, 10 francs (7s. 3d.); West Ham Branch N. S. S., 10s.; Constable, 5s. Per Miss Vance: R. S. Stirton and Friends, £1 3s.—The £1 acknowledged in our last issue from T. Griffiths should have been 10s.

E. O'BRIEN thinks that Freethinkers generally owe a deep debt of gratitude to the contributors to the *Freethinker* for their writing week after week in the way they do. The writers in question will appreciate the compliment paid them.

A. G. HARR.—Pleased to learn that after receiving a specimen copy of the *Freethinker*, you have decided to become a regular subscriber. We hope that many others will follow your example. If each of our readers made a resolution to secure one new subscriber during the next month, the financial anxieties connected with the paper would be nearly at an end.

K. HAMEL.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

J. DUNCAN.—We are not surprised that the editor of the *Daily Chronicle* refused to insert your letter on the Mons affair. Your letter is not at all a trouble. We are always pleased to hear from those who are interested in the work.

E. B.—Thanks; very useful.

Mrs MARGUERITE SANDERS desires to thank E. B. for so kindly transcribing Buchanan's poem in response to her inquiry.

H. R. WILSON.—There has never been any delay in the production of the *Freethinker*, and if it does not reach your public library at the proper time, the fault lies entirely outside this office. It should be there by the Thursday morning of each week. We will bear in mind your other suggestion, but articles dealing with the War—in its relation to Freethought, of course—are constantly appearing in these columns.

A. SMITH.—Too late for this week. Will find room for it in our next.

"CONSTABLE."—Cheque received, and apportioned as desired.

Letters for the Editor of the *Freethinker* should be addressed to 61 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

Letters NOTIONS must reach 61 Farringdon-street, London, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

Books for literature should be sent to the Shop Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon-street, London, E.C., and not to the Editor.

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

Sugar Plums.

Some Freethought Demonstrations in the London Parks are being arranged by the N. S. S. Executive. The first takes place to-day (July 25) at Finsbury Park, at 3 o'clock, at which the speakers will be Messrs. Rosetti, Davidson, and Miss Kough, and at a second one in the evening at Hyde Park, at 6 o'clock, Messrs. Rosetti, Saphin, and Gallagher will speak. Mr. Cohen addresses both meetings. Our old friend, Mr. Wilson, has kindly promised the use of a brake on the occasion, and we hope that all Freethinkers who can do so will make it a point to be present.

The New York *Truthseeker* announces Mr. Foote's recovery from a long and serious illness, and congratulates him on his return to "editing the *Freethinker* with force and dignity." This is a pleasing compliment, but not altogether true. Mr. Foote has been writing in the *Freethinker* for many weeks, but Mr. Cohen is still the responsible editor.

Personal.

WHEN I visited America, in October, 1896, I was astonished how the *Germanic* was boarded by reporters, and persons of any distinction asked all sorts of questions (with answers) for publication. They almost asked one what one thought of America before landing; but they went to work fairly and squarely, holding no partisan views themselves, or at least keeping them out of the interview. That was outside New York, and I found the same wherever I went. If they pitched into you in the editorial, they did you justice in the report. The English method is to deny you a hearing. You are shut out from publicity first, and denounced and misrepresented afterwards. You cannot reply to either form of criticism, for the public are not

allowed to hear what you have to say, and defence would be as useless as it is impossible.

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The English press, I say, simply blots you out by not reporting you. It recognises no duty to the world; it owes no obligation to truth or fairplay. You are to be hunted down by being smothered. It is an anticipation of German war-gas. The vital air of human society is denied you. You live and defend yourself as you can, and this is not a new thing. Partisanship ran strong hundreds of years ago when John Dryden could say that "every man is a rogue or a fool to the other side."

\* \* \*

The English press to-day will give hundreds of pages to reporting the case of a threecfold murderer who disposes of three brides by drowning them all in the same way in three different baths. Litigation over a pet dog or cat commands columns. So does a commonplace letter from the Front, and the same may be said of a vulgar divorce case, when the parties happen to belong to what is called Society. But let anything of real importance or value to the world ask to be introduced to the public, and the door is slammed in its face. Publicity, in fact, is given to the worthless, and denied to the worthy. That is why I was astonished at the reports in some of the London papers of the Bowman case, which was finished in the Court of Appeal on Friday afternoon. Surely, the world is turning round the other way.

\* \* \*

The fullest report of all appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, which was the case when Mr. Justice Joyce gave the verdict from which the present action is an Appeal. It would be dangerous to print a report in the *Freethinker* unless it were absolutely verbatim, and without comment; for while the trial is over, the judgment is not yet delivered, the judges having decided to deliver it in writing, probably by the end of July. It would never do, therefore, for me to express any opinion as to what their lordships will say, but I may state as a mere matter of fact that I am not very apprehensive as to the result. I am also free to express my view of some of the performers in this piece of litigation. Mr. Cave, K.C., heads the list. He worthily represents the fine, old, crusted bigotry of a hundred years ago. Indeed, one is tempted to believe that he flourished at that time, and was named Cave out of justice to his wearisomeness and obscurity. Mr. Tomlin, K.C., handled his brief well, as far as one can judge by the *Telegraph* report; but he was compelled by Mr. Cave's opening to argue a number of things which, while interesting enough in themselves (as, for instance, Positivism), had no vital relation to the specific points which it was his duty to maintain. It seems odd that the Secular Society should have to pay the bill for two or three hours' discussion on Positivism. What Mr. Tomlin had to discuss and defend was pointed out with great simplicity by Mr. Justice Joyce at the trial. It was all very well for people not very friendly to say nasty things about the Secular Society, Ltd, but what did it say for itself, and that was to be found wholly and solely in its Memorandum and Articles. Mr. Justice Joyce should have been an example in this respect. He said that no man of sense could find anything immoral, irreligious (in one sense of the word), or contrary to the existing law of England. That is what the Master of the Rolls, Mr. Justice Warrington, and Mr. Justice Pickford had to find whether it was true or not—and nothing else. In a way their task was narrower, because they have to find something that upsets Mr. Justice Joyce's verdict. In other words, they are trying the judge as well as the appellant—a contradiction in terms, but a reality in fact. So much, I believe, I am free to say; at any rate, I have said it. I might come across the Defence of the Realm Act if I said any more.

\* \* \*

I am speaking as plainly as I can afford to do now. I will speak more plainly when the case is over, and



judgment delivered—I hope in our favor. There are things that ought to be said, and I will say them. I know the Blasphemy Laws and their adjuncts better than any other man in England, and I have made a more serious and strenuous effort to demolish them than any other man in England. All I regret is that I am not in London and able to attend these legal sittings myself, but I have won nevertheless. The wheel has come full circle. One judge, and that the first, before whom the Secular Society, Limited, has had to render an account of itself, has given it a certificate of legal soundness.

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I looked in vain for any mention of my name in the reports of this Appeal against Mr. Justice Joyce's verdict in the Bowman case. All sorts and sizes of legal gentlemen had been mentioned as arguing opposite sides, with a hope that each would win, while I, the only person who really knew what the Society really was, and was really intended for—I, who brought it into existence, who upheld it in times of trouble, who protected it in hours of danger, who brought it triumphantly at last through a trial before a high judge in the Court of Chancery—I was not so much as alluded to. My very existence was unsuspected. I do not complain of this. Everybody knows that all laws were made for lawyers, and laymen never figure in the reports when they serve in any way as an advertisement. Not that I am anxious about an advertisement. I have been working without it all my life, so I have not contracted a taste for it, and do not feel prompted to complain desperately at my time of life. Still, fact is fact, and this kind of thing is so common, that Freethinkers themselves do not look upon it with the least astonishment. Considering who made the world, it is not so strange after all that its comicality should be so pronounced.

G. W. FOOTE.

### Studies in Supernaturalism.

AMONG men of science, the direct attack upon superstition has in large measure been transformed into a method of explanation. We witness the more respectable results of supernaturalism in the strongly established and cleverly garrisoned religious organisations of yesterday and to-day, and the causes which contributed to their evolution now form a very considerable percentage of the studies of anthropologists throughout the civilised world.

In his latest work,\* our eminent anthropologist, Sidney Hartland, complains that investigators so widely separated in standpoint as Sir James Frazer and the late Andrew Lang have attached insufficient importance to the influence exerted by human emotion in shaping theological beliefs. In a series of essays gathered into a slim volume, *The Threshold of Religion* (1909), and a year later in his inaugural address as Reader in Social Anthropology at Oxford, which he entitled the "Birth of Humility," Dr. R. R. Marett has set forth his theory that religion is mainly a social phenomenon, and that it is permeated with the magical concept. Other students of comparative religion have reached similar conclusions, and their contentions have evidently made a deep impression upon Sidney Hartland, whose *Ritual and Belief* contains, in addition to other interesting and informative essays, an extremely able and learned study of the relations of magic and religion.

In passing, one may perhaps be permitted to demur to Hartland's assertion that Dr. Marett was the first to recognise the powerful stimulus of emotion in the development of religious phenomena. Herbert Spencer and Sir Edward Tylor, to name no others, long ago emphasised the same truth. Possibly, with the rapid accumulation of later contributions to the constantly growing science of anthropology, the pioneer work of the Victorian giants is apt to be ignored or forgotten. Be that as it may, the new

volume of Mr. Hartland will be read with the keenest enjoyment by all of its readers who take any serious interest in the science of man. It is a book which deserves the study of all who are anxious to obtain further light on the rise and progress of religious customs and ideas.

Writing of the essays which compose his work their author says:—

"Their primary intention is not controversial. They rather seek to express some of the results of a study of the phenomena, from the point of view of one who has been convinced that the emotions and the imagination—and not merely the individual but the collective emotions and imagination—have at least as much to do with the generation of religious practices and beliefs as the reason, and that for the form they have assumed physical, social, and cultural influences must be held accountable."

In his opening essay, "Learning to 'Think Black,'" Hartland pays a well-earned tribute to the veteran Sir Edward Tylor, who, in his invaluable work, *Primitive Culture*, "laid the foundation of the modern study of the history of civilisation." It is to be noted that Tylor always insisted on the most critical scrutiny of the statements of travellers and missionaries, and the demand for accuracy which he urged upon others he has always been most careful to himself adopt. Missionaries and others have been sometimes misled by the answers given by savages to their not too tactful inquiries concerning native beliefs. There has also been too great a tendency to read into the religious notions of savages concepts that only arise in a higher culture. Again, there is the danger that the shrewd native will return just the kind of answer which is likely to gratify the inquisitive inquirer. When an average Christian missionary approaches the benighted savage in the full-blown consciousness of his own mental, moral, and religious superiority—he seldom troubles to disguise his half-amused contempt for the preposterous beliefs of his inferior superstitious savage mean no more lip-service, but a matter of life and death, are also supremely sacred, and not subjects for common conversation. It therefore need cause no astonishment to discover that various uncivilised and partly civilised races occasionally deliberately deceive their impertinent and patronising questioners. Various travelled anthropologists have learnt the truth of all this from personal experience. Among the Koreans, it was discovered that to ask questions was to invite reticence of the most disconcerting character. An able missionary who resided among them for a long period was driven to the conclusion that the Koreans were unconscious of their own customs.

Uncivilised peoples not only fail to comprehend the motives of the scientific inquirer; they resent the ridicule or reproof of their religious interrogators. Then there arises the suspicion that the meddling missionary may appeal to the authority exercised by the resident foreign magistrate. And there is also the quite natural feeling that obviously contrived questions are dictated by mere prying curiosity. A certain Mr. Batchelor, who lived for many years among the wild Ainu of Japan, at last considered himself qualified to write a book about them. After residing among them for a dozen years a very interesting work appeared from this missionary's pen; but after a further stay of twelve years, the author admitted that "when writing that book I must frankly confess that I had no idea, nor had I for many years after, that ophiolatry was practised at all by these people."

Yet, despite all such difficulties, a vast amount of reliable data has been accumulated by those who realise that it is imperative that they place themselves as far as possible in the position of the savage and steadfastly endeavor to survey the universe from the savage's standpoint. The man of science, as far as may be, deliberately divests himself of the prejudices and predilections born of a more advanced culture, and approaches the problem before him with

\* *Ritual and Belief* (Williams & Norgate), 1914.



an open mind, without attempting to magnify evidence for any particular theory, however dear to him, and in the full determination to sacrifice all preconceptions in the service of truth alone. This may seem a lofty ideal, but it is one that is persistently aimed at, and not infrequently reached, by many of that splendid group of conscientious and industrious workers who have already made "Taylor's science" one of the most valuable and important departments of human investigation.

In company with Della Seta, whose opinions we have already reviewed, Sidney Hartland holds that magic and religion arise from a common root, flourish side by side, and are ultimately to some extent separated into black and white magic. Hartland devotes the longest and most elaborate essay in his volume to "The Relations of Religion and Magic." The treatise consists of four parts: 1. The Common Root. 2. Theories and Definitions. 3. Development. 4. Divergence. The first three of these divisions deal in detail with the well-attested evidence which is to show that magic and religion have evolved from a single root. Hartland accepts nothing that is not entirely above suspicion; all the statements are taken from the most trustworthy sources, and have been subjected to the most critical treatment, and most of the inferences drawn are such as would command the assent of most men of trained intelligence.

It is extremely difficult to distinguish between magic and religion even in the higher cults, while the deeper we descend towards primitive superstition the more completely blended do these two aspects of the same phenomenon become. It is contended that religion represents those practices and beliefs which support social well-being, while magic, on the other hand, is essentially anti-social in character. And this opinion is expressed by those who acknowledge that both magic and religion sprang from a single source.

It seems very hard to define religion satisfactorily, and the definition which satisfies one is promptly rejected by another. As a matter of fact, every religious concept is colored by the social and cultural atmosphere in which he himself has lived. Salomon Reinach is as useful as any: "An assemblage of scruples which stand in the way of the free exercise of our faculties." Magic, however, is more positive in its methods. According to Hartland, the term magic implies the idea of power, no matter how slight, which the magician wields on his own account without the aid of the spiritual beings, whose assistance is only obtained by prayer and supplication.

Supplication, self-abasement, flattery, are the religious means of winning the help of divinities. Where the higher beings, whether called gods or devils, or by the more ambiguous title of spirits, are invoked by spell, will; the command is irresistible; and the procedure is magical. With reference to the claim that religion is superior to magic, inasmuch as it is social in its nature while the arts of a magician may be employed for the performer's own benefit, to the detriment of the community, a few comments may be made. Among savages, as among ourselves, magical formulæ are called into requisition for public as well as for personal reasons. The dividing line between magic and religion must, indeed, be thin when the one may be transformed into the other as circumstances vary. Hartland very oppositely says:—

But this very charge of being anti-social is brought by many dominant religions against their rivals. It was substantially the charge brought against the early Christians by the Pagans. It is to-day the charge translated by fanatical Russian Christians against the Jews. Here, in the west of Europe, it is, in a somewhat vaguer form, the reproach of orthodox Christians against Agnostics and all shades of Rationalists." Hartland presses his criticism of Durkheim's distinction between religion and magic in a further passage, which we cannot refrain from quoting.

Dealing with the religious crimes of the Holy Inquisition, he remarks:—

"They were, it is true, not performed by supernatural instrumentality, or for supernatural purposes... But they were carried out by persons consecrated to religion, as religious acts, surrounded by religious rites, by exorcisms, imprecations, conjurations, shielded by the Church with all her powers, and sanctioned, if not set in motion, by the highest ecclesiastical authorities. They desolated every society where the institution was introduced. Secrecy has been already noted as a characteristic of magic as opposed to religion. Naturally, anti-social acts are performed in secret. The deeds of the Holy Office were done in the deepest dens of the building, and surrounded by impervious precautions against discovery, except the last dread act. In that consummation of cruelty, that supreme Act of Faith, its officials nominally took no part; though it was well known that they insisted upon it relentlessly and with every terror, ghostly or secular, which they knew so well how to wield. On the other hand, the African sorcerer, conjuring the rain or the sunshine so necessary for the crops, performs an eminently social work, and does it very often in the open eye of day and before the assembled people."\*

However subtly some metaphysically minded anthropologists have striven to sever magic from its alter ego, religion, each of them has been foiled by the stubborn fact that the twin phenomena are inseparable as oxygen and hydrogen when these two gases combine to form water. Dr. Marett concedes this when he confesses that "Together they belong to the supernormal world, the x-region of experience, the region of mental twilight."

In his *Deutsche Mythologie*, the celebrated Jacob Grimm commenced his chapter on Magic by erecting a barrier between divine Wundern (miracle) and satanic Zaubern (enchantment). Miracle is godlike, while enchantment is devilish. But Grimm read into the magic and divination of primitive Teutonic paganism the culture of his own eighteenth century. It is now recognised that magic to the early Teutonic peoples was an essential part of their religion. As Professor De La Saussaye proves in his *Religion of the Teutons* (1902), the great gods, Odin and Thor, the giants, dwarfs, and elves, were all invoked in the practice of magic. In all ages, and with all faiths, the value and importance of the supernatural army mainly reside in its magic-working powers.

T. F. PALMER.

(To be concluded.)

The Fourth Gospel.

NICODEMUS.

AFTER the fiction of "purging the temple" the writer of the Fourth Gospel says of his pseudo-Jesus: "Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed on his name, beholding the signs which he did." This brings us to the third chapter which commences:—

"Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came unto Jesus by night, and said to him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him."

Here we have a second believer—the first being Nathanael—who is not mentioned in any of the other Gospels. There was, however, in circulation in the pseudo-John's day an apocryphal writing called the "Gospel of Nicodemus," which work no doubt suggested to that writer the idea of making this apocryphal Nicodemus come to Jesus secretly—"by night"—in order to hear some of his teaching. In this chapter we have a sample of the kind of instruction given to a new convert in the pseudo-John's time, though the writer has placed it in the mouth of his new Jesus. That Savior commenced by telling his visitor that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This language is, of course, metaphorical; but Nicodemus is repre-

\* *Ritual and Belief*, pp. 78, 79.



sented as understanding it literally, and stupidly asks "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus should then have explained what he meant, but instead of doing so, he said: "Except a man be born of *water and the Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." This explanation left the matter still unexplained. The pseudo-Jesus might be referring to a statement of John the Baptist (Mark i. 8), or he might be recommending a stiff glass of Irish or Scotch cold, or some other "water and spirit" of a stimulating nature. Whatever he may have meant, Jesus did not further explain, except by saying "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"—which profound philosophical utterance left the matter exactly where it was. If Nicodemus did not know what the expression "being born again" was supposed to mean when he came, he must have gone away unenlightened. In his further discourse to Nicodemus, Jesus, among other matters, is represented as saying:—

"If I told you earthly things, and ye believed not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you heavenly things."

Here the writer appears to have forgotten that his imaginary Jesus was speaking to a believer, and not to the Jews, who reposed no faith in his assertions. In any case, the Savior of the Fourth Gospel displays very little knowledge of "earthly things," and nothing at all of things "heavenly." He says again:—

"For God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him. He that believeth on him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God."

The word "judge" in this passage means "condemn"—as rendered in the Authorised Version. Here Jesus is made to say that he was *not* sent to condemn mankind, but to save them: yet, in the same breath he says that those who do not believe him to be the "Son of God" were already condemned by their unbelief. This style of reasoning is characteristic of the pseudo-John. If we turn to the Jesus of the Synoptics, we find that that Savior never uttered a word about being "born again" or of being "born of water and the spirit," or that he ever referred to other matters that figure in the discourse to Nicodemus: he was a different Jesus altogether—and at this time he was in the wilderness, in about the second week of his forty days fast.

#### JESUS A BAPTISER.

Next, the veracious writer of the Fourth Gospel says:—

"After these things came Jesus and his disciples into Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptised. And John [the Baptist] also was baptising in Ænon near Salim, because there was much water there..... For John was not yet cast into prison" (iii. 22—24).

Here the writer makes Jesus enter into rivalry with John the Baptist in the matter of baptising—the two being engaged in dipping converts at the same time. In commencing his fourth chapter the pseudo-John states:—

"When therefore the Lord [*i.e.*, Jesus] knew how that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptising more disciples than John (although Jesus himself baptised not, but his disciples) he left Judea," etc.

According to this remarkable sentence, Jesus did not find it very difficult to beat the Baptist—though it was somewhat unkind to set up an opposition shop. Such an act was evidently one which the pseudo-John would have had no hesitation in doing; for he seems to have delighted in devious ways.

But the statement that "Jesus himself baptised not" is not in agreement with that previously made—that "he tarried with them, and baptised." On the other hand, there is no record in the first three Gospels of Jesus baptising a single person—or even of his disciples doing so. When the latter were sent out to preach they received the command: "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast

out demons: freely ye received, freely give" (Matt. x. 8). Nothing is said about baptising in the Synoptic Gospels, save in the later additions at the end (Mark xvi. 16; Matt. xxviii. 19). The statements respecting Jesus entering into competition with the Baptist are but another example of the underhand ways of the Presbyterian John.

#### THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

Next, we are told that Jesus, when on his way to Galilee, came to "a city of Samaria, called Sychar," and "being wearied with his journey," sat down near a well outside the city walls. While seated there a "woman of Samaria" came to draw water, and the following conversation ensued:—

"Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink..... The Samaritan woman saith unto him, How is it that thou being a Jew, asketh drink of me, which am a Samaritan woman?..... Jesus said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked him, and he would have given thee *living water*. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that *living water*?..... Jesus said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up into eternal life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water. Jesus saith unto her, I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw" (John iv. 7—15).

This method of teaching is of the same character as that employed in the case of Nicodemus—and with precisely the same result. Jesus uses metaphoric language, and his hearer naturally understands it literally; but the Christian Savior, though he perceives and knows he is misunderstood, will condescend to explain his meaning: instead of imparting instruction, he simply tries to mystify. This appears to have been one of the favorite methods of the pseudo-John. It is almost needless to say that his Jesus had no "living water" containing the virtue mentioned to give to any human being. Continuing his so-called "teaching" the Savior gives the woman a sample of his divine power:—

"Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus saith unto her, Thou saidst verily, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: as it is said, Thou art a prophet. The woman saith unto him, I perceive thou art a prophet" (iv. 16—19).

This is the second time that Jesus is represented as displaying a knowledge of certain circumstances known only to the individual concerned, the first being the case of Nathanael—"When thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee"—resulting in the exclamations, "Thou art the Son of God" and "Thou art a prophet."

One remarkable saying in the discourse which he alludes to reads: "God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth"—which is a childish play upon the word "spirit." If God were a material being, then he would have to be worshipped in a material manner. But this Jesus, in the Fourth Gospel (v. 37) is represented as wrangling with the Jews and saying of their God, "Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his form," and asserts that he himself had done both. "Spirit" the Savior meant, therefore, by God being "spirit" "a spirit" it is difficult to say. Also, if we try to have actually seen the "back parts" of a deity, the difficulty is in no way removed. It is a simple matter of fact, anything that one can see, and that has a clearly defined shape, must necessarily be some form of matter.

At this point of the discussion the disciples, who had "gone away into the city to buy food," returned, and the woman—who had not been told what was meant by "living water"—"went away into the city." After her departure we read:—

"The disciples prayed him, saying, Rabbi, eat. Jesus said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of."



The disciples therefore said one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work" (iv. 32-34).

Here again Jesus employs metaphorical language, and the disciples, like Nicodemus and the woman of Samaria, construe his words literally: but in this case the writer makes his pseudo-Jesus, for the sake of some explanation—from which we learn that talking to the woman about "living water" and God being a "spirit" was "doing the will of him that sent him." Truly this new Jesus was a model Savior. The discourse with the Samaritan woman takes up no less than twenty verses. Whence the apostle John—who was not present at the tête-à-tête—get his account of the conversation? This is a matter which apparently escaped the notice of the writer of the Fourth Gospel when he made all the disciples go into the city to buy food, so that Jesus might talk with the Samaritan woman alone—answered the purpose just as well. And all this time the real Gospel Jesus, who knew nothing about "living water" and God being a "spirit"—that is to say, the Jesus of the Synoptics—was in "the wilderness of Judea" fasting, and preparing himself for his temptation by the Devil, before commencing his public ministry. This fact is admitted in the "Harmonies" of the four Gospels; for all the narratives in the first four chapters of the "Gospel of John" are placed (as regards chronological order) before Jesus commenced his ministry in Galilee, with his disciples, after his forty days fast and temptation.

ABRACADABRA.

The Bowman Case.

SECULAR SOCIETY (LTD.) V. BOWMAN AND OTHERS.

Re late Mr. Charles Bowman, of Ventnor, Isle of Wight, bequeathed the residue of his real and personal estate, said to be about £10,000, on trust, to the Secular Society (Ltd.). A summons heard by Mr. Justice Joyce, the heir-at-law next-of-kin contested the bequest, submitting that it was invalid because the trust was for illegal purposes and contrary to public policy; also because it infringed the rules of perpetuities. His lordship decided in favor of the bequest, and his decision was now appealed against by the heir-at-law and next-of-kin. Mr. Cave, K.C., and Mr. J. A. Price (instructed by Calder, Woods, and Pethick) were for appellants, and the Society was represented by Mr. Tomlin, K.C., and the Hon. M. M. Macpherson (instructed by Harper, Battcock, and Goode). In support of his argument that the bequest was invalid and contrary to public policy, Mr. Cave quoted, amongst the objects of the Society, the following:—

- "To promote in such ways as may from time to time be determined 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 the secularisation of the State, so that religious tests and observances may be banished from the legislature, the executive, and judiciary.
- "To promote the recognition by the State of marriage as a purely civil contract, leaving its religious sanction to the judgment and determination of individual citizens.
- "To promote an alteration in the law concerning religion, so that all forms of opinion may have the same legal rights of propaganda."

Counsel submitted that this was a propagandist Society, having the object of suppressing religion in all its forms, and that a bequest for that purpose was against public policy and void. Although the teaching of anti-Christian doctrines might not be indictable, it was so much against the law that no legal right could be founded upon it. The Master of the Rolls asked how this applied to Jews. Mr. Cave said Jews, as well as Unitarians, were relieved of disabilities by the Toleration Acts. But there was no doubt which extended the same protection to those who taught Atheism.

FAMOUS CASES.

Counsel cited a case in which the residue of an estate was left as a prize for the best essay on natural theology, and it was held to be void, the object being to belittle revealed

Christianity. Until the Jewish religion was recognised as legal, it was illegal to give a legacy for the purpose of teaching it. Counsel also cited the cases of Johanna Southcote and Mrs. Besant. In the latter case the custody of her child was refused to Mrs. Besant on the ground that she had directed that it should not be taught religion in any form. It was also held that a bequest directed to the publication of a book on the "absolute inalienable supremacy of the Pope in spiritual matters" was void, as contrary to public policy.

How, then, he asked, could a bequest to promote Atheism be legal?

Mr. Tomlin, for the respondent Society, submitted that on the narrowest construction of the Articles of the Society the money need not necessarily be applied for any illegal object at all. The legacy was not given for any definite purpose. It was a gift to a legal entity (the trustee) with no obligation upon that entity to apply it to any definite purpose, within certain limits. The money might within a few weeks become the property of a perfectly good legal charity. Even if any object of the Society was illegal, the validity of the gift was not affected.

POSITIVIST TEACHING.

Counsel proceeded to deal with the various Objects of the Society seriatim. The first object, to promote the principle that human conduct should be based on natural knowledge and not on supernatural belief, was the Positivist idea. In other days one might have been burnt for propounding that view. But, fortunately, we were in the twentieth, and not in the fourteenth, century. The Positivist idea had many eminent and learned followers, not one of whom had hitherto thought he was a criminal. As to the object of promoting "the secularisation of the State so that religious tests and observances might be banished from the legislature, executive, and judiciary," how could that be improper?

Lord Justice Warrington: Do they wish to abolish the attendance of the judges at Westminster Abbey on the first day of the Michaelmas sittings?

Mr. Tomlin: No; it must be things which are imposed by law.

Lord Justice Warrington: Is the King to be prevented from attending service in the chapel in Buckingham Palace?

Lord Justice Pickford: The judges take the oath of allegiance, but we make a declaration instead, if we like. What other religious test or observance is there?

Mr. Cave: Prayers are said in the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

The Master of the Rolls remarked that he was under the impression that neither a Jew nor a Nonconformist could be Lord Chancellor.

Lord Justice Pickford: There are certain religious observances by judges on circuit, but I do not know that any judge is bound to follow them.

Mr. Tomlin thought there would be nothing illegal in members on circuit getting up and agitating, with a view to stopping the observance of a custom, religious or otherwise, which the judges had formed for themselves on circuit. It would be an extraordinary state of things if it was legal to try and get Parliament to alter the law, and illegal to try and get one's neighbor to alter his opinion. With regard to the object of promoting the recognition by the State of marriage as a purely civil contract, that was only to bring our law into line with the law of France.

Lord Justice Pickford: They aim at taking away the recognition of the religious part of marriage.

Mr. Tomlin: That is a perfectly legitimate object, however much we may disagree with it.

FREE DISCUSSION.

Mr. Cave, in his reply, put the hypothetical case of a limited company formed to carry on highway robbery, and submitted that a bequest to such a company would not be legal merely because the company also performed the perfectly lawful business of purchasing horses, etc. The question in the present case was not whether a man could be punished for what he was doing, but whether the Court would hold under the law as it stood that a bequest to carry out his purpose was a good one. With respect to what was punishable as blasphemy, it was held in the Queen v. Bradlaugh that if, by writing or verbally, anyone denied the existence of the Deity, or the providence of God, he was a blasphemer. All the older authorities took that strict view.

The Master of the Rolls: The current of recent authority is strongly against your contention on that point.

Mr. Justice Pickford: We have got rid of a great many fetters on free discussion.

Mr. Cave submitted that the Blasphemy Act created a new offence, and a new penalty for that offence. Although there was no reported conviction for breach of the Blasphemy Act, that Act was still law, and it was enough to decide this case.

The Court reserved judgment, the Master of the Roll saying it was hoped to deliver the decision before the Long Vacation.—Daily Telegraph.



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**HYDE PARK:** 6, Freethought Demonstration. Speakers: Messrs. C. Cohen, L. B. Gallagher, R. H. Rosetti, E. C. Saphin, and others.

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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.  
The Society's solicitors are Messrs. Harper and Battcock, 8 Rood-lane, Fenchurch-street, London, E.C.  
A Form of Bequest.—The following is a sufficient form of bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—"I give and bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited, the sum of £... free from Legacy Duty, and I direct that a receipt signed by two members of the Board of the said Society and the Secretary thereof shall be a good discharge to my Executors for the said Legacy."  
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President: G. W. FOOTE.

Secretary: Miss E. M. VANCE, 62 Farringdon-st., London, E.C.

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SECULARISM teaches that conduct should be based on reason and knowledge. It knows nothing of divine guidance or interference; it excludes supernatural hopes and fears; it regards happiness as man's proper aim, and utility as his moral guide.

Secularism affirms that Progress is only possible through Liberty, which is at once a right and a duty; and therefore seeks to remove every barrier to the fullest equal freedom of thought, action, and speech.

Secularism declares that theology is condemned by reason as superstitious, and by experience as mischievous, and regards it as the historic enemy of Progress.

Secularism accordingly seeks to dispel superstition; to spread education; to disestablish religion; to rationalise morality; to promote peace; to dignify labor; to extend material well-being; and to realise the self-government of the people.

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Any person is eligible as a member on signing the following declaration:—

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Occupation.....

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