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Always be ready to speak your mind, and a base man will avoid you.—WILLIAM BLAKE.

Some Characteristics of G. W. Foote.

It is the usual fate of reformers to be misrepresented and slandered while living, and to become the centre of legends—more or less derogatory—when they are dead. It lies in the very nature of their work, in the character of the forces they are fighting, that this should be so. The enemy they attack is strongly entrenched behind the ramparts of social position, of tradition, and of wealth. Above all, in modern societies, the enemy controls that great channel of publicity, the press. The reformer is left to create his own vehicle of communication with the world. He must, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, become even his own printer, publisher, and bookseller. And the public he reaches, the public that really knows him, becomes, under these conditions, a very limited one. A much larger public may be familiar with his name, and may be in some measure more or less acquainted with the kind of work that engages his energies. But the man that the public knows is not the real man, and what it understands by his work is only a caricature.

What kind of a Thomas Paine—despite the splendid vindications that have been given to the world—is it that the average Christian, in all innocence maybe, thinks of? It is certainly not the real Paine—the brilliant writer, the ardent, clean-minded political and social reformer, the incorruptible fighter for human freedom in the old world and in the new, the man who risked his life rather than sacrifice his principles, and who paved the way for reforms of which millions now reap the benefit. The Paine that outraged tyranny and revengeful bigotry gave to the world was a drunken, dissolute, scurrilous pamphleteer, living in infamy, and dying in disgrace. And the poor, ignorant, deluded public clings to this delusion as though it were a priceless possession. And what is true of Paine is true also of scores of other reformers in all walks of life. Threatened vested interests either buries them in oblivion or covers them with infamy.

I have written the above because of a communication that has just reached me from a subscriber to this paper. This gentleman sent a copy of the Memorial Number of the *Freethinker* to a friend. This friend was not a Christian. Religion was not a topic in which he felt any great interest—either for or against. But he had heard of G. W. Foote, and he told my correspondent how surprised he was to find him referred to by so many people as a scholar, a man of genuine culture, a fine writer, and one whose sense of justice and humanitarian breadth won the respect of those who were quite opposed to him in opinion. He had evidently known only the G. W. Foote that bigoted orthodoxy had created. It was not the real man, it was not the G. W. Foote that we knew, it was the caricature that had been set up in place of the real man.

When I stood before his remains in the City of London Crematorium to say a few words of farewell, I said that G. W. Foote made the supreme sacrifice for Freethought—he gave himself. And I intended that in a very peculiar sense, one that I think was

fully grasped by but few—if any—of the mourners present. For I fancy that but few present realised that the direct, sledge-hammer attack on Christianity with which he became identified, that powerful amalgam of satire, ridicule, and good, sterling scholarship expressed in the plainest and most uncompromising language, was deliberately adopted as the one method that could crush modern religious obscurantism and bigotry. Yet so it was, and I have the very best authority for saying so—G. W. Foote himself.

It is well known that in the seventies, before he edited the *Secularist*, he wrote frequently for Bradlaugh's *National Reformer*. I may reprint one or two of those articles one day, if only for the purpose of letting people contrast the earlier Foote with the later one. When I first came across these articles, many years ago, they were something of a revelation. They portrayed quite a different G. W. Foote to the one I knew—different, that is, in manner. The firm and trenchant writer was there even then. But they were the articles of a young man fresh from the study of philosophy, with the ideas expressed in scholarly and studiously polite language. They were the articles of one who felt that the difference between himself and the Christian religion was a purely intellectual one, to be decided as one might decide a difference of opinion concerning some question of mathematics.

Talking with him one day, I mentioned this matter of the style of his early articles, and I asked him if he could tell me what caused the change of method. He looked at me for a moment, and then, with a curious side glance, said, "I went through the Bradlaugh struggle." That was all; but it meant volumes. He had seen one of the greatest figures of the nineteenth century deprived of his right to a seat in Parliament as the elected representative of the people; he had seen him set on without mercy and without decency by thousands of bigots—many of them highly placed; and he realised that he had so far misjudged the nature of the fight. It was not a contest between armchair philosophers. It was not a mere intellectual difference, to be settled by a quiet and decorous discussion. The bigots were numerous, active, and unscrupulous. They would stop at nothing to gain their ends; and resolved to pursue the fight without mercy. Henceforth every aid that invective, satire, ridicule, sarcasm, could give was fully utilised. The scholarship was always there, and it was always evident to such of his hearers as were well read enough to appreciate all that went to the make-up of his superficially simple speeches and articles. But the scholarship was veiled, and the bigots hated him all the more fiercely because of the form in which it was presented. He meant, he said, to make bigotry feel the weight of his whip, and but for that deliberate resolve the numbers of the *Freethinker* for which he was prosecuted would never have been issued.

And this I regard as the supreme sacrifice of his life. He deliberately sacrificed the good opinion of the "respectable" school of "advanced" thinkers in order to educate the masses and restrain the bigots. Littler men—much littler men—gained a reputation of scholarship with but a mere tithe of his mental equipment. He smiled at their pose, and went his self-chosen way. And in doing so he showed himself

capable of a height of self-abnegation to which few men could have risen.

In this connection I may be permitted a remark of Mr. Swinny's in his excellent article in last week's issue. In common with all educated readers, Mr. Swinny had a great admiration for Mr. Foote's style. And Mr. Swinny adds that he has been informed this was modelled on the style of Hooker. I hardly think this to have been the case. I know that Mr. Foote had a great admiration for the author of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, and I well remember his look of surprise when, many years ago, I quoted something from that work. "So you read Hooker!" and I could see that I had risen in his estimation; and I suppose there are really not many people who could claim to have read the *Ecclesiastical Polity* from cover to cover. And one could understand that Hooker, with his clear mental vision, his genial satire, his reflection of the grand manner of the Elizabethans, his freedom from religious scurrility, his sensitiveness to the choice of words, and broad human outlook, would have had a great attraction for a man of G. W. Foote's tastes and temperament.

Nevertheless, I do not think he owed more to Hooker than a receptive brain will naturally owe to the reading of great works. My own impression is that he owed more to Swift—for whom he had a great admiration both as a writer and as a man of courage—to Defoe, and Cobbett. He always advised beginners of promise to read these men—the great "direct" writers—to use his own characterisation. There was, of course, the influence of Shakespeare, always to be taken for granted where Foote was concerned, and the Elizabethans generally, concerning whom his knowledge was singularly wide and peculiarly intimate.

And his admiration for Hooker may be taken as illustrative of his impartiality of mind in judging writers with whose ideas he had little or no sympathy. He had a very great admiration for some of the seventeenth century theologians, for two or three of those belonging to the eighteenth century, for at least one belonging to the nineteenth century—Newman—and an easy-going contempt for the vast majority of modern preachers. And I believe his attitude towards both the earlier and the later preachers to be quite defensible. In the seventeenth century modern science was only in the birth throes of its attack upon theology, and it still offered attractions to many men of first-rate ability. With the development of modern thought, the inroads upon theology became more and more pronounced, the enlistment of men of the calibre of Hooker, Taylor, or Donne an almost impossible matter. The English Church had its last really great champion in Bishop Butler; and after Newman, the brains seemed to go out of the old creed with marked rapidity.

But it was *this* G. W. Foote, the man whose knowledge of the very best of the Christian theologians would have qualified him to write a history of preaching, and whose knowledge of English literature was of a singularly extensive character, the writer of faultless prose with an almost uncanny power of selecting exactly the right word to express his meaning, and with a grasp of philosophical questions that only those who knew him intimately could appreciate, it was *this* G. W. Foote whom outsiders had come to regard as a coarse, vulgar writer and speaker, who prostituted his admitted ability by abusive attacks on religion. That was no more the real G. W. Foote than the drunken, dissolute, uncultured Paine of popular Christian preaching was the Paine that some of the best men in two continents held in honor. Both committed the unpardonable sin in attacking the established creed. Both paid the price of slander and misrepresentation. But both live in the memories and in the affections of those who recognise that it is by the sacrifice of the few that the lot of the many is made better, and freedom made more secure.

C. COHEN.

Has Freethought Fulfilled Its Mission?

MR. HORATIO BOTTOMLEY, in a kindly reference to the death of our late leader in *John Bull* for October 30, asserts that "to-day there is no need for any further Freethought propaganda," because "all of us think freely now." Since Mr. Bottomley turned theologian and began to play to the Christian gallery, his allusions to Freethought have not been free from bias. It is perfectly true that George Jacob Holyoake preferred the term Secularism to Atheism as a designation of the system he advocated, but it is not true that he "abandoned Atheism" as his own creed. It is true that Charles Bradlaugh resigned the Presidency of the National Secular Society a short time before he died, but Mr. Bottomley is radically mistaken when he says that "in his later life he became less 'iconoclastic.'" Bradlaugh resigned in consequence of ill-health. Mr. John M. Robertson tells us that "the scene of his resignation was a touching one," and highly significant was the address he delivered on the occasion. He ended thus:—

"I do not say, 'We part, friends,' because this is not parting. The movement is still as much to me as ever, as much as it has been during my life. For more than forty years I have been a speaker among you. Now I lay down the wand of office, and the right to give command, but I hope always to remain with you a trusted counsellor" (*His Life and Work*, vol. ii., p. 411).

"Bradlaugh, in his later life, became less iconoclastic," says Mr. Bottomley; but we have the emphatic assurance of Bradlaugh himself, and of his daughter, Mrs. Hypatia Bradlaugh Bonner, that he did nothing of the kind.

Mr. Bottomley admits that "Foote was a man of brilliant parts, and, in his way, did good work," though "it was rough and ready—and unfashionable—work." He also admits that his work, which he pays only a left-handed compliment, "has borne its fruit." Then he hazards the astonishingly inaccurate declaration that "to-day there is no need for any further Freethought propaganda." Mr. Bottomley enjoys the renown of being exceptionally smart, and no doubt, in his way, he deserves it; but if he really believes that the Freethought propaganda has borne its fruit, and is no longer needed, he is either totally ignorant of the existing state of things in Christendom, or hopelessly blinded by prejudice. As a matter of fact, freedom of thought is still very largely a thing of the future. The young are not yet aware that freedom of thought is "an axiom of human progress." So far as they are concerned, authority is still the great, determining factor in education. Children are not free to think for themselves, and all the Churches are agreed that such freedom should never be granted to them. Has Mr. Bottomley never heard of the bitter and acrimonious interdenominational fight that has been going on for years in this country over the question of religious instruction in Government Schools? Is he ignorant of the fact that Freethinkers are to-day subjected to persecution of a galling and humiliating order? We will do Mr. Bottomley the justice of saying that he was broad-minded enough to offer the late Mr. Foote the hospitality of *John Bull*, an offer of which our lamented leader availed himself on more than one occasion. We also gratefully remember that Mr. Austin Harrison, editor of the *English Review*, regarded him as a highly desirable contributor, and that the number in which his masterly article on George Meredith appeared, ran quickly out of print. But these were exceptions, painfully rare. By the press of Great Britain generally, George William Foote was ignored, and this was true of the London press in particular. Though one of the most brilliant intellectuals of his generation, though he displayed heroic courage in most trying circumstances, and though himself ideally tolerant of views which wholly differed from his own, yet the reward meted out to him by the British people at large was obloquy, odium, ostracism. For exercising the right of thinking, speaking, and

writing freely, he was obliged to pay the heaviest of penalties.

There is absolutely no escape from the fact that Freethinkers still suffer from a very severe form of public censorship. We are aware that the trend of the age has hitherto been towards liberty. Science has now come practically into its own kingdom, and its demonstrated word has almost attained to the dignity and authority of an inexorable law. As Professor Bury informs us, "No man of science has any fear of publishing his researches, whatever consequences they may involve for current beliefs, criticism of religious doctrines and of political and social institutions being free." Still the freedom enjoyed by the scientist is not shared by the militant Freethinker, and there are plenty of bigots about to whom even science is only another name for the Devil, and who, if they had their way, would crucify all men of science, as the Jews are supposed to have crucified Jesus.

Now, Freethinkers, at least the militant ones, cherish as their supreme object, not merely the gaining of full liberty for themselves, but also the complete emancipation of the innumerable slaves of superstition by whom they are surrounded. The worst feature of such slaves is their unconsciousness of being in captivity. Many of them vainly imagine that they are the freest people on earth. In the Correspondence Column of the Rev. Professor David Smith, D.D., in the *British Weekly* for October 28, an "Inquirer" writes thus:—

"I am a member of a church whose communicants partake of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper kneeling. For such a posture I find no warranty in Scripture, but find the reclining or sitting posture set forth. I often think of ceasing to take the Sacrament under the present mode of administration, as my conscience disapproves of it. Kindly say what you would recommend me to do."

Such a silly inquiry rouses even Dr. Smith to a state of towering indignation. He cannot tolerate the littleness of mind and meanness of spirit exhibited in the amazing statement. "What a nuisance," he exclaims, "a man's conscience may be to himself and his neighbors." Most probably this ignorant and stupid believer is a thorn in the flesh of the community in which he resides. But his name is legion, the world actually teeming with similar bigots. Not so long ago Dr. Smith himself fell into the error, through invincible prejudice no doubt, of asserting, in the same Correspondence Column, that love was an unknown quantity in the Pagan world prior to the advent of Christ. Ignorance could not have been accountable for so stupendous a falsehood, for we understand that the Professor is an accomplished classical scholar, and must have been familiar at the time he wrote with the high-toned teachings of Greek and Roman philosophers and poets on the subject of domestic love. Christianity flatly refuses to recognise any good in the world which does not owe its existence to itself; and every Christian condemns as spurious specimens all other Christians who do not hold the same views as himself. During the last few years a furious controversy has been waged within the bounds of the Anglican Church as to whether it is right or wrong for Episcopalians to be associated with Nonconformists in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The idea entertained by the majority of the Bishops and their respective clergy seems to be that an episcopally ordained minister becomes, in consequence of his ordination, a special channel through which alone Divine grace will pass, as he administers the Sacrament, from the Redeemer to each reverent communicant, whereas a non-episcopally ordained clergyman becomes nothing of the sort, and through whom, therefore, no Divine blessing can reach his followers as they partake of the Holy Communion. Is it not clear, then, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that all who take part in such an essentially idiotic discussion are well-nigh hopeless slaves of superstition? Most of the men who engage in this controversy claim to be God's vicars or viceregents, whose business it is to mediate

between him and the people. Does it never occur to them how utterly ridiculous they make him look to all who think? Do they never pause and seriously ask themselves what it is they are so passionately quarrelling about?

Take the War as another illustration of the blighting influence of superstition. The overwhelming majority of those engaged in it are Christian believers, and they are slaughtering one another in the name and for the glory of him whom they all call Father. More than that, all alike are asking that same Father to grant them a speedy victory, irrespective of the side to which they belong. That is to say, these Divine children are deafening their Father's ears with prayers against one another. Furthermore, they are all agreed that the War is a judgment on those who occupy the opposite side. We in Great Britain are quite sure that it is Germany and her Allies whom God is punishing, but the curious thing is that while punishing them he is allowing hundreds of thousands of our men to be innocently slain. In Germany, the general belief is that it is Great Britain and her Allies upon whom the Divine wrath has fallen; and yet, while God is bringing us to the dust, millions of Germans and Austrians have been sacrificed. Now, Atheists thoroughly understand the War because they have studied it as a purely human phenomenon. They can see clearly how and why it began, as well as how and why it still goes on. There is absolutely nothing supernatural about it at any point. It is merely a detestable instance of the operation of the law of the struggle for existence and power between the different European nations. Civilisation has broken down, and the primal human passions are in full evidence. When Christianity won Europe, Humanism was condemned, and practically disappeared. We are no further forward in any essential sense to-day than we were two thousand years ago. The War only shows us what a colossal failure Christianity has been, and how impossible the War would probably have been had Humanism been allowed free scope during the last nineteen centuries.

As a matter of fact, the need for Freethought propaganda is more clamorous now than ever. The world will not be free, Humanism cannot do its constructive work, until the Christian religion has been wiped out. This War may be the last only on condition that it succeeds in giving supernaturalism its final quietus. Let us, therefore, buckle on our armor and fight more valiantly than ever before.

J. T. LLOYD.

"Let Me Hide Myself in Thee."

THE story goes that Augustus Montague Toplady, sheltering from the rain in a hollow among the rocks of Burrington, in Somersetshire, conceived the idea of his morbid hymn,—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

This miserable rhyme has for more than a century expressed the timidity of tens of thousands of souls, and helped to keep alive the sentiment of dependence upon the autocracy of God in heaven. Toplady was a Calvinist, and believed that God ordained souls to salvation or doom as he arbitrarily pleased. Hence he was vexed with the somewhat more liberal views which John Wesley entertained of the divine character. At the age of thirty-two, he attacked the elderly Methodist in this exquisitely courteous language:—

"Time, sir, has already whitened your locks, and the hour must shortly come which will transmit you to the tribunal of that God on whose sovereignty the greater part of your life has been one continued assault."

He evidently expected and hoped that when Wesley got transmitted to the tribunal, he would receive a severe reprimand from Toplady's God. He even

wrote doggerel verses describing Wesley's chat with Satan, one of the stanzas running:—

" 'Oh, your servant, my friend,' quoth the priest,
' Though you carry the mark of the beast,
I never shook paws with a welcomer guest.' "

Such are the manners of Calvinists.

I have raked up this unsavory hymn of the Rock of Ages because it unfortunately illustrates the tendency of a certain section of our people to stand aloof from the national crisis in which the European War has involved Great Britain and the Empire-Federation. These critics do practically nothing else but find fault with the diplomacy of the War, the conduct of the War, and the proposals for continuing the War to a reasonable success. I am ready to admit that, in some rare cases, this attitude results from the conviction that such a protest will really benefit the mind of the British people, and help towards peace and reconstruction. But, in many instances, I fear it results from a feeling of priggish superiority, and a vanity which shrinks from too close contact with a terrible problem lest the critic's lack of real wisdom should be tested and exposed. There is even an element of cowardice associated with such sentiments, perhaps mental rather than physical, as if the personality dreaded to handle unclean or perplexing things and situations.

Now, I suspect that the origin of such opinions is, to a large extent, theological. For centuries past, people have divided the secular world from the divine world; they have classed the secular world as mainly evil, and the divine world as entirely good; and, when they have found themselves confronted with dangers and difficulties, they have retreated to the refuge of the Divine:—

" Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

I will even venture to affirm that this habit of skulking may persist in minds that have given up theological beliefs, so powerful is ancient use and custom. This is but another way of saying that theology can only be finally expelled, not by mere argument, but by courage. Argument, indeed, is a valuable aid; but it does not strike home effectively until the human heart resolves to fulfil its own destiny, self-reliant and self-directive.

I will illustrate my point by quoting a case which came before the Sheriff in the Summary Court of Glasgow a week or two ago. A citizen, R. A. M. (I omit the full name) had declined to supply details asked for by the Government in the recent national registration:—

" R. A. M. admitted failing to sign the registration form. Accused, on the invitation of the Sheriff, said—The reason why I decline to sign this is simply because war is contrary to the teaching of Christ, and, therefore, being registered for the purposes of war is also contrary to His teachings. When I was converted I enlisted as a soldier in the Army of Christ. I don't think a soldier can wear two uniforms; at least if he does he is a traitor to the one he puts on first.

" Accused, in reply to the Sheriff, said he was an insurance agent, a widower with two of a family, and earned about 48s. a week.

" The Sheriff—Well, when Cæsar requires you to sign a declaration sign it, and render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. You are fined £5, with the alternative of twenty days' imprisonment. You have a month to pay the fine."

It is not a question as to whether R. A. M. is honest. What I would like to know is the exact relation of this amiable Scot to the world in which he lives, the world of the War, the world of Trades-Unionism, the world of railways, docks, mines, fields, hospitals, slums. I observe with interest that he is an insurance agent, prepared and willing to earn 48s. a week from secular sources, on condition that he persuades people to pay premiums towards a fund for insurance in case of death. The business appears to stand on a remarkably secular level. But when R. A. M. is requested to write certain personal notes as to age, status, and occupation, he tells the secular State which has guarded him and helped him from his

youth up, that he is not going to be inveigled into military service, because he has already entered the service of Christ. He must not be a traitor to Christ.

The honest man does not go so far as to say he despises the world, else the Sheriff might properly inquire why he acts as an insurance agent. On the other hand, he makes no pretence at trying to help the world; and that is my complaint against this Christian objector. Rebellion is sometimes a solemn duty, but it is only a duty when the rebel can straightforwardly assign reasons for thinking his action will, so far as he can judge, tend to the social welfare. While he dwells in a community, and even if he only encamps within its gates, he must cooperate for the common good, either by obedience to the laws and usages, or by honorable effort to improve those institutions through persuasion or rebellion. But he has no right whatever to erect some external authority, such as God, or Christ, or some spiritual Inner Light, which has no organic connection with the social life and manners. If he hides in the Rock of Ages, he is a sneak, or a fool, or a coward; or, at the best, a stray member of an ancient theological tribe, whose philosophy has no working attachment with present-day affairs and administration.

The point is one of extreme importance to the body politic, and, both during and after the War (after especially), will call for serious study.

Theology has a ghost known as metaphysic. Theology says a thing is right because God, or Christ-God, ordains it. Metaphysic says a thing must be done in accordance with a principle which is imperative in the nature of things; not (observe) because observation and experience and historical development support the principle. If a man tells me he must do this or that because his conscience bids, and if that is all the reason he can give, then he is resting his action on metaphysical grounds, and not social. What I maintain is, that mere conscientiousness is not a justification for refusing to share the burdens of the secular State with one's fellow-citizens. Civilisation must dispense with God, and, on the same reasoning, it must dispense with the Conscience-God. Poetically, indeed, we may describe conscience as the God within the breast. But, in the work-a-day world, conscience only possesses validity in the degree that it keeps in living touch with the public thought, public experience, public sorrows, hopes, joys, and aspirations. The very essence of such a conscience is that it should live in the world, and help the world, and serve the world. There must be no hiding in rocks, or retreating to the tent of sulkiness, or assumed wisdom of the Super-man.

Hence, I draw a very distinct line between the dissenter who defies society in the name of God or Conscience (like our friend the Glasgow insurance agent) and a Bradlaugh or a Foote who deliberately counters some current social creed. It is anti-social and anarchic (in the worst sense of the term "anarchic") to appeal to a detached world in which a God or a Conscience is preserved as a kind of private idol. Whereas it is a sane and quite estimable procedure to say to one's neighbors: "I belong to your world; I am proud and anxious to improve it; I regard such and such tenets or proposals as contrary to the interests which you and I alike desire to promote; I will give you my reasons for opposing the popular customs or popular intentions; I will use no language and appeal to no motives that are foreign to your psychology; and, in any case, I will not hide behind any supernatural authority; and if, by mishap, you are unable to understand me just now, I will manfully suffer the disabilities you impose, and trust to your better mind to-morrow, and to the calmer judgment of your children and mine. Meanwhile, I declare that I own allegiance to the same concrete and abjective purposes as yourselves, namely, the good of our common humanity."

F. J. GOULD.

G. W. Foote.—As a Man.

DURING the latter years of his life, Mr. Foote lived at Westcliff-on-Sea, where he was held in high esteem. At his death, the local papers devoted columns to his memory, and the notices were evidence of the respect he inspired. He was very fond of walking on the pier and in the summer months he frequently took steamer-trips to Margate, Ramsgate, and Clacton. The sea had ever a great fascination for him, and in his younger years he was keen on boating. Although he had little leisure for local affairs, he was a member of the Westcliff Ratepayers' Association, and whenever a matter of principle was involved, such as the question of Sunday performances at picture theatres, or matters affecting the liberty of the people, he attended the meetings. On these occasions the members were surprised and delighted to hear a real orator in their midst who could voice their demands with dignity. At such times he was very persuasive, and he often carried his points by the charm of his personality. When I complimented him on his rare tact, he said, "Have you ever seen a strong man courting? Tact is only common sense in practice."

It was not "roses all the way." Sometimes he received insulting letters and postcards. One pious scoundrel sent them regularly. Mr. Foote merely glanced at these things, and then dropped them in the waste-paper basket. "I have been accused of all the crimes in the calendar," he remarked, "except murder. That is because these people couldn't find a corpse." Once he was stopped in the street by one of these creatures and he told him to go away. "I'm damned if I do!" was the saucy reply. "You're damned if you don't," was the Chief's crushing rejoinder; and the man went. He bore no malice; it was foreign to his nature. After one of the stormiest debates he ever held he shook hands with his opponent in the ante-room and asked him, with a winning smile, "How's the wife?"

Critics said he was conceited; he was nothing of the kind. He knew he was head and shoulders above most men, but he did not presume upon it. I pressed him to have his portrait reproduced in his paper, and as a frontispiece to his books. "I am not a chorus-girl," he said, "why trouble!" The last photograph he had was taken by subterfuge by a photographer when he accompanied his charming little granddaughter to the studio to have her portrait taken. He snapped the Chief whilst he was seated, and it was only by express request that he had a few copies reproduced, and Mr. Foote bought the negative to prevent it being scattered broadcast.

His private life was idyllic. When he first dined with Ingersoll he was asked to take some oysters, but declined. Ingersoll said, "Not like oysters, Foote, that's the only fault I find with you." So with Mr. Foote's home life; calumny was silent. The family dispensed a cordial hospitality, the house being seldom without visitors and friends. And it was at once a privilege and a pleasure to visit his home. For in the course of his life he had collected a number of objects of great interest. He had a life-like portrait of Ingersoll on the walls with an inscription in the gallant Colonel's dashing handwriting. "Who may that be?" asked a visitor whom the Chief was showing round, pointing to a beautiful portrait of Richard Carlile. "That," said the host, "is one of the bravest men who ever lived." In a frame was an exquisite piece of needlework by the aged mother of Eugene and George Macdonald. There was the volume Meredith sent to him in his prison cell at Holloway, with the inscription, "To G. W. Foote, Esq., from George Meredith." This tribute of admiration from the greatest writer of our generation was one of his proudest possessions. Then there were the Meredith letters, extending over a period of thirty years, and of a most intimate and encouraging nature. Every object had its vivid story, and there were scores of them.

He was very simple in his habits and very abste-

mious. Whilst his guests could have what they liked, he contented himself with plain fare. For some years he enjoyed good cigars, but latterly he abandoned that small luxury because it affected his throat; but there was always a box of cigars for his friends. He disliked personal adornment, not wearing a ring or a watch-chain. He had a hair watch-guard some time, but not for very long. He had presentation watches and pins, but he never wore them, contenting himself with a serviceable watch of small value. He wore the same shape of hat for years—latterly, a little out-of-date. "If I live long enough," he said, "I shall be once more in the fashion, for these things always repeat themselves."

Mr. Foote had an extraordinary capacity for work. He wrote a beautifully clear hand himself, and when illness affected it, he smiled and said, "I shall never write as badly as Shakespeare"—alluding, of course, to the poet's handwriting. Until the last eighteen months he attended to all his personal correspondence himself, and his postage bill averaged a pound weekly. Even children who wrote to him received charming letters in return—to them he was Captain Greatheart. When obscure people wrote to him he was just as courteous. It was nothing to him what a man's position was. I have seen him shake hands with shabby people with the same urbanity and courtesy as he did when he greeted men of position. He was the same to all—a great captain, a great gentleman, strong yet pitiful.

Literature was his great love—after Freethought. In the last days he read and enjoyed "Mark Rutherford's *Pages from a Journal*, and he was keenly interested in that writer's account of "George Eliot." He intended writing on the book in his "Personal." He was also greatly interested in Mr. A. B. Moss's brightly written recollections, and used to supplement them with notes from time to time. For contemporary writers he had no great admiration, excepting Thomas Hardy and Bernard Shaw. More than once he expressed his regret that the younger men had so little to say. His own library was very comprehensive. He bought books frequently, and nearly always returned from a walk with a new purchase in his pocket. He was extremely broad-minded. His article on Cardinal Newman, published in the *Freethinker*, was afterwards reprinted in a volume of tributes to that great ecclesiastic.

When he was too ill to walk far he used a bath-chair. He did not like the idea at first. "It is too much like a large perambulator," he said, "and suggests second childhood." But he found it more comfortable than he expected, and his favorite journey was along the cliffs and in full sight of the sea. The attendant who used to pull him along was an elderly man, and it chafed the Chief that an older man than himself should have to do such work, and he showed his sympathy in a tangible manner that the old man appreciated. His hairdresser who used to visit him at his house to attend to his needs wrote a charming letter on his death, saying that he felt he had lost a friend and not a customer.

Thus throughout life did he make friends; or, to put it better, thus did men learn to respect him and value him and become devoted to him. There have been great men and great leaders who have never inspired such feelings of devotion and affection as he has, because they have not been so human, so simple, and so sympathetic. And, be it remembered, it is not only in these islands that he has been so regarded, and not only in the Freethought movement. Clergymen wrote to him in their mental perplexities. Our kinsmen beyond the seas regarded him with an equal devotion, and throughout the length and breadth of the English-speaking world his name has been, and will be, a name to conjure with.

Who could so inspire them as the leader who had so often rallied them and led them to victory. It was like him to go without hesitation at duty's call. His age, his health, the season, these all would not be considered for a moment weighed against the great and good purpose which prompted his journey. And so surrounded by the men he has led so often, he has

passed away in harness and activity, employed up to the very last. The European War waging at the moment, the desperate struggle of millions formed a setting not unworthy of the great soldier of progress in his last hours. He goes to his last rest after a life fully spent in the service of his fellows. He leaves behind an example of steadfast devotion and persistent endeavor, at all times and at all seasons, for us to follow.

MIMNERMUS.

G. W. Foote: An Appreciation.

BY T. F. PALMER.

WITH the deeply regretful death of the leader of British Freethought a powerful personality has departed. It cannot be gainsaid that he dedicated his life to the noble cause of liberty, both of thought and expression. In any other European country the late Mr. Foote's wide knowledge, platform ability, and literary gifts, would have won universal acknowledgment. But in our home of compromise no attitude of mind is more reprobated than that which impels a man to make known to the people his departure from current creeds. Hence that shameful conspiracy of silence which was only broken to reluctantly concede Foote's real intellectual standing when death had silenced his voice and arrested his pen for ever.

In the face of such depressing circumstances our lost leader's splendid courage shines forth with greater lustre. An outspoken advocacy of freethought in France, Belgium, Italy, and other countries, has been attended with the opportunity of occupying the most exalted offices in the State. In these less conventional lands the fearless Freethinker does not now incur the penalty of political and social ostracism, which is almost invariably the reward of the brave pioneers in our own ultra-respectable isles. Consequently, the dauntless bearing which our late leader consistently displayed constitutes a quality which entails sacrifices, grievous and heavy in the extreme.

That Mr. Foote was fully aware of the severe penalty he paid for his inability to slur the veracities, abundant evidence exists, both in his writings and speeches. Many years ago, in a candid criticism of Mrs. Besant's Theosophy, he praised that gifted woman for her unflinching love of truth. No genuine affection for veracity can flourish apart from the passion to utter fearlessly to the world the truth as we see it. Foote held that courage—and courage and love of truth are the same—is the greatest of virtues, and cowardice the most miserable of sins.

It is not the privilege of every man to wear a martyr's crown. Many an enthusiastic reformer has faltered when the critical moment came. But Foote was a reformer of firmer mould. When his ordeal arrived, his demeanor proved Roman in its grandeur. His speech before Lord Chief Justice Coleridge attracted the attention of the civilised world, and his refusal to permit any of his colleagues to run the risks that had sent him to herd with felons was a revelation of the man's steadfast character. His and Bradlaugh's fight for freedom still await their record, but some day the historical genius will render justice to their deeds.

George Meredith's "Pilgrim's Scrip" alleges that in the darkest hour of our distress we gather the worthiest about us. The names of those famous men who signed the petition for Mr. Foote's release from Holloway Gaol form a sufficient guarantee for the view entertained by our leading lights in science, philosophy, literature, and art as to the merits of his case. The cream of the working classes, and many of the more thoughtful members of the middle order, rallied to his support. But as those in authority deemed it inexpedient to notice the claims of humanity and justice, the hero who has left us was doomed to bear the brutal sentence imposed by a savage Catholic judge.

Foote's unbending policy has been deprecated by milder unbelievers, who are now permitted to enjoy their heresies in peace. But these err gravely if they fail to understand that those dauntless men who were prepared, if necessary, to march to the gibbet or the stake for the sake of their cherished convictions, were the men who made possible our comparative immunity to religious persecution.

It is a noble line that stretches over the centuries—this army of martyrs for truth's sake. These benefactors are of varying degrees of greatness, and one of the very bravest was George William Foote.

The Value of a Good Life.

I AM not a believer in canonising anyone, as I think there is a great danger that other ceremonies and superstitious customs will be slavishly imitated and followed by the ever-increasing body of Freethinkers and Rationalists.

Again, I have no tears for those who led good lives, useful lives, and noble lives. My tears are for those who abused their opportunities by increasing human misery. Such activities may take the form either of inordinate pursuit of wealth—I ought to say money, because there is a great difference in meaning—or in the systematic destruction of human beings for imperial glory or personal ambition.

For example, I pity the Kaiser and his military caste, but I sincerely honor the memory of men like Mr. Foote, because his achievements in the interest of humanity fill me with joy, gratitude, and pride of human possibilities.

Life is a skilful game of profit and loss. I pass the loss by and look intensely at the *profit column*. The philosophy of the might have been is indolent and barren.

Humanity is an organism. The question that interests us is, What has been achieved by earnest, honored men and women to raise it to loftier heights of scientific acquirements and moral grandeur?

What is Mr. Foote's place on the golden page of history? His ideal was human liberty, and his method the clearance from the human mind of the subtle accumulations of ages of priestcraft and obscurantism.

It is universally argued that he has succeeded triumphantly. People gaze at a grand temple and admire its symmetry and splendid effect on their imagination and emotions, but they do not take into account what silent labor and genius were necessary for its completion. Those who fight for liberty, justice, and human happiness, do, must, and will suffer in the struggle. If they are wise they will neither expect nor exact any sympathy. It is a condition to which progressive minds must, and do, adapt themselves.

In general, men and women are narrow, and full of amazing prejudices; only a few choice spirits partially escape from the idol of convention and tradition. I have only one prejudice in life, viz, a prejudice against all prejudices. Those who have the fewest prejudices and make the least mistakes—taking into full consideration the wide area of their activities—are the truly great and noble. The gods of history are real men and women who added to our knowledge and happiness. I count Mr. Foote as one of these immortals.

In an age of multi-millionaires and charitans, he chose poverty and human service. His abilities were great, and he endured and sacrificed much for his ideals. He will always be remembered to his honor.

He also possessed, in a large measure, mental clarity and sanity, but oratory, scholarship, wit, humor, and even logic, are mere instruments and means to an end. What gives them significance is their influence on human thought and human character.

Mr. Foote has influenced and inspired thousands. He lived to see more toleration, sounder public opinion, and a complete change in the spirit of

our judges in their progressive interpretation of our laws. This was his triumph. This was his glory.

Long live the dead! but the best way to honor them is to discharge our duty towards the living. The most enduring monument the Freethinkers throughout the world can raise in his honor is to continue his great work.

E. BURKE.

Acid Drops.

Mr. Horatio Bottomley parades his newly found religion with all the ardor of a recent convert. The War taught him to see the truth of religion, although it has weakened the faith of many who were already religious. And the death of Mr. Foote has provided him with a fresh opportunity to affirm his belief—as though his belief were of more consequence than that of any street-corner evangelist. Years ago, he says, in the *Sunday Pictorial*, he and Mr. Foote lived together—which is true, we believe, to the extent that he and Mr. Foote had rooms in the same building—and Mr. Foote "would rehearse his speeches to me." We can "see him a-doin' of it"—that master of brilliant impromptu. But now, in his fifty-fifth year, Mr. Bottomley says, "I believe in God! And in the immortality of the soul of man." That settles it! When a man who has led a strenuous life—and Mr. Bottomley's life has been such as to make him peculiarly fitted to settle questions of theology—says he believes in God and the soul, ordinary mortals who are not fifty-five ought to bow their heads in silence and believe.

Mr. Bottomley also says, "I am not sure that if poor Foote had died a few years ago I might not have been a candidate for his successorship." Our misfortunes come not singly, but in battalions. First we lose Mr. Foote, and then we have the added anguish which comes from the knowledge that we have lost the chance of having Mr. Bottomley as President of the National Secular Society. And what a succession that would have been! Bradlaugh, Foote, Bottomley! Every parson in Britain will give a shiver of relief at the thought of the danger that at one time threatened them.

But, anyway, Mr. Bottomley would not have remained long in the chair of Bradlaugh and Foote. For in *John Bull* he advises his readers that "there is no need for any further Freethought propaganda." So Mr. Bottomley does not believe there are such things as blasphemy laws, citizens are no longer insulted by judges and coroners because they are without religious belief, the boycott of Freethinkers no longer exists, the Churches are no longer so many vested interests that threaten social development, non-Christians are no longer forced to pay for a religious instruction they do not believe in and will not have. There is no need for any further Freethought propaganda. The intellectual millennium—Mr. Bottomley's millennium—has arrived. Mr. Bottomley, on the state of religion and Freethought, is almost as amusing as are his prophecies concerning the course of the War.

Mr. Bottomley says that "George Jacob Holyoake, in his maturer years, abandoned Atheism for Secularism." We beg to state most emphatically that Holyoake did nothing of the kind. And we regret to find Mr. Bottomley signalling his conversion to religion by so grave a misrepresentation. Holyoake remained an Atheist to the end, but he always held that Secularism did not involve Atheism. That was the whole and sole extent of his difference with Bradlaugh.

This War, besides converting Mr. Bottomley, has unearthed some remarkable Freethinkers. Mr. Ian Malcolm, M.P., has discovered a rare specimen, whom he immortalises in his book, *War Pictures* :—

"A Freethinker—or one who gave himself out to be such in peace-time—writes thus from the battlefield to his wife: 'Above all, teach our little one to say his prayers. Go to Mass yourself. You will think of me upon your knees.'" We would give a trifle to meet that "Freethinker" in the flesh.

It is fortunate for some of us that we do not recognise the clergy as our pastors and masters, or look to them for guidance in this time of crisis. The parish magazine published at Newton Common, Lancs, shows the intense interest in serious matters of its vicar, whose most important pronouncement is, "The celebration of the harvest was a very happy one." Not a word about the great European War, or that awful red harvest on the Continent.

Owing to the darkened thoroughfares of London, a number of places of worship have discontinued evening services. What brave people Christians are! They appear to be afraid "to go home in the dark."

A fire took place recently at St. Peter's Church, Fulham, and damaged the south porch considerably. Cannot "God" look after his own buildings?

We are glad to see that Mr. J. M. Robertson has, on behalf of the Rationalist Press Association, written the Home Secretary in connection with Judge Rentoul's treatment of an Old Bailey juror who desired to affirm. It cannot be said that Mr. Robertson's efforts in the way of redress, although that detracts nothing from the effort, and the fact of its being brought so vigorously before the Home Secretary may, perhaps, prevent the recurrence of a similar outrage. The shorthand reporter has, unfortunately, destroyed his notes, but he vouches for the following summary, which is reproduced in the *Literary Guide* :—

"The jurymen were already in the box with the others, and was the third to be sworn. He asked if he might be allowed to affirm.

Judge Rentoul asked the jurymen what his reasons were.

The jurymen replied that he had no religious belief.

Mr. Muir then asked Judge Rentoul if it was right that a man with no religious belief should try so serious a case.

Judge Rentoul said that he thought not.

Mr. Cassels, who was one of the defending counsel, said he challenged the right of the Crown to object.

Mr. Muir contended that he had a right.

Mr. Cassels repeated his objection.

Judge Rentoul then asked Mr. Muir if he still objected to the jurymen.

Mr. Muir said he did.

Judge Rentoul nodded his head, and had a short private conversation with the Clerk of Arraigns.

Afterwards the Clerk said to the jurymen, 'You must leave the box,' and the juror left without saying anything. [It was subsequently explained that he was deaf, and did not understand why he was objected to.]

The objection by Mr. Muir was made quite openly in court.

Neither Judge Rentoul nor the Associate gave any reason why the man should leave the box."

There seems no reason whatever for believing that the reporter, either in the original report or subsequently, had any motive for misrepresenting what occurred, and we incline to the opinion that when the Home Secretary says that he "very much doubts whether Mr. Muir did what is supposed; at any rate, the Judge did not hear him do it," it is merely a case of one official saving the face of another. Every newspaper that noticed the case, fully endorsed the reporter's version, and it would have been more to the credit of Sir John Simon had he met Mr. Robertson's complaint with a frank admission of a wrong done, and a hope—if nothing stronger were possible—that such conduct should not occur again.

Mr. Horatio Bottomley says, concerning the European War, "A very New Theology is required to grapple with it." Are there not sufficient fancy religions in the world?

Mr. Ashmead Bartlett, in an article in the *Daily News* of October 26, bears testimony to the kind of religion in the Navy, but we are afraid that it will hardly please very religious folk. Here it is :—

"The spirit of the Navy remains unchanged, whatever the dangers which confront it. I do not think I can describe it better than by quoting what was found by the Censor in the letter of a young bluejacket: 'Mother, it is sometimes very hot out here when the shells are dropping all about you and the submarines are hovering round, and you may strike a mine at any minute. At first I was a bit scared, but I remembered the words of the padre last Sunday when he said, 'Men, men, in times of trial and danger look upwards.' I did look upwards, mother, and if there wasn't a blooming aeroplane dropping bombs on us.'"

A great many people at home are also engaged in looking upward, especially at night-time.

Billy Sunday has a rival in the person of the Rev. R. van Meigs, of the First Baptist Church at Muskogee, U.S.A. This is the way, according to an American paper, in which Sunday the Second raises money :—

"Prior to starting his money-raising campaign the Rev. Meigs prepared for rushing tactics. Ushers with pads of paper and pencil were stationed at various points on the floor in order to lose no time in noting the names and amounts as they were announced. Then he went into the pulpit minus his regulation black coat and with his shirt-sleeves rolled above his elbows.

'It will cost just \$25 a throw to see me leap over the Bible-stand,' the Rev. Meigs declared. When the first \$25 subscription was announced, the preacher gave a loud shout of joy, ran to the pulpit, laid his hands upon and leaped over it, after the manner of most approved athletics. Before the evening's task had been accomplished he had repeated this performance something like a score of times."

And these people complain of the bad taste of Freethinkers!

The Reverend Billy Sunday claims that he is "giving hell the best kind of a run I know how." Unhappily, so many Christians no longer believe in the place he mentions.

The *Freethinker* in church! Not a person, but the paper. The other Sunday, the preacher at the Hunter-street Church, Kirkcaldy, cited, with approval, two short poems from this paper, and gave the name of the journal from whence he got them. If this kind of thing spreads, we shall find ourselves getting quite respectable.

The murder of Miss Cavell, the English nurse, by the German Military is a horrible thing, even for this War. In itself, the shooting of this poor lady is no worse than the shooting and stabbing of so many other women during the past fifteen months. But there are circumstances that bring home this particular outrage more sharply to the human imagination. For Miss Cavell was not charged with doing anything that could seriously prejudice the existence of a single German soldier. She was not providing the Allies with information, or playing the part of a spy. Her offence was one which reflected credit upon her, even though it may have been technically wrong. She had hidden some captured soldiers, or had helped them to escape. And that, we say, was a womanly action. It was what one might expect a good and tender-hearted woman to do. To have punished her in some way was probably admissible. To have shot her in cold blood, and by order of a court of soldiers, was altogether horrible. It is a fresh proof of the steady process of demoralisation brought about by this War between Christian nations.

Mrs. Amelia Thomas, wife of the Rev. J. M. D. Thomas, a Somersetshire rector, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment for ill-treating a young servant girl, the prosecution being instituted by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The restraining power of the Christian religion is not very evident in this case.

Attention is called in the *Jewish World* to a "disgraceful insult" to Sergeant Issy Smith, V.C., who was refused refreshment in a Leeds restaurant because he is a Jew. It is curious that this animosity against Hebrews should be so prevalent when we remember that one half of Europe worships a Jew and the other half a Jewess.

The Rev. Augustus Jackson, of All Saints' Vicarage, Northfleet, left estate of the value of £23,601. At least the reverend gentleman had courage, for his Master said, "Woe unto ye rich."

An article in the dear *Daily News* bore the title, "The Dark Side of Science." It is not nearly so black as the dark side of religion.

When the military members of the Upminster Congregational Church proceeded to the Front, a fervent appeal from the minister and congregation was directed to the Throne of Grace for protection and safe keeping of the contingent. The appeal apparently miscarried, or has been misunderstood by the Lord, for in the magazine of the church for October, we are told:—

"It is a pleasure to see Corporal T. H. Jackson in Upminster again, after his long sojourn in hospital.

Private E. Stapleton, too, we hear is now doing well. He is able to move about on crutches, and much enjoys the exercise, after lying for between three and four months on his back.

We regret to learn that Private E. Brandon has been wounded at the Dardanelles.

Since the above notes were written, we learn that Private A. L. Charlton has been wounded in the arm, and is now in hospital at Gravesend.

Signalman A. Lindsay also has been invalided home from Gallipoli, suffering from dysentery, and is in hospital in Birmingham."

The Vicar of St. John's, Stratford, in an address the other day before the St. John's Christian and Ethical Society, said that "the way their infants were slaughtered and ill-treated was not only a disgrace to their civilisation, but to their religion. The torture of children that went on in Christian

England was too awful to contemplate." If Mr. Mervin really believes this to be true, it is surprising he does not realise that this in itself constitutes an indictment of Christianity as damning as anything ever said by Freethinkers. If the statement had been made of India or Turkey, the vicar would have seen in it the need for a change of religion. In Christian England he advises more of the religion that is, at all events negatively, responsible for its existence. And the *Christian and Ethical Society!* What in the name of all that is wonderful is this new blend?

There are more ways than one of telling a lie. One may say what is textually true, and yet be miles away from the truth. Thus the *Times*, in a leading article on the massacre of the Armenians, speaks of "the inhuman orders of the Freethinkers Talaat and Enver." We do not know whether this description of Talaat Bey and Enver Bey is correct or not. Neither do we care. But the purpose of the description is very obvious. And seeing that Germans are reported to have helped in the massacre, it would have been only fitting to add "the Christian German." No Freethinker can successfully compete with Christians when it comes to a work of sheer brutality in the name of religion. The worst Freethinker that ever lived, or is likely to live, can only follow a long way behind his Christian teachers in the arts of massacre and brutality.

Mr. Muskett told a man, who was charged with creating a disturbance at a German Church, that in this country it was the duty of all people to show toleration of religious worship. This is good advice, but what is needed in addition is toleration of no religion. We should like to see Mr. Muskett observe that rule in all cases with which he is concerned.

The *Daily Chronicle* published recently the photograph of a Bible which had saved a soldier's life by stopping a bullet. We readily believe that this is something to be placed to the credit of our national fetish, but other papers have published during the War photographs of cigarette cases, chocolate boxes, pocket-books, and cartridges that have served a similar purpose. So that honors are equal. And we are not at all surprised at even a German bullet finding the Bible too tough to negotiate.

Viscount Bryce, speaking at the 147th commemoration of the foundation of Cheshunt College, said:—

"It must be admitted that Christianity had done less than we had hoped to prevent strife between nations. It was regrettable that the Churches had not done as much as might have been hoped; in fact, they seemed to have identified themselves with their States, to be followed whichever way their States took them. We had seen a State in these days recognising no moral responsibility to God, to humanity, or to moral law, but simply and wickedly acting in a way which suited its own interests. Hardly, if ever before in the world had such an atrocious doctrine been acted upon. It was a terrible thing to think that a State which was Christian could act upon such principles."

We do not think that Viscount Bryce, with his knowledge of Church history, can be very greatly surprised at this attitude of the Churches. The Church in every country has always supported the Government that supported it, and its present behavior is in exact conformity with its past history. And Viscount Bryce must be quite well aware that the Christian Church really has no theory of the State by which it can stand, and no social doctrine that it can call its own. That is the main reason why the Christian Church has operated as an effective force in social life, while its political opportunism is the direct outcome of a priestly order grasping after power, privilege, and wealth.

Lord Derby's circular letter respecting enlistment, which has been sent to all "unstarred men," has been sent to clergymen also. The Archbishops of York and Canterbury have protested against this, and have advised their clergy against joining. They consider that the clergy are "rendering the best service which they can offer to the nation at this juncture by discharging duties in their parishes which no one else can discharge, and this at a time when such ministry is called for and valued in a peculiar degree." We must confess to being sceptical both as to the call for and the value of the services which the clergy render. It looks to us very much as though the Archbishops are placing religious interests before everything, and are afraid that if the number of clergy left at home is diminished the Church may lose its hold on the nation. We have not heard of any laymen protesting against the clergy enlisting, and we suggest that it would have been more gracious had the protest been left to them. Perhaps the Archbishops of York and Canterbury are a little afraid that such a protest would never have been made.

To Correspondents.

PRESIDENT'S HONORARIUM FUND.—Greevz Fisher, 9s. 6d.

G. F. McCLUSKEY.—Many thanks for your sympathy and expressions of regard. We expected no less from you, and we are quite certain we can depend upon you.

C. STANTON (Edinburgh).—Thanks for cutting.

KEIDON.—If time permits, Mr. Cohen would be delighted. Pity that telepathy is not a demonstrated fact, and worked on the same lines as the telephone.

The three guineas acknowledged in our last issue as a subscription to the Honorarium Fund, from "Edward Driver," should have read from "Edward Oliver." Mr. Oliver writes Miss Vance:—"The decease of the late President will leave a blank in the cause of Freethought difficult to fill; one at the moment cannot imagine how it will go on without him.....Please convey to his wife and family my sincere sympathy and condolence in their great personal loss."

W. BOOTH.—The words you quote were favorite ones with Mr. Foote. And they applied well in his own case.

H. C. SHACKELTON.—Your description of Mr. Foote's influence on your own life is the best tribute that could be paid any man.

J. BLACKHALL.—Glad to get your appreciation of our efforts. You may rely upon our doing our very best for the *Freethinker*. We have never done less than that, and we cannot promise to do more.

ARTHUR CHAPMAN.—Mrs. Foote is deeply appreciative of your sympathy.

K. BONSONNI.—Whatever consolation can come to those who have lost husband or parent is given by warm-hearted letters such as yours.

G. WEIR.—Sorry to learn that you are yourself fighting the influenza fiend. He is most dangerous when he seems on the point of retreating. We hope to hear of your speedy recovery. Thanks for letter.

C. CHAMBERS.—Letters to newspapers in favor of Freethought, or in refutation of Christian statements, is a form of propaganda to which we attach great importance. We hope, one day, to see this press propaganda properly organised. Your own communication is on the right lines.

C. AYRES.—We have had a nightmare of a fortnight, but hope to get settled down to the more normal routine soon.

M. J. BREEZE (Birmingham) writes:—"I have just bought six copies of the *Freethinker* to send to friends. It is a magnificent tribute to the General's memory. The thanks of the Freethought party are due to you for the arrangement and production of what will become an epochal number of the *Freethinker*." Mr. Cohen has not forgotten his promise, and hopes to redeem it soon.

"MIDNEMOS" writes:—"The Memorial Number is a fine one, and I feel certain will produce an excellent impression everywhere. You have secured a galaxy of talent, and the number is of permanent interest."

T. GILDERDALE.—Crowded out of present issue, but hope to make use of your interesting communication later.

W. REPTON.—Glad to have the promise of your continued support, which we highly value. We know we have a hard task before us, but are confident that *Freethinker* readers will do their best to make it as light as possible.

M. B.—Pleased to get your list of likely subscribers to paper. Your own plan of taking two copies weekly is a practical way of helping. We do not stock the Oaths Amendment Act, but any newsagent will get it for you to order.

BROWN (Yarmouth).—Your wire, offering, "Honor, Respect, Reverence to Memory of Good, Brave Man," was duly delivered at the Crematorium, and deeply appreciated.

T. J. DAVIES.—Glad to hear that you are selling more *Freethinkers* than ever. Your energy is a credit to yourself and the cause.

H. HAYNES.—Sorry we cannot answer your query about the late J. M. Wheeler. Copy of *Freethinker* sent as desired.

SOLDIER ATHEIST.—Corrections have been made as desired. We shall be glad to receive the sketches you promise of "religious" life in the trenches; and, from your position, no one could be better qualified to supply them.

J. BLACKHALL.—We think you will find a quite adequate reply to the reverend gentleman in the letter from "Soldier Atheist" in our next issue. It is curious that the only people who notice and chronicle the intense religion of our soldiers at the Front are clergymen. And it would be akin to blasphemy to suggest that their testimony is little better than a trade advertisement.

J. A. REID.—Thanks for cuttings.

C. JORTAN.—Thanks for your sympathy with all those belonging to or connected with G. W. Foote.

THE SECULAR SOCIETY, LIMITED, office is at 62 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

THE NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY's office is at 62 Farringdon-street, London, E.C.

When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, giving as long notice as possible.

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

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

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

ORDERS for literature should be sent to the Shop Manager of the Pioneer Press, 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.

Mr. Cohen will be able to redeem one of the two promises made in last week's "Special"—that concerning the future of the *Freethinker*. We feel sure the statement will be awaited with friendly interest.

In view of an expected increased demand for the "G. W. Foote Memorial Number," we printed a much larger supply of the *Freethinker* last week, and we are pleased to say that our expectations were justified. But we estimated not merely for this one week's increased sales, but for a demand for this particular issue for some time to come. In this we were over-cautious, and we had to go to press again on Thursday with a second impression. Even that is running down rapidly, so that those who wish to secure copies for friends, or for any other purpose, would be well advised to order their copies soon. The type is now distributed, and we cannot, therefore, undertake a third impression of this particular issue.

We have received congratulations from all over the country on this Memorial Number, including one from Mrs. Foote. We can only say, as we said last week, that we tried to make the number worthy of its late Editor. We did our best, in the short time we had, and we are gratified that our efforts met with universal approval. We could have done more had we had more time for preparation, but only those who know what producing a special number means will realise the harassing week we had in getting the matter together, and the hundred and one incidental tasks and anxieties. We can only say that everyone connected with the *Freethinker* worked like heroes. Their heart was in the work, and everybody meant that the enterprise should not fail for want of effort. And the reward of everybody has been the success achieved.

A very old supporter of the *Freethinker*, in the course of a lengthy letter—of which modesty prevents our quoting much—says:—

"While deeply regretting the occasion, I feel that I must congratulate you upon the current issue of the dear old *Freethinker*. It is in every way a magnificent memorial to Mr. Foote, and the tributes paid him will come as a surprise to those who only knew him through the reports of slanderous tongues."

We are unable to say anything more definite about the photograph of Mr. Foote mentioned in last week's paper, except that it is under preparation. A new block has been prepared, and the result is a really clear, lifelike representation. Full particulars as to prices, etc., will be given next week.

On the motion of Mr. Cohen the N. S. S. Executive decided to hold a G. W. Foote Commemorative Meeting at an early date. The resolution ran "within a month," but owing to various circumstances, some connected with the War, it cannot be held until December 5. The place of meeting will in all probability be the Queen's (Minor) Hall, and it will be on a Sunday afternoon—again because of reasons connected with the War. We hope to be in a position to give full particulars next week, together with a list of speakers, which the Committee appointed to arrange the meeting is trying to make a representative one.

Amongst those present at the funeral of Mr. Foote was Mr. Bradlaugh Bonner. His name was omitted quite inadvertently, and, indeed, there are possibly others present who ought to have been mentioned. But we could not observe everyone, and the omitted will please extend due forgiveness.

A touching incident at the funeral of our late leader was the placing of a laurel wreath on the coffin by a soldier-Freethinker in full military uniform.

Among the hundreds of persons who sent sympathetic messages to Mr. Foote's family was the Rev. Fred Hall, of Blackburn.

We are glad to be able to report that Mr. Sydney Gimson's son, who was dangerously wounded in France, is now on the road to recovery, although it is expected that his convalescence will be a lengthy one. Mr. Gimson, who is a very old friend of Mr. Foote's, has written a brief appreciation of our late leader, which will appear in our next issue.

The cause of Secular Education has lost a very ardent supporter by the death of Sir Henry Cotton on Friday, October 22. Although we knew of him as a man of very liberal views, and who had an honorable distinguished career in the Indian Civil Service, we only came into personal contact with him on the Executive of the Secular Education League. All we saw of him there reflected to his credit. His courtliness of manner was as invariable as his kindness of disposition and liberality of mind was unmistakable. This is not the place in which to speak of his warm advocacy of the claims of the people of India, but we know that in his death they have lost the services of an ardent and incorruptible friend. His devotion to the cause of Secular Education was very pronounced, and the League has lost a staunch supporter at the time when it most needs help.

We are obliged to hold over replies to a number of correspondents until next week.

Tributes from Far and Near.

IT was so far pleasing to note the large number of papers—daily and weekly—that contained a notice with a biographical sketch, more or less brief, of Mr. Foote. We cannot reprint all these, and indeed most of them travelled over so identical a course that to do so would be wearisome. We can only say of them—as we have already said—there was not a really unkind word among them. The elaborate pretence, kept up for so many years, of not knowing that anyone such as G. W. Foote, or that a paper like the *Freethinker*, existed, was for once broken down. The *Freethinker's* editor was discovered after he was dead. We have no doubt that if the *Freethinker* died its existence would then be made known to the world. But we have no intention of winning publicity at that price.

Some of the press notices were sufficiently distinctive to call for reproduction, if only in part. The *New Statesman*, in the course of its obituary notice, says:—

It is worth remembering that Mr. Foote, in 1883, under Gladstone's administration, was allowed to suffer a whole year's imprisonment for blasphemy; notwithstanding the fact that, in the meantime, at a subsequent trial on a different indictment, the charge against him had been dismissed—mainly in consequence of a different version of the law laid down by a higher legal authority, Lord Chief Justice Coleridge. Nor must we forget that the Blasphemy Laws remain unrepealed, and are still occasionally put in force against the poor and friendless. Foote was a man of extraordinarily wide reading and great argumentative power, which he concentrated on what seems, to a later generation, too narrow an issue. His uncompromising sincerity and frankness gave to his criticisms of Christian doctrines an appearance of arrogant intolerance that was really quite foreign to his character, which was distinguished in its generosity, candor and freedom from either malice or ambition.

The *Manchester Guardian* remarks:—

The late Mr. Foote deserves a place in the history of English law. It was owing to his efforts, perhaps, even more than to those of his friend Bradlaugh, that the Secularist position was really legalised. He always claimed that it was his speech at the Old Bailey which induced the late Lord Coleridge to decide that a denial of Christianity, if expressed in moderate language, was not an offence against the law. Holding that Lord Coleridge's view governed the law of blasphemy in civil as well as religious matters, Mr. Foote constituted the Secular Society as a limited company. The recent decision of the Court of Appeal in the Bowman case proved the correctness of his view, unless, of course,

that judgment is overruled by the House of Lords. Subject to this possibility, Mr. Foote has shown that it is legal for a private benefactor to endow a Freethought propaganda.

An officer writes from the Front to Mrs. Foote:—

I have just seen a paper which announces the terrible blow which has fallen upon you, and the irreparable loss which we militant Freethinkers have maintained. There will be many sad hearts in the trenches to-day, where there are said to be no Atheists, and where there are uncommonly few Christians. I shall keep my eye on the *Freethinker* to see what's going on, and will help to see that your husband's noble work does not perish on his grave.

The West Ham Branch of the N. S. S. forwards the following resolution:—

That this West Ham Branch of the National Secular Society learns with deep sorrow of the death of the President of the Society, Mr. G. W. Foote, and desires to place on record its appreciation of the judgment, generosity, devotion, and other sterling qualities possessed and practised by our late great leader.

Further, it recognises that not only does our cause suffer an irreparable loss by the death of the great soldier of Freethought, but literature and the world of scholarship will be poorer through the cessation of his mind, tongue, and pen.

It also desires to express sincere sympathy with Mrs. Foote and family in the trial, trouble, and grief of their crushing misfortune.

Straight Talk, a Liverpool journal, says:—

Editorially and officially, whatever they may be privately, the editors of this paper know no creed, and therefore aim to steer clear of theological expressions; but a certain latitude is granted thus to those outside this group who write in its pages. This made plain—if it has not always been so—it will be clear we can express appreciation of the morally great, whatever their theology or lack of it. Seeing, then, that the chief aim of this paper is social-moral well-being, we cannot overlook the fact that in the death of Mr. G. W. Foote the world has lost a brave and brilliant man, who took the uphill of life with singular stability, strenuousness, and strength, which fact placed some notable victories, in the line of his quest, to his credit, the last being endorsed by eminent English judges. He stood fast and faithfully for social sanity and sterlingness, and was a lover and powerful advocate of peace, but only if honor accompanied. He was withering to his foes, and worshipped by his friends, though he never swerved an iota from the straight line of his conscience to secure one. He was unusually eloquent of speech and pen; fine of figure, and intellectual of face.

We only saw two notices of Mr. Foote's death in the religious press, but probably there were more. The first is from the *Christian World*:—

In his 66th year, Mr. G. W. Foote, Bradlaugh's successor as President of the National Secular Society, and founder and editor since 1881 of the *Freethinker*, died at Westcliff. A man of culture, Mr. Foote was on terms of friendship with Meredith, Thomas Hardy, and other authors. His attitude towards religion, however, was that of bitter contempt, and he lost all sense of good taste in his vulgar parodies of incidents of the Gospels. In 1882, with his publisher and printer, he was prosecuted for blasphemy. The jury disagreed, but on a second trial the defendants were sentenced to a year's imprisonment. In a later trial, Lord Chief Justice Coleridge delivered a famous judgment which established the principle that the fundamental doctrines of Christianity might be attacked without the legal offence of blasphemy being committed, provided the language used in the attack was not of an improper kind.

The second was in the *Christian Commonwealth*, which headed its notice "The Last of the Victorians":—

Almost the last of the Victorians has passed away in the death of Mr. G. W. Foote, the famous Secularist. He died on Sunday at Westcliff-on-Sea, after a long illness, in his sixty-fifth year. Mr. Foote was the associate of Charles Bradlaugh, and the founder and editor of the *Freethinker*, in which journal he fought hard to maintain the scientific materialism of the Victorian age against the slow return of faith. Of his ability and sincerity there has never been any real question; he believed in his negation with an intensity of conviction that some men lack who believe in God. He stood two trials for "blasphemy," and served a year's

sentence in Holloway Gaol, and to him more than to any other man is due the fact that the stupid and barbarous blasphemy laws were at least made more reasonable, and to that extent more tolerable to people possessing both conscience and intellect. This battle was certainly worth winning.

No serious complaint can be raised against either of these notices. The qualifications which accompany them were, in the circumstances, inevitable. And when the *Christian World* says Mr. Foote "lost all sense of good taste in his vulgar parodies of incidents in the Gospels," one feels that it really means only that the *Christian World* would have been pleased had he never attacked Christianity. The *Christian Commonwealth's* description of the *Freethinker* as struggling hopelessly to keep back the return of faith by means of an old-fashioned "scientific materialism" is characteristic. The picture of the Christian as being up-to-date and the scientific Freethinker as being old-fashioned, is almost amusing. We also note the expression, the "slow return of faith." *Very slow.*

Propos of what was said by several writers in our last issue of Mr. Foote's broad humanity, the following appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* a few days after his death (October 20), and written evidently by a Christian:—

SIR,—Your obituary notice of the death of the late Mr. G. W. Foote ends with a remark which those who were most opposed to his opinions will heartily endorse, that "he was free from malice or personal ambition." One instance comes to my memory at the moment of writing. The late Mr. Harry Alfred Long, of anti-Popery fame, and Mr. Foote had just concluded one of the most bitter contests the old Hall of Science in Old-street, City-road, had witnessed—and it had witnessed not a few in its day—when both champions shook hands warmly, and in the most naturally charming manner Mr. Foote said to Mr. Long, "And how's the wife?" Foote, like Bradlaugh, was obsessed with hatred of the Christian religion, and did not scorn to stoop to methods of debate that were not always fair; but both were possessed with a personal kindness not to be denied. I personally can testify to this fact from my own experience on the platform.

A. W. ELLIOT.

11, Woodberry-crescent, Muswell-hill, N.

The Portsmouth Sunday Lecture Society also writes expressing regret at the loss of "a great soldier of Freethought," and offering its condolence to Mrs. Foote and family.

Mrs. Turnbull and family, of Glasgow, write:—

It was with deepest regret that we learned of Mr. Foote's death. We feel that we have lost a very dear and true friend. We have been associated with him through the *Freethinker* for the last thirty years, and we greatly admired his noble fight for Freethought.

At a meeting of the Directors of the Rationalist Press Association on October 28, the following resolution was passed unanimously:—

That the Rationalist Press Association record on its Minutes its deep appreciation of the life-services of Mr. G. W. Foote in the cause of freedom of thought—his dauntless advocacy, his masterly oratory, his rare literary power, and his prescience in founding an incorporated organisation for the endowment of Rationalism; and that it tender to his family its sincere condolences in their bereavement.

At a specially convened meeting of the South Shields Branch of the N. S. S., a resolution expressing admiration for the work of Mr. Foote, regret at his death, and condolence with his family, was passed unanimously. Mr. S. M. Peacock and Captain Taylor also represented the South Shields Branch at Mr. Foote's funeral.

The Air and Water Currents of the Earth.—III.

(Concluded from p. 685.)

THE foregoing phenomena are clearly illustrated by the Gulf Stream, a warm and vapor-laden current,

as its comparatively high temperature permits it to carry a considerable percentage of vapor. When this ocean stream has its onward course arrested, first by the American plateau, and secondly by the shores of Europe, it is deflected by these obstacles and constrained to change its course. But the air current above it encounters no such interruption, and in the Eastern Atlantic at least it continues to travel as the ocean stream would have travelled had no land obstacle intervened. The mild and moist south-west winds which render the climate of Western Europe so humid and temperate, are in fact the aerial currents which, for thousands of miles, have floated over the genial waters of the Gulf Stream. The moderate temperature and the beneficent rainfall of the British Isles are conditioned in very large measure by these westerly winds. These currents are constantly deviated to the right by the earth's rotation, and they discharge their vapor in the form of rain over Sweden, Finland, and Russia. The great lakes of these territories are thus replenished. The winds sweep across the Ural Mountains and over the tablelands and waterless wastes of Central Asia. But their warmth and moisture become exhausted as they travel over Europe, and these currents are as barren as the proverbial east wind as they blow across Asia in returning to the equatorial regions which gave them birth. Their world journey is now completed. We thus discover that the self-same currents which bring us our mild and moist weather, blow as arid airs over the desert wastes of the Eastern World. After parting with their moisture, these currents pass through the rainless and bare regions which mark their return journey. They blow their barren breath across the Sahara Desert, the Desert of Tarkestan, and the Desert of Arabia. Thus, through a very remarkable reciprocal arrangement, the Gulf Stream becomes the indirect cause of the desert producing climates of the Old World.

To the British seamen the Gulf Stream is known as the father of storms. An isobar, that line on a map which connects places where the mean height of the barometer at sea-level is the same, may be profitably studied in connection with atmospheric disturbances. The circular isobaric curves on the charts represent fairly faithfully the form storms usually assume in Europe, where the area embraced by almost all aerial commotions, is either elliptical or circular in outline. Storms of irregular outline do occasionally occur, but in these cases one storm region will be found to have broken up into two or more smaller storms. The common characteristic of storm areas remains that of the circle. This rounded nature of a storm region is an attribute of very considerable consequence to the meteorologist and the navigator alike. To the mariner this circumstance provides practical guidance when at sea, while it assists the meteorologist in forecasting aerial disturbances at stated stations, and enables him to predict the quarter from which they will travel, as well as to anticipate the choppings of the wind during their continuance. The geographical arrangement of storms varies greatly, the circular area covered being seldom less than 600 miles in diameter, though sometimes increasing to five times that number. The entire continent of Europe is occasionally overspread by a single storm. Quite half of the storms which occur in North-Western Europe come to us from the south-west, while nineteen out of every twenty approach us from the quadrant north-west to south-west. Storms rarely move towards a westerly point, but in the few instances where this has happened, the westerly direction of the disturbance has been arrested either in the North Sea, over Southern Scandinavia, or the British Isles. Such departures from the usual trend appear to be traceable to local causes.

Berget is anxious to restore the name of the French scientist, Maurice de Tastes, to what he regards as its rightful position in meteorological research. The labors of this able pioneer have been ignored or forgotten. In several standard treatises on meteorology his name is not even mentioned. Yet de Tastes seems

to have been the first to point out the influence exerted by atmospheric currents in conditioning the globe's climatal phenomena. He laid the foundations of what still remains a far from exact science, but every honor is due to him for his too frequently overlooked contributions to the study of atmospheric circulation.

The development of de Tastes' research work now enables meteorologists to predict storms which were previously viewed with astonishment and dismay, when the ruin they had wrought had been accomplished. Now that the paths followed by aerial currents are better understood, the occurrence of cyclones in tropical regions may be forecasted and guarded against with some certainty of success.

The facts established concerning the Gulf Stream in the North Atlantic are similar to those relating to the Kuro-Siwo stream in the North Pacific. This ocean current generates an atmospheric current above it, which accompanies it as it streams over the sea. These two marine currents—the Gulf Stream and the Kuro-Siwo—are parted from each other by the Texas territory and the semi-tropical states of North America. At the midsummer season, when the sun's power is at its height, these soil-surfaces become heated much sooner than the adjacent seas. The lower air strata participate in this increased temperature and, becoming lighter, ascend towards the upper regions of the atmosphere. The land area under consideration now becomes the centre of low pressure conditions, and the neighboring air masses press forward to fill the spaces left by the departed atmospheric gases. As a result, the Pacific and Atlantic atmospheric current circuits, which lie apart up to this point, become displaced, and therefore collide. A cyclone is the consequence of this displacement, and whenever the above sketched conditions obtain, the recurrence of a cyclonic disturbance may be predicted with positive certainty. In the hot season of the year the required conditions are brought into being; the two contiguous currents may meet and mingle, and a rotary storm bursts forth. The time and place of the atmospheric turmoil can therefore be known beforehand, and all observation proves the correctness of the theory. It is interesting to notice that cyclones are unknown in South America, despite the nearness of the two chief aerial circuits of the South Atlantic and South Pacific. Now this is explained by the fact that these currents are separated by the Cordillera of the Andes, which constitutes an impassible barrier. Cyclonic phenomena are more or less confined to the lower layers of the atmosphere. At a height of from 125 to 250 miles, if not altogether absent, they are enormously weakened. The Cordillera attain an altitude of from 375 to 425 miles, and the mean height of the Andes in the Argentine area, which may be reckoned as being above 22 miles, therefore presents an insurmountable barrier to the junction of the Pacific and Atlantic currents, and, consequently, precludes the possibility of the development of cyclonic disturbances in that particular region.

This dual circulation, the aquatic and atmospheric, which is so closely and directly interrelated, evolves a third circulation—the fluvial motion—which restores to the sea the waters which the solar orb has drawn from it in the form of vapor. The combined activities of the atmospheric and oceanic currents transport this aqueous vapor to the colder terrestrial surfaces, where it descends to the earth as rain, or falls on the high mountains in the form of snow.

Water is absolutely essential to life, and in those areas of the earth where no water is available the higher flora and fauna cannot live. Water, then, is indispensable not only to life itself, but to all those applications of science and industry which render civilisation and culture possible. Yet all our springs and rivers unmistakably depend upon the precipitation of aerial water vapor, as snow or rain. It is a fair deduction from the facts which science has gathered, that if the total rainfall of our planet's land-surfaces which is annually received were quite

uniformly distributed, and if the continents and islands were uniformly level and thus made to coincide with the smooth surface of the sea, the amount of moisture so precipitated would, at the close of a year, form a layer 33.464 inches in thickness—

“which implies, considering the area of the continents, an equal quantity of rain occupying a volume of 122,500 cubic kilometres [27,400 cubic miles]. If we recall that the volume of the water of all the oceans is about 1,300 million cubic kilometres [312 million cubic miles], it follows that the total annual rainfall represents about the eleven-thousandth part of this.”

Not one quarter, however, of the terrestrial rainfall is returned to the ocean by the action of running water. The remaining three-quarters of the total rainfall are partly evaporated, while the rest is sucked up by the soil, or utilised by the animal and plant population of the globe. It is estimated that the earth's streams restore to the oceans one forty-eight-millionth part only of the liquid which the sun's energy removes from them by evaporation. This relatively insignificant quantity represents all that the united activities of the aerial and pluvial circulations through their to and fro movements between land and sea send back to the ocean in terms of gravity, out of the immense volumes of water the seas lose by evaporation. It may thus be said that the rivers in some degree perform a similar function in our planet's economy to that which the capillaries, arteries, and veins subserve in the circulation of blood through the animal body. All these blood-vessels act as rivers in conducting back to its place of origin the living fluid which, having been conveyed to every part of the body, thus maintains its life.

We may conclude with a brief account of the ocean's vertical movements. The Brazil current, the East Australian current, and the Mozambique current transport immense masses of warm salt waters from lower latitudes into the Southern Ocean. These tepid waters in their journey towards the south are brought under the powerful influence of the westerly and north-westerly winds of the “roaring forties.” They are thus refrigerated, become denser, and fall to greater depths. These sinking waters contain atmospheric gases, which serve to aerate the deeper waters of the sea. As they descend, these currents are drawn further southward, and then lie below the cold and fresher waters which have arisen from the thawed snow and melted icebergs from the Southern Polar regions. The sunken currents are also drawn in the direction of the equator to occupy the place of the warm surface-waters which the winds have blown towards the south. The north-westerly winds drive such vast volumes of warm water into the Southern Ocean that they are to be viewed as the most powerful factor in the marine circulation of these regions. A further phenomenon of great consequence lies in the fact that the passage of these enormous streams of warm and saline water very materially mitigates the temperature of the Antarctic Seas, especially in the deeper layers. Thus they confine the ice-clad regions to their present limits.

In the North Atlantic, and in a minor degree in the North Pacific, similar causes generate a vertical circulation akin to the one just described, but owing to the smaller area of the ocean surface and its restricted influence in the frozen Arctic Seas its effects upon the deeper waters are less pronounced.

Vertical circulation of oceanic water is due to three causes. The pull of the air currents on the surface water tends to upwelling; the differences in the quantity of salt between the various water layers which result from evaporation and precipitation; and the differences of density brought about by changes of temperature. These three factors cause the water to rise or fall in the ocean, and as the currents descend they carry with them the atmospheric gases they absorbed when at the surface. Therefore, material modifications are brought about at great depths both in temperature and salinity,

and these phenomena greatly influence the character of life in the deeper seas. The cold currents which descend from the ocean surface in high latitudes both in the Northern and Southern hemispheres, in consequence of their depressed temperature, bear with them in their descent a larger quantity of atmospheric gases than currents of a warmer character, and in this way aerate with greater efficiency the whole of the deeper waters of the oceanic world.

T. F. PALMER.

A French Diary.

Friday.—Relieved the Pray-Hards in the First Line Trenches. Situation normal.

Saturday.—Morning strafed by the enemy with field-guns on our Support Trench. Twelve shells; no one hurt. Rev. Soapuds (C. of E. chaplain), happens to be passing at lunch-time and takes pot-luck. Afterwards, gets me *tête-à-tête*, and tells me that he had for some time wished to assure himself that I was ready to die. How's that for damned impertinence?

I: "If you mean, do I believe in Christianity? Certainly I don't."

Rev. S.: "Well, what do you believe in?"

I: "I believe in man."

Rev. S.: "But don't you believe in *The Man*?"

I: "If you mean a man of the kind that can rise from the dead and go up in the sky without an aeroplane; I certainly do not believe in him."

Rev. S.: "But don't you think the character of Jesus the most beautiful ever depicted?"

I: "There are distinct characters given to Jesus in the various books of the New Testament; some of these portraits I do not admire at all. Take the Jesus of John, for instance. Why, he wasn't even a gentleman!"

Rev. S.: "Well, don't you admit that sin should sometimes be reproved in severe language?"

I: "Yes; but that doesn't justify abusive railing. The Jesus of the Fourth Gospel is simply an actor posing for effect."

Rev. S. (changing the subject): "Then don't you believe in virtue and justice?"

I: "Yes, I do. But I don't find justice in nature; I find it in man; and I hope God's friend, Kaiser Billy, will get it strong and hot before we have finished with him."

Saturday evening.—Went to tea with B Cor. Rev. Soapuds (C. of E. chaplain), looked in on passing, and was constrained to stay. He left for the Holy Terriers, on the left, where he wanted to see the men before dinner.

Sunday.—Morning misty. Private Blanket stands-to, starts pumping lead into the mist. Is "found" by a machine-gun, and gets a shot through the forehead.

Lunch.—The Rev. Smiler (Wesleyan and Nonconformist chaplain), happens to be passing. He has forgotten his sandwiches, and, "Would you —? Oh, how kind!" Starts telling stories about heaven. I wade in with the query, "Why is heaven a most lovely spot?" Rev. Smiler washes his hands in imaginary water, beams upon me, and says that he is sure he cannot tell. "Because there's not a damned soul there." Collapse of my brother officers. Rev. Smiler says, weakly, "Ha, ha! I'm afraid I must not ask you for anything more on the subject."

Tea.—Rev. Soapuds happens to be passing just to arrange to meet some of the men on Monday evening. "Yes, he would stay to tea, though he was really anxious to get home."

Monday.—Furious artillery duel starts at 12.30 p.m. All men stand to arms. Bits of steel and lumps of lead flying about in all directions for two hours. Net result, two men slightly wounded and a little bit of parapet down, reserve and communication trenches battered out of shape, and another penny on the income-tax. Injury to Germans not known.

Tuesday.—Enemy plunks a shell into the parapet we built last night. Rev. Smiler looks in at lunch time to see if we had suffered. Stays to lunch. Rev. Soapuds arrives at tea-time and apologises for not turning up yesterday, as he had some casualties to attend to. Has tea, then goes to see the men, and just leaving at dinner-time, but is constrained to stay for dinner.

Wednesday.—Tea; Rev. Smiler.

Thursday.—Lunch; Rev. Soapuds.

Friday.—Lunch; Rev. Smiler. Return to billets.

Saturday.—Rev. Smiler turns up at 12 (noon) and has a sing-song lasting till lunch-time, and stays to lunch. Rev. Soapuds drops in at 4 p.m. to arrange about to-morrow's services. Stays to tea.

Sunday.—Services really voluntary, as we have a new C. O.—a man with colonial experience. Fourteen men appear at church-parade. One officer (parson's son), intended well, but was too late. Wesleyan service a wash-out.

A KITCHENER CAPTAIN.

Correspondence.

BRISTOL'S LATE BISHOP.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

"Dr. Browne, retired Bishop of Bristol, was prosecutor in a summons against an organ-grinder named George Wilson. He said he requested the man to go away from outside his house in Kensington, but the accused refused and threatened him with violence. The organ-grinder was fined 10s. or seven days' hard labor."

SIR,—Perhaps the above cutting from a local paper adds another proof of the utter selfishness of the Church of England clergy. Here is Bishop Browne objecting to the playing of a street-organ outside his house. No noise must disturb this prelate's quietude. On the other hand, the little consideration this irascible old bishop and his successor have for the feelings of others, is proved by the every-day banging and clanging of church bells, which drive the inhabitants of Bristol half crazy.

At the present time many people are mourning some friend or relative, the hospitals are full of wounded soldiers; in these times of anxiety the nerves are highly strung and the amount of sickness is above the average, surely a little regard for the sufferings of others on the part of the clergy would not be out of place; they might well imitate the Archbishop of Malta, and cease the senseless and odious ringing of church bells during war-time.

Bishop Browne grows wrathful at the sound of "Tipperary" outside his house, whilst he and his satellites claim the right to disturb whole neighborhoods at will.

DO TO OTHERS.

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF MONTHLY EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON OCT. 28.

Mr. R. H. Rosetti elected to the chair. Also present: Messrs. Bowman, Britten, Cohen, Cowell, Cunningham, Davidson, Gorniot, Heaford, Leat, Neate, Nichols, Quinton, Roger, Rolph, Samuels, Shore, Silverstein, Thurlow, Wood, George Wood, Miss Kough, Miss Stanley, and Mrs. Rolph.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed; also those of a Special Meeting held on October 20 to officially receive the sad intelligence of the loss sustained to the Freethought world by the death of the Society's President, Mr. G. W. Foote. By a sad coincidence, the last meeting Mr. Foote's declining health had allowed him to attend was in February last, when he had just completed the twenty-fifth year of his office as President, to which he had been elected at the memorable meeting at the Hall of Science on February 16, 1890, when Charles Bradlaugh resigned in his favor.

The vote of condolence and sympathy with Mrs. Foote and her family, which appeared in the columns of this paper last week, was carried unanimously.

The ordinary routine business of the meeting of October 28 was then proceeded with.

The monthly cash statement was received and adopted. New members for the Parent Society were admitted, and correspondence dealt with. The principal item of business of this meeting was a resolution to hold a Memorial Meeting for the late President in London at an early date, and a Committee was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Rosetti, Cohen, and Quinton, to make arrangements.

The Secretary reported upon the instructions given at the last meeting to—

(a) Again write to the Home Secretary in reference to the case of Mr. Cowell, who was not permitted to make his affirmation as a juror at the Central Criminal Court on July 21; and

(b) To invite the co-operation of the R. P. A. in the matter. She stated that the R. P. A. representative had kindly permitted an inspection of their voluminous correspondence with the Home Secretary and others upon the matter, and having also made further personal investigation, she had concluded that the action already taken by both Societies and others would effectively prevent a repetition of this treatment on the part of the legal authorities, and had therefore not continued the correspondence.

It was unanimously resolved that the Secretary's action be endorsed and approved.

The meeting then adjourned.

E. M. VANCE, General Secretary.

LETTERS TO THE CLERGY.

BY

G. W. FOOTE.

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