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*In religion,  
What damned error, but some sober brow  
Will bless it, and approve it with a text.*  
—SHAKESPEARE.

## Views and Opinions.

### The Bishop of London.

Speaking generally, it does not do to take the Bishop of London *too* seriously. That he takes himself seriously is no justification for sensible people doing likewise, although foolish ones may take him at his own valuation. He is not lacking in the energy that helps to make a good commercial traveller, nor in the shallow glibness that attracts a certain type of religionist. And he is at his best when he is expounding God's ways to man. On that subject he is quite at home, and as good an authority as anyone we ever met or heard of. We know of no one else who knows *more* about God than the Bishop of London, and if only he understood the things of earth one thousandth part as well as he appears to understand the things of heaven, the ghost of the scholarly Bishop Creighton might feel less affronted at finding Winnington Ingram established on his throne. Not that Freethinkers have cause to complain at his appointment. If we must have bishops, his kind is the most serviceable we could have. He is a standing illustration of what little *earthly* use bishops are.

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### Arrogance in Excelsis.

But there are times when even the Bishop of London may be taken seriously—or at least more seriously than usual. There are occasions when he stumbles on a truth, and there are occasions when he says things which express the feelings and mental attitude of other Christians. These other Christians do not often say these things so clearly, because if they attempted it they would see their absurdity, and at once unsay them. The Bishop is hampered by no difficulty of that kind. At a religious meeting the other day, Bishop Ingram referred to his attempts to get the authorities to comply with his wishes as regards places of entertainment. And, as reported in the *Evening News* of May 17, he said:—

If I fail in my negotiations I may call upon the whole Church in London to stand by me in facing this question as to whether we Christians are going to be masters in our own household.

Now that is quite clear, and no one but the Bishop could have put it so plainly. He sees nothing wrong in it; nothing absurd in it. It is to him quite plain. The question at issue is whether Christians are to be masters in their own household. This country belongs to Christians. All other people are interlopers; or, on the most charitable interpretation, visitors. Like considerate guests, they should accommodate their behaviour to that of their host's. Otherwise they must not be surprised if they are handed a railway guide with the

earliest departing trains underlined. All non-Christians exist on suffrance.

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### The Process of Civilization.

Observe the arrogance—even impertinence—of the Bishop! With men of the smallest pretence to culture it is now a commonplace that civilization is a process. Its origins are lost in the mists of human history. But we know enough to say that when the cave-man made the first rude drawings of contemporary animals, when he fashioned a flint implement, learned to cook his food instead of devouring it raw; above all, when he discovered the use of fire, the foundations of the art of civilization were laid. To the tremendous story of human civilization all subsequent generations have added their quota. Egypt, Babylon, Greece, Rome, India, and who knows how many peoples of whom all records are now lost, have toiled to produce it. Civilization is not the product of Christianity; it is Christianity itself which, to the evolutionist, is a mere incident in the story of human progress. That story began before Christianity was heard of. It will continue when Christianity is forgotten, or remembered as—to use Heine's expression—the great sickness period of humanity. Gods come and gods go, and man—their creator to-day and their executioner to-morrow—emerges from the shadow of their rule to carry to a successful issue the work that the gods have done so much to retard.

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### Christianity and the State.

If it was the Bishop of London alone who took up this ridiculous attitude, one would just smile and pass on. But the truth is, in saying that “we Christians” must be masters in “our own household,” he really represents the majority of Christians. In this respect they suffer from a bad heredity. The Christian Church had it all its own way for so long, it paid so little heed to the rights of others, that it nowadays finds it difficult to realize changed conditions. Mentally, the Bishop of London and those who agree with him are still in the Middle Ages. They still dream of society as being organized with sole reference to the maintenance of Christian doctrines and the gratification of Christian feelings. They are still under the stupid delusion that the modern State is a *Christian State*, and simply cannot realize that nowadays Christianity is nothing more than a sect—a large sect, maybe, but still a sect. For the modern State is made up of all sorts of believers, and of a vast number of non-believers, and the State is by the sheer logic of events being driven to treat the Christian religion as of no more real consequence to its welfare than any other form of religious folly that may exist within its borders.

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### There Are Others.

Psychologists have often speculated as to the profound importance of a baby's discovery of its own toes. It probably initiates or marks the first stages of the development of personality. But however great that discovery may be, it will be equalled by the social impor-

tance of the Christian's discovery of other people in the world beside himself. At present he discusses social questions as though none but Christians exist. If he attacks any existing habit or institution it is because it offends the *Christian* conscience. When he discusses the education problem—which is really a religious problem—the only thing he considers is the kind of arrangement that will enable the Christian sects to parcel out the nation's children between them. That there are millions of others in the country with the same claims to consideration as himself, never seems to disturb the egotism of his calculations. In the discussion of the Sunday question we see the same thing. The Christian demands that nothing shall be done on that day which outrages *his* feelings. The feelings of other people matter nothing. No Christian is compelled to attend a picture palace or a concert on Sunday. His complaint is not that he is forced to go, but that other people are not compelled to stay away. The claims of Christians are everything; others do not count. One day, perhaps, the Christian will discover that there are other people in the world beside himself. And when he makes that discovery he will cease to be a Christian and become a useful citizen.

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#### A Reminiscence and a Retort.

This talk of "our own household" is an old favourite with the Bishop of London, and the absurdities of his youth are repeated with the confidence of more mature years. Some years ago, in opposition offered at the close of one of my lectures, he suggested that if Freethinkers were not satisfied with this *Christian* country they should emigrate. I replied that if one's house became infested with vermin it was not wisdom to sit on the doorstep waiting for the vermin to evacuate. The better policy was to clear out the vermin and make the house habitable. We are not in the household of the Christian; it is the Christian who is in our household. Civilization was not created by Christians, and it does not belong to them. Christianity does not include humanity; humanity includes Christianity. Humanity includes religion, as it embraces the good and the bad, the wise and the stupid, the beautiful and the hideous. And in the purification of the social organism the Freethinker is playing the part of those indigenous anti-toxins in the individual organism which neutralize the effects of poisons working to its injury.

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#### Pious Egotism v. Facts.

What the Christian must be brought to realize is that we are living in the twentieth century, not in the Middle Ages. The basis of the State was never really religious, but conditions were once such that people thought it to be so. All their thinking proceeded on that assumption. To all who *think*, that assumption is no longer possible. Society is no longer composed of Christians, and no one really expects that it ever will be again so composed. Christianity, we repeat, is now no more than a sect; and, we may add, a dwindling one. The existence of all sorts of opinions is admitted and, by the best amongst us, welcomed. Uniformity of religious belief becomes more impossible every year, and by sheer social growth Christianity is becoming a matter of private opinion, with which the State should have no concern. The modern State is not Christian; the Christian is a member of the modern State, and the distinction is vital. The State is not based upon Christian principles, it does not exist to enforce Christian doctrines or to realize Christian ideals. The Jew, the Christian, the Mohammedan, the Atheist, are all members of the modern State. The Christian is no longer cock of the roost. He is only one of many. This may be a disturbing consideration to the egotism of

Christians, but it is the truth. The believer who realizes this may find his Christianity weakened, but his usefulness as a citizen will be increased. And if the Bishop of London really desires to become master in his "own household," he will have to seek out one of those obscure Eastern Christian sects whose mental life is still centuries behind that of modern Europe. But he will forfeit his £10,000 a year, his two palaces, and his seat in the House of Lords.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## Theories Insusceptible of Proof.

A NEW pulpit star, of exceptional brilliance, has arisen in the religious firmament, and is being industriously boomed by some sections of the press in this country, particularly by the *Christian Commonwealth*. The Rev. Dr. Joseph Fort Newton is an American divine who ministers to the Liberal Christian Church at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and who is deemed worthy to succeed Mr. R. J. Campbell as contributor of a weekly sermon to the journal just mentioned. That he is a highly intelligent, widely-read, deeply thoughtful, and well-balanced gentleman, who makes bold but honest attempts to solve anew the great problems of the world, is self-evident to all unbiased readers of his discourses. In the *Christian Commonwealth* for May 17, his subject is "The Will of God," than which none can be more difficult to treat in an intelligent, consistent, and convincing manner. Dr. Newton's thesis is the supremacy of the Divine Will, the truth of which, he contends, "every one must admit who thinks at all." This, surely, is an awkward, unfortunate position to take up, inasmuch as something of a very definite character is asserted concerning a wholly undefined something. This is a putting of the cart before the horse with a vengeance. We are not told what the will of God is, which is so oracularly declared to be supreme. We should immensely like to know just exactly what it is, and where and how it makes itself known. Without even attempting to define it, Dr. Newton assures us that a denial of its supremacy "leads, in the end, to a most horrible conclusion—that there is in this world a dark, inscrutable Fate or Chance which divides divinity with God, and in many ways thwarts his will." Our choice lies, therefore, between a personal God whose will is supreme, and a dark, inscrutable Fate or Chance. The reverend gentleman does not believe that there is "a dark, inscrutable Fate or Chance," which in many ways thwarts the Divine Will:—

Such a notion would make God as much an object of pity as of worship, and faith would fall like a bird with a broken wing. No; it is better to think that all things exist or happen directly by the will of God, or else by his permission; and surely it need not surprise us that we do not often see the reason why. Of very few things do we know the reason, and perhaps we could not understand the reason for the tragedies of life if it were plainly told us.

That extract smacks pretty strongly of mediæval mysticism, as well as of the obscurantism that manifested itself at the time of the revival of learning. The motto of the obscurantists was, "Resist new views at whatever cost." Dr. Newton is prejudiced against any teaching that seems to challenge the sovereignty of God.

There is an element of disingenuousness in many of Dr. Newton's statements. For example, he avers that "with this faith in the supremacy of the Divine Will philosophy, in its deepest insight, agrees." That is egregiously false. He may, of course, reply that any philosophy that does not teach the sovereignty of God is not philosophy at its deepest insight; but that reply is

falsified by the very philosophical illustration he himself supplies. He alludes to Schopenhauer's book, *The World as Will and Idea*, as proof of the essential harmony between theology and philosophy on the subject of God's will; but, unfortunately for him, Schopenhauer believed neither in God nor his will. He was completely out of touch with the popular religion, his own religion being purely cosmic and secular. To him, Buddhist and Christian monks, Indian devotees and nineteenth century "beautiful souls" are all the same, and serve equally well as examples of saintship. Dr. Newton frankly admits that only in his "initial insight" was Schopenhauer authentic. Subsequently, the poor man, owing to temperamental eccentricities, went philosophically astray, but this is mere quibbling, the truth being that many of the world's greatest philosophers have not been Christian believers at all. The reverend gentleman is not fully honest when he reiterates that "faith and philosophy unite to say that the final reality is an Eternal Will, to obey which is the only path to joy."

The next step in the reasoning is more disastrous still. The preacher had neither read nor thought with sufficient closeness when he composed this sermon. The following deliverance on the meaning of suffering and sorrow is wholly misleading:—

Life is full of terrible and mysterious woe, which baffles and utterly confounds us. Upon some lives the Eternal Will lays so heavy a burden of pain and sorrow that they seem to be one long endurance, and nothing more. Stripped of leaf and blossom, they stand bare, like so many crosses, appalling and appealing. Pain, in its origin and uses, is as deep a mystery as sin, and it grows the more obscure for being closely tracked. We talk of its medicinal and disciplinary property, but that lies on the surface, so easily seen that none can miss it.

Further on in the discourse we learn that pain is medicinal and disciplinary only for believers in Christ. Carlyle had his share of suffering, but it merely soured him, because he prayed not to a Divine Father, but to "a conflux of eternities." Edward Irving, too, Carlyle's intimate friend, was kept for years in a fiery furnace, but the effect the chastisement had upon him was to soften and sweeten his disposition; and Dr. Newton contrasts the two men thus: On Carlyle's part, "there was bitter, blank resignation to the inevitable," while in Irving "there is revealed the Christian way of meeting the inevitable, not sullenly or bitterly, but with vision which sorrow could not dim." As a plain matter of fact, the difference between these two men was purely one of temperament acted upon by two different sets of environment; and on the whole, Carlyle was the happier man, because underneath all the bitterness and cantankerousness in his nature, there was infinite laughter, which every now and then burst through them and completely dispersed them, while Irving, being a much smaller and lighter personality, was never either so miserable or so happy as Carlyle alternately became. It was Nature, neither grace nor the lack of it, that caused the difference between them.

Besides, it is very questionable whether pain, as such, ever is medicinal and disciplinary in its action upon character. As a rule, its only effect is to emphasize, or bring out into clear visibility, qualities already potentially, if not actively, present in a man or a woman; and this effect is the same whether those qualities be good or bad. It is undeniable that what makes some people utterly ruins others. It must also be borne in mind that pain is but the dark side of pleasure, neither of which is ever absolutely alone. Blood-red is the path of the race's progress, and yet laughter and song are intermittently heard along its slow ascent. Pain is universal,

quite as common among the lower animals as among human beings, yet no one dreams of characterizing it as medicinal and disciplinary in the case of the former. A monkey, a lion, or a tiger does not grow in grace or develop a noble moral character as the result of the chastisement inflicted upon it. Pain and pleasure are but a part of Nature's great law of evolution working alike in all living things. As Meredith says, they are the guides that—

Led our wild steps from slimy rock  
To yonder sweeps of gardenland.

In other words, nothing exists or happens by the will of God, or else by his permission, all things existing, occurring, and progressing, or retrograding according to the chemical and physical forces of Nature, which remain for ever the same. These laws are not only immutable, but also of universal application. Absolutely no severance from them is possible for a single human being.

Now, the curious thing is that, according to Dr. Newton, God has two wills, a higher and a lower. He says: "It seems to be the higher will of God that we resist the lower will." Here is a more astonishing statement still:—

When we resist the Divine will we may be resisting what he wills to be resisted, what he wills to be transcended—just as we make problems and appoint difficulties for those we teach for the purpose of overcoming them.

The reverend gentleman supplies us with a list of anomalies which exist by the will of God, such as our physical passions, poverty, disease, and death, all of which God calls upon us to resist with all our might. Here is another statement, more damaging if possible than all the rest:—

Within the realm of the Divine will there is a sphere, tiny, it may be, but real, where the will of man is allowed free play to work out its destiny. Not otherwise, so far as we can see, could man become a moral being. Ignorant, wilful, often wicked, he can defy the will of God indefinitely, inconceivably. Thus many things are permitted in our human world which are not in accord with the perfect will of God. Hence the will of God does not receive perfect expression in human affairs.

We started with the affirmation, both of theology and philosophy, that the will of God is supreme. We soon discovered, however, that it was false to represent philosophy, except in occasional instances, as concurring in that affirmation. Then we were told that the Divine will permitted many things which it did not ordain, and these are things which prevent it from being done on earth as it is said to be done in heaven. God permits, winks at, the War, but the War is not an expression of his will. All these permitted things merely prove that the doctrine of the sovereignty of God falls hopelessly to the ground. And the so-called freedom of the human will, which enables man to set God and his will at defiance even endlessly in the flames of hell, is but a desperate invention to account for existing facts, or a tacit admission that there is, after all, some "dark, inscrutable Fate or Chance" which is stronger than God's will. Our conclusion, therefore, is that theology is not a science at all, but a tissue of vain, useless, and pernicious theories, not one of which rests upon a foundation of unyielding rock, but every one of which seeks to wrench us from our Mother Earth, and convert us into strangers and pilgrims upon our native heath.

J. T. LLOYD.

The Young Men's Christian Association has resorted to the very mundane device of having a flag day. Does this mean that the subscriptions are flagging?

## The Sanctity of the Sabbath.

It is time to fling aside the antiquated rubbish of the clergy, and arrange our periods of rest and recreation according to the dictates of common sense.—G. W. Foote.

THE increasing secularization of Sunday has, as was expected, provoked the clergy into demonstrations of those extreme opinions on the subject which are very generally received with derision, if not with contempt. Apparently, their chief efforts have been directed recently towards the restriction of cinema entertainments. Even a proposal for raising money for blinded soldiers by Sunday entertainments has aroused the pious ire of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The clergy recognize that under modern conditions it is useless to expect the democracy to be content to spend their only free day in the midst of the scene of their work; being faced by the alternatives of spiritual or spirituous intoxication provided by places of worship and public-houses. The clergy do not venture to propose attacking Sunday excursions by rail or motor-bus. It is recognized, we suppose, that this is too strong and powerful an institution to attack, and if a serious attempt were made in that direction the Sunday Observance movement would lose what little influence it possesses in the cloud of public disfavour which would envelop it.

Despite their hypocritical plea for a day of rest, the clergy themselves work on Sunday, so do their servants, choristers, organists, and all who are engaged about their churches. Religious people delight in noise, and plenty of it, and inflict their barbaric taste upon the more civilized members of the community. Acts of Parliament give local authorities the power to suppress unnecessary noise, and vendors of milk, watercress, and muffins have here and there been compelled to desist from their rancorous cries. A man may proceed against his neighbour if he has a dog that bays the moon, or cocks that challenge the dawn. Even organ-grinders may be moved on. But the "unco guid" turn the day of rest into a pious pandemonium, and the peaceful citizen does nothing because the noise is associated with religion. We do not discriminate between any sect, and criticize equally the State and fancy religions. We object as much to the clanging of bells in church-steeple and tin-tabernacles as we do to the ear-splitting noises of the Church and Salvation Armies and side-street mission bands. Leather-lunged preachers, with throats of brass, are equally distasteful to our ears, whether dressed in scarlet, corduroy, or black. It is not a question of prejudice, but of noise. The banging of drums, the blare of brass instruments, the droning of harmoniums, and the bellowing of hymns prevalent on Sundays is sufficient to bring blood from the ears of a bronze statue.

Of all these noises peculiar to the "day of rest," bell-ringing is the most perfect anomaly. People no longer believe in evil spirits, hence there is no necessity to ring bells to drive them away. Since none are so poor as not to possess a watch, the secondary purpose of the Sunday cacophony is a need of the past. As for the Salvation Army, it is true that it banged and brayed itself into notoriety; but the time has gone by for such methods since its first "General" was canonized by Oxford University and the Army patronized by royalty.

Nor is this all; for hypocritical mendicants parade the streets on Sundays in the rags of simulated poverty, catching coppers from the unwary by droning hymns, whose cash value is seen when the public-houses open their hospitable doors. Neither would the Salvation Army send detachments into the streets if the collection failed to provide the sinews of war.

Unless the clergy, who profess to care so much for "the day of rest," are prepared to grapple with this

problem of noise, we cannot see that they can escape the accusation of hypocrisy. If they attacked the Sunday noises made by their co-religionists, they would probably not succeed, but they would persuade people much more surely of the sincerity of their crusade. The modern idea of Sunday is broadening, and, when the hundreds of thousands of troops return after actual experience of continental customs, religious denominations must adapt themselves to the changed conditions. The time has gone by for ever when the working classes of this great Empire can be fobbed off with the sole resources of the public-house as an alternative to the ritual of an outworn creed. No longer will the democracy consent to wallow in such kennels, and so give excuse for saintly tyrants to call aloud for more laws which shall convert the one free day in a week of work into one of gloom, bigotry, and persecution. Let those who have six days in the week for the world's pleasures appropriate Sunday to gloom, but let those who employ six days in toil devote their Sundays to a different purpose. Let the workers have one day's freedom in the week—freedom for rational enjoyment. There are other people in the world beside the clergy and their followers.

MIMNERMUS.

## Nietzsche and His Critics.

As a child Nietzsche was holy, as a man he was the symbol and embodiment of all unholiness. At nine he was already versed in the lore of the reverend doctors, and the pulpit, to his happy mother—a preacher's daughter as well as a preacher's wife—seemed his logical goal; at thirty he was chief among those who held that all pulpits should be torn down and fashioned into bludgeons, to beat out the silly brains of theologians. The awakening came to him when he made his first venture away from the maternal apron-strings and fireside; when, as a boy of ten, he learned that there were many, many men in the world, and that these men were of many minds. With the clash of authority came the end of authority. If A was right, B was wrong—and B had a disquieting habit of standing for one's mother, one's grandmother, or the holy prophet's.—H. L. MENCKEN, *The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche*, p. 4.

Nietzsche is worse than shocking, he is simply awful; his epigrams are written with phosphorus on brimstone. The only excuse for reading them is that before long you must be prepared either to talk about Nietzsche or else retire from society. . . . His sallies, petulant and impossible as some of them are, are the work of a rare spirit, and are pregnant with its vitality. GEORGE BERNARD SHAW, in the *Saturday Review*.

IMMEDIATELY after the outbreak of the War, the names of three German writers became very prominent in the papers and periodicals of this country as the men mainly responsible, by their teachings, for bringing about the War. These writers were Nietzsche, Treitschke, and General von Bernhardi. The religious press in particular put forth all their vituperative prowess—for which they are so justly renowned when dealing with the enemies whom their professed Master is reported to have told them to love—and singled out Nietzsche in particular as the sinister philosopher who had corrupted the soul of Germany and plunged Europe in the furnace, seven times heated, of the present War.

Even semi-Rationalists like Sir Conan Doyle, in the *Daily Chronicle*, and demi-semi-Rationalists like Mr. William Archer, in the *Daily News*—who has lately been telling us, through the same medium, that there is a lot in Spiritualism that science cannot explain—Mr. Alex. M. Thompson, in the *Clarion*, and, saddest of all, Mr. Thomas Hardy, have followed the pious lead.

It is a noticeable feature of the newspaper campaign against Nietzsche that it is very rarely that the writers give chapter and verse, or even the titles of the books from which their quotations are taken. Mr. A. M.

Thompson, who quoted Nietzsche largely, never gives, so far as I have seen, the titles of any of Nietzsche's works. The number of protests he received against his attacks upon Nietzsche rather astonished Mr. Thompson, for he observes: "I cannot refrain from surprise that this mad apostle of brutality and slavery should ever have appealed, as he appears to have done, to readers of the *Clarion*" (the *Clarion*, October 24, 1916; p. 9).

These quotations from Nietzsche, without giving the reference to the works from which they are taken, looks rather suspicious, as if they were quoted at second-hand from some other writer who had collected them. Probably this is the truth, for the collected works of Nietzsche, in the English Edition published by Foulis, runs to eighteen volumes, and busy men like those we have mentioned would hardly find time to master the contents of these volumes; if they had done so, they would have seen that the context from which many of these extracts are taken considerably alter the sense and the meaning of them. No modern writer has indulged more largely in metaphor and hyperbole than Nietzsche, and his pathway is full of pitfalls for the uninitiated, the careless, and the unwary.

Soon after the War broke out, several pamphlets, dealing with the War, were published by the University of Oxford. They were written by University men for the enlightenment of the "lower orders," who are supposed to know nothing of these high matters. It is to be feared that these tracts never reached their destination, for the working man is profoundly suspicious of pamphlets written by University dons.

These pamphlets, or some of them, have been bound into a volume, under the title, *Oxford Pamphlets, 1914*. One of these pamphlets is entitled "The Germans: What They Covet," by C. R. L. Fletcher, whose pen must have sparkled when he delivered himself of the following furious diatribe on Nietzsche:—

This Superman was the special invention of a philosopher called Nietzsche, who spent his life in railing against the "superstition," as he called it, of Christianity, and against the virtues of pity, mercy, and love, which are, he said, the most destructive doctrines of that superstition. You need not remember anything else about Nietzsche, except that he went stark, staring mad before he died (p. 5).

We can imagine him adding to himself, "That's all you vulgar people need know about Nietzsche, and I do hope you won't get prying into his works for yourselves, or you might meet with some very awkward truths."

Christians like the superior Mr. Fletcher gloat over the fact that Nietzsche went mad; as if madness did not deserve our sympathy as much as cancer or tuberculosis. These pietists seem to be the lineal descendants of the Christians of the Middle Ages, and even later times, who used to duck and flog these poor afflicted wretches to bring them to reason.

As if Nietzsche was the only great writer who met with that sad fate. The poet Cowper, as is well known, became insane. Suppose a Freethinker were to write of Cowper, "He composed hymns glorifying the Christian superstition. You need not remember anything else about Cowper, except that he went stark, staring mad before he died." What would the supercilious Mr. Fletcher say to that?

One of our greatest writers, who was no Atheist or Materialist, has praised the virtues of war quite as strenuously as any German. He says: "All the pure and noble arts of peace are founded on war; no great art ever yet rose on earth but among a nation of soldiers." And again: "When I tell you that war is the foundation of all the arts, I mean also that it is the foundation of all the high virtues and faculties of men."

That is from *The Crown of Wild Olives*, by John Ruskin, who also suffered from a spell of insanity. Does Oxford jeer at Ruskin on that account? Not they. One of the Oxford colleges is named after him.

On the other hand, as Mr. Chatterton-Hill has pointed out:—

It has become customary—as was to be foreseen—to talk of Nietzsche as if a trace of insanity were to be found in all his works; as if the stroke which fell at Turin in January, 1889, were but the culminating point of a morbid state dating back some fifteen years, and which, according to this theory, was inherited by Nietzsche. In view of the attempt which has been made to discredit Nietzsche's work on the ground that it is the work of an insane person, and in view of the not unnatural success which has attended this attempt, especially, or exclusively, among the uninitiated—we say, not unnatural, for it is an easy and convenient way of refuting views which may be only with difficulty refuted by more serious arguments—we think it well to give a brief sketch of Nietzsche's history from the medical point of view.<sup>1</sup>

From this sketch it appears that there was no hereditary taint of insanity on either his mother's or his father's side of the family. On both sides they were an exceptionally healthy and long-lived race. During early life, Nietzsche enjoyed exceptionally good health. At the age of twenty-six he served in the field hospitals during the war with France in 1870. The hardships and over-work endured during that campaign permanently shattered his health. Without being properly cured or rested, he resumed his duties as Professor at Bale. He suffered from headaches of constantly increasing severity, also from stomach troubles; so that in 1879 he was obliged to resign his professorship. With rest and careful living, his health improved from 1881 to 1888, when he had a relapse, suffering from insomnia, for which he took ever-increasing doses of chloral, and some strange Eastern drug given him by a Dutch gentleman from Java, until, in January, 1889, came the final breakdown, and for the next ten years, until his death in 1890, his mind remained a blank.

To those who, in their hatred of Nietzsche, profess to trace madness in all the works compiled by him, we commend the following quotation:—

It must be clearly pointed out that this stroke of insanity came very suddenly. From the year 1882, Nietzsche's health had been steadily improving, and he was, generally speaking, in a happy frame of mind and a sound state of body. In 1888 he produced a large amount of work, in no part of which can any trace of madness be found by even the most sceptical inquirer. All the letters he wrote up to the end of 1888 are in quite a usual strain. On Jan. 4th, 1889, however, he sent a letter to the celebrated Danish critic, Brandes, which was unmistakably written by a madman. It was in very large handwriting on a sheet of ruled paper, signed *Der Gekrenzighte*, the crucified one. So far as it is worth deciphering its incoherence, we are led to suppose from it that Nietzsche identified himself with Jesus Christ, of whom he imagines himself to be the successor and the "best enemy." His breakdown then took place with appalling suddenness between January 1st and 4th, 1889. A letter sent to Rohde on the 7th also shows distinct traces of insanity.<sup>2</sup>

Nietzsche also wrote to his friend, Professor Overbeck, at Basle, who, alarmed at its contents, went to Turin, where he found Nietzsche at the piano, singing and shouting in the height of delirium. He took the unfortunate man to a private institution at Basle.

W. MANN.

(To be continued.)

<sup>1</sup> Chatterton-Hill, *The Philosophy of Nietzsche* (1912), pp. 49-50.

<sup>2</sup> J. M. Kennedy, *The Quintessence of Nietzsche*, p. 43.

## Materialism and Morality.

IN a recent issue of the *New Witness* the editorial article contained the statements that "Prussianism and Pacifism" were both the outcome of "Materialism;" that "the Materialist doctrine," that physical force is the only test of right and wrong led naturally to Prussianism; and that "the Materialist doctrine," that physical pain and death are the worst of evils led naturally to Pacifism. The statement that either of the above is a Materialist doctrine is false. Moreover, the editor of the *New Witness* is clever enough to know that it is false. And I hereby challenge Mr. Cecil Chesterton to quote from representative Materialists, from Lucretius to the staff of the *Freethinker*, any statement that can be construed as meaning that physical force is the only test of right and wrong, or physical pain and death the worst of evils; failing which, I denounce him as deliberately trying to exploit popular feeling against Germany to the prejudice of a doctrine he happens to dislike. Furthermore, I ask Mr. Chesterton why we Freethinkers should not, on the strength of the attitude of the present Pope, denounce the Catholic Church, to which he belongs, as an ally of Prussianism of the most shameless kind.

Materialism is a word that suffers from vague uses. In a narrow sense, it is applied in philosophical language to the theory held in ancient times by the Epicureans, and in modern times by Holbach and others, which would account for all phenomena by the impact and interaction of atoms of matter. This is probably held by very few people, and I do not suppose Mr. Chesterton was referring to it. In a wider sense, Materialism denotes doctrines, also called by such names as Naturalism, Atheism, and Monism, according to which the reality underlying physical phenomena is also the reality underlying mental phenomena, making the universe all of a piece, so to speak, everywhere and for all time. In this sense Bruno, Spinoza, Spencer, and most of those commonly called "Pantheists" (a polite name for Atheists) are Materialists; and I am one myself.

According to Mr. Chesterton, it should be an integral part of this system to believe that physical force is the only test of right and wrong, and that physical pain and death are the worst of evils. Now, I affirm that not only can Mr. Chesterton produce no evidence from Materialist literature in support of his contention, but such conclusions in no way follow from the Materialist premises. Indeed, I question whether any positive ethical conclusions can follow from purely metaphysical premises. Doubtless, negative ethical conclusions can be so deduced; e.g., if there is no God, it is evident that to do the will of God cannot be the basis of morality. But such inferences are mere tautology. No positive ethical conclusion can be deduced from the premises of Materialism, or any other metaphysical system, for the simple reason that no metaphysical system, as such, contains the conceptions of good and evil, and these, therefore, have to be introduced from elsewhere.

What Mr. Cecil Chesterton really means, I suppose, is that, whereas in his religion right and wrong and the duty of self-sacrifice are based on the sanction of rewards and punishments in another world, Materialism excludes such sanctions. Mr. Chesterton seems to be one of those people, who no doubt exist in some numbers, who cannot conceive any reason for right conduct unless they are to get something for it in another life, failing this. I know, or once knew, an Oxford parson, connected with a certain East End Mission, who was alleged by his acquaintances to have asserted that but for his religious beliefs he would simply live for pleasure. Obviously, there is no arguing

with people like that. They are not moral, but merely unite calculation with superstition.

As a matter of fact—and Mr. Cecil Chesterton is perfectly aware of this—militant Materialism in history, from the Materialism of Lucretius to that of the Encyclopædists, and since then to the present day, has been inspired by a strong conviction of the difference between right and wrong, as distinct from physical force or impotence, and by a passionate desire to expose the essential wrongness of established religion. The moral sense is recognized by the Materialist, and by Freethinkers generally, to be an impulse, just as hunger is an impulse, but with this difference, that while the scope of hunger is individual and immediate, the scope of the moral sense is also universal and permanent—resembling in this respect the faculty of reason. That is, whereas hunger and similar impulses regard food, etc., as goods for the individual affected, the moral sense regards the equal satisfaction of the needs of all individuals as a good for all individuals possessed of the moral sense. The root of hunger, etc., is the "will to live"; the root of the moral sense is the same "will to live," enlightened by the faculty of impartial judgment. The progress of humanity consists precisely in this depersonalization of values, or in the gradual enlightenment of the primary impulses and repulsions by impartial judgment.

This may be unintelligible to Mr. Cecil Chesterton, but he has no right therefore to publish what is nothing less than an unscrupulous libel on Materialists, by describing it as a "Materialist doctrine" that physical force is the only test of right and wrong. The people who have come nearest to advocating this doctrine, such as Carlyle, have not been Materialists, but exceptionally muddle-headed Theists. Indeed, the view that physical force is an adequate test has not been unknown even in unimpeachable Christian surroundings. Mr. Cecil Chesterton is a great admirer of the Middle Ages. He has therefore heard of "trial by combat." Perhaps he will inform us on what theory this institution could have been defended, except on the theory that physical force would decide the question of right and wrong.

The refutation of such a doctrine stands in no need of supernatural assumptions. It is refuted once and for all in the third and fourth chapters of Rousseau's *Social Contract*. Rousseau, it is true, was a Deist; but the reasoning of these chapters is independent of Deism.

I pass on to Mr. Cecil Chesterton's second libel, viz., that Materialism teaches that physical pain and death are the worst evils than can befall a man. Here, again, the writings of Materialists themselves do not give any support to his allegation. Lucretius, the greatest Materialist of antiquity, devotes his most eloquent passages to showing that death is *not* the supreme evil; and I should say that the permanent value of Lucretius' poem lies chiefly in those passages. As in the case of the physical force doctrine, the theory here in question can be refuted without any supernatural assistance, merely by pointing to the fact that men, independently of religious beliefs, have universally chosen to suffer pain and death when certain other evils are the only alternative. If Mr. Chesterton says that Materialism logically requires that men should prefer any evils rather than pain and death, the burden of deducing this conclusion from the premises rests on him. I can only repeat what I said earlier in this article, that no positive ethical conclusions can follow from purely metaphysical premises. What we are entitled to require, not as Materialists, but as rational beings, is that the object of any self-sacrifice shall be commensurate with the sacrifice demanded; in other words, that the evils, to avoid which we are to exact or undergo pain and death, shall be either such as are commonly regarded by human beings as worse than pain

and death, or such as to involve pain and death on a wider scale than we are asked to exact or undergo them.

I have now, I think, said enough to refute Mr. Cecil Chesterton's allegations against Materialism. I will conclude with a few words on this gentleman's general attitude. Ever since the beginning of the War, Mr. Chesterton, in common with his brother, with Mr. Belloc, and with a host of petty religionists unworthy of notice, have been trying to exploit the conflict to the advantage of one or another form of Christianity, by circulating the falsehood that the Germans are Atheists, or that their peculiar conduct is the result of Atheism. The War is thus made out to be a crusade of Christendom against Atheism; and those in the allied countries who happen to be Atheists are tarred with the brush of pro-Germanism. This is a form of slimy mendacity which thousands, if not millions, of convinced Atheists in Great Britain, France, and Italy have a right to resent most bitterly. It is not true that the Germans most responsible for this War are Atheists; it is not true that Atheism has any connection with Prussianism. It is the case, on the other hand, that nearly half of the people of Germany are Catholics; that the remainder, except some of the educated classes and the Socialists, are Bible-worshipping Lutherans, with the Kaiser at their head; that the Catholic Party in Germany is among the foremost supporters of the War and of submarine "frightfulness"; that Austria-Hungary, whose aggression against Serbia first brought on the war, is the Catholic power *par excellence*; that in most neutral countries the Catholic Party is the pro-German party; and that the Pope, the infallible head of the Catholic Church, has consistently refused to condemn German outrages on non-combatants, and, down to last May, threw his whole weight against Italy joining in the War. I dare Mr. Cecil Chesterton to deny one of these statements. Yet we Freethinkers have never attempted to represent this War as a crusade against Catholicism.

Mr. Cecil Chesterton knows that militant Freethinkers are a small minority in this country, and from the editorial chair of the *New Witness* he thinks he can libel them with impunity. So far as any tangible penalty is concerned, he can; but he may rest assured that, whoever else is afraid of him, we are not. We shall expose him, and all such swashbuckling religious bullies as he is; and if we cannot teach them the virtue of veracity, we have at least the satisfaction of pinning them to the alternative of either withdrawing their slanders, or seeking the usual refuge of the orthodox by ignoring what they cannot refute.

ROBERT ARCH.

A popular song refers to Ireland as "A Little Bit of Heaven." The sample will not induce many worldly minded folk to attend the churches. —

So many persons wear armbands and other military and naval decorations, that teetotalers are becoming worried concerning the advisability of continuing the use of the blue ribbon of the beerless life. —

Mr. Lloyd George says "you cannot run a war as you would a Sunday-school picnic." Indeed! The Army chaplains and the Y.M.C.A. are doing their best. —

Lord Hugh Cecil, speaking in the House of Commons on the rights of conscientious objectors, said that "in India we respected the objections of Mohammedans to eating the flesh of pigs. It was not a question of a man's Church, but of his convictions." A palpable hit! But there are more Mohammedans than humanitarians.

## Acid Drops.

Brixton Parish Church is in difficulties. It has no endowment, and is dependent upon pew rents. This makes it difficult to pay the salary of a preacher of the Gospel. It will be remembered that the Rev. A. J. Waldron resigned this church some months ago. After Mr. Waldron, a curate took on the job; but, after an unsuccessful attempt to raise a fund to pay his quarter's salary, he departed. His appeal to the parishioners, says the *Observer*, yielded much sympathy, but only half-a-crown in cash. The churchwardens are also appealing for funds to repair the church organ, which is so old that parts of it have to be tied up with string. Brixton Parish Church is evidently a striking testimony to the value of Mr. Waldron's preaching.

At the London Diocesan Conference the chief subject of discussion was Sunday observance. The general complaint was that "the increasing secularization of the Lord's Day by all classes of the community is a serious hindrance to the religious life of the nation," which is an obvious truism. Prebendary Eardly Wilmot and Sir Edward Clarke vehemently protested against the process, and expressed the conviction that some drastic methods of checking it should be immediately put in operation. This was the old fallacy of confusing cause and effect, as was convincingly pointed out by the Rev. T. A. Lacey. The commonplace mind declared, "The increasing secularization of Sunday causes irreligion." "No," retorted Mr. Lacey, "the secularization of Sunday is a consequence, not a cause, of irreligion." When will the clergy realize that the secularization of the Sabbath is a visible demonstration of the colossal failure of the Church to keep religion alive in the land? They may denounce the process they so much regret till Doomsday, but their very denunciation of it will only serve to accelerate its consummation. Religion itself is fast decaying, and as an inevitable consequence, Sabbatarianism collapses.

At the beginning of the War, Sir William Robertson Nicoll believed in and advocated prayer, in answer to which immediate victory was sure to come. He wrote leading articles in the *British Weekly* and attended prayer-meetings, in the certain hope of Heaven's speedy intervention in our behalf. Delayed victory induced him to join the *Times* and *Daily Mail* in the cry, "More and ever more high-explosive shells, or we perish." For months he spoke and wrote as if all depended on material arms. But now, victory being still deferred, he returns to the efficacy of prayer, saying, in effect, "Let us pray for victory, for our cause is just, and victory will come, for God is behind the fighters in that cause." If victory is still postponed, what will be Sir William's next move? Most assuredly, unfathomable is the stupidity of the clerical mind!

Dr. Orchard says that the advice of Jesus not to resist evil was one of his "tremendous jokes." It is quite evident that the Christian nations have always looked on it as a joke, and the biggest joke of all is that the Christians engaged in the present War all profess to believe it quite seriously. But it is all a joke—including Dr. Orchard.

The Dean of Canterbury is happy in spite of the War—even because of the War. German writers have been discredited. That is the cause of the Dean's rejoicing. And we have been trying to realize the frame of mind that can reject a criticism of Christianity because it happens to be propounded by a German. We do not deny that this occurs; but it is none the less interesting to discover the connection between the invasion of Belgium and, say, a rejection of a German disproof of the authenticity of the Four Gospels.

The Bishop of Chelmsford laments that if we leave out the women and children, not five per cent. of the population are members of the Church of England. And yet Churchmen talk as though but for the Church the country would go

straightway to ruin. Allow another five per cent. for the Nonconformists, and we have ninety per cent. of the male population outside all the Churches. But we allow this minority to obstruct education, interfere in matters of public entertainment, and to act as though they were the most important section of the community. If only the majority had the moral courage to speak out, this religious rule might be destroyed very quickly.

The Rev. R. E. Gillie, a Presbyterian minister, says he has dreamt of Nonconformist Bishops attending a service at St. Paul's Cathedral. When we heard of it we almost had a nightmare in imagining these Free Churchmen reinforcing the other Fathers-in-God in the House of Lords.

Most of our readers will agree with the following "open letter" from *Reynolds* :—

TO LORD NAPIER OF MAGDALA.

DEAR LORD NAPIER,—

That was a splendid reply you sent to the parson who wrote setting forth his and his son's objections to serving their country. They were, you said, sheltering themselves behind misreadings of the Bible. Quite so. Why parsons and parsons' sons should be exempted I cannot imagine. Either war is or is not against the doctrines of the Church. If it is, why do so many of the best divines support it? If not, why should they not be helping their country with a rifle?

REYNOLDS'S WATCHMAN.

The Bishop of London seems to have an irresistible passion for saying inane, silly things. Addressing the London Diocesan Conference the other day, he said that "if the Church has no message for the nation at this the greatest and most critical moment of the national history, it had better go out of business." Is not his lordship aware that the Church does not have, and never has had, a message for the nation; that the nation never consults it, never pays any heed to what it says, even laughs at its foibles and follies; and that the nation would get on much better without it? Indeed, it is high time for it to go out of business. Why doesn't the Bishop give back his £10,000 a year to the nation, and live on what he can earn like an ordinary man?

The Bishop was warmly applauded when he said that the first message of the Church to the nation must be: "On to the end!" That is, "Kill! kill without mercy until the enemy lies prostrate and humbled on the ground, ready to accept the terms of peace we shall dictate to him." And this bellicose message goes forth in the name of a mythical Prince of Peace! What thinly veiled hypocrisy!

The Bishop goes on to say that, whilst killing Germans as fast as we can, we are to "keep in a Christian spirit," which means, if it has any meaning, that killing Germans is just now a highly Christian deed. Almost with the same breath, evidently forgetting what he had just said, his lordship declared that by this War God is chastising us for ignoring himself, for desecrating his day, neglecting his worship in his own house, not saying grace before meals, and for running up such a tremendous drink bill; and for all these heinous sins he is punishing us by sending us out to kill Germans!

Mdme. Novikoff, writing on the present War, says "a mighty crash of thunder rolled across the sky from Germany, Russia made the sign of the cross and grew sober. In France, the silent churches reopened their doors, and prayer was resuscitated." The lady might have added that in England the great Mr. Bottomley was converted.

The publication of a life of Benjamin Disraeli recalls the exquisite courtesy of politicians in the "good, old days," Daniel O'Connell taunted Disraeli in the House of Commons with being "a lineal descendant of the unrepentent thief that hung upon the cross." Disraeli sent him a challenge, but O'Connell was "too proud to fight."

There are some places where the clergy work more than one day weekly. Canon Langridge, writing in the *Daily News*

on the Irish rebellion, says, "The soldiers never got to bed, I fear. The clergy did not, I know. There were prayers all night." Quite a little record in its way.

The funeral of Archdeacon Wilberforce took place in Westminster Abbey. Years ago, when it was suggested that Meredith and Swinburne should be buried there, the clergy said there was no room.

On the notice board of a church within six miles of St. Paul's, London, is posted the following piece of pietistic nonsense:—

THE WAR AND DELAYED VICTORY.—Our God says: "Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries."—*Victory is Delayed* in part because men and women are not hearkening to God concerning His Day—the *Lord's Day*.

Very probably a similar announcement is posted upon many a church door in Germany, and God is undecided to whom to give the victory because of the difficulty to determine on which side are the best hearkeners. The Bishop of Chelmsford, however, gives another reason for the delayed victory. Preaching recently in London, he accounted for the delayed victory by saying that it is due to the fact that God does not hearken to our prayers because they lack passion and are not offered up by the whole nation. Meanwhile the earth is red with the blood of hundreds of thousands of innocent men. Oh the infinite pity and sadness of it all!

A correspondent writes that he observed the following notice displayed for the benefit of the public:—

Christian Messenger.

What I Suffered.

By

R. J. Campbell,

and suggests it would have read more appropriately:—

What I Suffered.

By

R. J. Campbell.

(With apologies to Jesus Christ.)

Mr. G. K. Chesterton is still repeating, with the iteration of a gramophone, that the Germans are irreligious. Writing on Ferdinand, of Bulgaria, he says, "If Prussia had any religion, it would be a northern perversion of Protestantism. But Prussia has no religion. For her there is no god; and Ferdinand is his prophet." What Mr. Chesterton means, probably, is that Prussia has no respect for Papa at Rome.

Dr. F. B. Meyer is like the shoemaker who thought there was nothing like leather. Speaking at a Tract Society Meeting in London, he said that on the night of the declaration of peace, every church in the kingdom should be thrown open for a great thanksgiving service. Truly, Christians take their pleasures sadly.

The clergy like to have their fingers in every pie, and they are making the most of this War. Many strut about in khaki uniforms without getting near the fighting, and even the regular army chaplains do not, as a rule, fare at all badly. One of them, the Rev. G. Erskine Nicol, of Westcliff-on-Sea, and now "somewhere in France," writes in his parish magazine, "I have the best billet in the town, and sleep in the bed recently occupied by the Duke of Argyll." Yet Mr. Nicol is doing a great deal more than many of his ministerial brethren, of whom there are 50,000 in this country alone.

In the course of an animated discussion at the Southend Town Council concerning the sale of tea and other refreshments on Sundays at the public park, Councillor Newitt said that the clergy and their followers suggested that the supporters of the movement would go to a place where they would have no difficulty in boiling a kettle.

"What is wanted to-day, and in the future, is an aggressive Christianity," says the Bishop of Chelmsford. We hope that this does not mean something with boiling oil in it, such as found favour in the ages of Faith.



### To Correspondents.

W. THOMSON.—Sorry we cannot feel grateful to Christianity, because "without it there would be no need for a Secular Society." At any rate, we would cheerfully commit suicide by removing the cause of our existence.

J. WILLEY.—Thanks. We are returning the document, and have taken a note of the passage indicated, which will prove useful later.

E. PARKER.—Thanks for good wishes for an easy time. We are afraid that running a Freethought paper is not the best way to get it. And, after all, we prefer a useful time to an easy one.

E. DAWSON.—We are obliged for your efforts to gain new readers for the paper. Every one helps.

J. FOOT.—A little late in acknowledging your congratulations, but better late than never.

A. J. MITCHELL.—The only point of interest we see in your attack on our "pernicious journal" is that you write "Dodo" as "do do." This isn't "pernicious," but it is confusing. Please don't write again.

J. H. GASTRELL.—Glad to receive subscription from what you describe as "the first and last town in England." We hope to see Freethought active in your part of the world.

H. R. WRIGHT.—We had neither ignored nor overlooked your communication. We have asked someone to make inquiries, and are awaiting results. If anything definite transpires, will let you know.

WE are obliged to hold over a number of replies to letters until next week.

Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business 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.

### Special.

To all friends, Thanks. The whole of the £200 has been subscribed, with £6 13s. 2d. to spare. The campaign has been short, perhaps the shortest ever run in these columns, but it has been decisive. And that is how things should be. A short decisive fight, with plenty of enthusiasm left over for other efforts, and renewed confidence in attempting new ventures. Our next task will be that of organization. There are many thousands—hundreds of thousands, we may say, of men and women with well defined Freethought opinions, who are doing nothing directly for the promotion of the Cause. They must be induced to do something in the near future. We have in operation a Compulsion Act for the prosecution of a European War. Now, we must create a Voluntary Compulsion Act, if the phrase is permissible, for the prosecution of a much greater, wider, and more important war—the war of reason with superstition. And in this war we shall need every recruit that can be obtained. So I again say, Thank you, to all who have helped to fill the munition chest. And I think I may promise that the ammunition will not be expended without good results to a good cause.

Now that the Propaganda Fund is closed—happily closed, I feel tempted, in view of a long and interesting letter received from an old supporter of this paper, to—as it were—report progress. And I do this the more readily because the relations between the *Freethinker* and its readers have always been of a peculiarly intimate character. This is not an ordinary paper, and I like to think that its readers are out of the ordinary ruck.

It is now just over seven months since Mr. Foote's death, from which event I took over the responsibility for the maintenance of the *Freethinker*. At its best this would have been no light responsibility, and events made it a peculiarly heavy one. In facing this I was, however,

encouraged by very many offers of help were any needed, and I felt quite sure that, come what might, the *Freethinker* would not suffer for want of friends. Moreover, as the situation then stood I felt that with care, economy, and the putting into operation plans for increasing sales that had been simmering in my head, it might be possible to, at least, make financial ends meet.

But the difficulties began to accumulate, and soon after Mr. Foote's death we were faced with (1) need for new type (this had been needed for several years); (2) loss of readers consequent on enlistments in the Army and Navy; (3) rise of 100 per cent. in the cost of paper, and increase of other expenses. And as the *Freethinker* had no capital behind it, the situation was not, on the face of it, encouraging.

As readers are aware, the new type was obtained, and the appearance of the paper greatly improved thereby. Everybody was in agreement on this point. To make up for the loss of readers due to enlistment, several plans were put into operation, the "Freethinker League" doing good service; a little advertising was tried with good results (more would have been done had I possessed the means); and I set to work on a lecturing campaign, which not only had the effect of helping the paper, but also of putting a little more life into the Secular Movement generally. The consequence of this was, that not only did we make good the loss of readers, but the circulation was actually increased. At present, the circulation of the paper is greater than when the War opened, and this has gone some distance towards meeting the heavily increased expenses. More pleasing still has been the number of press notices received by the *Freethinker*. It is probable that more notice has been taken of the paper by the general press during the past few months than was taken during as many years. And that is wholly to the good.

The greatest difficulty of all was paper. Paper not only jumped to double the price, but it became scarce, and at one time the supply looked like stopping altogether. It became necessary, therefore, not only to buy, but to buy a long way in advance. Fortunately, I had friends at hand, and from these I borrowed enough, on my own personal security, to secure paper for months ahead. And in this matter I was fortunate in having the help of a good business manager, with his heart in the work. Mr. Ash worked like the proverbial nigger, and a great deal harder than the actual one. He scoured the city day after day, grabbing paper wherever possible. We bought, and events showed we bought well, even at so greatly advanced a price. If we were buying to-day, we should be paying three or four shillings more per ream.

Business friends who realized the situation wrote asking me to open a *Freethinker* Sustentation Fund; but this I declined, at least for the present. The paper was safe, and I had determined on my course. My plan was to wait for a year, and then see exactly how things stood. That seemed the wisest and most businesslike method. Owing to the great increase in cost of production—very much more than when I wrote in November last—there is sure to be a loss on the year's working; but it is also certain that the loss will not equal the increased cost. That is so much to the good, and it means that, had conditions remained normal, the *Freethinker* would have paid its way.

It has been a trying time—how trying only those behind the scenes can appreciate. Many papers have ceased to exist; others have reduced their size, raised their price, or have been compelled to ask for subsidies. The *Clarion* is raising its second thousand pounds, the *Christian Commonwealth* is raising a thousand, and others are engaged in a similar task. May I say, then—at the

risk of being thought conceited—that I feel very proud of having kept the *Freethinker* unchanged during the very worst time it has ever experienced? Presently some economies may have to be affected in the production of the paper, but this will not be done until it is quite unavoidable.

Here, for the time being, must end my report. On the whole, I think it may be described as encouraging. When the War is over, many of our lost readers will return, and I feel sure there are better times ahead. I have also other plans in mind for increasing the circulation and influence of the paper, and these will be put in operation as soon as can be managed.

Finally, I must thank all those who, throughout the country have done so much to push the paper. When a paper is established, and the running expenses fixed, every hundred new readers means a solid gain. I thank most heartily all those who have helped, and although I hope that in my case gratitude is *not* a lively expectation of favours to come, I hope they will continue their work in securing more readers. The more we get, the better. It is as easy to write for a million as for a thousand; increased circulation means less anxiety, greater influence, and a stronger Freethinking voice in our national life.

#### SPECIAL PROPAGANDA FUND.

Previously acknowledged, £179 2s. 8d.—R. H. Side, £2; Greevz Fysher, £1; Mrs. M. Rogerson, 10s.; R. W. Blakely, £1 1s.; J. H. Waters, 10s.; J. Hammond, £1; J. H. Gartrell, 10s.; Mrs. F. Burns (2nd subscription), 10s.; H. Silverstein, 5s.; James Adams, 5s.; F. Cox, 5s.; J. Williams, 5s.; E. H., 6d.; S. Clowes, 6d.; J. E. M. Robinson, 6s.; In Memory of E. and F. Oaks (Frome), £1; M. Goodman, 2s. 6d.; C. G. Hearson, £5; M. Sax, 5s.; L. E. Wabbett, 5s.; Private W. Perry, 5s.; Abertillery New Eraists, 12s.; E. F. Simper, £1 1s.; A. B. Moss, 10s.; E. Oliver, 2s.; S. M. Peacock, £1 1s.; Mrs. A. Lee, 3s. 6d.; P. Meredith Dennis, £1 1s.; George Brady, £1 1s.; C. W. Adams, 2s. 6d.; T. T. (Glasgow), 2s. 6d.; Kepler, 5s.; P. Freer, 5s.; G. Gee, 1s.; T. Gordon Shaw, 10s.; W. P. Pearson, 2s. 6d.; J. Hughes, 10s.; W. Dodd, £1; D. Aberdeen, 2s. 6d.; V. Collins, 5s.; W. Smith, 2s. 6d.; F. Collins, 2s. 6d.; A. Vanderbout, 2s. 6d.; S. Vanderbout, 2s. 6d.; W. K. Bennett, 2s. 6d.; Geo. F. Vincent, 10s.; John Burgess, 5s.; H. M. Ridgway, £1; A. G. C. Harden, £1.—Total, £206 13s. 2d.

The £5 acknowledged last week from Dr. J. Laing should have been £5 5s., and the total £179 2s. 8d.; also T. Vail 10s. should be T. Vine.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

### Sugar Plums.

On Sunday last Mr. Cohen paid a visit to Bargoed, Glamorganshire, and delivered two lectures in the Workmens' Institute. Mr. Cohen did not receive notice of the date until Wednesday, too late for last week's paper. This was the first time Freethought meetings have been held in Bargoed, and the meetings augured well for the future. There is plenty of enthusiasm there; a number of likely young men, with a sufficient sprinkle of older ones to check rashness; and there is every prospect of regular and profitable work being done next autumn. Bargoed is the centre of a well-populated district, and thus affords ample scope for work.

This week we publish the Agenda of the N. S. S. Conference, and we are pleased to learn that in spite of the War—perhaps because of it—there promises to be a good attendance of delegates. Practically every Branch will be represented, and it is to be hoped that the discussion of the

various items on the Agenda will bear good fruit in the coming year. The current card of membership will procure admission to the Society's business meetings.

Provincial friends who wish to secure accommodation during their stay in London should write at once to Miss Vance, at the Society's office, and she will do her best to meet their requirements. On the Saturday evening preceding the Conference a reception will be held at the Bay Malton Hotel, 160 Portland Street, W. A private room has been engaged for the purpose, and the Secretary, with members of the Executive, will be in attendance from 6.30 to 9 p.m.

The evening public meeting will be at 6.30 this year, which is a little earlier than usual. The speakers will be Messrs. Cohen, Lloyd, Moss, Heaford, Rosetti, and F. E. Willis, of Birmingham. We hope that Freethinkers will do what they can to see that the meeting is well advertised, and that the hall is well filled.

"Criminologist" writes:—"You are entirely right. The Christians do not derive their power from intellect, or even from actual numbers, but from the gold of the dead and good organization—they are like certain other nefarious birds, 'all feathers,' and therefore not so strong in attack as they would appear. But yet they are exceedingly dangerous to our liberties. Some years ago they approached a committee to which I belong, to assist them to get the age of consent increased to nineteen. All the various bodies composed of anti-sex maniacs were ready, and panting, to go full cry. But in spite of this, they found it 'wouldn't do,' and no more was heard of the matter. It is by organized shrieking from many platforms that the 'Free' Churches would make enslaved citizens—if they could, and deprive us of such liberties as we still possess of writing and speaking."

We are pleased to see that the *Humanitarian* is resuming its monthly form, even though in an abbreviated shape. The present is not the most favourable time for a Humanitarian propaganda, and our readers might easily do worse things than become subscribers to this useful little penny monthly.

### Actual Hell.

THE White City was looking rather drab under a lowering London sky, from which rain was falling steadily. It was towards the end of the Exhibition season, and the few visitors who had braved the wet weather were keeping religiously under the shelter of the large buildings. We were running a show called "Hereafter," a sort of childish caricature of what is popularly supposed to be "Hell." I was guide in these infernal regions. Habited in a brown cowl and cassock, I looked like a monk of the Holy Inquisition, and as I am swarthy-faced and possess shiny, black eyes, I fully maintained the satanic appearance of our establishment.

The Flip-Flap seemed to be the only thing in the grounds that was taking money, and as I idly watched its scissors-like movements, I stood, sheltered from the rain, in the porch of our fantastic building of plaster, and reflected on the inutility of this huge contraption of steel. Darker grew the sky, and the rain began to fall furiously, when, suddenly, three well-dressed gentlemen came hastily from the neighbouring restaurant, and, laughing gaily, said they wanted to look at "Hell."

I ushered them into the "ballroom," on the walls of which were figured several groups of dancers. These groups served as the first object-lesson.

"You will observe, gentlemen," said I, "that these people you see pictured on the walls thought only of dancing in their life on earth." I pressed over a switch. "Now you see them as skeletons, doomed to dance in Hereafter for ever."

"How monotonous," observed my listeners.

"Come this way, gentlemen," I continued, "and we will descend into the deeps, and behold what is in store for us." They followed me into our imitation of a lift. I shut the door, at once expecting to hear our labourer working the contrivance which produced the impression of descending motion. Imagine my amazement when I felt this wooden box, which I knew was standing on solid ground, plunging downward with a rapidity that made me dizzy and gasp for breath. My companions regarded me with great amusement.

"Anything wrong with the machinery?" asked one of them. I was about to reply when the lift bumped and stopped.

"Come along, guide," they exclaimed; "we are not afraid."

Feeling rather dazed, I opened the opposite door. Instead of the subdued red light which I knew ought to be there, there was pitchy darkness.

"One moment, gentlemen," I said; "something has happened to the electric lights." I groped for the switch, but could not find it. I fumbled in my pocket for matches; there were not any. I turned round to re-enter the lift. It had vanished. I was in a blackness that was as thick as religious ignorance. I apologized to the three gentlemen for the lack of light and my inability to supply it, but there was not the slightest indication of their presence. And the strange sound of my voice put me almost in a panic. I shouted the name of an assistant. There was no reply. An oppressive silence ensued, and I experienced a strong sensation of fear. What was this heavy something round my waist; these cold, clammy things that encircled my wrists; and these dragging fastenings on my ankles, which clanked as I stirred, and prevented me almost from making any movement? As I had become, most strangely, shackled in body, so had I become shackled in mind. My familiar notions of place and time had faded away like a dissolving view, and I thought myself a prisoner of the Holy Inquisition, condemned to solitary confinement in a darkness that seemed to press on me with the clamminess and heaviness of death. I was meditating on my terrible position when a door creaked open, and the smoky light of a torch lit up the foul, fungus-covered walls of my prison. An uncouth, hard-featured man thrust some bread into my hands, set a jug of water beside me, and, having placed the torch in an iron socket in the wall, he, without uttering a word, hurriedly withdrew, clanging the door to as he went. With blinking eyes I looked thankfully at that smoky, sputtering torch, although I knew it was a means of torture whereby to make the darkness following its extinction more fearful by contrast. Presently, when the torch was half-burnt, another terror appeared. Just above the socket which held the torch there came a trickle of water. Too unhappily did I know the meaning of it. Soon it would increase until it splashed out the light of the torch, and would continue to gush down until the water rose to my knees, sometimes to my chin, chilling me to the marrow and making me gasp for breath as it lapped against my face. Oh, what fiends to devise such cruelty!

Gradually the flow of the water increased, plashing louder and louder as the floor of my prison became deeper covered with it. Before long the torch, burning down to where the water was coming in, began to hiss and crackle, and then, with a final sputter, went out. Conceive the horror of my situation, in that awful blackness, with water gurgling and plashing in, and creeping slowly up my legs. I shouted frantically, then fainted.

A keen, wintry wind was blowing from the north-east, and the stars sparkled brilliantly through the frosty air.

I was middle-aged, unkempt, ill-clad, hungry, and was shuffling through a street in the East-end of London. The time was near midnight, and but few people were about. Presently I encountered several men, much the worse for liquor, who were staggering along, arm-in-arm, and singing choruses of popular songs at the top of their voices. I shuffled into the road to avoid them, and regained the sidewalk when they had passed. A little farther on, the smell from a fried fish shop intensified my hunger almost to mad desire. Weeping with torment, I shuffled on, neither knowing nor caring where I was going. It was the chiming of midnight in a clock tower that brought me out of my stupor, and, with a thrill, I recognized my surroundings. Sub-consciously, I had made my way to the street where I had lived when a boy. What recollections surged into my mind! Momently I expected to see my father or mother open the door to me. Then the memory that they were long dead came to me like an icy-cold touch. How cold and hungry I was now, and how warm and well-fed I used be in that house as a boy! And my brothers and sisters, where were they? I knew not. I should not know them if I met them. There I leaned against the railings, lamenting both the happy past and the miserable present. I knelt down and crawled into the doorway, where, huddled up in my rags, I shortly fell asleep.

I awoke, shivering. The grey light of dawn was melting the darkness in the eastern sky, and, round me, I heard many voices. A chill wind was also adding to my discomfort. I had a confused recollection of having gone to sleep in a doorway, but that memory was fast receding from me. I raised myself to a sitting posture, and looked round. I was one of hundreds of men who were stretched full length upon the ground in the vicinity of what appeared to be the ruined houses of a small village.

"Hallo, mate," said the soldier nearest me. "This aint a bit like a feather bed in London, is it?"

I grinned at him for an answer.

A sergeant intervened. "Show a leg, lads," he called out; "we're for the West-end to-day; and mind the traffic as you go down Oxford Street."

A general laugh followed the sergeant's banter, and I inquired of my neighbour what was meant.

"You're one of the last joined, I can see," he replied. "Well, I'll tell you. We call the trenches by fancy names: Oxford Street, Piccadilly, and so on. In fact, if they didn't have labels, we'd lose our way in them. The 'traffic' is the shells the Germans fire at us."

Soon we were busy in the arranging of our equipment, which attended to, we then heartily partook of breakfast. After breakfast, we got the order to "Fall in." A few moments later we were on our way to the trenches, trudging along a muddy, ill-kept road that intersected the monotonous Flanders landscape. Overhead several aeroplanes hummed and rattled, looking ever so much like huge hawks sailing and watching for prey. And there was a distant but heavy thudding of guns. After a march of five miles, we arrived at the communication trench. I was disappointed. I had pictured the communication trench as something wonderful; behold, it was nothing more than a glorified ditch.

We had to proceed now with the greatest caution. The sound of the guns was tremendous, and such was the great vibration in the air that one's very breathing was made difficult. A hail of machine-gun bullets greeted our appearance in a dip in the ground where the trench ran shallow, but we did not suffer one casualty. Quickly we gained the front line trenches, and relieved the men who had been in them for nearly four days.

Those trenches were vile. They were knee-deep with a thick, muddy water that smelt of the sewer and the charnel-house. Direst necessity only made the conditions bearable; but for the cruel spur of war, life could not be endured in such surroundings.

The artillery fire from our own guns and those of the enemy, now increased to a violence both frightful and amazing. Our front line trenches became untenable, and we retired to those of the second line. Then, after what seemed years of terrific and continuous explosion, the enemy artillery ceased abruptly, and their infantry attack began. What a sight it was! Long lines of grey-clad men, eleven deep, came forward quickly. Our machine-gun and rifle fire met them and staggered them. To shoot them was easy. All one had to do was to place one's rifle in the rest afforded by adjoining bags of sand, and to keep on pulling the trigger. I saw whole lines of men drop as the withering hail of bullets from our Maxims smote them. But the survivors came on magnificently. Our rifle-barrels became almost red-hot. The progress of the enemy was marked by their dead and wounded. Still they came on; then they broke on our trenches as an incoming wave breaks on the sea-shore.

Night fell, and the firing ceased; but silence did not follow. From the darkness beyond our trenches came the cries and screams of men suffering dreadful pain and thirst, the choking sounds and groans of strong men in helpless agony.

I was standing in the porch of "Hereafter," bidding good afternoon to the three gentlemen who had expressed a desire to see "Hell." I scarcely heard what they said to me, but I know I felt immense relief at again hearing the rattling sound of the "Flip-Flap" in motion.

JAMES H. WATERS.

## National Secular Society.

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

QUEEN'S (MINOR) HALL, LANGHAM PLACE,

London, W.

WHIT-SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 1916.

### Agenda.

1. Minutes of last Conference.
2. Executive's Annual Report.
3. Reception of Report.
4. Financial Report.
5. Election of President.

(a) Motion by West Ham, Bethnal Green, Birmingham, and South Shields Branches:—

"That Mr. Chapman Cohen be elected President."

(b) Amendment by Camberwell Branch:—

"That considering the exceptional circumstances in which the Society is now placed, and the difficulty of convening a really representative gathering of delegates, the office of President should remain unfilled for the present."

6. Election of Vice-Presidents.

(a) The following are nominated by the Executive for re-election: Bailey, W.; Baker, W. H.; Bartram, J. G.; Bowman, E.; Chapman, R.; Charbonnel, Victor; Cohen, C.; Collins, W. W.; Cowell, H.; Davidson, W.; Dobson, J. G.; Dodd, W.; Elstob, T. H.; Fathers, R. G.; Gorniot, T.; Grange, John; Hammond, J.; Heaford, W.; Hins, Eugene; Hurd, S. L.; Kough, Miss Kathleen B.; Leat, W.; Lloyd, J. T.; McCluskey, G. B. H.; McGlashan, James; Moss, A. B.; Neate, J.; Nelson, Wallace; Nichols, R. T.; Partridge, J.; Peacock, S. M.; Pegg, C.; Pegg, Mrs. M. E.; Pitt, W. T.; Quinton, C. G.; Robertson,

Thomas; Roger, Victor; Rolf, G.; Rolf, Mrs.; Rosetti, R. H.; Ross, J. T.; Ross, Miss Mary; Samuels, S.; Shore, T.; Silverstein, H.; Stanley, Miss Alma; Thurlow, T. J.; Turnbull, John H.; Vance, Miss E. M.; White, G.; Whitwell, C. J.; Willis, F. E.; Wood, Frederick.

(b) Proposed by the Birmingham Branch:—

"That Mr. James Terry and Mr. E. Clifford Williams be elected Vice-Presidents.

7. Election of Auditors.
8. Executive's recommendation *re* Mr. T. Shore's scheme for Secular Funerals. Report by Mr. R. H. Rosetti.
9. Executive's Report *re* Revision of Rules and Formation of Branches.
10. Motion by Mr. Cowell:—

"That in order to place the Society on a more democratic basis the office of President be abolished, and in place thereof a committee of three be appointed by the Executive to act in emergencies and report."

11. Motion by Executive:—

"That this Conference notes with profound regret the growth of the movement in favour of military drill in elementary and secondary public schools; and bearing in mind the fact that such drill can have no influence on the present war, cannot but regard it as an encroachment of militarism on a sphere that should be sacred to the task of developing character with a view to the prevalence of the spirit of peace and to friendly co-operation between nations."

12. Motion by Mr. W. Heaford:—

"That this Conference regrets to learn that Freethinkers, upon obtaining permission to abstain from attendance at religious services, are often ordered to do some special work during the time of worship."

13. Motion by the Birmingham Branch:—

(a) "That this Conference, seeing that the Law has provided that a conscientious objection to military service can be validly entertained, and has, moreover, decreed that a military representative shall be present in the interest of the War Office, expresses its deep regret at the want of fairness on the part of Tribunals in dealing with Freethinking objectors, believing that conscience is strictly a personal matter, determined by the circumstances of birth, training, education, and environment."

(b) "That this Conference is of opinion that it would be in the interests of the Movement that brief monthly reports of Branch meetings should appear in the *Freethinker*, with names and addresses of Branch Secretaries."

(c) "That this Conference reaffirms its adherence to the following clause in our Immediate Practical Objects: 'The promotion of peace between nations, and the substitution of arbitration for war in the settlement of international disputes,' and invites the co-operation of other advanced societies to give effect to them; and also suggests that lecturers should give prominence to this principle whenever possible."

14. Motion by Mr. C. Cohen:—

"That this Conference is of opinion that an energetic press propaganda should be organized and conducted in the interests of Freethought, and recommends to the Executive that this matter be taken in hand at the earliest possible moment."

15. Motion by Mr. A. B. Moss:—

"That this Conference, while fully recognizing the difficulties of domestic legislation during the continuance of a great European War, nevertheless, reaffirms its confidence in the policy of Secular Education as applied to the nation's schools, and hopes that the Government, on the conclusion of peace, will decide to bring in a Bill that will put an end to a quarrel that has obstructed educational progress for more than a generation."

16. Motion by Mr. W. Davidson:—

"That this Conference protests in the most emphatic terms against the violation of the Oaths Act when Mr. H. Cowell was refused a seat on the jury at the Old Bailey Criminal Court on account of his Freethought"

views, the Act clearly providing that every person who objects to being sworn on the ground either that he holds no religious belief or that the taking of an oath is contrary to his religious belief, may be allowed to make a solemn affirmation."

17. Motion by the Liverpool Branch:—

"That this Conference recommends that the Executive should open a Sustentation Fund for the purpose of paying a number of lecturers to carry on regular propaganda work in the provinces."

This Conference will sit in the Queen's (Minor) Hall, Langham Place, W.; the morning session lasting from 10.30 to 12.30, and the afternoon session from 2.30 to 4.30. Both are purely business meetings. Only members of the N. S. S. can speak and vote. A public meeting will be held in the evening at 6.30 o'clock.

By order of the Executive,

E. M. VANCE, *Secretary.*

## Correspondence.

### CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The more I read Mr. Bertrand Russell's letter the less I like it. It appears to ignore the moral principle, which is this: that if a person accepts the benefit of a system which, in its last resort, is maintained by militarism, he incurs the burden of defending that system in such manner as the rulers think best. In the piping times of peace the conscientious objector lives and thrives under the detestable system, and we hear of no attempt to withdraw and establish a community more in accordance with his ideals. It is in times of stress—when he is called upon to make some return for the benefits he has received—that his principles are in evidence. I cannot occupy your space (assuming you to do me the honour of publishing this) by traversing the various statements in Mr. Russell's letter, some of which read very queerly; but, with every wish to be charitable, I cannot help thinking that the conduct of most of the objectors is prompted by cowardice or selfishness.

G. E. WEBB.

### INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND THE STATE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In "Views and Opinions" for May 7 you say a good deal with which I agree, but not that "the State has a right to use compulsion in what is considered to be its own interests." A "State," in that sense, is the effective majority of the people composing it. But, again, you say that advances in the liberty of men and women have all been initiated by the stand of the individual conscience against that of the community. You say, too, you see no general principle that can be said to govern the matter. Surely there must be one. It cannot be both right to coerce and right to resist. Neither can "seriously threatened safety" help us; for that is just when we most need a general principle. It is true that there is no conscience apart from society, but there is a conscience apart from government, else government itself could have none. You complain that the State has asserted the right to compel all, while giving to all the right to decline that compulsion. Yet you say "a wise community would recognize the value of such protests, even while insisting upon its own right to use compulsion." Why, that is exactly what it has done, and landed itself in all this confusion!

The fact is, no individual has any right to coerce another in any matter whatever. Governments must be judged by whether they help or hinder this principle. W. KENSSETT.

### The Rationalist Peace Society.

THE Annual Meeting of this Society was held at Durham House, 16 John Street, Adelphi, at 6.30 p.m. on Thursday, May 11, and in spite of the early hour, there was a very good attendance. The meeting was presided over by Mr. John M. Robertson, M.P.

The report presented by the Chairman (Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner) showed that in spite of the adverse circumstances of the past two years the present position and prospects of the Society were very favourable. A few members (not more than half-a-dozen) had withdrawn from the Society, because they were no longer in sympathy with its policy, a few others because they were despondent and thought all labour for Peace was in vain; some valuable members have also been lost through death, notably, Professor del Marmol, Dr. Callaway, Mr. J. Barry, and last but not least Mr. G. W. Foote. On the other hand, members in renewing their subscriptions had expressed their entire agreement with the policy of the Committee, and a number of new members had joined, with the result that the R. P. S. was now stronger than at any time since the beginning of 1913.

At the conclusion of the business of the Society an admirable address was delivered by the President, in which he said that pacifists had been profoundly shaken by this War, and in some cases resorted to methods of expression which had the effect of antagonizing people towards peace. Those of us who are Rationalists have no common cause with those who are non-resisters. It was a misfortune that the peace movement should be associated with non-resisters who are not pacifists in the true sense; they make no appeal to the ordinary individual; they indeed compromise the pacifist movement. The position of many in the peace movement to-day was similar to that of the tree which grew beside the hut of a North American Indian, which the Indian said was so straight that it leaned the other way! Mr. Robertson dwelt upon the hopes, fears, and dangers of the future, and concluded by reminding his hearers that a Rationalist peace movement must aim at a rational practical policy.

Miss Freeman drew attention to the shameful treatment of avowed Rationalists in the Army, and Mr. Kent thought something should be done to try to obtain decent treatment for Rationalists conscientious objectors.

Mr. S. H. Swinny, in a brief speech reminded the members that when the R. P. S. was first started it was our aim to make Rationalists supporters of Peace, but the position had now somewhat changed and we have to infuse rational thought into the advocates of Peace.

The meeting then terminated.

A. B. C.

### Pernicious Pars.

Readers will note that this week we reproduce a really splendid photo of the Archbishop's little pet lap-dog "Judas." He is a hairless black-and-tan, weighs just one and a-half pounds, and is exactly two years old on Whit-Monday. The Archbishop and Judas are inseparable. They dine together, walk together, and travel together. The Archbishop says that Judas is the most wonderful little dog in the world. Lady Maltby-Lynne, who it will be remembered is the Archbishop's sister-in-law, breeds these little dogs especially for the Archbishops as mascots. A really splendid idea; for never in the history of the world was the Church in so great need of good fortune as it is at the present moment. The War is likely to be over before the Church has received a full and lasting benefit. Therefore, say we, the more hairless black-and-tans the better.....a really charming idea.—*Canine Conformist and Cope.*

The Rev. Nevvah-Hollah has invented a patent clerical collar which should prove a great success. Not only does this collar enhance the personal appearance of the wearer, but also eliminates the necessity of donning a clean collar each Sunday. These ingenious collars are pressed by hydraulic power from the finest Para rubber, and are so highly compressed in texture that they will stand a great deal of rough usage. The Rev. Nevvah-Hollah maintains that his patent collar will serve for fifty-two Sundays without washing. We take this opportunity of recommending his remarkable invention to all the clergy. At a time like the present when the Church must economize rigorously, the Rev. Nevvah-Hollah should be congratulated. We wish him every success with his patent "Ever-clean." They are 6½d. each, or six shillings a dozen, carriage free.—*Christian Clothier.*

ARTHUR F. THORN.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

## LONDON.

## OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 3.15, Mr. Rosetti, a Lecture; 6.15, Mr. Burke, a Lecture.

CAMBERWELL BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park); 5.30, R. W. Rosetti, a Lecture.

FINSBURY PARK N. S. S.: 11.15, Percy S. Wilde, a Lecture.

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Messrs. Shaller and Saphin; 3.15, Messrs. Kells and Dales, "Ideas"; 6.30, Messrs. Hyatt, Beale, and Kennedy.

KINGSLAND BRANCH N. S. S. (corner of Ridley Road): 7, a Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill): 3.15, E. C. Saphin, a Lecture.

REGENT'S PARK N. S. S.: 3.15, W. Davidson, a Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (outside Maryland Point Station): 6.45, Miss K. B. Kough, a Lecture.

**Determinism or Free Will?**

By **C. COHEN.**

*Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.*

## CONTENTS.

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

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

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

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

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

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, consisting of not less than five and not more than twelve members, one-third of whom retire (by ballot), each year, but are capable of re-election. An Annual General Meeting of members must be held in London, to receive the Report, elect new Directors, and transact any other business that may arise.

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

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Friends of the Society who have remembered it in their wills, or who intend to do so, should formally notify the Secretary of the fact, or send a private intimation to the Chairman, who will (if desired) treat it as strictly confidential. This is not necessary, but it is advisable, as wills sometimes get lost or mislaid, and their contents have to be established by competent testimony.

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