

# The FREETHINKER

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## Views and Opinions.

### Stick to your Last.

Woman, said Artemus Ward, in the course of one of his inimitable lectures, is a very necessary institution. “She is good in sickness and in wellness,” but when she forsakes her proper “spear,” and goes round “like a roaring lion seeking whom she may devour, she becomes a darned nuisance.” We have no wish to discuss now what is woman’s proper “spear.” We were reminded of this deliverance by two or three recent expressions of opinion by military officers on religion in the Army. And after reading these we feel inclined to paraphrase Artemus Ward, and say that while the military man may be a more or less necessary institution, useful enough in his proper “spear,” when he finishes that and goes round expressing opinions on matters outside his craft, he is apt to become a “darned nuisance” in the sight of those who have a conviction that people should understand their subject before posing as public instructors. And taking the records of military men, their success outside their particular department has not been such as to encourage a blind confidence in their leadership. If the cobbler should stick to his last, the soldier should stick to the work on which he is entitled to be heard with respect.

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### Religion in the Army.

The other day Field-Marshal Lord French opened a Salvation Army hostel for soldiers in Southampton Row, and in the course of his address said (we quote from a report in the *Christian World*):—

The British soldier to-day was possessed of a very extraordinary spiritual power; in no other way could he explain the almost supernatural courage, tenacity, and endurance shown throughout the war. Only those who had served with him knew how terribly he had been tried, and could realize, what he had no hesitation in saying, that only those who were imbued with the spirit of noblest self-sacrifice and duty to God and country, could possibly have attained such results in such circumstances.

The language is vague enough, and the thought under-

lying it is doubtless correspondingly indefinite, but it serves. So long as expressions of such doubtful meaning as “spiritual,” “duty to God and country,” etc., are used, the religious world will not fail to see evidence of the strong religious feeling of our soldiers, and as in this country religion is closely identified with the Christian religion, the further step that all our soldiers are Christian is one easily made. Of course, it may be that Lord French had only in mind the desire to pay a compliment to the courage, tenacity, and self-sacrifice of men he has commanded. And that, we are quite ready to believe, those men have well earned. It is the use made of his remarks with which we are chiefly concerned, and when the *Christian World* caps its excerpt from Lord French, with a statement by Field-Marshal Lord Grenfell, that “the soldier has a strong religious instinct and rarely goes into action without some ejaculation of a prayerful kind,” one is not left in much doubt as to how readers are asked to interpret the statement cited.

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### Are Soldiers Pious?

Now, this Army of ours is not composed of men who are strangers to us. We know them intimately. We have all walked with them, talked with them, worked with them, and played with them. We know just how much religion they had in times of peace, and we know just how much they had when they left for France or elsewhere, and—more important still—we can see how much religion they have when they come home on furlough. And we observe no marked change in their feelings towards religion—unless it be one of hostility. They do not, when they come home, rush off to church and chapel; they make no requests of their friends to send them out religious literature. They are certainly not more religious now than before they entered the Army. We may appeal to everyone’s experience in support of what has been said. Of course, it may be said—it is said, as a matter of fact—that the men have become religious but are too shy to make any public profession. This, however, will not do in the case of religion. When a man has got religion he doesn’t keep it to himself. We wish he did—in the interests of decency and good manners. The tendency, then, is to parade it, to thrust it upon every one and to make it a general nuisance. Lord Grenfell may be correct in saying that soldiers go into action with “a prayerful ejaculation” on their lips. But this is nothing new. Such things are heard on all sorts of occasions in the streets at home, but they are not usually taken as indications of intense piety. We have ourselves heard a man exclaim, “Oh, Christ!” when his feet have been stepped on, and in the classic precincts of Fleet Street. And the author of *Fragments From France* has depicted our soldiers as burning to give the Germans “‘ell,” because of the unwelcome intrusion of a high explosive shell. That pious ejaculations are often on the lips of our soldiers in France we quite believe. That is in accord with our experience of people at home.

### Religion Unnecessary.

That this War has called for a display of courage, endurance, tenacity, and self-sacrifice greater than other wars we believe; but what has the supernatural, what has God, to do with it? There are some forty millions of men under arms, and a large proportion of that number are enduring, or have endured, similar hardships. And, apparently, British, French, Russians, Italians, Austrians, Germans, etc., all display much the same kind of courage and endurance, as they all have to face substantially the same kind of dangers and discomforts. Is it the supernatural that is aiding all? Or does Lord French mean that it is only our own soldiers who are being helped by God and the supernatural? In that case, we beg to protest. As our readers know, we are no lover of the soldier as such. Our dislike for militarism grows the more we see of it, and our hatred of warfare gains strength, if possible, with the passing of the days. But we decline to believe that our soldiers need either the belief in God or the inspiration of the supernatural to nerve them to do all they have done. It seems to us that a sense of duty alone is enough. When General Joffre was asked some time ago about religion in the French Army, he replied that love of country was enough to account for all they did. We do not think Englishmen fall below Frenchmen in this respect. Love of country, a sense of duty, a sentiment of comradeship, and the power of discipline are enough to account for all that the War has furnished. And we must protest once more against this picture of the British soldier made suddenly religious because he is faced with the prospect of meeting an enemy in the field.

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### That "Blessed" Word!

It is not, as we have said, ultimately a question of what Lord French meant so much as the use that is made of his words. He meant, probably, as little as did the Master of Balliol, who, in addressing a meeting at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields on January 9, said "There was in Army recruits a vast reservoir of religion in the deepest sense." The same stupid use of a baleful word. There is a reservoir of religion in men because they can be roused to a sense of duty and self-sacrifice! Rubbish! Duty and self-sacrifice have no more to do with religion than with the differential calculus. It is part of the old game. If a man is a rogue, call him a Freethinker, or say he is non-religious, and in this way the Churches will escape the odium of possessing him. But if he is honest and straightforward, say he is "essentially religious," or "truly religious," and the Churches will escape the difficulty of explaining how *he* came to exist without religion, and will, perhaps, get some little reflected glory from his being thus. If a man is religious, let him say so. And if he is not religious, let him also say so plainly and openly. The pity is that, while so many millions possess the courage that enables them to face a violent death, there are so few who possess the kind of courage which enables them to withstand the frowns of "respectable" society.

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### Freethought and Religion.

Freethinkers would do well to steer clear of that baleful word "Religion." It is a bad word, with a bad history and bad associations. Right through human history religion has involved—and rightly involved—a belief in supernaturalism of some kind. And it is idle—nay, dangerous—for one who does not believe in supernaturalism to drape his naturalism in that cloak. Surely human nature is strong enough to stand without it! Surely ethics, science, and philosophy gain nothing by having the word "Religion" associated with them! By all means let the Churches keep the word "Religion."

Let us see that they do keep it. It will at least make the line of demarcation clear. And it will enable a man to say with pride and without misunderstanding that he is without religion. Whether the stories be true or false, I have an admiration for those early Christians who declined to purchase salvation by dropping a pinch of incense on the altar of an alien god. Their own God was equally absurd; but their stubbornness indicated conviction. They could have purchased safety so easily, but it would have cost them their self-respect, and their courage reflected credit on their manhood. And as we admire their action, so we are convinced that no man can go on sacrificing, day by day, a pinch of incense to the Mammon of respectability without undermining his own character and injuring the cause he professes to serve. The Freethinker takes his stand, not on religion, but upon reason and humanity; and the way to make our enemies respect these symbols is to pay due reverence to them in our own person.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## The Self-Abolishing Deity.

THE non-interference of the Christian or any other God in the affairs of the world is an absolutely insoluble problem to those who really believe in his existence. Some treat this problem as if it were the special creation of the present War; but in reality it is the oldest and most difficult of all Theistic problems, though it must be admitted that the savage European conflict which has been going on for two years and a half has added fresh and heavier emphasis thereto. Ever since the War broke out the divines have been feverishly discussing God's relation to it, and scarcely any two of them have been in agreement as to the nature and extent of that relation. Some have boldly maintained that the War is the Deity's peculiar operation, that he sent it as a judgment upon nations that had been rapidly repudiating his right to their worship and service, and some of them wickedly denying his very existence. At times the Bishop of London seems to glory in the horrible carnage as a revelation of the Divine love and care, and as constituting a glorious day of the Lord. Others, like Dr. Campbell Morgan, find the cause of the War in the momentary ascendancy of some malign forces always more or less operative in the world, and declare that God has permitted it in order to bring about most effectually the overthrow of those evil influences. A third school of divines teach that it is not indifference, but love, which compels the Divine Being "to limit his interference on behalf of men." A leading light of this school is the Rev. W. Garrett Horder, a popular Congregational minister at Ealing, who recently preached a sermon, entitled "The Self-Limitation of God," which appeared in the *Middlesex County Times* for January 6. The main points of this discourse are these three: "that God's essential nature is love"; "that such love must of necessity make him suffer with the objects of his love"; and "that it is not indifference, but love, which compels him to limit his interference on behalf of men." It will be very interesting to see how Mr. Horder arrives at these curious positions.

The assertion that "God's essential nature is love" Mr. Horder fails to confirm by the adduction of a single fact. He merely repeats, parrot-like, what the Bible says, without presenting one scrap of evidence in support of it. He dogmatizes thus:—

God is love. For my part, I believe that had there not been love in the nature of God, there would have been no world nor men upon it.....That love is manifest

in Nature and Humanity I am fully persuaded—manifest far more fully than is commonly supposed.....For myself, I am prepared to say that the world, taken as a whole, is witness to a loving purpose in the mind of its author. But for that the world would have been without beauty—without the multitude of things which give delight. It would have been a mere dwelling-place, and not as it is a veritable palace. It would have been constructed as men used to construct workhouses, into which they put the least they could—where they catered for mere existence, and not for life.

There is surely no argument in that extract. It contains nothing but empty rhetoric, skilfully adapted to the believing ear. Mr. Horder believes that God is love, and consequently discerns the presence of his love everywhere. To say that had there not been love in God there would have been no beauty in the world is to ignore the fact that the world contains ugliness as well as beauty. Besides, the world is all either a wilderness or a desert until man's intelligent toil converts it into a garden; and when man first appeared he did not find it a ready-made palace awaiting his arrival.

Mr. Horder girds repeatedly at the pessimists, as if indulgence in that alluring exercise could establish the reality of God's love; but pessimism is largely a matter of temperament. The reverend gentleman forgets that there are pessimistic Christians and optimistic Atheists. If Huxley was constitutionally inclined to pessimism, Darwin, despite his intimate acquaintance with Nature and her ways, cherished optimism. Jack London was an Atheist, familiar with and inured to the hardships of a strenuous and incessantly struggling life, was yet an invincible, glowing optimist throughout his brief career. One of the touching stories in his *Children of the Frost* is entitled "The Law of Life." In far off Alaska, Koskoosh, a very old man, was patiently waiting for death. Camp had just been broken; he had listened for the last time to the men lashing the sleds and drawing tight the thongs. The tribe over which his son ruled had left to return no more. He could still hear the whip-lashes snarling and biting among the dogs, who whined dolefully, hating the work and the trail. "Sled after sled churned slowly away into the silence. They were gone. They had passed out of his life, and he faced the last bitter hour alone." But his son came back for one last look at the father he loved. "Is it well with you?" he asked, and Koskoosh answered, "It is well." He was alone once more. Beside him lay a pile of wood and the fire was burning brightly. It was snowing heavily, and the bundle of faggots alone stood between him and his end, and once the last faggot ceased to burn his blind eyes would close and his tired feet would be at rest for ever.

- He did not complain. It was the way of life, and it was just. He had been born close to the earth, close to the earth had he lived, and the law thereof was not new to him. It was the law of all flesh. Nature was not kindly to the flesh. She had no concern for that concrete thing called the individual. Her interest lay in the species, the race. This was the deepest abstraction old Koskoosh's barbaric mind was capable of, but he grasped it firmly. He saw it exemplified in all life. The rise of the sap, the bursting greenness of the willow bud, the fall of the yellow leaf—in this alone was told the whole history (*Children of the Frost*, pp. 40, 41).

Yet, face to face with all these natural facts, which even Mr. Horder dare not deny, and knowing absolutely nothing of the love of God, this raw Alaskan savage winced not, nor cried aloud, but from a sane and serene outlook upon life confidently exclaimed, "It is well." The constant refrain in many of Jack London's charming stories is, "Nature does not care," and it surely follows that, if Nature, in whose hands we are, does not care,

there is no ground whatever for believing that Nature's maker and governor exercises any care for anybody or anything.

Of course, in the absence of any evidence that an all-loving Heavenly Father exists, there can be no proof that he suffers either for or with mankind; and in this entire lack of evidence, it follows of necessity that the testimonies of either Isaiah or Jesus can possess no value whatever. The God who counts all the hairs on our heads, and who falls with every dying sparrow, is but one of the myths that have unfortunately outlived the ages of ignorance and credulity in which they were born. The doctrine of the loving, suffering, and dying God, mystical union with whom alone secures salvation, is wholly mythological, whether preached in ancient India and Egypt, or in twentieth century Christendom.

At this point Mr. Horder is obliged to halt, because the facts are so many and so stubborn that he cannot possibly run away from them. Amazingly illuminating are the following words:—

But then this love in God, which makes him to suffer with us, obliges him to limit himself, to refrain from doing what his love would like to do.

How astonishingly audacious is this terribly humiliating apology which the servant makes for his Master? Unlike several divines of to-day, Mr. Horder still holds the doctrine of the Divine omnipotence. He asserts that God *could* deliver all mankind from the wrath to come and make them heirs of heavenly glory, *could* banish all evil from the Universe forthwith, *could* have prevented this awful War, or put an end to it to-morrow, if he only *would*; but he respects the world far too much to will to exercise his power for its benefit without first getting its permission to do so. Surely, this is a new doctrine, and the most irrational ever offered to a credulous congregation. Love issuing in compulsion, the reverend gentleman assures us, "would be a lower love than one which so respected men and their freedom that, though it would appeal and persuade, it would never compel." Then love is, after all, not the greatest and strongest, but the weakest thing in the world. At the commencement of his discourse this preacher said that power in God is but the instrument of his love which he essentially is, but now he excuses God's non-interference in human affairs by declaring that the love that has omnipotence as its instrument is yet too timid and shy, too respectful towards human freedom, to employ it without first getting leave to do so. In our simplicity, we had thought that pure love's compulsion was the noblest and holiest thing in life, but at last we learn that the pleading and persuading done by God's love have been wholly ineffectual. Horrible evils, gigantic wrongs, shameful and most degrading forms of injustice and oppression, and devastating wars have been allowed to flourish and often to achieve their nefarious ends throughout the ages simply because the Creator, Sustainer, Sovereign, and Father of mankind has always respected his creatures, subjects, and children far too much to boldly step in and set things right amongst them.

All we wish to say in conclusion is that such a self-limiting Deity is also self-abolishing. In reality, however, both the self-limiting and self-abolishing are done by God's self-appointed champions. It is *they*, after all, who are the most successful manufacturers of Atheists.

J. T. LLOYD.

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Contempt for human life, taught as every day by Nature, and alas! by man himself; all war intensifies that. But the more permanent forces, alike of human nature and of the natural world are, on the whole, in the interest of tranquility and sanity, and of the sentiments proper to man.—*Pater*.

## The Freethought Valhalla.

Yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign prince,  
For you a stately gallery maintain  
Of gay and tragic pictures. —Wordsworth.

To the meditative mind there is no better reading than a list of names of note. We can well understand the sober joy of the old Puritans, who, taking their Bibles seriously, loved to grapple with the lengthy genealogies of Israel and Judah. Even a gazetteer is a mine of suggestion, and in a London directory you can lose yourself among the strange lanes from Pie Corner to Hanging Sword Alley. But a biographical dictionary or an encyclopædia is certain to make large inroads on our time. Take, for example, Joseph Wheeler's *Dictionary of Freethinkers*. In it there are thousands of entries, taken from all ages and all countries. That means thousands of names of interest, thousands of men and women who have played their part on life's stage, and who played it in a sufficiently remarkable manner to give their names a distinct interest to their descendants. We know of few more interesting occupations than the reading of such a book, and it is a pity that Freethought publishers are not sufficiently wealthy to include the portraits of many of the persons mentioned.

Such a book is informative, and turns the handles of many doors. We turn a page and encounter the name of Charles Bradlaugh, as brave as any soldier who ever drew a sword. He fought a great battle for thirteen years against overwhelming odds, and his was the cool head and the calm judgment of the great captains of men. He gave his life for liberty, and our children will remember something of this Freethought leader when they have forgotten the names of his opponents. A few pages further and there is the name of Richard Carlile. What an indomitable spirit does it not conjure up. There flits into our memory the terrible martyrdom of this bravest of the brave soldiers of liberty. Think of it! Carlile, the lion-hearted, suffered nine and a half years imprisonment for championing the liberty of the Press. His wife and other members of his family, and shop assistants, divided among them fifty years' confinement. Further, we see the splendid name of Edward Gibbon, the greatest of English historians, who in his *Decline and Fall*, "sapped a solemn creed with solemn sneer." He walks for ever as to the clash of martial music under an imperial banner. Without exploration we have found the magnetic and powerful name of Voltaire. What a man! His epigrams stung like wasps—rankled for years. At sixty-four, when other men are thinking of slippers and ease, he was writing *Candide*, the wittiest book in the world. Writing *Œdipus* at seventeen, *Irene* at eighty-three, he crowded between these two masterpieces the accomplishments of a giant. And Edward Fitzgerald, the East Coast recluse, who turned the quatrains of the old Freethinking Persian, Omar Khayyam, into a great masterpiece of English poetry. "A planet larger than the sun which cast it," his friend Tennyson described it. The name of Thomas Paine is homely, but what a personality does it recall? A character of outstanding ability, a maker of nations, and far removed from the uncouth and unlettered figure of popular imaginings.

There is a very significant entry in the name of the Empress Catherine of Russia. How many innocent critics of Freethought know that the evangel of Reason appeals equally to the monarch on the throne as to the toiler in his garret. Catherine was a Freethinker in word and in deed. When Denis Diderot was compelled by dire poverty to sell his library, she bought it back for him and installed him as librarian. Another Royal

"intellectual" was Frederick the Great. What must it have been to have been present at those festal nights at Frederick's palace when the nimble wit of Voltaire challenged the choicest brains of Europe? It must have been a rich memory and an abiding delight, like those ever-memorable nights at the "Mermaid," when Ben Jonson exchanged quips and cranks with the smiling Shakespeare. Napoleon, the little Corsican, who shook the world before he was thirty, is here, too, in this volume. A more shadowy figure is that of Kit Marlowe, the Elizabethan dramatist, whose untimely death prevented his trial for blasphemy. Sir Richard Burton, the master of many languages, and the untiring traveller, who penetrated to the Holy of Holies at Mecca at the peril of his life, is another of the glorious company of Freethinkers.

The "intellectuals" of France are represented by a magnificent procession from Abelard to Anatole France. Who can see the name of Robert Ingersoll without a quickening of the pulses? He comes riding down the wind like a knight in shining armour to attack the embattled hosts of superstition. And the lonely student, Charles Darwin, who turned "Adam" and "Eve" out of the "Garden of Eden," not with a flaming sword, but with a steel pen. Here is Heinrich Heine dying upon his mattress-grave in Paris with a jest upon his lips, and Shelley, the sweetest-souled of the English poets, whom Christians sought to deprive of his children, and imprisoned men for selling his works. A sense of fellowship with the fled centuries invades us as we see the name of Giordano Bruno, one of the most fearless martyrs for Truth. And Time seems poised for a moment upon his spread wings as we encounter the puissant personality of Lucretius, one of the sublimest poets who ever attuned his lyre under the eagles of the Cæsars.

Names such as these are but signposts to meet the reader and direct him towards the wonderful universality of Freethought. And, mind you, there are many hundreds of such signposts. "Wonderful" is the only adjective which will serve for this maze of surprises; this patient account of the men and women who have cared, not for wealth and notoriety, but for intellectual honesty, written by a wise and careful student who himself emptied many an inkpot in the service of a great cause.

Here under one roof, we may say, is the temple of Liberty and the house of Wisdom, compared with which the churches and mosques of the superstitions are but charnel-houses full of bones. For each of these men and women were, in their way, the apostles of Freedom. They were knight-errants of the evangel of Liberty. From the dim twilight when Lucretius rolled his richest thunders against the infamies of religion in his day, until twenty centuries later Swinburne and Meredith rallied the soldiers of Freethought with the golden trumpets of their genius, Liberty never failed of her votaries. The bare records of the doings of these pioneers thrill and fascinate by very reason of their simplicity. The feats of Freethinkers have needed little of the embellishment which high-sounding language could give them. From Hypatia, murdered by a Christian rabble, to Ferrer, "butchered to make a Roman holiday," they strike our imaginations and hold our wonder in thrall. They are potent because of their very sincerity. Who could fail to recognize the splendid courage which held so steadfastly to the last moment, or fail to appreciate the iron nerve which bent only before the impossible?

We come to this in the end, that freethinking "saints" are the best. It is significant that even in Christian Scotland the popularity of St. Andrew's Day is far less than that of Burns's Night. Is it not true that in the sheer fight of personalities for the possession

of England's day, Shakespeare has beaten St. George, as our American friends say, "to a frazzle."

This is but a little cloud of biographical dust, and, if an apology is needed for such trifling, we point to the fact that the interest of such a volume is inexhaustible. It reaches from the greatest names in history to hundreds of men and women whose achievements were less important, but, who, because they dedicated their lives to the service of intellectual liberty, laid the deep foundations of the future greatness of the human race.

MIMNERMUS.

## A Sceptical Scientist and Saint.

### II.

(Continued from p. 22.)

IN 1864 was formed the X Club. X being the unknown quantity, the only club rule was that it should possess no specified number of members, and nine was the original membership; and this number was never exceeded. The original members were Huxley, Tyndall, Herbert Spencer, Hirst, Busk, Frankland, Hooker, Spottiswoode, and Lubbock, and all these men reached high eminence either in science or philosophy. No formal dissolution of the Club ever took place, but at the last regular gathering in 1893 the attendance had fallen to three. Lubbock, Hooker, and Frankland formed this gathering. In a sense, the Club's final meeting occurred in 1911, when Lubbock visited the venerable Hooker. That great botanist died soon afterwards, and Lubbock himself passed away in 1913.

In the early 'sixties Lubbock was invited to stand for the City of London, then a safe Liberal seat. He regarded the proposal with favour, but his father set his face against it. In 1865, Warde Norman, the economist, invited young Lubbock to contest West Kent. The invitation was issued on behalf of the Liberals in that division, but, remembering his parent's opposition to the suggested candidature for the City—the great commercial and banking constituency—Lubbock declined the offer. From the progressive standpoint, West Kent seemed a forlorn hope, as there was a Conservative majority of 2,000 to pull down. Norman, however, refused to take "No" for an answer from the son, and appealed to the father, who, to the younger man's astonishment, promptly acceded to Norman's request. Lubbock's scientific friends murmured at the prospect of his wasting his energies in political life, and Darwin, while congratulating him on a speech at Maidstone, regretted his young disciple's desertion. "Even in the moment of triumph," wrote Darwin, "I must let a little groan escape me for poor deserted Science. Anyhow, I know that you will always love your first-born child, and not despise her for the sake of gaudy politicks."

The famous John Stuart Mill, who subscribed a little later towards the election expenses of Bradlaugh at Northampton, was a member of Lubbock's committee, whose list included other eminent names. Yet, despite his highly successful meetings, Lubbock was soundly beaten at the poll. And a contributory factor in his defeat was the appearance during the contest of his *Prehistoric Times*, which contained so many arguments and illustrations that were antagonistic to the almost universally treasured belief in the Old Testament story of the creation of man. Lubbock was advised to suspend the publication of this work until after the election, but he intimated that "such a course would be scarcely honourable." And the few years that divide us from this despotism of theological darkness will be vividly realized when we learn that—

as late as 1871, a meeting was held to reply to a lecture

he (Lubbock) had recently given. The speaker, the Rev. J. B. McCrea, considered that "Science was the cause, science is the cause, of the degeneracy of man. It was not man's natural tendency and development that made him scientific. Science did it. The Bible told us distinctly and plainly it was not the devil that did it. A great deal more was laid at the door of the devil than belonged to the devil, although he cannot be made worse than he is."

Evidently we have made some progress since then, for the most illiterate ranter in the most benighted little Bethel could hardly descend at our time of day to such drivels as this. The reviewers who addressed the better-instructed circles were loud in their praises, and *Prehistoric Times* received generous recognition from those whose opinions were of value in the world of science. The *Athenæum* notice was penned by Russel Wallace, who wrote that the work "teems with information on everything that has been yet discovered bearing on the early history of our race, and is written in so clear and agreeable a manner that it is sure to gratify and instruct every class of reader."

*Prehistoric Times*, nevertheless, abounds in arguments, verities, and implications with which Wallace in later life must have strongly dissented. The first edition was soon translated into the leading European tongues. Three editions have appeared in France, and in the sixth and final English edition we possess one of the finest of our anthropological masterpieces. A note to Lady Lubbock from Walter Bagehot, dated 1866, shows how novel appeared the views presented in this volume. The famous essayist, economist, and author of *Physics and Politics*, wrote:—

I am afraid it will be a very long time before people will give up talking nonsense on *Prehistoric Times*. They have not quite given it up as to present times, and views so new as Sir John's and so entirely contrary to strong traditions will not be thoroughly understood, much less universally accepted, for many years. Argument moves men but very slowly.

In 1865, while journeying with his wife to the Science gathering at Birmingham, he met with a serious mishap. When a little beyond Banbury, most of the train left the rails. Lubbock was bruised and shaken, his hands and coat were drenched with blood, and, although the lady suffered no serious bodily hurt, her nervous system was subjected to a severe strain, and she was never the same woman again. She was at the moment well advanced in pregnancy, so much so that several weeks later she gave birth to their son Rolfe.

In 1870 Lubbock wooed and won the electors of Maidstone, and his maiden speech at Westminster was delivered in April. Military Education was his theme, and the new member told the House how our Army suffered for lack of science. After deploring the absence of chemical teaching, he turned to geology, and pointed out that—

Portsmouth great fort was built on the summit of a chalk ridge.....The strata sloped in each direction away from the summit; a very deep well had been sunk here; but as the rain which fell on the hill drained away along the line of the strata, this was the worst possible place for such a purpose. When the Military Authorities were building the College at Sandhurst, they had a quantity of bricks made of the Blackwater Valley or river alluvium. These consequently fell to pieces, and others had to be made. Along our South Coast, groins were placed to arrest the movement of the shingle caused by the prevalent winds and tides. The military engineers were ordered to set groins on the Dover Coast, and they slanted them the wrong way, thus helping the shingle on. Some of the forts on our Southern Coast, having been built in yielding strata, had given way, and though the damage might be repaired, it had caused great

expense. When our Army went to the Crimea, Sir Roderick Murchison applied to the Government to send out a geologist, but that request was not complied with. An unhealthy position was chosen for our troops in the Crimea from want of a scientific acquaintance with the geological conformation of the ground.

Yet thirty years rolled away before a Government-appointed Committee mildly recommended these very reforms. And so on, and so on; but we must be a wonderful people, for we have somehow managed to muddle along with at least the semblance of success.

Although Lubbock was actively engaged both in Parliament and in the City, there appeared in 1870 another important work from his pen. This was his *Origin of Civilization and the Primitive Condition of Man*, which is now in its sixth edition. The book proved an immediate success, and, although an expensive volume, the first edition was soon exhausted. *Preliminary Times* was filled with facts, but the new work contained weighty deductions and pregnant theories relating to aboriginal man's efforts to control and direct the forces of Nature to his own advantage, as well as to his rude struggles to rear a social structure. It also endeavoured to picture early forms of religious belief. Sir John's views concerning the genesis of savage religion were similar to those of Herbert Spencer, Sir Edward Tylor, and other evolutionists. He was convinced that dreams were largely responsible for the theologies of primitive humanity. He shows us the savage puzzling over the problem as to—

What happens to the spirit during sleep? The body lies lifeless, and the savage not unnaturally concludes that the spirit has left it. In this he is confirmed by the phenomena of dreams, which consequently to the savage have a reality and importance which we can hardly appreciate. During sleep the spirit seems to desert the body; and as in dreams we visit other localities, and even other worlds, living, as it were, a separate and different life, the two phenomena are not unnaturally regarded as the complements of one another. Hence the savage considers the events in his dreams to be as real as those of his waking hours, and hence he likes to feel that he has a spirit which can quit the body.

Contrary to the settled convictions of the astute Parliamentarians, he was successful, in 1871, in placing his Bank Holidays' Bill on the Statute Book. Ever an enthusiastic advocate of the lessening of the hours of labour in shops and warehouses, Lubbock lost no time in providing the public with Bank Holidays. The holiday with which his name is inseparably associated is that which falls in August, and he was convinced that this summer season furnished fuller facilities for open-air benefit and enjoyment than any other part of the year. Critics have asserted that it was quite by accident that the wording of the Bill extended its provisions beyond the banking world. This is, however, entirely erroneous, as the subjoined note in Lubbock's own handwriting shows. "As regards the Bank Holiday," he states:—

I will only say that I never intended it to apply solely to the Banks. In fact, the Bill expressly provides that nobody shall be compelled to do anything on a Bank Holiday which he cannot be compelled to do on Xmas Day or Good Friday. The term Bank Holiday was used for a technical reason; on other holidays, Bills of Exchange are payable the previous day. On our holidays, on the following day. Now, if we had used the expression "General" or "National," the provision would have been doubtful, and we therefore chose the special distinguishing term "Bank Holiday."

The August festival proved a magnificent success. All the scenes of rowdyism and drunkenness confidently predicted by the wiseacres were conspicuous by their absence. It is the privilege of few legislators to perform

a deed of such widespread usefulness at the early age of thirty-seven. In the same year in which St. Lubbock's Day received the Royal Assent, Lubbock interested himself with Huxley and others in preparing food supplies to be sent to Paris, to relieve the famished population of that splendid city from the fatal consequence of the German invasion of France. And it was also in 1871 that Lubbock began that intimate interest in Avebury, the spot from which he in after years assumed his title. He had long been interested in the preservation of ancient ruins and public monuments, and Avebury is one of our chief national treasures. It was first mentioned by the antiquary Aubrey, who declares that "Avebury doth as much exceed Stonehenge in grandeur as a Cathedral doth a Parish Church." This venerable ruin stood in imminent danger of falling into the hands of the builder, and, although local protests were raised, its fate seemed settled. An enlightened clergyman sought Lubbock's assistance, and he willingly purchased the site, thus securing the lovers of archæology against the Vandals. All who know the Hardy country of Wessex will bear Sir John in grateful remembrance for his prompt act. Thus was conserved a priceless relic of far remote times.

T. F. PALMER.

(To be continued.)

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## Acid Drops.

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We have heard of trouble in China because engineers tried to run a railway track through a graveyard. This was because it outraged the respect and veneration which Chinese feel towards their ancestors. We were reminded of this by a case before the War Losses Commission the other day. The military authorities found it necessary to lay an electric cable under a churchyard path at Willesden. The rector objected, but the Electric Light Company were informed that the "outrage" would be assuaged if £200 were paid to the Church Fund, with an additional £30 for expenses. The Company objected to this as "blackmail," and the military authorities exercised their power and laid down the cable. Then the vicar claimed for professional charges. Hence the case before the Commission. We have by this time got quite used to patriotism at five per cent., and to everybody making all they can out of the War by way of *doing* their bit; and doubtless the rector and the vicar felt that here was the chance of "doing" something, or someone. The outrage on their religious feelings would disappear if £230 were handed over! So much for the sacred character of religious susceptibilities!

Sir Ronald Ross, who is world-famous for his discoveries in connection with malaria, retorts, in a controversial letter to the *British Medical Journal*: "Surely the All-Maker can at any moment stop a practice of which He disapproves." That Sir Ronald made this, in any case, pregnant observation with his tongue in his cheek is shown by his further one that Tennyson's "believing where we cannot prove" he considers "dishonest."

The Sabbatarians are at it again. The Chief Constable of Grimsby and the Deputy Chief Constable of Lincolnshire have both definitely decided to stop Sunday trading by prosecuting customers on a charge of aiding and abetting. These little local gods, dressed in brief authority, evidently do not read their Bibles. They should turn to the second chapter of Mark and then put on sackcloth and ashes. We wonder what parson is at the bottom of the game.

Mr. W. L. Hichens, Chairman of Cammel, Laird & Co., gave a very thoughtful address before the Headmaster's Conference the other day. In such an expression as "The true function of education is to teach a man to live, and not how to make a living," he showed that he had a much truer conception of the higher function of education than many of our

statesmen who can see in it no more than a society decoration on the one side, or an instrument for beating a commercial rival on the other. If a man knows how to live, he will sooner find a way of getting a living, than by knowing how to get a living, find out how to live.

There was another expression used by Mr. Hichens that was worthy of note. "The code of honour which regulated the modern schoolboy's everyday life was derived, not from religious teaching, but from the cricket field and the football ground. He grew to understand that he must play the game in the affairs of everyday." We commend this observation to those who are fond of sentimentalizing over the power of religious education. The obligation of straightforward conduct comes from life, not from theology, or even from moral instruction. The one may turn a boy into a hypocrite and the other into a prig. But it is in association with his fellows, in the cultivation of his powers of imagination, and in a quickening of his sympathies that the real springs of moral development are reached.

Another poor wandering sheep is James Harry Thorburn who was sentenced to three months for frauds extending over six years and involving £1,300, the money of his employers. Thorburn was a choirmaster at Bradford. He will have plenty of time now to learn new tunes.

The New Year's Gathering of the Commercial Travellers' Christian Association has been held. Did it help those who attended to "tell the tale" more plausibly, or whitewash them for booking orders they never received? Perhaps they found consolation in the text, "I opened my door to the traveller." There is very little in the Bible which is appropriate for men on the road.

Mrs. Cornwallis West, who figured prominently in the recent War Office case, is a clergyman's daughter. And, curiously, Mrs. Langtry, who was considered to be her great rival, is the daughter of a former Dean of Jersey. The careers of both these charming ladies illustrate the value of early religious training.

Lord Curzon, speaking at a Primrose League meeting, said the soldiers were fighting in this War for the principles of the League. There's statesmanship made easy! One of the objects of the Primrose League is the maintenance of the Protestant Church of England, and he would be a bold man who would assert that French and Italian Catholics, and Russian and Rumanian members of the Greek Church care a button whether English Protestants worship cats or crocodiles.

At the Central Hall, Westminster, General and Mrs. Booth advertise "Two Days with God." The Kaiser will be cross.

"Food or Alcohol?" runs a headline in the press. Perhaps the clergy will respond by limiting the use of communion wine.

A facetious journalist has pointed out that the chief holy days of the Christian Church are associated with gluttony. Just so! The merry birthday of the Man of Sorrows is quite an old joke, and the hot cross buns on Good Friday appeal far more powerfully to the young than the trial and execution of the Trinity.

The forthcoming Spring meetings of the various Churches are likely to be seriously affected by the restricted train services, and the Godly are much perturbed in consequence. Probably, some of them will pray for the wings they expect to wear in another place.

Pious relics are a standing disgrace to priests. The "true cross" must have been the height of St. Paul's Cathedral, and the "real crown of thorns" the size of Lord's Cricket Ground, judging by the extremely numerous fragments scattered throughout Europe.

Enormous sums of money were spent at the coronation of the Emperor Charles as King of Hungary, despite the fact that his subjects are dying of hunger. When the King of Kings entered Jerusalem the sole decorations were palm-leaves. Probably the Emperor Charles agrees with Hosea Biglow that "they didn't know everything down in Judee."

Ever since the War began nothing has been more characteristic of British Christianity than the persistency and audacity with which it has sought to paint the Germans as a nation of Materialists and Atheists, even from the Kaiser downwards. The Bishop of London, Dr. Clifford, Dr. Campbell Morgan, the editor of the *British Weekly*, Mr. Spurr, A. G. Gardiner, in the *Daily News*, and many others, announced, several of them a score of times, with dogmatic certitude, that Germany had repudiated the Christian religion in favour of Nietzscheanism, according to some, or, according to others, in consequence of a return to the religion of Odiu. This journal has availed itself of every opportunity to expose that monstrous lie, not because it hates Christianity but because it loves truth above all else. But the clergy of all denominations, from the Bishop of London down to the most ignorant curate or Nonconformist minister, continued to repeat the falsehood whenever they had a chance.

And yet all these more or less eminent men of God knew, or ought to have known, that they were lying in order to convince their fellow-countrymen that the War did not originate in a Christian nation, or that Christianity was in no sense responsible for it. Prior to the War they used to assert that there were scarcely any Atheists in the whole world; but after the War broke out they discovered that the hateful people were numerous enough to have caused it. They were willing to take their oath that it was so.

But that is not all. Before the War, they were in the habit of calling special attention to the fact that in Germany Christianity was triumphant. To refresh their memory we will here cite the testimony of the late Right Reverend Dr. Wilkinson, Anglican Bishop of North and Central Europe, published in the *Year Book of the Churches* for 1908. The editor of that work described Dr. Wilkinson as "a great authority on this matter." Said his lordship:—

Germany is a religious nation. Germans, from their great Kaiser downwards, are a God-fearing people. The sense of duty, so strong in every German, plays a larger part in religious observances than with us. And God has blessed and is wonderfully blessing that nation.

The Bishop went on to emphasize the fact that "religious education in all the primary and secondary schools of Germany is compulsory." He contended that in many respects England might learn good lessons from Germany. As far as we know, no objection arose, in any quarter, in 1908, to that eulogistic characterization of the German nation; but soon after the outbreak of the War, the pulpit rang from end to end of the land with the declaration that a nation capable of pronouncing treaties as "scraps of paper," of violating the neutrality of Belgium, and of committing the unspeakable horrors laid to its charge, could not be a Christian nation. Appalling is the hypocrisy thus disclosed!

The early Christians believed in a community of property, as well as a host of fairy tales. This may account for the fact that one cannot go into any hotel or boarding-house without finding the touching text hanging in a conspicuous position, "The proprietor is not responsible for any articles left in the bedrooms."

"General Booth needs immediate help" was the headline in a bold advertisement in the press recently. We do not remember the time when this gentleman did not require assistance, but why does he not rely on the spiritual uses of prayer instead of the material methods of newspaper advertising?

The Rev. J. F. Newton, of Cedar Rapids, U.S.A., who has accepted the pastorate of the City Temple, London, says that

his Nonconformist chapel is a "house of the Eternal." Bless his innocent heart! When he comes to England he should find out that there are many thousands of "houses of the Eternal," some of them tin-tabernacles, and many heavily mortgaged.

Surgeon-General Sir Alfred Keogh, who, as head of the R.A.M.C., has been responsible for the medical service of the British Army during the War, made a biting reference recently to the mental equipment of so many people in high positions. "I have to work with these men," he says, "and press scientific decisions upon them, and it is exceedingly difficult to get low enough to find yourself upon their level. They possess no knowledge whatever of the facts of science and nature." Perhaps this accounts for piety in high places.

"Buffalo Bill" (Col. F. Cody) is dead. On hearing that his death was near, he requested various Freemason societies to arrange his funeral. Then he called for a pack of cards, and insisted on playing a game of poker. Of course, the religious world will be shocked. He ought to have called for the Bible; and it is possible that the pack of cards may become a Bible in the future. But our respect for Col. Cody goes up in consequence of that request. We feel certain there was a *man* behind it. Whining for a Bible or a parson would only have proved there was a knave or a coward.

Rev. G. McLuckie, of Yarmouth, says he likes to think of the Allies as "God's chosen instruments." We do not say they are not; but if they are, it is a pity God does not look better after them. If he had warned them what was coming, it might—if we may so put it—never have happened. A God who knew his business would have prevented this horrible mess ever occurring. But to let it happen, and then merely select "instruments" to settle it, is only doing what a mere mortal could do. One thing seems certain. If theology doesn't find a man foolish, it leaves him so.

It looks as if that distinguished Christian, Mr. Horatio Bottomley, aspires to be among the prophets, for he has written an article with the title, "If I were Old Moore." We hope that Mr. Bottomley will never write like the prophet Ezekiel.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has been ill, and doctors have been in attendance. Evidently, His Grace has not much faith in prayer alone.

It is said that dear old Providence takes a special interest in sparrows. Leicestershire folk will have to look out for trouble, for they are trapping sparrows in thousands and using them as a substitute for meat. Agricultural experts state that sparrows destroy annually the produce of 185,000 acres.

Juvenile humour is sometimes very pointed. In an essay on "The Church," a schoolboy thus classified the clergy: "There are three kinds of parsons—bishops, vicars, and curates. The bishops tell the vicars to work, and the curates do it. Curates are mostly thin, but get fuller when they are vicars, and podgy when they are bishops."

Miss Picton-Turberville told a meeting held to consider the subject of "Women in the Church": "In an invitation recently issued on a Church anniversary it was announced that the vicar would speak on the history of the Church, the curate on woman's work for the Church, and in small print it was announced that the ladies would give the tea and coffee." We are not surprised; but it is women's own fault. So long as they are content to act as handmaidens to the clergy, they will be used as such. And, after all, the arrangement was quite scriptural. Jesus selected no women disciples, although he permitted one to wash his feet. And that is an old Eastern symbol of abject submission.

We are indebted to the *Daily Sketch* for a tale of a man at the front which is highly enlightening as well as amusing.

The censor opened two letters from the same soldier, one addressed to the vicar of his parish and another to a friend in the same village. The holy tone of the first was beautiful, the plain, or rather flowery, language of the other, describing the weather and conditions he was experiencing would have made the vicars's hair curl. But the clergy can use "some" language at times, and take a lot of beating.

The Church of Christ has always opposed everything new. It brought all sorts of charges against the cinemas, and in many London districts will not allow the "movies" to be shown on Sunday. There is positively nothing for the people to do in Tottenham, East Ham, and other places, if the people do not want to go to church, since the public houses are open for so short a time. Now another proposal is mooted. It is proposed that the Church take over the picture palaces, but about £17,000,000 has been invested in the industry, and this would take some finding. Anyway, the owners of that capital are not likely to hand it over to the clergy.

There is a proposal on foot to create a new Bishopric of Bradford. For this purpose a sum of £700,000 is required, and the public is earnestly requested to subscribe. Of course, at a time like the present, when the Government is urging everybody to invest in War Loan, the proposal might be called unpatriotic, for certainly the country is in no crying need of a new bishopric. But the authors of the scheme are alert, and they promise that every penny subscribed shall be invested in War Loan. Which means that, after having obtained £700,000 for a quite absurd purpose, the rest of the country will be called upon to pay 5 per cent. interest on it for thirty years in the name of religion and patriotism.

## Jack London and Religion.

THE late Jack London, the author who had perhaps achieved greater success than any other American expert, except Mark Twain, was never suspected of being pious. Mr. Nathan Shapiro, a Californian reader of the *Truth Seeker*, who enjoyed a personal acquaintance with London, says:—"He was a sincere Freethinker." Jack London was all for brain and muscle, and could not give anything to religion and dogma. Living and not believing was his business. His experience with the professors of religion, from the Salvation Army promoter to the church-endowing, Bible-class capitalist, convinced him that they were grafters and hypocrites. Of one of the latter he said:—

This man, talking soberly and earnestly about the beauties of idealism and the goodness of God, had just betrayed his comrades in a business deal. This man, a pillar of the church and heavy contributor to foreign missions, worked his shop-girls ten hours a day on a starvation wage, and thereby directly encouraged prostitution. This man, who endowed chairs in universities, perjured himself in courts of law over a matter of dollars and cents. And this railroad magnate broke his word as a gentleman and a Christian when he granted a secret rebate to one or two captains of industry locked together in a struggle to the death.

He had opportunities to know the church at both ends, where the Salvation Army type of exhorter works his game, and where the pious millionaire or business man acts his part, for he had been a down-and-outer and he had entered the portals of "society." He had no use for either nor for types of religionists found between them. His friends among the clergy were the unorthodox and unfrocked. His economic heresies made him the idol of the radicals. He was not conservative enough to remain with the Socialist organization, although he promoted its objects. When the fragments of his work are collected, it will be found, as with Mark Twain (from whom he was otherwise altogether different), that Christianity not only never tempted his belief, but had his contempt rather than his admiration.

—*Truth Seeker* (New York).



C. Cohen's Lecture Engagements.

January 28, Swansea; February 4, Abertillery; February 11, Liverpool; February 25, Clapham; March 11 Birmingham; March 18, Leicester.

To Correspondents.

- J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—February 11, Walsall. March 25, Avondale Hall, Clapham.
- MRS. TURNBULL.—Very pleased indeed to hear from you. Thanks for good wishes to self and family. We hope that you are yourself keeping well.
- W. MATHER.—We hope to publish that pamphlet, with many others, before long. It is a question of getting a little capital to be used for that purpose and securing a supply of paper at a reasonable price. We shall overcome both difficulties one day, we have no doubt.
- DENEb.—We don't at all share your despair of Scotland. Of course, Christianity is still strong there, and we should like to see it weaker. But the Scott is a hard-headed "cuss." He doesn't rush, but once he has moved one can depend upon him, and his strength in the service of superstition is an earnest of equal strength in the service of Freethought. And he is the better worth fighting for on that account.
- F. C.—Pleased to hear from one who attended our lectures at Blackburn, although these were given many years ago. We quite share your opinion of the priest—Roman Catholic and other.
- M. BAXTER (Cape Town).—Thanks for cuttings and congratulations.
- R. OGDEN.—We will not say "Courage," as we believe you already possess it. But we fancy that the stand you have made will in the future be looked back on by you as something of which to be proud—if that is not already the case. And nothing could really compensate for the sacrifice of one's sense of right.
- G. E. WEBB.—You say, "If you keep on hammering away.....you will come out on top." We hope so. At any rate, we intend doing it whether we come out on top or go under. We note your neat comment on the "Mutual Admiration Society." It is all a matter of temperament. Some are born to fight, and others to be spectators.
- A. BUTTON desires to thank all the writers in the *Freethinker* for the weekly treat he receives every Thursday. Thanks.
- MR. B. SIGER.—We hope to keep on doing "nowt" else for a long time. Our best wishes to your son in Salonica.
- G. L. B.—Very sorry to hear of your loss. We hope to have the pleasure of meeting you soon.
- S. HEALING asks whether we could not induce our readers to make an effort to get the *Freethinker* into all public reading-rooms. We should be pleased to give any help we could to this effort, which is a desirable one.
- A. SIMPSON.—The *Athenaeum* is now a monthly, and can be ordered through any newsagent, price 1s.
- J. BREESE.—We dealt with the article on "Religion at the Front" some time ago. We may recur to it again as opportunity offers.
- B. DUNLOP.—Want of space compels; that is all.
- J. EVANS.—Sorry we have not space to spare for a lengthy discussion as to the verisimilitude of Caradoc Evans' sketches of the Welsh peasantry. We can only say we have not seen their accuracy challenged, and Caradoc Evans asserts he is writing from personal observation. We must let the matter rest at that.
- H. SILVERSTEIN writes that the word "live" in the quotation from Shelley on p. 26 of last week's *Freethinker* should be "rule." We are glad to find that the paper is read so carefully. The mistake was due to an error of transcription. "Rule" is obviously the correct word.
- R. W. BLAKELY.—We don't quite see the point of your criticism. *When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, giving as long notice as possible.*
- Lecture Notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C., by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.*
- 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.*

Our Sustentation Fund.

LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Previously acknowledged, £250 15s. 3d.—G. E. Webb, 10s. 6d.; Deneb, 7s. 6d.; E. Beardall, 2s.; W. Dunlop (Torquay), 5s.; Kepler, 2s. 6d.; J. Bryce, 8s.; F. C., 2s. 6d.; R. Ogden (3rd sub.), 2s. 6d.; Capt. J. Latham, £2 10s.; Mrs. Turnbull, 10s.; T. M. Mosley, 2s. 6d.; W. Mather (2nd sub.), 10s.; Harry Randell, 4s.; C. T. Simpson, £1 1s.; W. D. and R. (Portsmouth), 3s.; A. Button, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. B. Siger, 3s. G. L. B., 2s.; S. Healing, 2s.; R. L. M., £1; R. A. Downes, 10s. 6d.; Bonnie Dundee, 4s. 6d.; J. Pemberton, 3s.; J. Bryan, 5s.; C. Bridger, 2s.; F. Webb, 5s.; R. Viedge, £1 2s.; S. Hartley, 4s.; A. Little, 2s. 6d.; J. H. Gastrell, 10s.; Nelsonian, 2s. 6d.; A. Waymark, 2s. 6d.; Mrs. A. Knoll, 2s.; E. Oliver, £2 2s.; T. Dunbar, 2s.; D. Richards, 2s.; T. Chalmers, 5s.; S. E., 2s.; H. Black, 10s.; W. Shelley, 1s.; W. Pitt, 10s.; F. Smith, 2s. 6d. *Per H. E. Anderson (Leicester):* G. Sharman, 5s.; Gordon Tate, 1s.; W. Leeson, 5s.; S. Leeson, 5s.; H. E. Anderson, 2s. 6d.; F. J. Smith, 2s.; E. Pinder, 5s.; W. H. Scott, 5s.; W. Wilber, 1s.; S. Woolley, 2s. 6d.; W. H. Woolley, 1s.; M. F. Frear, £1 1s.; total, £2 16s. *Per Miss Vance: H. P. K., 2s. 6d.; "A Friend" (Blackburn), 5s.; John Halliwell, sen., 1s.; "J. L. F. Aberdeen," 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. Cross, 5s. Total—£270 12s. 3d.*

Sugar Plums.

Next week (Jan. 28) Mr. Cohen pays a visit to Swansea. It is the first time he has visited that town, but both this and Cardiff should prove profitable ground for propagandist work. South Wales is a most promising ground altogether. Perhaps this is because the older generation there was very religious, and the reaction has been greater than in other parts. At any rate and whatever the cause, it is our business to take advantage of favourable conditions when they present themselves.

The Sustentation Fund has realised £270 12s. 3d., and we take this opportunity of thanking all those who have so generously contributed to this result. We have been greatly encouraged by so prompt a response, accompanied, as most of the subscriptions were, by warm letters of appreciation for what we have done. We have had so many of these during the past week, that we can only take this method of saying how deeply we appreciate them. As we now stand, the whole of last year's loss—entirely due to the excessive cost of paper—has been cleared, with more than enough over to meet the deficit to date. There will be some months of the year to face, but we dare say we shall manage somehow. Without doubt had we adopted the suggestion of many, and kept the Fund open until the War ceased, we could have cleared the loss, week by week, but we think the plan we have adopted the better one. There are always some who will not send until closing day, and others who wait until the day after. But to ask for money is the worst—perhaps the only distasteful part of our work, and we are very pleased to cease from this for awhile. So, once more, we thank those who have helped. We also thank those who would have helped had circumstances permitted, and we shall not be misunderstood if we say the sooner we can get along without this kind of help the better we shall like it.

Please note that we have said *this* kind of help. Other help a paper like the *Freethinker* will always need. We always need the help of our readers in securing new subscribers to the paper. That help has enabled us to weather as well as we have done one of the worst periods in the history of the *Freethinker*. This journal remains one of the few in Great Britain that has remained practically unchanged during the war, while scores have ceased to make their appearance. That is a result of which we feel very proud, and it has been accomplished because so many have worked so hard and so effectively in securing new readers. May we ask, therefore, for a continuance of their help in this direction. We will send specimen copies when names

and addresses are forwarded, or posters to newsagents who will display them. The more readers we can get the better—better to enable us to meet the expenses that must be met somehow, and better also for the great cause which the *Freethinker* exists to serve.

Mr. Cohen had two fine meetings on Sunday last at Nottingham. In the afternoon the hall was packed to the doors, and in the evening the place was well filled, despite the dark night and a snowstorm. No speaker could have wished for a more attentive or a more critical audience. There was quite a rush of people anxious to join in the discussion, and as many as a liberal extension of the time would allow were accommodated. And there were many requests for Mr. Cohen to pay Nottingham another visit.

We are rather sanguine as to the results of these meetings. Some very likely gentlemen expressed their willingness to co-operate in forming and helping a Branch of the N. S. S. in Nottingham, and, for the time being at least, Mr. T. Mosley, of 3 Carnarvon Grove, Gedling, has consented to act as secretary. We should be obliged if those who are willing to co-operate in any way will write Mr. Mosley without delay. There is nothing like striking while the iron is hot. There are hundreds of Freethinkers in Nottingham, we know. And they should get to work at once.

Mr. Lloyd was caught, like ourselves, in a snowstorm at Leicester on Sunday, but we are glad to learn that he had a good and a pleasant meeting in spite of the weather. We have no details to hand, so cannot say more.

The South London Branch re-opened its meetings on Sunday last with a lecture from Mr. P. S. Wilde, on the "Antiquity of Man." To-day (Jan. 21) Mr. A. D. Howell-Smith lectures on "Evil, evolution, and God." The meetings commence at 7 o'clock, and admission is free, with a few reserved seats at 6d. South London friends will please notice.

Mr. Harry Snell will deliver a course of lectures at the Emerson Club, 19 Buckingham Street, Strand, on Tuesday evenings, commencing January 23. The titles of the lectures are: "Modern Civilization in the Melting-Pot," "Religion and the Reformation of 1517," "Four Centuries of Religious Progress," and "The New Reformation; the Principles of a Universal Religion." We should have thought the world had had enough of religions—universal and otherwise; but if people are hankering after that sort of thing, we feel sure Mr. Snell will provide them with as good a one as can be found. The lectures will commence at 6.15, and admission to a single lecture is one shilling. A ticket for the four can be obtained for 2s. 6d.

A discussion on "Why I am Interested in Politics" (from a Mother's Point of View) will be opened by Mrs. Drake, of the Woman's Suffrage Association, at the Victoria Reform Club, 15, Victoria Road, Kentish Town Road, to-day (Jan. 21) at 7.30. These meetings are held under the auspices of the North London Branch of the N.S.S., and we hope that Freethinkers in the locality will do their best to make them a success.

## "Free Will."

### II.

(Concluded from p. 27.)

YET another example. A man is starving; he has been three days without food. He passes a stall on which some savoury and hot pies are exposed. He begs one from the proprietor, who refuses in scorn, adding an insult relative to "work-shys" as he turns away and enters his adjoining shop. The famished beggar gazes on the longed-for food and, with a last remnant of "respectability," turns, too, away. His tattered boot,

with projecting rusty leather, strikes the trestle. The board falls, and he falls. A pie, still steaming, rolls within an inch of his face as he lies full length on the ground. He inhales the aroma, *and he is starving*. Does he desire to eat? No one doubts it. Does he *will* to eat? Then he will snatch at the food and soften the pangs of hunger. Does he *will* to be honest? Then he will refrain. Different readers will reply differently, but two alternatives of action alone present themselves. These, again, sub-divide into four, according to the definition chosen.

1. Will, including mental attitude, plus activity mentally pictured.

(a) He steals a pie.

(b) He crawls away unfed.

2. Will, signifying mental attitude only.

(a) He steals a pie.

(b) He crawls away unfed.

Now let us deal analytically with all four cases.

1 (a) He steals a pie.

That is he wills to eat, and eats. Or, more consistently with definition temporarily accepted, his mental attitude is decision to eat, and he actually does eat. Incidentally, his mental attitude is decision to steal, and he actually does steal. But hunger precedes both mental attitude and subsequent act. Hunger, the overwhelming and agonizing incentive, controls both. Thus the "will" is controlled, hence not free. Again, suppose his mental attitude were decision to eat; and the subsequent act to crawl away unfed. Then we have (a<sup>1</sup>) a flagrant departure from the definition, for the mental attitude is not followed by act pictured in that attitude; (a<sup>2</sup>) and we have an act consciously performed, either unwilling or contrary to the mental attitude preceding it. That is, (a<sup>1</sup>) is not susceptible of discussion under heading 1 at all, for it opposes the definition postulated, and (a<sup>2</sup>) both violates the same definition, or comes under the class of conscious involuntary acts, *i.e.*, like the live-blood twitching of the eyelids occasionally, or the spasmodic knotting of certain muscles in the leg, an uncanny pathological condition most people are familiar with. If will, of any kind conceivable, can be predicated of these, and freedom tacked on in addition, our opponents are welcome to the position. To us it appears too absurd to seek words with which to oppose it.

1 (b) He crawls away unfed.

That is his mental attitude—is decision to remain honest, and the act to crawl away, and sustain the attitude. Very well, but they both follow from the previous honesty in the man's training. They both result from earlier and repeated introspective views and conclusions as to the great ethical value of probity. Hence these past thoughts imprinted and retained mentally, control this example of will, and, again, what is controlled is not free. We need not consider here that he might (b<sup>1</sup>) in mental attitude decide to be dishonest, and in act crawl away. All the strictures applied to cases (a<sup>1</sup>) and (a<sup>2</sup>) equally fit (b<sup>1</sup>) and (b<sup>2</sup>) decision to eat, and *then* a crawling away. Thus we have now class 2 only.

2. Will signifying mental attitude only, irrespective of what follows actually.

A. He steals a pie.

A<sup>1</sup>. He willed it. A 2. He did not.

A 1. The willing followed the hunger; result as before, will controlled, not free.

A 2. He willed to be honest, and then stole. The will, as before, follows the bent and training, hence it is not free, and then conscious involuntary act follows, and absurdity as exposed above, again apparent.

2. (b) He crawls away unfed.

(b) 1. He wills to be honest, and act following is in agreement. But the latter is unimportant on the postulated definition of this group 2, the will being the mental act. Adnauseum we have shown why he wills to be honest.

B 2. He wills to be *dishonest* and crawls away, unfed and honest.

Hunger controls the mental attitude, and the act leads us to the old absurdity.

Let us now gather all the loose ends of the argument and endeavour to plait or weave them into a coherent strand.

We assert with conviction, and we hope without undue dogmatism, the following theses.

1. Will is a mental attitude, which consists of two stages.

(a) Intense desire, culminating in

(b) Decision.

(c) Will, as such, is independent of any act except a possible other *mental* attitude which may follow.

2. The physical act pictured in "will" follows the will accurately in the vast majority of cases. Nevertheless, the reverse or another physical act may occur.

3. No voluntary and conscious act can occur which opposes the will preceding it.

4. Physical acts which occur consciously and involuntarily prove nothing as to the freedom or captivity of the will. They are totally unconnected with it.

5. The will is always, and consistently, determined or controlled or impelled by one or more (usually myriads) of factors in thought or sensation which preceded it. It, the will, is never, in any circumstances nor in any conceivable manner, free.

The basic belief of most religions is in an all-beneficent Deity. Now, it would soon become apparent to even the lay mind that all-goodness could neither create nor permit evil; that evil could not exist in the work of such a deity and be due to that deity. The clergy, keen to anticipate any possible objection to their teaching; the clergy who have ever armed the fortress with all weapons possible, before risking attack unprepared, naturally saw the possibility of a raid still earlier. Evil exists. Poverty, death, injustice, cruelty, squalor, pain, sorrow, exist. They are as apparent to boor as to bishop. Beneficent omnipotence created all things they taught, but they dared not attribute the evil to the same source. The glaring contradiction was too vivid even for stultified and chloroformed believers. The evil must be accounted for, and the deity thereby exonerated. Obviously, the easiest method is to blame man himself. Teach us that man can do right when and if he wills, because will is free, and the thing is done. Man becomes the source of all evil, and Sin conveniently covers the whole ghastly connotation of it. Thus Free Will which masquerades as an added dignity to the attributes of men, is no more than a mean subterfuge to whitewash the deeds of a naughty God. It is immaterial to us that few, if any, of the Sable Herd in *all* denominations really believe this doctrine. The point is, they tell us to do so. Nay, more, they *must* counter one stupidity by another, or their credit with the masses, already not a little on the wane, were well nigh vanished altogether. Lest it might seem that we hint, and by innuendo oppose that which we dare not expose, we may state that the first stupidity referred to is a beneficent deity or any deity whatsoever, and the other is the moribund doctrine of Free Will.

In a word, then, Free Will in man was the inevitable invention to follow the earlier one of all-beneficent deity.

Hence we are prepared to find that the more orthodox the form of religion accepted, the more strenuous the loyalty to the false notion "Free Will."

For the priest, irrespective of which particular religion he upholds, Free Will serves to buttress a bias. It contributes to the support of a vested interest.

One can imagine a Peer-brewer waxing eloquent over the cases where alcohol has prolonged life. And were the said noble follower of "spirit" the poorer for every drink taken, even a prohibitionist might listen to the tale. But when we see that exactly as in the case of the devotee of another "Spirit" the stronger the pleas, the longer the lease, we may be pardoned for doubting, and forgiven for examining the case critically and independently.

That the masses of the people accept Free Will is plainly to be found in this. They are told that its absence would reduce man to a machine—an automaton—and degrade him even in his own eyes. Vanity, sometimes exorbitant, is a human quality. To learn from childhood, for a thousand generations, that man is himself a potential god, made in the image of his transcendent creator, with a Free Will, able to gradually climb to dazzling heights of beatitude in a future life of eternal glory, is not a picture so devoid of flattery as to be easily cast aside as idle babblement. The mental bravery, the unflinching heroism which can receive the news as "glad tidings" (because it is true), that man is a risen beast, with a will fettered and controlled and determined by environment and heredity, with a termination to his individual consciousness, exactly parallel with that of a mosquito, or a hippopotamus, with nearest surviving blood relatives among the tailless anthropoid apes; that heroism is to be found solely among men who prostrate themselves before one idol only—Truth. For these we make no apology, for these we crave no indulgence. *Their* glory is indeed eternal, for it is an heirloom which passes along from generation to generation, from the present to the future. It can never fade nor fail, neither shall it wear away nor pass into darkness nor death.

JERL. NIRRA.

### Critical Chat.

#### THE GRIEVANCES OF SIR GEORGE GREENWOOD.

THOSE of my readers who have not had the misfortune to forsake literature for Freethought will remember that some while ago I drew attention to a promising quarrel between Mr. J. M. Robertson and Sir George Greenwood. As I remarked at the time, a number of un-sportsmanlike conscientious objectors got at the editor of the *Literary Guide*, and persuaded, or forced, him to stop the fight, presumably in the name of ethics, the higher humanism, or some other dismal abstraction. That, at any rate, is the impression I received; but it may be that he needed more space for the abuse of the German nation in general. Those of us who were beginning to get a little tired of vague international indictments expected to find a pleasant relief in the more definite, if not more refined, art of literary invective. As I said above, this interesting display of the art of controversial amenity was stopped just when it was promising to become exciting. Mr. Robertson and Sir George would have made short and sanguinary work of each other's reputation, and the reader who knew nothing of their books would have gone away thinking there was not much to choose between them.

Here, if Sir George Greenwood had been wise, he would have let the matter drop. But he appears to have found Mr. Robertson's implied and direct abuse too galling, especially—and here he has my sympathy—the

irritating harping upon an imaginary pathological cause for some more or less trivial error in statement or deduction. He has just printed with Messrs. Watts & Co. his part in the controversy, and calls his pamphlet *Shakespeare's Law and Latin*. I recommend anyone who admires Mr. Robertson's literary criticism to spend two shillings on this pamphlet. It will be all to the good if he takes the trouble to look carefully into the Shakespeare studies of Sir George Greenwood. He will then, I imagine, have no doubt as to which writer has more of the real spirit of scholarship and literary humanism.

The *brochure* is not, as one would expect from the title, a discussion of Shakespeare's legal and classical knowledge, but rather an attempt to show that Mr. Robertson has little Latin, and even less law. For my part, I do not profess to be very much shocked by these revelations. Mr. Robertson has quite enough learning for the matter he has in hand, the discrediting of the Baconians and their allies. It is to be regretted that he went astray in his discussion of certain legal phrases in the plays. Evidently he had only the vaguest notion of what was meant by "fine and recovery" in *Merry Wives of Windsor* (Act iv., sc. ii., 219, etc.). A candid confession of his ignorance would have made a better impression. The same criticism applies to his refusal to recognize any special legal sense of the word "purchase," which implies a "contrast between acquisition by such means as are recognized by law as *purchase*, and *acquisition by inheritance*." The passages in *Henry IV.*, pt. ii., and in *Antony and Cleopatra*, where the word occurs, are meaningless if this distinction is not borne in mind. Mr. Robertson seems to have misunderstood a few other legal expressions with which, as a critic of Shakespeare's knowledge of law, he ought to have been familiar. But, after all, I don't imagine that his errors amount to very much. I have among my friends two or three barristers who are also students of the Elizabethan drama, and they dismiss the legal part of Sir George Greenwood's theory with amused contempt.

For the support of this heretical theory that the plays were not written by the young man who came to London to make a living, who had only his genius to recommend him, but by a highly educated man, presumably of the same name, it is necessary to show that he had more than the ordinary classical culture of the average gentleman. Why it should be necessary to prove he was also a lawyer, I cannot understand. The frequent occurrence of legal expressions in the plays would rather tend to show that he was *not* a lawyer; and, on the other hand, their comparative absence in the work of Francis Beaumont would, I suppose, prove that he was no lawyer, if we had no direct evidence that he was "of the craft." It seems to me that the theory is a kind of half-way house to the Baconian heresy—if I may say so, a feather bed for a falling Shakespearean; and I should never be surprised to hear that Sir George had embraced the simple and edifying doctrine that Bacon wrote every work of any literary importance in his period. Mr. Robertson, in spite of his error, is really on the side of critical sanity, and, what is more, he has the support of a learned lawyer like Mr. A. Underhill, who writes that the dramatist's knowledge of the law was neither profound nor accurate.

Another point which Sir George Greenwood tries to make against the Stratford Shakespeare is to prove that the writer of the plays was a classical scholar with a good deal of Latin and not a little Greek. This is a theory usually associated with the name of Churton Collins, a man who did more to encourage a dislike of English literature than a dozen University Extension Lectures. A friend of mind who had the misfortune to

attend his lectures at Scoones' tells me that his over-estimation of Shakespeare was only an insidious form of depreciation. In any case, his attempt to trace the Greek and Latin poets everywhere in the plays is a performance that comes but little short of farce. Nothing could be less Greek in spirit than the Shakespearean stage, it would have been no different in spirit and in form if the dramatist had never read a line of North's version of Plutarch. It would seem that Collins and the Baconians are responsible for Sir George Greenwood's heresy.

Mr. Robertson is told that he is not a classical scholar, and that any pronouncement on Shakespeare acquirements must be left to scholars. But scholars show no anxiety to take up the task; they leave it to a man like Collins, whose only qualification was a prodigious memory. The balanced scholar, ignoring the question as frivolous, is contented to leave it to Sir George and the Baconians. Mr. A. C. Bradley, whose scholarship will satisfy even the most exacting critics, nowhere suggests Shakespeare's indebtedness to the Greek dramatists, and has no word to say of any classical culture. "Shakespeare," says Sir Walter Raleigh, wittily, "is a live man; he is sometimes wrongly judged by slower wits to be a learned man." We notice that both of them agree with Mr. Robertson, who has no classical scholarship. But as we can see in the case of Churton Collins, and no doubt in that of Sir George Greenwood, a long training in Greek and Latin is no guarantee of sane scholarship; it depends largely on the spirit. Mr. Robertson undoubtedly went astray; he was wrong in saying that a good classical scholar would not scan the word "Academe" as Shakespeare does in *Love's Labour's Lost*. A few more errors are noticed, and they serve to show that Mr. Robertson is not always as accurate as he might be; but in all candour, and while sympathizing with Sir George in his state of critical soreness, I can hardly think that he has damaged Mr. Robertson's reputation, which rests upon a fairly solid and broad foundation.

Indeed, by some of his censures, implied and direct, Sir George stands to lose his own reputation with an ingenuous reader who is inclined to have an interest in the matter discussed. When it is claimed that, while Mr. Robertson is an acknowledged authority in the history of Free thought and in some branches of economics, we must not assume that his studies in Shakespearean criticism are equally authoritative, the implied censure will have weight only for those who have no acquaintance with Mr. Robertson's work. Let us assume that the ingenuous reader begins with Sir George Greenwood's books. He will find some amusing criticism of the orthodox belief in the three or four books; he will reject emphatically the Greenwood Theory as insubstantial, as raising more difficulties than it explains—in fact, as a mere academic amusement a lawyer for whom politics is not a very strenuous occupation. He will then turn to Mr. Robertson's books. In *Montaigne and Shakespeare* he will find one of the most shapely pieces of Shakespeare-criticism of modern times. Many a man has obtained a University fellowship for work of not a tenth its value. He will find in *Did Shakespeare Write Titus Andronicus?* not only a study of that play, but also an elaborate investigation into the authorship of the body of anonymous drama vaguely associated with Greene, Peele, Kyd, and Marlowe. Only those who have worked in that chaotic period of the early drama can really appreciate the immense value of Mr. Robertson's work. He will find some scattered essays on Hamlet, notably an early one on the *Upshot of Hamlet* (1885), by far the most illuminating criticism of that perplexing drama. If the Baconian Heresy is less satisfactory, it may be accounted for by its hasty

passage through the press. Finally, I am afraid that our ingenuous literary Freethinker will have no very high opinion of Sir George Greenwood's pamphlet when he reads it again, and this time in the light of his new knowledge.

GEO. UNDERWOOD.

### A Modern Bishop's Move.

"TOSH," muttered Bishop Bloom irritably, as he twisted his latch-key in the massive fumed-oak door of the vicarage and banged into the dimly lighted hall. "Once more I venture to remark—tosh! What's the world coming to?" He threw his soft, black hat upon the hall stand and removed his overcoat, which he flung irritably over a chair, then, with much inaudible muttering, he marched into his study and switched on the electric light. The study was in a condition of chaos; books, magazines, copies of the *Heavenly Hooter* and *Bishop's Bathos* littered the floor in profusion. Bishop Bloom walked over to his armchair, lit the gas-fire, and sat down with a sigh. For over a minute he sat tapping his knee nervously with his fingers and rolling his eyes anxiously. "So it has come at last," he muttered in a low voice. "At last. Who could have foreseen it?" The thought agitated him so much that he rose suddenly from his armchair and paced quickly up and down the room with his hands clasped tightly behind his back. He visualized the immediate future—he saw quite clearly the position he was in—how hopeless the situation was. There seemed to be no way out; he frowned heavily. "I must act at once," he muttered, with emotion. "At once. This Woman in the Pulpit business is not only monstrous, but dangerous. Not only blasphemous, but calculated to take the very bread out of my mouth. I must think of something immediately." He sank into his armchair again and produced a notebook. He scribbled a few words absently; and then, a smile spreading over his previously gloomy countenance, he chuckled aloud. "I have it," he exclaimed with enthusiasm, springing from his chair and running his fingers through his hair rapidly. "The very thing. I must wire to Monsieur Clarkson at once. A splendid idea. The only way out. No one will detect—it is my only hope." He seized a telephone directory and raced through the pages until he discovered the number he wanted, then, placing the directory back upon the table, he raised the receiver and shouted a number. "Hello, hello! Is that Clarkson. Yes, Clarkson—it is, ah!—well, its me—er Mr.—er Mr. Dorgcollar. Yes, in fact—well I—er—want a complete female rig-out—hair—yes, I mean a wig—and, er—ah! you know. Splendid! Send it at once. Thanks so much. Yes, dark hair, of course. Splendid! Thanks! As soon as possible. Good-bye." Bishop Bloom replaced the receiver and staggered towards the armchair, where he sat with closed eyes. His breathing was slow and irregular, large drops of perspiration hung upon his brow, and he trembled in every limb. Then, with the electric light on and the gas-fire burning, he fell asleep.

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A week later, in the *Heavenly Hooter*, a special leading article, in extra large type, appeared on the front page. It read as follows:—

"No longer can we be said to place any reliance whatever in old bottles. Our new wine must have new bottles. We have been accused by many modern satirists and social reformers of a lack of, shall we say, scientific perception and moral courage in not supporting revolutionary ideas. But, to-day, this charge of apathy cannot be reasonably lodged against us. *Our tentative attitude towards change has itself undergone a change!* Our

pre-war narrowness of vision, our lack of sympathy with the great working-class movement, our persistent ignoring of all the vital issues of the age, all these things have vanished, we have been, indeed, 'born again.' The point at issue is the new movement in the Church against women preachers. Well, we here and now state our attitude, fearlessly and without bias or party cant. We believe in this new idea. We believe that female bishops and women clergymen (or should we say clergywomen) have come to stay. Furthermore, that it is the duty of every sane Christian journal to help forward this great movement for the benefit of humanity. No one who had the pleasure last Sunday of hearing Mrs. Blossom preach at St. Margaret's, will deny that women can preach. In fact, we will go so far as to say that Mrs. Blossom possesses qualities which very many clergymen we are afraid do not possess. One thing in particular was very noticeable: her remarkably strong voice, her dominating personality, masculine in its power, her short vivid sentences, her masterly gestures, and freedom from narrowness. In fact, everything was as it should be. The sermon itself was splendid. No bishop, with the exception, perhaps, of Bishop Bloom, ever preached a better. We take this opportunity of urging our readers to hear Mrs. Blossom as soon as they can."

STOP PRESS.

A sensational event has just been reported from the Central News. Bishop Bloom, whose work is so well-known to readers of *Bishop's Bathos*, has suddenly disappeared and no trace of him can be found. Whether the reverend gentleman has joined the Army as a private, we cannot say; but it is exactly the modest sort of thing he would do, avoiding all ostentation, show, or vulgar advertisement. Let us hope so.

ARTHUR F. THORN.

### Correspondence.

#### ATTACK ON DEMOCRACY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—More signs are appearing that something is being prepared behind the scenes for an attempt to use the position caused by the War to filch from the British people the representative method of Government.

In the *Freethinker* of December 31, I had occasion to deal with this matter in regard to a weekly journal under the title of "Bogus Lessons of History," I now find the particularly respectable daily, the *Morning Post*, has taken up the question, and in an article discussing the coming Imperial Conference, it says, "If the War be used as a test of efficiency, the Democratic form of Government does not come out very well." This is a beautiful expression for a supporter of the Law and Order Party and the mouthpiece of the so-called Constitutional clubs. It is not only a piece of unmitigated inaccuracy, but it is also calculated to upset the good relations between this country and its Republican Allies, France and Portugal, to say nothing of the United States.

We are pleased to find that the *Star* has joined us in denouncing this move of the "hidden hand." In a leader of January 3 it says ".....what amuses us most of all is the cool assumption that the Democratic form of Government does not come out very well in war. We think it comes out very well. We are not afraid to back the French Republic and the British Democracy against the Russian Autocracy."

The *Freethinker* has always championed the free expression of opinion, at the same time exposing chicanery and lies, and therefore it denounces here and now this new movement, which can only be propagated with such disgraceful methods. Truth is great and will prevail, and such attempts as that referred to will end in ignominy and failure if the people are on their guard.

BON GRE

### Where to Obtain the "Freethinker."

The following is not a complete list of newsagents who supply the "Freethinker," and we shall be obliged for other addresses for publication. The "Freethinker" may be obtained on order from any newsagent or railway bookstall.

#### London.

- E.—E. T. Pendrill, 26 Bushfield Street, Bishopsgate, M. Papier, 86 Commercial Street. B. Ruderman, 71 Hanbury Street, Spitalfields. J. Knight & Co., 3 Ripple Road, Barking. Messrs. Duncumb & Sons, 287 High Street, Stratford.
- E.C.—W. S. Dexter, 6, Byward Street. Rose & Co., 133 Clerkenwell Road. Mr. Siveridge, 88 Fenchurch Street. J. J. Joques, 191 Old Street. Mr. Henderson, 66 Charing Cross Road.
- N.—C. Walker & Son, 84 Grove Road, Holloway. Mr. Keogh, Seven Sisters Road (near Finsbury Park). Mr. West, New Road, Lower Edmonton. T. Perry, 17 Fore Street, Edmonton. H. Hampton, 80 Holloway Road. E. S. Smith, 7 Turnpike Lane, Hornsey.
- N.W.—W. I. Tarbart, 316 Kentish Town Road. W. Lloyd, 5 Falkland Road, Kentish Town.
- S.E.—J. H. Killick, 1 Tyler Street, East Greenwich. Mr. Clayton, High Street, Woodside, South Norwood. W. T. Andrews, 35 Meetinghouse Lane, Peckham. B. Dean, Southwark Bridge.
- S.W.—R. Offer, 58 Kenyon Street, Fulham. A. Toleman, 54 Battersea Rise. A. Green, 29 Felsham Road, Putney. F. Locke, 500 Fulham Road. F. Lucas, 683 Fulham Road.
- W.—Mr. Fox, 154 King Street, Hammersmith. Mr. Harvey, 1 Becklow Road, Shepherds Bush. Mr. Baker, Northfield Avenue, West Ealing. Thomas Dunbar, 82, Seaford Road, West Ealing.
- W.C.—J. Bull, 24 Grays Inn Road.

#### Country.

- Aberdeenshire.—J. Grieg, 16 Marischol Street, Peterhead.
- Barrow-in-Furness.—J. Jowett, 56 Forshaw Street. E. L. Jowett, 84 Dalton Road.
- Beccles.—C. Chase, Station Road.
- Birkenhead.—Mr. Capper, Boundary Road, Port Sunlight.
- Birmingham.—J. C. Aston, 39-40 Smallbrook Street. A. G. Beacon & Co., 67 & 68 Worcester Street. F. Holder, 42 Hurst Street. Mr. Benton, High Street, Erdington. Mr. Kimber, Ash Road Post Office, Saltley. W. H. Smith & Son, 34 Union Street. Messrs. Stanford & Magn, New Street.
- Bolton.—E. Basnett, Church Street, Westhoughton. W. Atkinson, 364 Blackburn Road.
- Brighton.—W. Hillman, 4 Little Western Street.
- Bristol.—W. H. Smith & Son, Victoria Street.
- Cardiff.—W. H. Smith & Son, Penarth Road.
- Carshalton.—Mr. Simmons, 29 North Street.
- Gateshead.—Henderson & Birkett, 4 & 5 Hills Street.
- Cheltenham.—S. Norris, Ambrose Street.
- Cullompton.—A. W. Clitsome, The Square.
- Derbyshire.—Mr. Featherstone, Chapel-en-le-Firth.
- Dublin.—Mr. Kearney, Upper Stephen Street.
- Dundee.—Mr. Cunningham, St. Andrew's Street. "The Hub," High Street. Mr. Lamb, 121 Overgate.
- Falkirk.—James Wilson, 76 Graham's Road.
- Glasgow.—David Baxter, 32 Brunswick Street.
- Gravesend.—Mrs. Troke, 10 Passock Street. Mr. Love, Gassick Street. Mr. Gould, Milton Road. Mr. Troke, Clarence Place.
- Hastings.—King Bros., 2 Queen's Road.
- pswich.—A. E. Hiskey, 1 Old Cattle Market. T. Shelbourne, St. Matthew Street. Mr. Fox, Fore Street. Mr. Fox, St. Helen's Street. Mr. Roberson, Back Hamlet. Mr. Joyce, Fore Street.
- Jarrow.—L. Prescod, Railway Street.
- Kent.—E. J. Voss, 148 Broadway, Bexley Heath.
- Lancashire.—John Turner, Scourbottom, Waterford. W. Restall, Station Bridge, Urmston. J. T. Middlehurst, 43 Water Lane, Preston.
- Leeds.—C. H. Pickles, Ltd., 117 Albion Street. J. Bray, 95 Park Lane. J. Sutcliffe, West Street.
- Liverpool.—S. Reeves, 316 Derby Road, Bootle. W. H. Smith and Son, 61 Dale Street.
- Manchester.—Mrs. Tole, Whitelaw Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy. John Heywood, Ltd., Deansgate. Abel Heywood & Son, 47-61 Lever Street. W. H. Smith & Son, Blackfriars Street.
- Monmouth.—Mr. Davies, Pontnewynidd. Wm. Morris, Windsor Road, Griffithatoun. Wyman & Son, Station Bookstall, Pontypool Road.
- Neath.—W. G. Maybury, 57 Windsor Road.
- Newcastle-on-Tyne.—W. H. Smith & Son, 2 Forth Place.
- Northampton.—Mr. Bates, Bridge Street. A. Bryan, Barracks Road.
- Southend-on-Sea.—Harold Elliott, 1 Belle Vue Terrace.
- Stockton-on-Tees.—Mr. Elgie, Bowsfield Lane.
- Teddington.—H. H. Holwill, 105 High Street.
- Torquay.—L. Priston, 103 Union Street. A. Priston, 47 Market Street. A. Peters, Old Mill Road, Chelston. Mr. Ronayne, Walnut Road. H. Peters, 193 Union Street. W. J. Peters, 37 Union Street. Mr. Hunt, Lucius Street.
- Yarmouth.—C. H. Knights, 87 & 88 Northgate Street. H. Bird, 19 Howard Street South. J. M. Headley, North Howard Street.

### SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

#### LONDON.

##### INDOOR.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, off Kentish Town Road, N.W.): 7.30, Debate, "Why I am Interested in Politics" (from a Mother's point of view). Introduced by Mrs. Drake (Workers' Suffrage Federation).

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##### OUTDOOR.

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