

# THE FREETHINKER

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## Views and Opinions.

### Harassing the Enemy.

We have several times lately reprinted complaints from the general press as to the quantity of Freethought literature being circulated in both the Army and Navy. We are not alone in pleading guilty for responsibility for this, but we believe we are the oldest of the offenders. So soon as the War started, we saw a chance of propaganda; and as propaganda is our business, there was nothing surprising in that. But we saw in this War a unique opportunity. Our forces are recruited from everywhere, and when the War is over they will return to everywhere. Here, then, was a splendid audience collected for us by the Government. We deeply regretted the occasion for its assembly, but it would have been folly not to have availed one's self of its presence. So, in the Autumn of 1914, we set to work, sending out free parcels of literature to soldiers whose addresses we had received. The results have more than justified the expenditure. Thousands of men, who would not otherwise have come into contact with Freethought, have made its acquaintance. Hundreds will go back home, missionaries for their new cause. The casualties on the religious front have been many; and we pride ourselves on having, with the help of our readers, supplied many of the shells.

\* \* \*

### Cant.

Some religious organizations are shrieking out for ammunition to repel the attack. On the other hand, there is a demand, from those who realize what "duds" are the religious shells, that the authorities shall stop the circulation of this "poisonous literature" among the men. This last policy is characteristically Christian, eminently British. For, as it is Christian to suppress opinion, so it is British to do it in the name of morality. There is nothing in which the British Christian takes a keener interest than the task of moralizing someone. The old Biblical command was, "Love thy neighbour as thyself." The Christian loves his neighbour better than himself—at least, he is trying to bring him up to a standard of excellence seldom illustrated in his own character. The neighbour pursues the same policy, and thus both are provided with employment—without either being seriously affected. So it is suggested that a ban should be placed upon the circulation of Free-

thought literature on the score of morals. The *Freethinker* will undermine the soldier's character, sap his moral health. He can stand against poison gas and shells, the filth of the trench, and the de-socialization of warfare. But to a Freethought paper or pamphlet he succumbs. What a power we must wield! How interesting it would be to find the soldier debarred the *Freethinker*, with the commanding officer serving out religious tracts—and standing over the men while they read them.

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### "Good" and "Bad" Books.

But we are chiefly concerned with the suggestion because of the light it throws on the mental make-up of the average Christian. Suppression is the hall-mark of the tribe. And with literature there has been the dual policy of suppression and expurgation—sometimes assisted by falsification. When books were few, suppression was an easy method for a powerful Church to adopt. When they became more numerous, the task became difficult, and if they were at all popular the next best policy was to issue them Bowdlerized. The displeasing parts were left out or toned down. And all on the ground that these works were not good for people to read. And who were those who said they were not good to read? Notoriously such as were least qualified to form an opinion. Personally, we have little faith in books being either good or bad, save in an artistic sense. People will usually get from a book what they bring to it; and a book may be easily made, through suggestion, to appear indecent when it is not really so. But in the direction of suggesting indecency, a sermon on "The Social Evil," by Father Vaughan, or F. B. Meyer, or the Bishop of London, will be more effective than any book we have ever come across. As guides to the indecent, some of our clergy hold easily a front place. A really bad book suppresses itself. Time sees to that. It is only a good book that lives, and therefore it is only good books on which these moral ghouls have a chance of operating.

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### Books and the Young.

But there are the young people who need guarding. Oh, these young people! Perhaps a little less guarding might be to their benefit. It is certainly to be questioned whether adults are always the best judges as to what is suitable or unsuitable for young people to read. May it not be that the young people themselves might decide fairly well for themselves? No one will accuse Ruskin of a desire to place unclean or debasing literature within the reach of young people; and yet here is his advice, deliberately given, as to the choice of books for girls:—

Whether novels, or poetry, or history be read, they should be chosen not for their freedom from evil, but for their possession of good. The chance and scattered evil that may haunt or hide itself in a powerful book never does harm to a noble girl, but the emptiness of an author depresses her, and his amiable folly degrades her. And if she can have access to a good library of old and classical books, there need be no

choosing at all.....Turn her loose into the old library every wet day and let her alone. She will find what is good for her.....Let her loose in the library, I say, as you would do a fawn in the field. It knows the bad weeds twenty times better than you; and the good ones too; and will eat some bitter and prickly ones, good for it, which you had not the slightest thought would have been so.

The censorship of books is, at bottom, a product of a conception of education which is summed up in prohibition. Don't do this! don't do that! A child is some one to be restrained, not an organism to be developed. Does not the Christian habitually illustrate the same thing in his reference to moral "restraints"? And it quite follows, so far as he is able to control social affairs, he has no other guiding principle, save that of prohibition or suppression.

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#### Christian Heredity.

So quite naturally, and in accordance with his history, the Christian takes to a policy of suppression as comfortably as a duck to water. And as soldiers are regulated as to their eating, sleeping, dressing, and washing, why not as to their reading? The soldier must be guarded against the poisonous influence of the *Freethinker*, etc., by an Army order prohibiting their circulation! And if not the soldier, why not the civilian? If this could be done then we might witness something of the revival of religion about which we have heard so much during the past four years. The genuine Christian is the Peter Pan of history. He never grows up. He has no desire to grow up. In leading strings himself he cannot appreciate the desire of others for freedom. Above all, he is supremely oblivious of the fact that where opinion is censored, and its discussion prohibited, an environment is created fatal to even genuine moral growth. The rising generation suffers because no genuine appeal is ever made to the better part of their nature. The one lesson fronting us is that if they do form opinions at variance with those of the crowd, the wisest policy is to hide them. They are trained to cowardice, and invited to become liars as a matter of policy. This has been one of the practical consequences of the establishment of Christianity. And the present state of Europe may fairly be taken as one indication of its influence.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## "Ignorant Worship."

### I.

THE Rev. W. Garrett Horder, minister for many years of the Ealing Congregational Church, is deservedly held in high esteem by all who know him. He enjoys the reputation of being one of the sanest members of the clerical profession. In the *Middlesex County Times* for September 21, one of his sermons was published, bearing the title at the head of this article. Naturally, the text is Paul's oft-quoted words, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you" (Acts xviii. 23). We do not doubt Mr. Horder's sincerity, but after carefully reading and re-reading this specimen of his pulpit oratory, we are left no choice but to charge him with gross ignorance or hopelessly blind prejudice. Fully aware of the seriousness of such a charge, we at once set out to prove it. The text is taken from Paul's famous speech at Athens, and its first significance is said to lie in the fact that the Athenians "did worship at all"; but this is affirmed to be "suggestive of a still greater fact that men everywhere do worship." The reverend gentleman waxes bolder, and asserts that "the tribe, the people, the nation has yet to be discovered in

which worship in some form or other is not found." "In other words—so far as our knowledge goes—worship is universal." Has Mr. Horder forgotten that several explorers have testified that they came across savages who entertained no religious beliefs, who even ridiculed the idea of a Supreme Being and a future life? Herbert Spencer quotes several testimonies of that import; and he also furnishes evidences not a few to show that deaf and dumb people are completely destitute of religion until they receive definite instruction therein. He cites the case of a deaf-mute American woman who had reached mature years before a missionary approached her, who found her to be absolutely devoid of belief in or sense of a God. The universality of worship is by no means a well-attested fact. In that false assumption, however, Mr. Horder discerns several tremendous implications. "First of all," he tells us, "it implies a human craving. Men feel that they want something, or they would not worship." But is it not indisputable that worship owes its origin to what has been called "the primal stupidity" of human nature? Primitive man felt that he was at the mercy of the strange forces by which he was surrounded. The storm destroyed his crops, the lightning killed his children as they played in front of the hut, the earth quaked and swallowed up his neighbours, and in utter desperation he wildly appealed to he knew not what for protection. The first form of worship, doubtless, was the frantic cry of helpless fear in the presence of Natural Laws, concerning which the densest ignorance prevailed.

Mr. Horder sneers at the people who say that "the priest gives birth to religion," dubbing them "people who do not think"; but will he be good enough to inform us what the mission of the priest really is, and how it arrived at the present stage in its development? As a matter of simple fact, is not the priest a functionary who slipped into existence on the back of that "primal stupidity" just mentioned? In a supercilious fashion the reverend gentleman exclaims:—

Religion made by priests—No! It is the feeling out of which religion springs that makes the priest. Back of all religion lies a human craving for something which the world does not give—a craving found not only in those who worship in temple or church, but in all men everywhere.....Get at the heart of men and you will find this craving which is the germ of all religion.

Is not this really an unwitting giving away of the preacher's whole case? We readily concede, it is our fundamental contention, that "it is the feeling out of which religion springs that makes the priest"; but is it not equally true that the priest, playing upon the existence of that initial feeling, fear, or stupidity, is the author of religion—the maker of every deity, the shaper of every worship? What other purpose has he ever served, or is capable of serving? In order to make this clearer, we will take Mr. Horder's next point, namely, that the universality of a craving implies that there is something to meet it. With something like triumphant pride he cries out: "If you ask me for proof of God—it is here—that I crave him." Well, after his long career as a teacher of religion, no doubt the reverend gentleman does crave him; it would be a miracle if he did not; but that is no proof whatever that the craving is a human instinct, or is in any sense a part of our constitutional inheritance, like the eye, the ear, or the palate. We maintain that the craving for God is at best but an illusion. "The craving for God," Mr. Horder adds, "if it be universal, implies a God to meet it." We unhesitatingly deny the universality of the craving, and declare it to be nothing but a sheer illusion where it exists—artificially produced by the priest and his satellites. A moment's thought will convince any unbiased person of

the truth of this statement. You say: "There is the eye, and there is the light to meet it." But you do not have to devote months and years to the task of convincing a child of the existence of light before it can see. Without any teaching at all vision becomes a reality. But it often takes many years of laborious instruction to instil into the young mind a veritable belief in God; and in numerous instances total failure is the only reward.

Surely, Mr. Horder cannot be blind to the fact that in so-called Christian Britain to-day there are tens of thousands of men and women who are absolutely without belief in a Divine Being, and who as certainly experience not the slightest craving for him. Among these are multitudes who, as children, received no religious instruction, and who, in consequence, have been all their lives entire strangers to divine worship. In America psychologists are devoting considerable attention to this subject, and have already issued statistics which show that among young men and maidens at colleges, as well as among educated people generally, the belief in God is possessed only by a minority. Scientific investigations have been made "in which the usual fatal defects of statistical researches have been avoided." In a most interesting work, entitled *The Belief in God and Immortality*, James H. Leuba, Professor of Psychology at Bryn Mawr College, describing these studies, says:—

These inquiries have yielded results of considerable significance; and we are now for the first time in a position to make certain definite statements, valid for *entire groups* of influential persons, namely, college students, physical scientists, biologists, historians, sociologists and economists, and psychologists. We have been able not only to compare these groups with each other but also, among the students, the lower classes with the higher; and among the other groups, the more eminent persons with the less eminent. It appears, with incontrovertible evidence, that in each group the more distinguished fraction includes by far the smaller number of believers (pp. vi. vii.).

With reference to the scientists Professor Leuba says:

The biologists produce a much smaller number of believers in God and in immortality than the physicists. The figures are, for the believers in God: physicists, 43.9 per cent.; biologists, 30.5 per cent. There are fewer believers among the greater men, whether physicists or biologists. The smallest percentage of believers is found among the greater biologists; they count only 16.9 per cent. of believers in God.....As many as 59.3 per cent. of greater biologists express disbelief in God (p. 254).

Mr. Horder's assertion of the universality of worship, and of the secure place of religion in the hearts of men thus falls to the ground; an assertion he must have made either in total ignorance of the facts or in wilful defiance of them. Our claim is that all worship is founded upon ignorance, and that the spread of knowledge is steadily uprooting it.

J. T. LLOYD.

### Rondel: The Priest.

WHEN Love, and all of priceless worth,  
Are violate and flung away,  
And War's gory plough rapes the Earth:  
The Priest shall pray!

The Priest shall pray,—when murd'rous fray  
Proclaims the Reign of Hate, the dearth  
Of Sanity;.....*he would allay!*

And yet, 'tis he who aids the Birth  
Of War, and flames the Brand to stay  
The Dawn of Peace! Fade, stricken Earth,  
The Priest shall pray!

C. B. WARWICK.

## How the Clergy Starve.

If I had been a bishop, with an income of five to fifteen thousand a year, I should have had an inexhaustible source of rejoicing and merriment in the generosity, if not in the credulity, of my countrymen.—*John Bright.*

THE Bishop of London is in low spirits, not because the dear clergy are on strike, but from a feverish apprehension of what may never happen at all. The fashionable churches still display the latest and most expensive show of millinery in their pews; coins still rattle in the collection-plates; but to watch his lordship's face it would seem as though the end of all things was at hand. The bishop is in the dumps concerning the shocking poverty of the poor clergy. Speaking at an excellent lunch given by the Lord Mayor of London, he said he did not know how some of the clergy were going to get through this winter at all. There were, he added, amid the awed silence of his hearers, no less than 143 benefices in his own diocese where the income was below "£300 a year and a house." Some of the clergy contemplated resignation; they could not face the future. A rural dean said, "I just manage. I see that no meal for myself, wife, and children exceeds 6½d."

Is it not "too deep for tears"? Who in that gay assembly of lunchers ever thought of the dire distress of that poor "rural dean," who had to feed five human beings (for deans are always expected to have one servant) on sixpence-halfpenny? It reads like a romance, written by a magician, an idealist, and a eugenicist, who could only have been bred in the wild and woolly West, where men's imaginations are as wide and untrammelled as the rivers. Here, in the old country, the parson with his big and expensive vicarage too often is a miniature reproduction of the bishop in a palace too large for him and for the times.

The mystery remains how that "rural dean" manages to provide food for his family, so that "no meal exceeds 6½d." Do they, like Nebuchadnezzar, eat grass? Or, do the ravens who fed the prophet Elijah bring them sandwiches? One cannot dine *a la carte*, or even *a la Lockhart*, on a beggarly sixpence. Perhaps the Bishop of London will explain. So skilful is he with figures, that he has already proved to an admiring world that the more money he receives the poorer he becomes.

There is a way of providing money for the poorer clergy which will, doubtless, find favour in the eyes of the Bishop of London and his ecclesiastical colleagues. It is to act on the advice of Shakespeare, as adapted from the lines in *King Lear*:—

Take physic, pomp,  
Expose thyself to feel what deans do feel;  
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,  
And show the heavens more just.

The higher clergy could afford easily to "show the heavens more just." Thirty-nine archbishops and bishops receive, between them, no less than £180,700 yearly, with emoluments in the shape of palaces and palatial residences. The Bishop of London is a bachelor, with an income of £200 weekly, and he could, if he wished, prevent that "rural dean's" family from watering their war-bread with their tears. Perhaps an innate sense of modesty alone prevents him from depriving wealthy laymen of an opportunity for disbursing charity in so sad and distressing a case. As for the bishops themselves, they could so easily mitigate the Spartan fare of the rural dean and his dependents. One cannot think for a moment that these descendants of the apostles would act like the selfish boy with an apple, who, when his young brother asked him for the core, replied, "Get away! There ain't going to be no core."

A former canon of St. Paul's Cathedral once said that some of the reasons why men remained in the Established Church were "purple, palaces, patronage, profit and power." And the right to appoint clergymen to benefices is sold for money in the open market, as if it were so much coal or a quack medicine. The clergy pretend, professionally, to be entirely uninfluenced by financial motives. Yet many of them manage to evade the blessings of poverty, and to leave large sums of money. The late Bishop of Colchester left estate valued at £60,848. Bishop Creighton, who used to talk of the fearful struggles of the wretched ecclesiastics to keep out of debt, left £29,500. Archbishop Benson left £35,000, and Archbishop Tait a similar sum. The biggest episcopal estate of recent years was that of Bishop Walsham How, who left £72,240. A good second to this was Bishop Tuffnell's £65,800, and Bishop Phillpot left £60,000 whilst Archbishop Thomson left £55,000, and Bishop Trollope £50,790. Compared with these sums, the £19,361 of Bishop Harvey Godwin, the £10,000 of Bishop Tozer, and the £12,605 of Bishop Pelham seem quite modest.

It was at a Mansion House banquet that the Bishop of London made his sad remarks concerning the rural dean who fed his family on sixpence halfpenny a meal. It must have startled his auditors as much as Banquo's ghost scared the amazed Macbeth. For Judge Rentoul has stated that at the annual banquets given to the clergy at the Mansion House seventy-four bottles of champagne were drunk which would cost about £40. He added that he actually saw those figures in black and white one year, and he was told that the figures were every year about the same.

Maybe, the plaint of clerical poverty is, after all, only a trick of trade. The Bishop of London may be only practising the arts of his profession, and probably laughs in his dainty lawn sleeve at his public performances. Perhaps he is merely seeking to excite the generosity of devoted Churchmen who have balances at the bank. Clerical performances such as this will only last so long as they produce the desired result. Some day the democracy of this country will turn to the clergy and say, echoing the words of Cromwell: "Be gone and make place for better men."

Sincerity makes respectable even absurd and wrong-headed causes; but sincerity is not a shining Christian virtue. The God of the Christians is no longer the sad-faced figure of the poor and despised Nazarene, but the rubicund, self-satisfied form of Mammon, with the leer of the miser. Gone are the crown of thorns, and the spear-wounds in his side, but in the bejewelled hands of the new deity are held the money-bag and the bribe. The purple robe covers the huge imposture of an organized hypocrisy. Could the pale shade of Christ that slinks past the gilt altar-rails but speak it would bewail an agony of spirit deadlier than that which drenched Gethsemane in blood. Mohammed has a direct influence over his professed disciples; Gotama Buddha still colours and controls human life; the teachings of Brahmanism still affects the lives of millions. Even Joseph Smith's revelations are held in honour by the Mormons, but where, throughout the length and breadth of Christendom, are the Christians who are faithful to the ideals and aspirations of the "Gospel of Poverty"?

MIMNERMUS.

## GOD AND MAN.

*An Essay in Common Sense and Natural Morality.*

BY CHAPMAN COHEN.

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## A Search for the Soul.

XV.

(Concluded from p. 537.)

IN his *Personal Religion in Egypt before Christianity*, Mr. Flinders Petrie devotes a chapter to a comparison of "Body and Mind," based upon a work by Professor W. James in his Gifford Lectures. Commencing with the body, he draws attention to the following facts:—

1. That all the internal functions of the body are carried on without our consciousness, and that it is only where these come in touch with the external world that we have any control over them.

2. That all functional action is carried on by two opposing mechanisms—one of excitation and the other of inhibition.

3. That natural form and function are both due to heredity, and are determined in different parts by different hereditary sources.

Coming next to the mechanism of the mind, the same processes are found, thus plainly indicating that the mind is compelled to act through the same mechanical conditions as those relating to the body. These are:—

1. That processes of mind are mainly unconscious.

Our normal waking consciousness is but one special type of consciousness, while all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different.

2. That all mental action is performed by two opposing mechanisms.

Our moral and practical attitude, at any given time, is always a resultant of two sets of forces within us, impulses pushing us one way, and obstructions and inhibitions holding us back.

3. That natural form and function of mind are both due to heredity, and descend from various hereditary sources. The persistence of mental tendencies, though much obscured by education, is so marked that the hereditary descent of mind cannot be doubted.

Of the unconscious mind a very important part is the accumulation of experiences, the details of which have been entirely lost to memory or consciousness, but the effect of which is stored. This is the source of unconscious anticipation.....which forms the unseen framework and guiding lines of our actions; and we only become aware of it when it is obstructed.....The routine of life is a part of anticipation. Each daily event as it arrives prepares us for the next unconsciously, and much is thus done without calling up Will, or even consciousness, to direct our actions.

Looking now at the analogy between the processes of body and mind, the fact that these are practically identical is proof that both are carried on by the same influence of heredity, and that there is a manifest unity in the functioning of every part of the human organism. The alimentary organs convert the nutritious portions of the food into chyle, the liver secretes bile, the organs of respiration assist in the oxidation of the blood, the heart propels the vital fluid through every part of the body, and the brain with its energy generates consciousness and thought. Though the function in each case is of a different nature, the same methods are more or less employed throughout. If the function of the brain may appear to be of a less material character than that of any of the others, this circumstance does not alter the fact that that organ is alone responsible for the production of thought. An immaterial nonentity like the "soul" would be powerless to produce anything. As Buchner says:—

A soul without a body, a spirit without physique, a thought without substance, can no more be realized or

exist than electricity, magnetism, gravity, can exist without those bodies or materials by the activity of which the phenomena designated by those names are produced.

Needless to say, this statement is undoubtedly true; a so-called "soul" without material organs, though it might perhaps be imagined, could not exist.

Now, if we consider that there was a time when every individual body and mind first came into existence, we shall also perceive that there must certainly come a time when each individual body and mind shall cease to exist. That which had a beginning will most assuredly have an end. This is, of course, admitted by all so far as the body is concerned, but not in the case of the soul or mind. With regard to the latter, however, it should be remembered that each man begins his individual existence at the moment when the two parental sexual cells meet and coalesce for the formation of a single simple cell—the individual stem-cell—with the formation of which the existence of the personality of the individual commences. Through this cell man, like all other complex animals, inherits all his personal characteristics, *both bodily and mental*, from his parents. Hence, the new personality which arises can lay no claim to immortality. All these characteristics are contained, in a latent state, in the stem-cell, and after birth, should the conditions be unfavourable, the mental faculties may never be developed. We have thus a proof that the so-called "soul" is not an indwelling entity of the body, and if circumstances prevent its development it remains through life not only non-manifest but non-existent.

Again, the individual stem-cell from which man is formed is undoubtedly a particle of matter; it follows therefore that what is called mind is, at the most, merely a property of living matter, or something that results from the activity of that matter, which, in the case of man, has been evolved far beyond that of any of the higher animals.

If, again, we go back through the ages we find that matter was in existence long before what is called mind had arisen, and that both must have been contained, either potentially or in capacity, in the primal world-mist, out of which our solar system has been gradually evolved. Says Buchner:—

The development of mind from matter is the product of a protracted toil, rising step by step, through countless centuries, till reaching the height of humanity..... What is called "spirit" is a manifestation of life, and life, by the law of its being, is subject to change and therefore to death. Spirit is perishable, for it is absolutely indivisible from the perishable forms of matter, and it is a wholly natural force.....The spirit which resides in man is indissolubly bound up with a living organised brain. According to our experience, spirit is without exception found only in conjunction with a brain.

The foregoing statement is, of course, in perfect agreement with science; but opposed to it we have that of the great physicist, Sir Oliver Lodge, who says:—

It does not follow that the brain generates or secretes thought, or that every thinking creature in the universe must possess a brain.....The manifold activities [of the mind] did not arise with us: they never did spring into being; they are as eternal as the Godhead itself, and in the eternal Being they shall endure for ever.

This, no doubt, is a grand theory; but science tells us that the most primitive forms of animal life were of a nature that cannot be credited with mental faculties, and though in the course of time higher animals possessing rudimentary brains came into being, many long ages elapsed before the highest parts of the human brain—those concerned with reason, reflection, and judgment—

became fully developed. Again, when a child is born, it comes into the world without any psychological faculty whatever. Though possessing a brain, that organ is almost as smooth as a bagatelle ball, no impressions from the outer world having been registered upon it—without which there can be no thought. It should also be borne in mind that every kind of force or energy active upon this planet—including that of mental activity—ultimately arises from the sun, and takes its origin in the form of light and heat, which come to us by vibrations of ether particles.

Here I will leave this subject for the present—to return to it, later on, in a more irrational form, miscalled Spiritualism.

ABRACADABRA.

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## Acid Drops.

The Salvation Army advertised for October 9 and 10 "Two Days with God" at the Congress Hall, Clapton, and then thoughtfully added "General Booth and Mrs. Booth will also be present." That "also" is delightful. Perhaps they were there as a kind of understudy, in case the advertised guest of the evening was engaged elsewhere.

The Bishop of Hull says that 2,000 men at the Front have expressed a desire to enter the ministry. Some men in the trenches are far more eager to enter the ministry than the men in the ministry are to enter the trenches. The Bishop says £500,000 will be needed for their education. Perhaps lack of it is a cause of their desire to mount the pulpit.

The Bishop of Peterborough is alarmed at the "snaky selfishness which still lifts its head among us." Yet his Church has been fighting that reptile for twenty centuries.

Religion is a costly business. The first stage of the restoration of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, has cost £40,000, and a further sum of £60,000 is required to finish the work.

The Rev. E. F. Nicholas, a Congregationalist minister, has been selected Labour candidate for Aberdeen. "Woe unto ye rich" and "Blessed be ye poor" should be excellent election cries.

The Bishop of London is hostile to the idea of Sunday baseball. Presumably, the heavier the "gate" at baseball matches, the lighter the "gate" at the churches.

Dr. Biggs, Bishop of Worcester, has accepted the bishopric of Coventry, which has been carved from the diocese of Worcester. The income of the new bishopric is £3,200, but the newspapers state that Dr. Biggs has a large private income. "Blessed be ye poor."

The Church no longer commands the obedience of people as in the Ages of Faith. She forbids divorce—but the Divorce Court is busy. No less than forty-four *decrees nisi* were made absolute in the Vacation Court recently.

At the Guns' Exhibition and cardboard village display at Trafalgar Square, the opening service was conducted by the Bishop of Kensington, and choirs from Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, and other churches sang. It is pleasant to find priests of the Government religion justifying their position.

It is an open question whether the proposed Hyde Park War-shrine will be "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever." According to the Church Crafts' League the design submitted for that shrine is "out of harmony with its surroundings and ugly in itself." In short, there is more craft than art in the design.

In view of the near possibility of a General Election, the Sabbatarians have issued a manifesto to secure the support of candidates "to the right of the people to retain their Sunday freedom for family life and religious worship." This rigmarole means that the Sabbatarians wish for a continuance of the Christian monopoly of Sunday.

Under the pressure of adversity, Church and Chapel are becoming quite friendly. At the City Temple, London, a Congregationalist place of worship, the Rev. G. W. H. Shaw, Rector of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, preached recently in the place of Miss Royden, the lady pastor.

"God must have been waiting to give a blessing to our arms," says Bishop Taylor Smith. What exquisite humility on the part of the bishop!

Not so long ago religious folk frowned at novels; but a great change has taken place. At the Sunday School Union's shop in Ludgate Hill a new novel is boldly advertised, and a profusion of light literature fills the windows. A cynic might add that this was commercialism, and not Christianity.

The London correspondent of the *Glasgow Herald* says there is a widespread demand in Scotland for the insertion of a provision in the Education Bill making the teaching of religious instruction mandatory in the public, elementary, and secondary schools. Quite a number of public men have made statements to the same effect, but were unable to substantiate their statements when challenged. Is he aware that the paper he represents has received dozens of letters against the proposed religious clauses, but has not published them? With a prejudiced press, how is it possible to know the will of the public apart from a General Election?

A correspondent to the Daily Press makes an appeal to the authorities in Glasgow to provide Sunday entertainment, in the form of concerts or cinema shows, to the many soldiers and sailors staying over the week-end in town. He says if it is good enough for them to fight for us on Sunday, it cannot be bad for them to get some form of healthy entertainment on that day as well. Quite a good idea.

A puff in a daily paper asks for the gift of a portable organ for a chaplain going out with the troops to Northern Russia. Might we suggest that a concertina would be easier to carry such a great distance. It would also be less expensive.

I have ever looked on mankind in the lump to be nothing better than a foolish, headstrong, credulous, unthinking mob; and their universal belief has ever had extremely little weight with me.—*Robert Burns*.

The following is from the *Times of Ceylon* for July 20:—

Cook-Appu. Must be able make good bread and pastry; energetic, registered, married man whose wife lives on estate essential; healthy climate. Salary Rs. 30, half bushel. *No old men, drunkards or Christians need apply.* Bachelor.  
—D. 6094, c/o *Times of Ceylon*.

The italics are ours. It is quite a commentary on the elevating influence of Christianity.

The Chaplain of Pentonville Prison says that a prisoner once said to him: "Nobody who comes into this place and hears you preach, sir, can ever want to come here again." We have, no doubt, many outside prison have felt the same after hearing some sermons.

It appears that before the War some Anglican clergymen were passing poor on £300 a year, and now, everything being double cost, the poor dears are starving. The Bishop of London is now making a public appeal on their behalf, and wonders they have not gone on strike. His lordship forgets his Master's words, "Blessed are ye poor."

The Bishop of Glasgow, in a letter to the clergy of his diocese, says, that during these weary years the Church has never put forth her full strength in prayer. To prepare for this, quiet afternoons and evenings have been arranged in certain parts of the diocese. It is also proposed to make a special missionary effect throughout the Scottish Church to deepen a sense of responsibility for carrying out our "Lord's will." Is it not now nearly time the various sects were coming to an agreement to determine what they think the "Lord's will" to be. Secularists have no doubt in the matter.

The Vicar of St. Woollos, Newport, calls those who attend church on a rainy Sunday At Christians, while those who remain at home belong to Grade 3. After all, how simple and easy a thing it is to be a Christian, and how amazingly cheap heaven is!

Dr. Jowett says that "there has never been a period in the history of the world when there were so many people nestling in the Lord." Other clergymen complain that religion is at a lower ebb to-day than it has been for many ages. Perhaps Dr. Jowett makes his own popularity his standard of judgment.

Mr. Silas Hocking, the Methodist novelist, claims that the League of Nations "has its roots in the Sermon on the Mount." What an unspeakably poor soil that famous discourse must be when the roots of such a desirable institution have lain therein for nineteen centuries without giving any signs of their presence; and even now we have only the word of a writer of fiction that they are there at all.

According to the Dean of Exeter, God "gradually unveiled himself as the people could bear it." This is quite interesting, and reminds one of the plot of a good old-fashioned Adelphi drama. Everything is "wropt" in mystery until the last scene, and meanwhile the audience have to follow the plot as it best can. Only, as the Aristophanes of Germany said to the Aristophanes of the skies, the joke, or plot, is rather long-drawn out and threatens to become monotonous.

#### CHANGING RELIGION.

Human nature remains the same; but religion alters. Christianity has taken many forms. In the early Church it had the hues of a hundred heresies. It developed in the successive councils. It has been Roman, it has been Greek, it has been Anglican, Lutheran, Calvinist, Arminian. It has adjusted itself to national characteristics; it has grown with the growth of general knowledge.—*J. A. Froude*.

#### MY MADONNA.

I haled me a woman from the street,  
Shameless, but, oh, so fair!  
I bade her sit in the model's seat,  
And I painted her sitting there.

I hid all trace of her heart unclean;  
I painted a babe at her breast;  
I painted her as she might have been  
If the Worst had been the Best.

She laughed at my picture, and went away.  
Then came, with a knowing nod,  
A connoisseur, and I heard him say:  
" 'Tis Mary, the Mother of God."

So I painted a halo round her hair,  
And I sold her, and took my fee,  
And she hangs in the church of Saint Hilaire,  
Where you and all may see.

—*Robert W. Service, "Songs of a Sourdough."*

Think not that any good act is contemptible, though it be your brother's coming to you with an open countenance and good humour.—*Mohammed*.

## IN MEMORIAM.

George William Foote.

Jan. 11, 1850—Oct. 17, 1915.

### C. Cohen's Lecture Engagements.

November 10, Liverpool; November 24, Leeds; November 27 to December 1, South Wales; December 8, Leicester.

### To Correspondents.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—October 20, Southampton; November 3, Manchester; November 10, Sheffield; December 1, Swansea.

J. CAPON.—We hope we deserve some of the things you are kind enough to say. At any rate, we appreciate them from so old a Freethinker as yourself.

N. S. S.—The *Freethinker* can be obtained from Mr. F. Henderson, "The Bomb Shop," Charing Cross Road, W.C.

R. THOMAS.—We would rather do anything than increase the price of the *Freethinker* if we can possibly avoid it. It is not a question of our present readers objecting to an extra penny per copy—we think very few of them would; it is a question of what is ultimately best for the Cause. It may, as you say, require courage to keep the price unchanged; but timidity is fatal to anyone who is entrusted with the Freethought standard. We nevertheless appreciate the kindness of your offer.

W. J.—The "cheap seaside lodgings" had no personal application. The best reply to your friend would be to ask him what is the use of praying without belief? No, we have never engaged in prayer for anything—at least not since we attained years of discretion.

MR. T. MOZLEY writes that, having induced his newsagent to show a copy of the *Freethinker*, the result has been five new subscribers up to date. Good news, but not, we are glad to say, unusual.

A. D.—Pleased you found the *Freethinker* "a treat."

E. MAY.—Both of Barratt's books, *Physical Metempiric* and *Physical Ethics*, are full of meat, but marked by an awkward terminology. Still, he will repay close study. You will find the other matter discussed in *Critical Realism*, by R. W. Sellars (chapters iii. and iv.); New York, 1916.

E. MILLS.—Thanks for contribution to Fund. We can assure you we do not feel discouraged. Why should we? We never went in for Freethought on account of its being a bed of roses, and the respect, confidence, and support of Freethinkers all over the country gives us every encouragement to push on. Shall be glad to see you when you are in town.

E. K.—No apology is necessary. You are doing what you can, and if all do that we can face the future without serious misgiving.

F. S. KEBBLE.—The spirit of your letter is quite enough to prevent our estimating your interest by the size of the contribution. But we are not inclined to do that in any case, and, certainly, not in yours.

A. BOYD.—Not at all a congenial occupation; but if it must be done, it is as well it were done well.

H. CAJRNEY.—Thanks for second subscription to Fund. Pleased to have your warm appreciation of what is being done.

THE members of the Kingsland Branch of the N. S. S., in sending subscriptions to Fund, desire to say they are "very proud of the manner in which the cause is upheld and its principles disseminated by our chief and his colleagues." We return thanks on their and our own behalf.

F. BETTS.—There is no legal right, but an application to the C.O. might be successful. Parcel of "poisonous literature" being sent to address given in France.

The Secular Society, Limited, office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

The National Secular Society's office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

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. 4, by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4, and not to the Editor.

All Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed "London, City and Midland Bank, Clerkenwell Branch."

Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

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

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

## Sugar Plums.

A very successful commencement of the season's work was made by the Swansea Branch on Sunday last with two lectures from Mr. Cohen. The hall was well filled in the afternoon, and quite inconveniently crowded in the evening. A pleasing feature of the meeting was the large number of ladies present, and the keen interest with which the lectures were followed was both a compliment and an inspiration to the speaker. At the afternoon meeting, Mr. D. Morgan also spoke, and his speech on the need for Freethought work, was well phrased and well delivered. It made a capital impression, and contributed to the success of the day's proceedings.

Mr. Cohen has deferred his visit to Nuncaton—fixed for October 27—until a date later in the year. He is remaining in London for the next two or three weeks, and this will enable him to clear up some arrears of work that have accumulated. Week-end trips, under prevailing conditions, make a serious inroad into one's time, and as War conditions necessitate his doing everything connected with the paper single-handed, to say nothing of other work in connection with the Movement, a little break will be agreeable.

Mr. Lloyd lectures to-day (October 20) in the Waverley Hall, St. Mary's Road, Southampton. The meetings are held in the morning at 11 and evening at 7. We hope that local "saints" will do their best to see that the hall is crowded on both occasions.

We are again receiving complaints from readers who are unable to get their copies regularly from their newsagents. We shall be obliged if, in addition to writing us, they will insist upon being supplied with what they order. No excuse should be entertained. The copies can be obtained, and it is the fault of either the newsagent or the wholesale agent when they are not forthcoming.

We believe we have partly to thank our growing sales for this. Newsagents find their sales increasing, and the wholesale man is careless of increasing his order, and so some are left without enough copies. We trust our readers will help us to overcome this difficulty. They will be pleased to learn that the circulation of the *Freethinker* steadily grows. We have made substantial progress towards adding a second thousand increase to our weekly circulation, and we have some hopes, with the help of our friends, of starting on the third thousand early in the New Year. Considering this is War time, we have every reason to feel gratified. But we can always do with more readers.

The Barnsley Branch of the N. S. S. is holding a meeting on Wednesday evening, October 23, at Irving's Studio, for a discussion on "The Principles of Secularism." The meeting

opens at 7.30 p.m., and we hope that all Freethinkers in Barnsley and district will make an effort to attend, as one purpose of the gathering is to organize the work in the district. All who can co-operate to this end should write Mr. H. Irving, 48 Sheffield Road, Barnsley, Yorks.

Freethought is developing well in England, there has been quite an outburst in South Wales, and now we have signs of movement in Ireland. We have had several letters lately from Ireland from correspondents saying they have recently "made the acquaintance" of the *Freethinker*, and how pleased they are with it. Meeting the *Freethinker* is not quite such an accident as these correspondents assume, as we naturally included Ireland in our general plan of operations for advancing the interests of the cause. When the War is over we hope to see a very definite Freethought advance in Ireland. Meanwhile we are glad to see signs of an awakening.

We are asked to announce that our contributor, "Keridon," lectures to-day (Oct. 20) before the Sheffield Ethical Society on "Theology; the Art of Squaring the Circle, or Solving the Insoluble." The lecture will be delivered at 6.30 in the Builders' Exchange, Cross Burgess Street. Sheffield Freethinkers will please note.

The *Manchester City News* of October 12 devotes a leading article to a review of Mr. Cohen's *Christianity and Slavery*. It calls it "a powerful and poignant work," containing an "overwhelming mass of facts," and adds that the whole forms "a terrible indictment" supplied "from history." *Christianity and Slavery* is evidently a work that was wanted. It is selling more rapidly than anything that has been published for years.

There is a new regulation that all Civil Servants must take the oath of allegiance. We have had some inquiries on the matter, and desire to say that the right to affirm holds in every case where an oath is required by law. Freethinkers in the Civil Service may therefore insist upon their right under the Oaths Act of 1888.

## "Freethinker" Sustentation Fund.

### Seventh List of Subscriptions.

Previously acknowledged:—£373 11s. 6d. R. Daniel, 5s. A. D. (Edinburgh), 10s. Collette Jones, £2 2s. E. Mills, £1. S. Kerble, 2s. J. Stanway, 10s. E. K., 5s. J. Peacock, 2s. 6d. Miss H. Baker (second subscription), 4s. J. A. B. Mitchell, 2s. 6d. X. Y. Z., 10s. A. Boyd, 2s. 6d. A. J. Marriott, 5s. E. Williams, 10s. Kingsland Branch, N.S.S., £1 1s. Andrew Harvey, 10s. Alfred Harvey, 10s. J. Morris (per Mrs. H. Rosetti), 10s. J. Shipp, 10s. H. Cairney (2nd sub.), £1 1s. E. Blakeman, 2s. 6d. W. R. Edwards, 2s. 6d. H. Jarmaine, 2s. 6d. S. Getrals, 2s. 6d. E. Jones, 10s. T. Scott (Glasgow), £1 3s. A Freethinker, 2s. 6d. F. M. Greig, 2s. A. Hawkyard, 10s. G. W. R., 2s. 6d. J. Stringer, 2s. 6d. D. Bonvoni, 4s. R. Reid, 2s. 6d. W. Morgan, 1s. E. E. Slate, 1s. R. Montgomery, 1s. J. Boway, 1s. F. Cure, 1s. P. S., 1s. F. Bargeege, 1s. L. J. Box, 1s. H. Atkinson, 1s. H. Densham, 1s. W. Heath, 1s. Mr. and Mrs. Knott, 2s. 6d. Milodon, £1. Lonicera, £1. J. Glassbrook, 5s. William Bell, 2s. 6d. O. B., 3s. 6d.

Per Sec. Manchester Branch:—H. Everson, 10s. L. H. Everson, 2s. 6d. E. Johnson, 10s. Total, £392 os. 3d.

What is real and universal cannot be confined to the circle of those who sympathize strictly with his (Swedenborg's) genius, but will pass forth into the common stock of wise and just thinking. The world has a sure chemistry, by which it extracts what is excellent in its children, and lets fall the infirmities and limitations of the grandest mind.—*Emerson*.

## Religion and Life.

BY E. LYTTTELTON.

SIR,—What you have written about our each holding a theory explains that part of the position sufficiently, and I will pass on to your challenge as to my repudiation of other gods as nonsense, and the use of the word "myth." Your last paragraph shows quite clearly where we stand, but I am doubtful if I can reach it in the present letter.

Yes, I should agree that the early statements made in the childhood of nations generally took the form of myths. But the word does not mean simply untrue and therefore worthless, but a story expressing an idea more or less valuable. You have read Homer's *Iliad* containing some immortal passages about the Trojan War? How much of the framework of the story is true? Nobody knows and very few care much. The historical truth of the framework is the least important question concerning it. Again, suppose you want to teach a child a moral lesson and construct a really good allegory skilfully, enforcing just the principle you want to convey, are you to call that allegory *true* or not? You would have to distinguish between the view of life presented and the framework or setting—much the least important part of the whole. Thus, the early chapters of Genesis are mythical; but if the principles or deep views of life taught by them are lofty, I should not like to dub them as untrue. A myth appears to be a way of expressing an idea natural to childhood.

Your challenge takes the following form: Dr. Lyttelton's fault lies in speaking of "God" as though it stood for some understood thing such as gravitation or natural selection. But "God" in the abstract is to me nothing. This criticism assumes that the word God expresses no more to me than it does to you. But supposing it means nothing to you that is surely no proof that it means nothing to everybody else.

Again, supposing my idea, or conception, or impression of God is real, does it follow that it would be explicable to another? In other words, there is no warrant for saying that A's knowledge of everything must be transferable to B or else be an hallucination. More than once you have implied the contrary, if I mistake not; anyhow, many writers do. Let us examine this point.

I presume you would agree that you and I have knowledge of other persons C, D, E, F, and so on. Supposing C and D are my friends, E and F are yours, and that for some reason I were anxious to convey to you my knowledge of C and D in return for your conveying to me your knowledge of E and F. Nothing either of us could say or do would go more than a very little way towards accomplishing the object. Nay, more: if C and D were people of what we call great personality, I might know them for years, and yet feel perfectly certain that there is much in them which remains to be discovered, but which I never shall discover in this world. If it were not so they would not be in the least interesting. As it is they are interesting as persons chiefly because there is a good deal, quite undefinable in amount, which is mysterious in them. Do you remember George Eliot's story called "Lifting the Veil" which turns on this fact, and I never heard that anyone disputed it.

Therefore, if you asked me to explain what I meant when I spoke of C and D, I should say I really cannot tell you unless you first make their acquaintance. Then we might have some interesting talk about them, but always as explorers.

Now, if that is true about great human personalities,

and even of lesser ones, what can we say of an Infinite Person?

At this point I can imagine your saying, "Now he is talking about what he does not and cannot understand." Well, let us be careful how we use that word understand. Does a child of six understand his father? I doubt it. He certainly doesn't *comprehend* him, but equally certain he *knows* him, and that his knowledge is ever growing, especially if his relation to him is filial and affectionate. If he understands anything of him, it is very little, and if he were to sit in judgment on any of his father's actions, he would be a little monster, and not a child. If this is so, can we not know God, though He be infinitely beyond our comprehension?

But perhaps you bar the idea of Infinity. You may say it conveys nothing to you, and you may be right; but I fancy it conveys as much to you as to anyone. What do you conceive of the region on which your eye falls between the stars? Is it bounded or not? At any rate, if it is nothing to you, does that prove it does not represent a truth when a man of the colossal intellectual power of Pascal or Paul of Tarsus and a host of others were full of it?

Let me tell you a story about a great man whom I feel sure you hold in high honour, T. H. Huxley. He was once walking with an eminent Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, a man of acute brain power, and a Christian; and Huxley suddenly asked him a question in some such words as these: You are a clear thinking man, and well worth talking to on deep topics. Tell me how it is that all these religious notions which to me are nothing, are all the world to you? The answer was: Don't you think it is possible that in matters beyond the evidence of the senses, it may be that some people are afflicted with spiritual colour-blindness? Huxley's answer was nobly candid and true: Yes, he said, I suppose that is possible; and if I were afflicted in that way, I shouldn't know it.

Now, Sir, I do not mean to say that these words apply to those who think with you, because there are obviously spiritual truths which you not only believe, but live and move in them; and what I hope to go on to next time is to show that intellectual consistency forbids you to stop where you do stop, or rather try to stop; but beckon you on to certain beliefs which at present seem to you nonsensical, but which I firmly believe are wrapped up in the convictions you already hold and acknowledge. It is not a matter of trying to prove you wrong; but what I shall ask is that you attentively consider whether you are right in saying that the belief in the existence of God is to you unmeaning; further, whether, if so, that gives you the warrant for supposing that it must be unmeaning for every other thoughtful mind, or will be before long.

It will be necessary, too, for me to anticipate a misgiving which will have occurred to you already. You are expecting me to say something about faith being above reason: the kind of talk that galls some people sadly. I will therefore explain what I mean by faith before bringing it into the discussion. It is not what a schoolboy is supposed to have said about it. "Faith is a power of believing what you know is not true." The same authority tackled Hope and Charity in a similar strain. "Hope is the power of expecting what you know won't happen. Charity is giving away what you don't want." At present I will only say these definitions are not adequate, but that I have something better to talk about.

Whoever degrades another degrades me,  
And whatever is said or done returns at last to me.  
—Walt Whitman.

## A Naturalist's Paradise.

THOSE favoured islands of the far eastern seas, Borneo, Sumatra, Java, and Celebes, were revealed to the Western World as biological treasure regions by Alfred Russel Wallace in his fascinating *Malay Archipelago*. Borneo is not only the largest island in the Malay region, but is one of the greatest islands on our globe, and has about five times the area of England and Wales. Yet, although encircled by isles of volcanic origin, Borneo betrays meagre evidence of volcanic commotion, and its deposits consist of ancient accumulations of igneous substances and of water-laid strata.

In 1912 two handsome and well-illustrated volumes from the pens of Dr. C. Hose and Professor McDougall were published under the title of *The Pagan Tribes of Borneo*. Still later, in 1916, the posthumous fragment of Robert Shelford, *A Naturalist in Borneo*, was presented to the reading public by Professor E. B. Poulton, the distinguished Oxford biologist.

At the early age of three, Shelford met with an accident which led to tubercular disease of the hip-joint, and the boy was doomed to lie on his back for several years. When ten years old, a painful operation was conducted, and he afterwards left his couch. Despite his lameness, he led an active life, and lived long enough to be esteemed as one of the most promising naturalists of the day. Born at Singapore in 1872, he died after an agonizing illness at the age of forty in 1912. Shelford's premature death was deplored, writes Professor Poulton,

by a wide circle of friends interested in the most varied sides of natural history, all of whom felt not only a keen sense of personal loss, but also the loss to the science to which they had devoted their lives. We in Oxford retain grateful memories of pleasant years spent in hard work and constant friendly intercourse, and his efficient control of the Sarawak Museum, and bright and attractive, many-sided personality, will be long remembered in Borneo.

Shelford enjoyed special advantages during his sojourn in Borneo for acquiring knowledge of the flora and fauna of that earthly paradise. As Curator of the Museum at Kuching, Sarawak, he was afforded the fullest facilities for collecting specimens from distant parts of the State. The white Rajah then ruling British Borneo—Sir Charles Brooke the second—was ably supported by the other officials at Sarawak in his ambition to secure a valuable and important Museum of Natural History. Moreover, Rajah Brooke ordained the restriction of the exhibits to the plants, animals, and ethnography of Borneo. Overlapping and confusion were thus avoided, and a splendid collection of permanent interest both to Europeans and natives has been established. Yet this praiseworthy achievement has met with characteristic national disregard. As Shelford mordantly notes:—

Although foreign countries have been quick in expressing gratitude for the services he (Sir Charles Brooke) has rendered to naturalists visiting his country, the debt has never been acknowledged by a single English learned society.

Kinabalu, Borneo's principal mountain, rises to an altitude of 14,000 feet. This is a solitary eminence, and the remaining mountainous masses form ranges whose peaks sometimes attain an elevation of 10,000 feet above ocean level. With a copious rainfall, the island's river systems are extensive, and the largest stream of all, the Kapuas, flows from its source in Central Borneo for about 700 miles to the sea. The leading watercourses rise from the central highlands, and run north, south, east, and west towards the coast. As they wander to the ocean, the streams transport

immense quantities of alluvium, which forms a marshy belt that almost everywhere surrounds the island.

Until recent geological times, the present island of Borneo was attached to the continent of Asia, and constituted its south-eastern extremity. In addition to geological proofs of this, the faunal kinships between Borneo and the adjacent continent provide powerful testimony to this truth. The quite modern separation of Borneo from the Asiatic mainland is indicated by the large array of Asiatic organisms still dwelling there. These include, among numerous others, the elephant, rhinoceros, wild cattle, swine and deer, various cats such as the civet and tiger cats, porcupine, little black bear, the flying lemur, several monkeys, and two manlike apes. Some of these mammals are also found in Sumatra, and the evidence supplied by their distribution clearly indicates the recent isolation of both Borneo and Sumatra from the neighbouring land mass, and the still later division of one original island into two.

The climate of Borneo is hot and moist. Rain descends very freely throughout the year, but the wettest season extends from October to February, while the finest period is that of April and May. Speaking from a quarter of a century's experience, Dr. Hose states that the *average* annual rainfall in Kuching totals 160 inches. But 225 inches fell in one year, while, in another, 102 inches only were recorded:—

The greatest rainfall recorded in one day was 15 inches. The temperature hardly, if ever, reaches 100° F.; it ranges normally between 70° and 90° F. The highest reading in one year (1906) at Kuching was 94°, the lowest 69°. Snow and frost are unknown, except occasionally on the summits of the highest mountains.

The whole of this great island forms one vast forest. The mountains are mantled with diminutive trees and masses of moss. In the dense forests of the plains and valleys tall and majestic trees soar to a height of 150 or even 200 feet. Below these giants there flourishes a luxuriant undergrowth of smaller trees which await their turn to replace the older ones when these fall, while creepers, palms, and ferns of almost infinite variety strive and struggle for existence in their sylvan environment. Nearly 500 species of forest trees furnish superior timber, and yield most nourishing fruits, such as the mango, many varieties of bananas, the durian, and numerous others. The rattan and bamboo, however, provide the native peoples with the main materials for their habitations and arts. Several forest plants yield gutta-percha. Wild sago is usually abundant; rubber is extracted from the sap of a creeping plant, while some of the orchids excel in beauty those even of South America. The Bornean pitcher plants are justly celebrated for their splendour, and the gigantic *Rafflesia* found in the island is the largest flower in the world.

The birds of Borneo are extremely rich in species, and volumes would prove necessary for their detailed description. Many remarkable forms are special to the island, and this is also true of several mammals, including three species of our relatives, the apes and monkeys.

Reptile life is strongly represented by huge ferocious crocodiles, various lizards and tortoises, and over seventy species of snakes, the thirty-foot long python among them. The streams teem with edible fish. The insect order contains countless genera and species, and all observers have noted that at sunset the Bornean forest becomes clamorous when the ever noisy cicadas are joined by the croaking of frogs, and the humming, droning, whirring, and other sounds of innumerable insects which combine to make the evening hideous to all but the most hardened listener.

(To be continued). T. F. PALMER.

## Notes From Scotland.

The Rev. G. S. Peebles, Uddingston, says if we are to have Sunday Evening Services at all, then they ought to be better attended. Is this another testimony to the intense religious fervour in Scotland, of which we heard from the House of Commons, or is it a common wail all over the country?

We have been having quite a number of harvest thanksgiving services of late. If we thank God for the bountiful crops, who should we curse for the rain that has spoiled them?

Scotch farmers are now becoming sensible. A good many of them took advantage of the fine weather last Sunday to secure their crops.

Are the religious clauses in the Scottish Education Bill to be the means of the whole Bill being dropped? It looks very much like it at present, and perhaps that would not be the worst fate that could befall it.

"The Whigmore bullets ken unco little discretion, and will just as sune knock oot the harns o' a psalm-singing auld wife as a swearing dragoon."—Cuddie at Drunclog, in *Old Mortality*.

Why do our teachers, as a body, not let their opinions be known regarding the teaching of the Bible and Shorter Catechism in school. I have never yet met a teacher who approves of the latter, yet they go on teaching it. Are they afraid to offend the clergy, who are generally to be found as members of the Board? Fancy teaching children of seven years of age "Thou shalt not commit adultery"!

Is it not now time the Secularists in Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen were forming themselves into Branches of the N. S. S.? I am sure they are numerous enough in each of these towns. Perhaps next time our President comes North, meetings might be arranged for the purpose of forming new Branches.

SCOTIA.

## Correspondence.

### MIND AND MATTER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I think (judging from your "Answers to Correspondents") in the September 29 issue that one of your correspondents, Mr. T. C. Langridge, has been raising the point that the distinctive colouration on some species of animals, *e.g.*, butterflies, so far from making them invisible, makes them prominent, and that this involves a refutation of some evolutionary theories. If he has you might bring the following to his notice, or, in any case, it would be worth printing.

In *Science Progress* for July there is an essay on the colouration of animals, and the author shows that all the so-called prominent colourations of animals are not at all prominent to animals, as their colour-vision is extremely different from our own. In fact, most of the markings are such as render the animal invisible to others.

May I say a few words on the subject of the "Mind and Matter" correspondence. I entirely approve of what Mr. E. J. Hirst has to say on this subject, save that he seems to make the difficulties in the way of a Materialist explanation of mind on the same level as those in other explanations.

It is true that Materialism has not explained what consciousness is, but those who believe in a soul can draw no comfort from this, for, beyond assuming something else to experience things, it can no more explain the process of experiencing than Materialism. Indeed, it is the triumph of Materialism that it recognizes that consciousness is a process.

However, the soul theory has to face difficulties that are

not present in Materialism. Suppose we grant that there is a soul, and that it has "made up its mind" to do an action. For that action to be done certain material actions have to take place in the nerves. Hence, at some point the soul has to make matter move in a way that it would not do before, *i.e.*, it has to perform an exceedingly clever and complex miracle without knowing that it is doing so, and without being aware of the particles it has set in motion.

The behaviour of the particles of matter would also be directly against the laws of nature.

Sir Oliver Lodge has seen this difficulty, and has shown that it would be possible for a miracle to take place without breaking the laws of conservation of momentum and energy, but he quite ignored the fact that these are not the only laws of nature, and that a miracle must of necessity break at least one law.

R. H. NISBET.

THE TASK OF FREETHOUGHT.

SIR,—Like your correspondent, "J. F. Rayner," I am also of opinion that it would be better if the N. S. S. had a constructive as well as a destructive policy. The objects of Secularism and the beliefs of Freethinkers are so often contorted by Christians that it is sometimes difficult to convince those who are seeking after truth that Secularism is superior to Christianity.

There is really a want of ceremony about the opening and closing of our meetings. This may not appeal to some, but there are others who, I think, would appreciate a little ceremony. Many people go to church solely for their love of music. Were nothing more than a sermon to be heard there, I am afraid the attendance would be meagre in the extreme. If this be an admitted fact, why should the N. S. S. not adopt means to draw this section of the community to its fold?

I think every meeting of the N. S. S. should be opened by the recitation of a creed on something like the following lines: "I believe that conduct should be based on reason and knowledge. I know nothing of divine guidance or interference. I regard happiness as man's proper aim and utility as his moral guide. I believe that progress is only possible through liberty, and I believe in equal freedom of thought, speech, and action to all." CRUX CORTICORUM.

Suggestions for Hymns and Their Singers.

And when they had sung a hymn they went out.  
And it was night.

CARADOC EVANS.—TUNE: "CALVARY."  
"THERE is a green hill far away,"  
"My people" there do dwell,  
And on the cross of ignorance  
Worship—the Lord of hell.

REV. F. B. MEYER.—TUNE: "UPSALA."  
"I thank the goodness and the grace  
That on my birth hath smiled,"  
And kept me, midst this *heathen* band  
A Christian—undefiled.

FATHER VAUGHAN.—TUNE: "ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS."  
Slay, "as if on that alone  
Hung the issue of the day,";  
Slay, for blood, and blood alone,  
Yet can wash thy sins away.

THE PROFITEERS.—TUNE: "HARVEST HOME."  
"Here a little,  
There a little,"  
Reaping all we can;  
Hear us, as we praise thee,  
And bless the working-man.

THE C. O.—TUNE: "GETHESEMANE."  
"Christian dost thou hear them":  
How they rend and jeer?  
He, who lived in Nazareth  
Is dead—and cannot hear.

P. A.

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, N.W., off Kentish Town Road): 7.30, H. J. Stenning, "Is there a Science of History?" Open Debate.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Trade Union Hall, 30 Brixton Road, S.W., near Kennington Oval): 7.30, Mr. E. Burke, "The Last of the Infallibilities." Public invited.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C.): 11, Camille Huysman, "The Labour International."

OUTDOOR.

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Mr. Saphin; 3.15, Messrs. Hyatt, Swasey, Dales, and Kells; 3.30, Mr. Harry Boulter, "Bible Stories."

WOOLWICH (Beresford Square): 11.30 and 3, Geo. H. Swasey.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

GLASGOW BRANCH N. S. S. (Good Templar's Hall, 122 Ingram Street): 12 noon, Discussion Class. Subject: "The Relation of Socialism to Freethought."

GOLDTHORPE BRANCH N. S. S. (14 Beaver Street, Goldthorpe): 6.30, Annual General Meeting.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Dr. Henri M. Leon, M.A., LL.D., Phil. D., etc., "Manx Legends and Superstitions."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Baker's Hall, 56 Swan Street): 6.30, The Secretary, "Freethought, Ancient and Modern."

PORTH, GLAM. (Morley's Restaurant): 2.30, A Meeting. Mr. Tal Williams of Maesteg will attend.

SHEFFIELD ETHICAL SOCIETY (Builders' Exchange, Cross Burgess Street): 6.30, Mr. J. C. Thomas, B.Sc. ("Keridon"), "The Return of the Gnostic." (The New Era of God-making.)

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH N. S. S. (Waverley Hall, St. Mary's Road): 11 and 7, Mr. J. T. Lloyd.

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