

The

# FREETHINKER

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## Views and Opinions.

### Religion and Labour.

The Rev. F. H. Stead announces that he is about to undertake an inquiry concerning the state of religion among the working classes. That is an interesting announcement for many reasons, and, if a committee were appointed, we should not mind serving on it. We are quite certain that the report would in that case be much nearer the facts of the case than it is likely to be otherwise. For with all these committees the aim is not so much to discover how far people really believe in religion as it is to find out how much religion can be with safety offered to them. Mr. Stead's method appears to be open to question even more than is usually the case. According to a paragraph in the *Star*, Mr. Stead has addressed a dozen questions to "leading representatives of the Labour Movement and allied interests relating to such questions as the following: Indifference to religion, the adoption of Haeckel's Materialism, the influence of the Rationalist propaganda, increase of drunkenness and other vices, attendance at public worship, middle-class ascendancy in organized religion," etc. When he gets all these reports in, Mr. Stead hopes to make the results public in connection with the International Conference on Labour and Religion. For our part, we have not the slightest doubt as to the nature of the report. We have come across such before, and they are about as valuable as would be a blind man's report on the appearance of the lunar craters.

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### An Old Trick.

One may note in passing the graceful association of an inquiry as to the growth of Freethought with the "increase of drunkenness and other vices." True, this is followed immediately by "attendance at church"; but Mr. Stead would probably argue that this was one of the results of the prevalence of "drunkenness and other vices" that followed an adoption of Haeckel's Materialism, etc. But it is evident that the theory of the association of a lax morality with the rejection of religion is too valuable to be allowed easily to die. If it is not openly asserted, it must be insinuated. Somehow or the other, people must be induced to believe that this giving up of religion is a most serious affair. Only

so will it be possible to maintain that amount of social pressure which can make them keep their unbelief to themselves. For, once let the world grasp the fact that of all questions concerning which mortals bother their heads there are none that are intrinsically of so little consequence as those that come properly under the name of religion, and the game is up. Ideas can only be kept alive in one—or both—of two ways. Either the majority must believe that they are true or they must believe that they are useful. Apparently the hope of proving that religion is true is now given up as almost hopeless. Nothing remains, then, but to prove that it is useful. And even that is not attempted in a positive manner. It is rather by way of suggesting the awful things that may happen if religion loses its hold on the people. And all the time the lesson in front of us is that every vileness can and does flourish in connection with the most fervent profession of religious belief.

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### Why Working Men?

But why should Mr. Stead address his inquiry specifically to the religion—or lack of it—of working men? If religion is true, and if it is useful, it should be of as much importance to other people as it is to working men. Really, the soul of a millionaire should be as worth saving as that of a navvy. On behalf of the "upper classes," we protest against this favouritism. Why not give to Mayfair some of the attention that is bestowed on Mile End? Genuine religious belief is, after all, not something that affects one class of society. Societies may be more or less religious, but they are more or less religious as a whole. Freethought is not something that affects society as Alopecia affects the hair of one's head—in patches. It affects all who think, and many who do not; and there is no reason whatever for confining the capacity for thinking to one class of the community. Some of the keenest intelligences we have met have been uneducated, and some of the greatest fools have been educated. Education does not give capacity; it seems pretty evenly distributed through all the social grades; and therefore we do not see why Mr. Stead should limit his attentions to the working classes. Does he think that if the working classes can only be kept religious it does not matter much about the others? Personally, we should not be surprised if this were the case; for it is the working classes who have always been most carefully guarded against the spread of unbelief. It has been pointed out that in all the cases of prosecution for "blasphemy" that have occurred it was never they who wrote for the "upper classes" in expensive volumes that were prosecuted, but always they who wrote for the working man. Had Paine written in stilted English and published at a guinea a copy, he would never have been made the subject of a prosecution, nor would others have been punished for selling his works. This concern for the working man is very touching—and just a trifle suspicious. It looks as though there were a desire to keep him religious—in order to prevent his waking up.



## Cause for Suspicion.

Mr. Stead's method of enquiring whether the working men are religious by addressing a circular to "leading representatives of the labour movement" is very ingenuous. Putting on one side the fact that the leaders addressed will, in all probability, be quite *safe* ones of whom to make enquiries, Mr. Stead ought to know that this is the last possible way in which one could get reliable information. Why, many of the labour leaders are afraid to let their opinions on religion be known for fear of damaging their interests in other directions, and it is quite certain that the replies will be of a kind to please the religious world. They will be told that the working man has a dislike to the formalism and class atmosphere of the Churches, that he has a profound respect for the character of Jesus, etc. We saw this game worked with the soldiers during the War, when the men were represented as half-baked idiots who gave up religion because they did not like the cut of the parson's collar, or from some other purely imaginary cause. Anything, in fact, to disguise the truth that the working man is, as are others, steadily outgrowing these childish fantasies of the world's infancy which meet us in the shape of religion. Why, indeed, should Mr. Stead assume, if he does assume, that while the rest of the world is steadily outgrowing religious beliefs, the working man is so constituted that he is destined to put up for ever with these same fables as the literal truth? The truth of the whole matter is that these religious leaders cannot get over the habit of thinking of the working class as a class apart, one that requires special teaching and *special watching*. They must be kept in order, and what is there that can do it so well, or that has done it for so long, as religion? And when religions fail to do this, its utility to the governing classes of the country will have gone.

## An Awakening.

\* \* \*

Perhaps, if Mr. Stead cares to set on foot a genuine enquiry, he will discover how much truth there is in what has been said. The working man is not, of course, the only one who sees what the historic function of religion has been, he is only the last to realize it. While the general environment was such as to encourage religion, the establishment of it in all branches of life gave rise to no special reflection. But when the environment underwent a change, when the growth of knowledge led to a universal weakening of religious belief, then the strong desire of the governing classes that men should be kept religious aroused first suspicion, then enquiry, and finally conviction. It was seen that from the most primitive times whenever the sinister interests of a country needed protection that function was always performed by religion. Behind the autocrat, the tyrant, the monopolist, the exploiter, always the priest. The frame of mind that was favourable to the latter was favourable to all the others. The people might be kept ignorant, but there was always religious instruction forthcoming. Their bodies might be starved, but their "spiritual" nature always received nourishment—of a kind. Under the worst conditions of factory employment the visit of an inspector might be resisted, but the visit of a "missionary" was always welcome. And now the working man is waking up. He sees no reason why knowledge should be the possession of a class, or why he should longer give support to institutions and ideas that have no justification in either truth or utility. Enquiries about the religion of the working man will not re-establish belief. Vague speeches about the religion of labour will not drive from the minds of those who think the knowledge they possess of the historic part played by religion in the life of the world.

You cannot very easily turn the world back; you can more easily delay its progress. That may be done by religious organizations as it has been done before. But it is a little more difficult now than it was. The world is waking, and man is beginning to stand erect. And before knowledge the gods retreat as the morning mist is dissipated by the rising sun.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## Orthodoxy Up to Date.

(Concluded from p. 435.)

THE *Church Times*, while almost gleefully admitting the failure of Protestantism, expresses the opinion that "it will be time to say that Catholicism has failed in England when it has been fairly tried." That is a perfectly legitimate statement; but I venture to affirm that Catholicism was once fairly tried in England, and that it signally failed. Now, the *Church Times*, being a Catholic journal, on the whole very ably and discreetly conducted, will readily admit that up to the time of Henry VIII., England was a Catholic country, and that whenever and wherever the true Church exists it is a Body whose Head is Christ. The Church of England was founded early in the seventh century, and continued as a branch of the Catholic Church until the beginning of the sixteenth. Curiously enough, Augustine, the first missionary, was a Roman abbot whom Pope Gregory the Great sent, at the head of a band of forty monks, to convert the English people to Christianity. For close upon a thousand years Catholicism had a fair trial in England. Its career was somewhat chequered, and its relations with Rome were often painfully strained; but not even the *Church Times* will deny either the validity of its orders or its right to be regarded as *the Church*. Its founders were monks, and monks were its glory or its shame throughout its history. Gardiner, in his article on England in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, well says:—

The Church of England is the daughter of the Church of Rome. She is so perhaps more directly than any other Church in Europe. England was the special conquest of the Roman Church, the first land which looked up with reverence to the Roman Pontiff, while it owed not even a nominal allegiance to the Roman Cæsar.

Without a doubt, then, the Church of England was from the first in the fullest sense Catholic; but was it morally and socially a success? Let us glance at its condition in the twelfth century, in the reign of King Stephen. England was then passing through terribly troublous times, Stephen lacking all kingly qualities except bravery. The clergy were extremely worldly men, who cared much more for their own interests than for the welfare of their flocks. Roger, Bishop of Salisbury, had but one ambition, namely, the acquisition of wealth and the promotion of his family. His two nephews were bishops of Lincoln and Ely, while his two illegitimate sons occupied exalted positions, the one being Chancellor and the other Treasurer. The bishops lived in large, well-fortified castles, and ruled their subordinates with rods of iron. They were mighty princes in the land, who took prominent parts in the political conflicts of their day. Milman says:—

Such were the prelates of England just before the commencement of Henry II.'s reign: all, says a contemporary writer, or almost all, wearing arms, mingling in war, indulging in all the cruelties and exactions of war. The lower clergy could hardly, with such examples, be otherwise than, too many of them, lawless and violent men. Yet the Church demanded for the property and persons of such prelates and such clergy an absolute, inviolable sanctity. The seizure of their



palaces, though fortified and garrisoned, was an invasion on the property of the Church. The seizure, maltreatment, imprisonment, far more any sentence of the law in the King's Courts upon their persons, was impiety, sacrilege (*History of Latin Christianity*, vol. v., pp. 19, 20).

The Church proudly claimed absolute independence and irresponsibility for its sacerdotal order. No matter what crime any member of that caste might commit, he was not amenable unto the law of the land. It was maintained that even the most menial churchman was immune from the law of capital punishment. "The churchman too was judge without appeal in all causes of privilege or of property, which he possessed or in which he claimed the right of possession." It was for this complete immunity of the sacerdotal order that Thomas-a-Becket fought such a desperate battle with Henry II. It was for the honour of his order that that extraordinary fanatic sacrificed his life at Canterbury. Among the king's commands which the haughty archbishop was requested to sign was this: "If any cleric be accused of felony, the Church shall not protect him, but he shall answer to the summons of the king's court to be tried therein." Becket exclaimed:—

And that I cannot sign.  
Is not the Church the visible Lord on earth?  
Shall hands that do create the Lord be bound  
Behind the back like laymen-criminals?  
The Lord be judged again by Pilate? No!  
—*The Works of Tennyson*, p. 705.

The Church of the twelfth century manufactured piety, or saintship, in superabundance; but greatness and nobility of character it cannot justly claim as one of its peculiar products. St. Bernard, the celebrated abbot of Clairvaux, the most influential man of his age, was by no means an exemplary character, as the following incident related by Dean Milman indubitably shows:—

The Abbot of Clairvaux was involved in a disputed election to the archbishopric of York. The narrow corporate spirit of his order betrayed him into great and crying injustice to William, the elected prelate of that See. The rival of the Englishman, Henry Murdach, once a Cluniac, was a Cistercian; and Bernard scruples not to heap on one of the most pious of men accusations of ambition, of worse than ambition: to condemn him to everlasting perdition. The obsequious Pope, no doubt under the same party influence, or quailing under the admonitions of Bernard which rise into menace, issued his sentence of deposition against William (*Latin Christianity*, vol. iv., p. 390-1).

Other incidents, equally or more discreditable, in the life of the illustrious saint of Clairvaux are on record, showing that saintliness and honourable behaviour do not necessarily go together.

Let us now take a leap from the twelfth century to the sixteenth and inquire what moral and social progress was made during the interval. The first thing that arrests our attention is the following reflection by the illustrious scholar and critic, Erasmus:—

Oh, strange vicissitudes of human things. Heretofore the heart of learning was among such as professed religion. Now, while they for the most part give themselves up, *ventri luxui pecuniæque*, the love of learning is gone from them to secular princes, the court, and the nobility. May we not justly be ashamed of ourselves? The feasts of priests and divines are drowned in wine, are filled with scurrilous jests, sound with intemperate noise and tumult, flow with spiteful slanders and defamation of others; while at prince's tables modest disputations are held concerning things which make for learning and piety (*Froude's Henry the Eighth*, vol. i., p. 30, 31).

By the twelfth century the Church had won the affectionate allegiance of the mass of the population. Through-out Becket's violent strife with the king, the people, especially the poor, were enthusiastically on the archbishop's side, because they believed that the clergy were their best friends and protectors. Becket was assassinated in his own cathedral, but he had really won a temporary victory, and ere long we see Henry II. walking bare-foot through the streets of Canterbury, and then kneeling while the monks, at his own request, scourge him on the pavement in the chapter-house. Despite many glaring faults, the clergy were then veritable servants of society. Monasteries and nunneries were numerous and rapidly growing rich; but their main object was still to relieve the necessities of the poor. In course of time, however, the men of God became notoriously worldly and selfish, and their very privileges proved their ruin. Religion degenerated into an empty form. The religious houses lost their original purity and honour, and sank into centres of luxury and vice, the abominations of which were notorious. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries their names stank in the nostrils of the public, and Cardinal Morton, having visited them by permission of the Pope, laid their scandalous condition before a provincial synod held in 1486. The report says:—

Many priests, it was stated, spent their time in hawk-ing or hunting, in lounging at taverns, in the dissolute enjoyment of the world. They wore their hair long like laymen; they were to be seen lounging in the streets with cloak and doublet, sword and dagger. By the scandal of their lives they imperilled the stability of their order. A number of the worst offenders, in London especially, were summoned before the synod and admonished (*Froude's Henry the Eighth*, vol. i., p. 60).

But there was no amendment. "The monasteries grew worse and worse." In Roy's *Satire against the Clergy*, the bishops are thus described:—

As for preaching they take no care,  
They would rather see a course at a hare;  
Rather than to make a sermon  
To follow the chase of wild deer,  
Passing the time with jolly cheer

They drink in golden bowls  
The blood of poor simple souls  
Perishing for lack of sustenance,  
Their hungry cures they never teach,  
Nor will suffer none other to preach.

For nearly a thousand years Catholicism was fairly tried in England, and the result was a total failure. Cardinal Morton's letter to the Abbot of the monastery of St. Alban's contains the following passage:—

The brethren of the abbey, some of whom, as is reported, are given over to all the evil things of the world, neglect the service of God altogether. They live with harlots and mistresses publicly and continuously, within the precincts of the monastery and without.

The Church, with such an inglorious past, stands self-condemned and doomed to extinction, despite its orthodoxy of belief and exquisite machinery.

J. T. LLOYD.

I am now convinced, that no great improvements in the lot of mankind are possible, until a great change takes place in the fundamental constitution of their modes of thought. The old opinions in religion, morals, and politics, are so much discredited in the more intellectual minds as to have lost the greater part of their efficiency for good, while they have still life enough in them to be a powerful obstacle to the growing up of any better opinions on those subjects.

—*John Stuart Mill*.



## The Grand Old Man of Laughter.

How many and many a weary day  
When sad enough were we, Mark's way  
(Unlike the Laureate's Mark's)  
Has made us laugh until we cried,  
And sinking back exhausted, sighed  
Like Gargery, "Wot larx!" —Andrew Lang.

FOR forty years Mark Twain filled the English-speaking world with laughter, always generous, always clean, often springing, as the truest humour must spring, from the source of tears. Beneath his cap and bells was only partially concealed one of the sanest writers of our time; a satirist who reserved his scorn for the mean and ignoble, and all the praise for the worthy and pure. The incident of his financial failure, which, like Walter Scott's, was the work of others, raised him to the rank of the heroes, and every new revelation of his character only brought him closer to the hearts of his admirers.

Regarded as the prince of jesters, he was so much more than that. He was a great man, a great citizen, a great writer. Mark Twain was the national author of the United States in a sense in which we, in England to-day, have no national writer. The feeling for him among his own people was like that of the Scots for Walter Scott ninety years ago, or like that of our fathers for Charles Dickens. There was admiration in it, gratitude, pride, and above all, affection. This was shown at one of the last public dinners Mark Twain attended. When he came in he was escorted to the table, and the whole company, in which no man was indistinguished, rose to greet him, and remained standing till he had taken his seat.

This full flame of personal affection went out to Mark Twain for what he had written and what he had done. His dashes against tyranny, humbug, and corruption attracted men no less than his irresistible humour. Such a man's humour was bound to be interwoven with seriousness. "Papa," said his young daughter, "can make bright jokes, and he enjoys funny things, but still he is more interested in earnest books and earnest subjects."

A thorough Freethinker, Mark Twain always wrote under the restraint of a family full of religious prejudice. His pious wife edited his jokes, and some of his serious attempts at philosophical writing, such as *What is Man?* were suppressed, or else withdrawn quietly from circulation by the unseen hand of piety. Probably we shall never know how far his writings were edited in the interests of God and Mrs. Grundy. Some of his jokes have disappeared from recent editions of his works, such as the jest on Joseph and his brethren, in which Joseph says, "Pity me!" and Twain adds, "his brethren pitted him." Fortunately, through the sincerity of his friend and biographer, Mr. Bigelow Paine, we know something of this side of Twain's character. It is well; for the hirelings who write for the "free press" of England and America have chosen to ignore the subject of Twain's heresies.

It is characteristic that at the time of the posthumous publication of so many of Twain's heresies that the orthodox press should discover that the great humourist's work is no longer to the public taste. People talk of him more than they read him, so they say. It is the fate of all writers with great reputations. They will, however, not get rid of Mark Twain so easily.

The orthodox journalists who are frightened at Mark Twain's reasoned attacks on Christianity must have forgotten the iconoclastic note in his most popular works. Some of the liveliest jests appear in *The New Pilgrim's Progress*, in which he describes the travels of

an excursion party through the Holy Land. Here is a fine jibe:—

The street called straight is straighter than a corkscrew, but not as straight as a rainbow. Saint Luke is careful not to commit himself. He does not say it is the street which is straight, but the "street which is called straight." It is a fine piece of irony, and it is the only facetious remark in the Bible, I believe.

A shrewd thrust at priestcraft is shown in his laughable remark:—

These gifted monks never do anything by halves. If they were to show you the brazen serpent elevated in the wilderness, you could depend they had on hand the pole it was elevated on, and even the hole it stood in.

There is a palpable thrust at Oriental boastfulness in the following:—

When I used to read of "kings" in Sunday-school, it suggested to me the kings of such countries as England and France, arrayed in splendid robes ablaze with jewels, marching in grave procession with gold sceptres in their hands, and flashing crowns on their heads. But, here in Syria, it suggested ill-clad, ill-conditioned savages, much like our Indians, who lived in sight of each other, and whose "kingdoms" were large at five square miles and containing two thousand souls.

A delightful piece of irony is displayed in his comment on the alleged tomb of Adam:—

There is no question that he is actually buried in the grave which is pointed out as his. There can be none, because it has never yet been proved that that grave is not the grave in which he is buried.

Writing of monks, he is in his most Ingersollian vein:—

They have banished the tender grace of life, and left only the sapped and skinny mockery. Their lips are lips that never kiss and never sing; their hearts are hearts that never hate and never love. They are dead men that walk.

In his autobiography there are many Freethought touches. Whilst visiting Europe, he had an invitation to dinner from an Emperor. For some time Mark Twain had been meeting titled persons, but when the Imperial card was passed round the breakfast-table, his daughter said with emotion and excitement: "Why, papa, if it goes on like this, there won't be anybody left for you to get acquainted with except God." It was not complimentary, adds Twain, to assume that I was unknown in that august quarter, but young folk jump to conclusions without reflection.

Sometimes he threw aside the cap and bells, and spoke from a full heart. The question of ethics and religion is well put in the following:—

It needed no God to come down from heaven to tell men that murder and theft and other immoralities were bad, both for the individual and society. If I break all these moral laws, I cannot see how I injure God, for he is beyond reach of injury from me. I could as easily injure a planet by throwing mud at it.

That was written in his Theistic days, but in his later years he became Agnostic. In his *Mysterious Stranger* he makes a fierce attack on the God idea:—

Strange, because they are so frankly and hysterically insane—like all dreams: a god who could make good children as easily as bad, yet preferred to make bad ones; who could have made every one of them happy, yet never made a single happy one; who made them prize their bitter life, yet stingily cut it short; who gave his angels eternal happiness unearned, yet required his other children to earn it; who gave his angels painless lives, yet cursed his other children with biting miseries and maladies of mind and body; who mouths justice and invented hell, mouths mercy and invented hell, mouths Golden Rules and forgiveness multiplied by seventy



times seven, and invented hell; who mouths morals for other people and has none himself; who frowns upon crimes, yet commits them all; who created man without invitation, then tries to shuffle the responsibility for man's acts upon man, instead of honourably placing it upon himself; and, finally, with divine obtuseness, invites this poor, abused slave to worship him.

The posthumous works of Mark Twain, which have so upset the orthodox, show Ariel turned Prospero, and showing in the transformation how extraordinary a spirit Ariel is. Despite his dress of motley, he was ever a knight-errant charging down the wind at the hosts of superstition. Honour was his shield, and truth tipped his lance. Gentle in his dealings with gentle people, he was relentless in his contest with humbug. The lustre of his fame must deepen with the progress of the years.

MIMNERMUS.

## The New Testament.

### I.

#### PAUL.

READERS of Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* will remember the passage where Sue Bridehead offers to make Jude a "new New Testament," by cutting out and rearranging the separate books in the order of their composition, beginning with Paul's Epistles. Such a rearrangement would no doubt have a certain subtle effect in the direction of rationalizing our conceptions of these writings. The present order is eminently calculated to suit the current clerical fiction, designed for consumption by simple souls, according to which the Gospels are authentic memoirs of Jesus (two of them written by apostles, and the other two at any rate by immediate followers of apostles), and the Epistles an edifying commentary on the Gospel story, written in full view of the events recorded in it. This fictitious view is tacitly assumed by the clergy in nearly every sermon they preach—the truth, or an approximation to it, not being allowed to appear except in expensive volumes and periodicals only read by scholars, and beyond the reach of the average man. This is part of the ecclesiastical machinery for dusting the eyes of the common people.

A "new New Testament," as above defined, would give the order of the books somewhat as follows:—

1. *Pauline Epistles*. 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians. (Before A.D. 64.)

2. *Anti-Pauline writings*. James, Revelation. (Before A.D. 70.)

3. *Primitive Gospel narratives*. "Q" (the elements common to Matthew and Luke, but not Mark), and Mark. (A.D. 70 to 85.)

4. *Post-Pauline Epistles*. Hebrews, 1 Peter, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus. (A.D. 85 to 100.)

5. *Later Gospel narratives and companion writings*. John (Gospel and Epistles), Matthew and Luke (the parts peculiar to each), and Acts. (A.D. 100 to 140.)

6. *Inferior late stuff*. Jude and 2 Peter. (A.D. 120 to 150.)

It is well for the open-minded student of the New Testament to read its contents in this order, and thereby ensure that he approaches the documents earliest in date free from preconceptions derived from those written later.

When, accordingly, we start with the genuine Pauline Epistles, we find at once that we are confronted with the phenomenon of a few individuals (Paul, Silvanus, Timothy, etc.) on the shores of the Ægean preaching a

new religion, for the understanding of which some knowledge of the social and religious history of the times is the main thing necessary. It has been held by some respectable critics that Paul himself is a fictitious character, and his letters therefore—even those most generally accounted genuine—pure forgeries. This hypothesis, however, is not really a very helpful one. Like the Bacon-Shakespeare theory, it only pushes the problem further back; for no one can read Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians, at any rate, without perceiving that, whether by Paul or not, they are the work of a distinct and remarkable personality, and that if that personality was not Paul, but a forger who invented Paul and his whole system, he was a more remarkable individual than Paul himself would have been, and we have to account for the odd fact of his having left no other trace of his identity. For present purposes, therefore, I regard Paul as the historic author of those epistles which go under his name, those to the Hebrews, Timothy, and Titus excepted.

By the first century A.D., all the petty kingdoms and city-states of the Mediterranean had become enslaved to the Roman Empire, administered by a bureaucracy of proconsuls and other officials deriving authority from the emperor, or hereditary war-lord and chief magistrate of the Roman State. Public life had become a routine, concerning nobody but the officials and the Italian plutocracy. Religion, once a live ritual designed to conciliate natural forces and serve the interests of the tribe or people practising it, had become a hollow form, ridiculed by the learned, no longer appealing to the slaves and disinherited, but enforced for political reasons by the Imperial officials. Not the tribe or the people, but the individual and his destiny had become the centre of ethical teaching and religious speculation. The old "mysteries," connected with the local cults of Demeter at Eleusis, Isis in Egypt, Adonis in Syria, Attis in Asia Minor, and so forth, had originally (as demonstrated by Sir J. G. Frazer) been magical rites to further the revival of vegetation and crops in spring. No one any longer believed in them in this sense, but devout persons continued to be initiated into the "mysteries" in the belief that the slain and resurrected gods, whom they celebrated, could free them from the bondage of the flesh, and fit them for eternal happiness after death.

Towards the middle of the first century, Paul and his companions appear in the Greek cities of Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus, proclaiming the revelation of a new "mystery," specially intended for the poor, the ignorant, and the wretched in this life—the mystery of Jesus, the "Christ" or Messiah, crucified as a sacrifice to God for human sin, and risen again as a pledge of the future resurrection of believers in him to an eternal life of bliss. By accepting this "mystery," believers would become sharers in the "Holy Spirit" of Christ; they would forget their miserable earthly existence, as though they were dead to it, and live in continual ecstasy, praying and preaching, speaking strange tongues "of men and of angels," miraculously recovering from diseases, and triumphing over the flesh and its temptations, until the wonderful day soon to come, when Jesus would appear from the sky, dead believers would come to life and be caught up, with the living, to dwell with him for ever, and the wicked, the scoffers, and the rich in this world would be cast into everlasting darkness and torment!

This highly sober and rational creed is set forth at length in Paul's letters—our prime authority for its tenets. From them, particularly those to the Galatians, Corinthians, and Romans, we learn not only the nature of Paul's preaching, but something of his antecedents and the kind of opposition he had to encounter. Paul



was a Jew, exceedingly ignorant and uncultivated, who had hit upon the new "mystery" in an emotional reaction against the legal requirements of orthodox Judaism, of which he had been an adherent. "Through a revelation from Jesus Christ," according to him—but really through the effect of continual brooding over the Law and the Prophets upon a mind already religious to the point of mania—Paul had come to the conclusion that Jesus, the founder of an obscure Jewish sect, crucified as a seditious a little before Paul's time, was not only the longed-for "Messiah" or deliverer, but a divine person, sent into the world to redeem men by his death after the manner of the Pagan "mystery" gods.

That there actually had been an historical individual called Jesus, the founder of the sect above-mentioned, and that he was not altogether the coinage of Paul's imagination, is a conclusion to which I am led, not by Paul's extremely irrational theories on the subject, but by the nature of the opposition with which he was confronted. We read of "apostles that were before" Paul—that is, the leaders of the Jewish sect in question—and of two in particular, Cephas or Peter, and James "the Lord's brother," with whom Paul had difficulties. Paul, therefore, had to do with a reputed brother of Jesus, and there is at least this much evidence for the latter's historicity—altogether apart from the Gospels, to which we shall come later.

At the time when Paul wrote the Epistles to the Galatians, Corinthians, and Romans, the little sect he had founded in the Greek cities was disturbed by violent schisms. The Jewish followers of Jesus, finding Paul preaching a new religion in the name of their founder, which to them was heathenish blasphemy, had sent emissaries among his converts to discredit him, and to make out that they, the Nazarenes of Palestine, were alone the accredited apostles of Jesus. On the other hand, some of the Greek converts, with a smattering of philosophy, finding Paul's teaching excessively crude (as it was), were endeavouring to rationalize it to a certain extent by explaining the resurrection figuratively. Paul's letters attack both these sets of opponents. Galatians and 2 Corinthians x.-xiii. deal with the original followers of Jesus, Peter, and James, in an extremely bitter fashion. 1 Corinthians i.-iv. and xv. deal with the Greek intellectuals. It is in these controversial chapters that we find the real Paul. These railings at "the extra-special apostles," as he calls his rivals—these anathemas on anyone who preaches a different Gospel from his—these sneers at the eloquent and intellectual among his Greek opponents, do not reveal Paul as a very lovely or saintly character; but they are authentic; they are the outpourings of a man fighting for all that to which his life's work has been given, and not the compositions of a literary forger. Here, at any rate, if nowhere else, we can study the protagonist of early Christianity.

ROBERT ARCH.

Nothing is idler than disputes about the motives to virtuous deeds or the proportion of praise to be assigned to the doers of them. It is a common criticism that a sweet temper deserves no commendation, because the blessed possessor of it is naturally sweet-tempered, and undergoes no terrible struggle in order to say the sweet word which he who is cursed with spite only just manages to force himself to utter. What we are bound to praise or blame, however, is the result, and the result only—just as we praise or blame perfect or imperfect flowers. If it comes to a remorseless probing of motives, there are none of us who can escape a charge of selfishness; and, in fact, a perfectly abstract disinterestedness is a mere logical and impossible figment.

—Mark Rutherford.

## The Personal Equation.

It would be very foolish to deny the power of personality. All men are equal, but all men are not identical. Some men have no personality to speak of. There are varieties of personality as well as varieties of other things in Nature. We speak of the force of personality, the attractiveness of personality, and so on. But no man or woman should allow himself or herself to be so subjected to another personality as to have no will of his or her own. Now, the Churches use personality for this very purpose—to blot out other personalities. The exaltation of a limited number of individualities is secured by the mental subjection and dependence of the mass.

This statement can be tested in many ways. Why do men obey laws? The great majority of men obey laws because of fear of the law-giver, or of the law administrator, or because of the uncomfortable results flowing from disobedience. Only one man in a myriad deliberately obeys or disobeys a law after reaching a reasoned conclusion as to the quality of the law.

The policy of the clergy confessedly is (they have supernatural authority for it) to rob people of their wills. "Free-will," after all, means nothing. God holds all the aces. There can be no such thing as free-will. How can there be in the Christian scheme? We are adjured to submit to the divine will, or to merge our wills in the Almighty will. If we do so, what becomes of our so-called free-will? There never was such a thing as free-will. It never existed.

We sometimes talk of a determined man as one "who has a will of his own." He is an exceptional man who has; but even he is limited in the exercise of his will. His will is not free. Conditions are always imposed by Nature. You cannot break her, but you can break yourself against her. In the language of the theologians, this attitude of Nature is transferred to their God—a personality praise-greedy, jealous, revengeful.

If it were not for powerful orators or eccentric slang-sliding evangelists, we should not see big audiences crowding to hear the "old, old story." The crowds do not go to church, chapel, or revival meeting for the sake of the message, but to hear the entertaining messenger. They want to be emotionally impressed or to be tickled or thrilled. The very same motives that take them to hear the preacher—who, when successful, is ever an actor—are those which take them to the theatre or great political demonstration. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the burden of the sermon is forgotten before the meeting-place is left. Change and sensation are the things that most people are out for. They are willing to pay for them, too, if required. No wonder the big church is packed when some well-boomed preacher with a big voice appears. There is no admission fee.

The Freethinker is right. The emancipation of humanity must begin with the lesson of thinking for ourselves. A man, to know anything profitably, and to be of any service or usefulness to his fellow-beings, must have a mind and will of his own. If he be gigantically strong in mind and will, he must ever remember that, to be nobly helpful, he must not use his strength like a giant. The true man exercises his strength of mind and will, not in vulgarly asserting himself and brazenly obtruding his strength—not in terrorizing and tyrannizing over others—but in embracing opportunities of social service, in finding out Nature's secrets, in elucidating matters, and in vigorously attacking the forces of darkness—anti-social forces of every kind.

Everybody must have a mind and will of his own. If he has not, he is a parasite. Loudness, showiness,



and the popular limelight are no proofs of strength of character. Character is just the strong, conscious possession of a mind and will of one's own, and it often exerts its influence unseen and in silence. The Churches to-day are going in for all-round galvanizing. They are using the limelight, the spectacular show, and blaring brass bands and brass lungs, to keep people in mind of their existence. But silently, amidst it all, the seed of Freethought is taking root in innumerable corners. Returned soldiers—thoughtless before the War—have become thoughtful, and in the great majority of cases, hostile to the claims of clericalism. The Personal Equation enters into many decisions. It is never pleasant, for instance, to have to oppose, or contradict, or run counter to one whom we love or respect. But the claim of Truth, which is just the claim of Humanity, is paramount. Therefore, if we have not yet got them, let us each set about finding out how to acquire a will and mind of our own.

IGNOTUS.

### Acid Drops.

We have received an urgent appeal for funds from the Y.M.C.A. in order to send out concert parties to Russia for the entertainment of the British troops. But we have it on the word of the War Minister that our troops are to be withdrawn, and in that case the men can wait for concerts until they return home. The document is signed by Sir Arthur Yapp, so that either he is making a needless appeal or Mr. Churchill is not speaking the truth. We are thus in a difficulty, for the reputation of both religionists and politicians stands so high that it is hard to believe that their statements are in any degree inexact.

Stands Scotland where it did! A Glasgow University has conferred an honorary degree on the Roman Catholic Cardinal Mercier. In acknowledging the honour, the wily ecclesiastic said that he regarded it as a tribute to his Church rather than to himself. The Cardinal need not get cold feet over this business. British Universities honour so many people, including successful tradesmen and Royal nobodies. Some years ago, Oxford University conferred a degree of Doctor of Civil Laws on General Booth the First. And people have not done laughing yet.

The clergy like people to think that the dear bishops are elected by the Holy Ghost. This does not always harmonize with the facts. Referring to a deceased ecclesiastic, the *Daily News* calls him a "Campbell Bannerman" bishop, and adds that the Dowager Lady Wimborne brought his services to the attention of the former Prime Minister. This is, indeed, a secular solution of a pretty spiritual mystery.

According to the newspapers, a recent Saturday was observed in New South Wales as a day of prayer and humiliation for a mitigation of the dry weather. If this be so, "God's own Anglo-Saxons" and the Australian aborigines ought to shake hands as equals.

The blessings of poverty are not so attractive to the clergy as the curse of riches. Despite Christ's injunctions, they lay up what treasure they can get their hands upon. This week's wills includes the name of the Rev. W. Townsend, of Pawdrip, Somerset, who left £9,782.

The Church of Scotland candidates at the education elections in Glasgow are in trouble about their expenses. Some portion of the costs has been raised, but there is a balance of over £100, and an appeal is now being made for this. Perhaps some of our readers would care to help.

In an article on "Anti-Semitism" in the *Westminster Gazette*, the writer suggests that the reason "is to be found in a radical difference of ethic between Jews and Europeans." What a fog of words! The reason is solely one of religious prejudice, fostered in a soil of ignorance. Among really cultured people no such prejudice exists at all.

Here is a good story. A little boy coveted a gold watch belonging to a priest. "Do you believe if I prayed long enough God would give me a gold watch like your's?" said the boy to the priest. "Certainly, if your faith was strong enough," replied the priest. "Then," said the smart boy, "you give me your watch, and you pray to God for a new one."

A Chatham resident was scared on finding a snake curled up on his doorstep. What must poor Eve's feelings have been in the Garden of Eden when the snake started talking to her?

A humorous writer in a contemporary says a dead man cannot pour a long, cool drink down his hot throat. Of course, it is not to be expected that a humourist should read such a serious work as the Bible.

The late Rev. E. H. Bennett, of Cheltenham, ignored the Biblical injunction to lay no treasure up on earth. When he left to talk to Jesus, he left behind £16,770.

An advertisement in an Irish paper throws a light upon the interesting methods of the cinema proprietors: "Tonight! Pictures! Daniel in the Lion's Den," etc. If the film producers can screen the story of Jonah and the Whale, they will shake Charlie Chaplin off his throne.

At a Bible Society garden party at Cambridge the ghastly discovery was made that no plate was handy for the purposes of the collection. One of the visitors passed his hat round.

A press paragraph states that a suburban curate wants a bicycle to assist him in his parish work. Why does not the brother-in-the-Lord think of relying upon prayer rather than the advertising methods of the heathen.

So the explanation of the rectory ceiling which mysteriously dripped oil turns out to be a commonplace affair after all. It was all a trick of the servant girl, who has now confessed, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has missed a splendid chance. He might easily have made it a "precipitation" by spirit-agency, and the servant girl the operating medium. In that case her confession would not have interfered with the theory. For that in turn would have been due to "tricky" spirits influencing the girl.

But the illuminating thing was the way in which, day after day, this absurd story was served up with assumption that some ghostly or spiritual agency was at work. To those who need it, that in itself was a revelation. It showed how ready the general mind is to seize on this kind of story, and how little removed the mass of people are from the savage state of mind. Those who think that the work of Freethought is done should find a corrective in such incidents. And for Sociologists also the lesson here is a very important one. For it is certain that until that type of mind is reduced to harmless proportions a rational ordering of social life is impossible.

For several Sundays pigeons entered Harlesden Parish Church when the windows were opened, and left after the evening service. Maybe the birds were religious. One of the partners in the Christian Trinity is associated with a pigeon.

A picture in an illustrated contemporary showed a tapir at the Zoological Gardens, suffering from mumps, and with his head bound up. Fancy dear old Providence afflicting the giraffe with six feet of sore throat!



Marshal Foch is a Roman Catholic, and he has not been allowed to forget it. The Catholic clergy have lionized him—and themselves—during the Marshal's visit to London.

A man was sentenced to three years' penal servitude for robbing church offertory boxes in Kent. It seems a severe sentence for a few coppers and trouser-buttons.

Barley, oats, and wheat are all growing in the churchyard of St. James, Bermondsey. As these things flourish in "consecrated" ground, are they consecrated also?

The Christian Evidence Society must look to its faded laurels. A new sect has been started in Arabia, says the *Times*, which includes armed attacks upon infidels among its objects. Perhaps the athletes of Craven Street will take lessons in the noble art of self-defence.

Will the pious ladies and gentlemen who prayed for fine weather in 1914 kindly note that the present summer has exceeded the customary three fine days and a thunderstorm?

The *Evening News* asks, "Shall we allow the uniformed limpets to cling to their spooof jobs?" Is this meant to be a cut at the Army chaplains?

A Mr. T. Nicholls write in the *Rugby Observer* that over 5,000 Atheists have been converted to "British Israelism." Our knowledge of British Israelism is of the slightest, so also is our knowledge of Mr. Thomas Nicholls. Still, there are some things that one would venture, as did Charles Lamb when he "damned" at a venture the troublesome old lady's parson. And we dare venture the assertion that if Nicholson's name is not mentioned in the New Testament, it is only because the space is already occupied by a gentleman named Ananias. Really, Mr. Nicholls is insulting. If he had converted his 5,000 to some presentable form of religion it would have been had enough, but to have picked out that particular form of Christian insanity known as "British Israelism" is enough to make one look round for a brick.

During the absence of the organist on holiday a piano was used at a Chislehurst Church. Why not? An evangelist at Spurgeon's Tabernacle used to play the cornet; Prebendary Carlile blows the trombone; and General Booth's male and female followers play all sorts of instruments. The very sacred instrument—the harp—is said to be popular in heaven, and outside public-houses.

The *Daily News* suggests calmly that the Gospels were written in "the language of the Holy Ghost." It seems appropriate that the story of one bogey should be written by another.

Mr. G. N. Barnes, M.P., a member of the Cabinet without portfolio, delivered a speech at the Browning Settlement Hall, Walworth, in which he spoke of the "new and menacing danger of materialism." What beautiful nonsense is this? Materialism is older than the "everlasting hills," and it has never been a danger to anyone except priests.

In a flamboyant report of a religious meeting, it was stated that "strong men, as well as frail women, were seen in tears." We cannot compliment the strong men on their associates.

Llanelly Free Church ministers held prayer-meetings in protest against a boxing entertainment in the town. Owing to the extra advertisement, the boxing show was very well patronised.

At the forthcoming Church Congress that devout Christian, Mr. George Lansbury, who will be assisted by Lord Eustace Percy, will speak on "Christian Ideals in World Politics."

Comrade Lansbury was also a star preacher at the Browning Settlement Hall meetings. Soon he will be indistinguishable from a professional sky-pilot.

"Ask and ye shall receive" is a fine text for the congregation, but it does not appear to have much weight with the minister. His house having been sold and notice to clear out given, the Rev. W. Atkins, Vicar of Snibston, held a meeting of parishioners to ask their advice.

The *Daily Mail* tells a tale of a suburban parson who said, "Peace, be still," in his sermon, as a coin intended for the collection plate slipped and rolled down the aisle.

An advertisement of a chapel for sale states that the contents include a white marble altar, with inlaid pearls and coloured marbles. The panels of the building are of satin-wood. Some improvement has been made since the Christian Religion started in a stable.

The Rev. T. Pym, of Camberwell, cannot understand why there should be any prejudice against games on Sunday. Most Camberwellonians will agree with him; but he still has the task of converting the parsons to this view.

The clergy must show, if they can, that they are doing something. So, Northampton Racecourse being closed, the Rev. Dr. Guttery claims that as being due to their influence. But the *Northampton Daily Chronicle* points out that the reason for the closing of the racecourse was the condition of the track. This was said to be dangerous to both man and beast. So now Mr. Guttery will have to go one further back, and assert that "Providence" ruined the course on the suggestion of the Churches.

A Wesleyan chapel at Bishop's Stortford is to be made into a cinema theatre. This is a conversion which Christians will not approve of.

A novel note is sounded in a tailoring advertisement, which justifies high prices by remarking "in primeval wars indifferent fig-leaves were rationed at an exorbitant figure; at any rate, we know Adam's apple cost a hell of a price."

A woman gave birth to a baby boy in a Mitcham 'bus. If that boy grows up, he will have the consolation of knowing that the Deity was born in a stable.

There are not many sources from which the Church will not take money, but the Bishop of Chelmsford has set his face against raising money for the Church by holding dances and whist drives. He wants the people, he says, to give money for a "spiritual object," and he says he has never heard of dances and whist drives being opened or closed with prayer. Neither have we, nor do we think that all the sources from which the Church gets its money are connected with prayer. What of tithes, mining royalties, rents, dividends, etc.? It looks as though the Bishop is out for a cheap advertisement, and by discarding a shilling hopes to get in a sovereign.

For ages man has bred animals for physical points. The Church for century on century has bred for mental points, viz., for a mental conformity to her beliefs and teachings. When the slightest variation showed itself to the forced belief, that variation was weeded out by the rack or the stake. This process has evolved a mental condition in the race which, by intellectual impressions transmitted from age to age, renders most men unable to think otherwise than with the mass.—*J. W. Wood.*

Matter and its movement are the ultimate factors to which all things may be traced, while they themselves can be traced no further. They are the great X and Y, whose eternal and illimitable process constitutes the universe.—*Buchner.*



## "Freethinker" "Victory" Sustentation Fund.

It is never a pleasant task to ask for financial help; but so far as it can be robbed of unpleasantness, those who have so promptly responded to our appeal of last week have done so. The letters received prove—if proof were needed—that the *Freethinker* has lost none of its hold on its readers. There is a touch of personal interest in this journal, displayed in the letters received, that fills one with a sense of satisfaction and courage. We are certain that no journal ever inspired a more *personal* feeling in its readers than this one does. We thank heartily those who have responded to our article in so generous a manner; and if, in the few letters from which our available space has enabled us to quote, we have passed in silence much of a personal nature, it is not through any lack of appreciation of the kindly sentiments expressed.

Major Wallas suggests:—

Why not call it the "Victory Fund"? That seems to me to express the situation. You have had a long and strenuous fight, and may surely count it a victory to have so successfully piloted the "one and only" through the storm. Please accept the enclosed as an indication of my ability to help, not as a measure of "the will to give."

Major Wallas's suggestion strikes us as a good one, and we have adopted it.

Mr. T. Robertson, Glasgow, writes:—

I have much pleasure in sending £5 towards the "Sustentation Fund." You have done well during the past year to have incurred so small a deficit, in view of your very much increased working expenses. I hope your appeal will bring sufficient, not alone to wipe out this deficit, but to leave such a balance as will enable you to "carry on" until your circulation balances your outlays.

If only half our readers would make it their business to secure *one* new reader within the next month, that desirable end would be attained.

From Mr. J. Sumner:—

Again, as last year, I must congratulate you upon what you have achieved; but at the same time you must not mind my saying that, as a business man, I think the paper should be self-supporting. I do not believe in doles where they can be avoided, and I am of opinion that at any rate  $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per copy would not influence the circulation. A man should be prepared to pay for what he wants, and you would still be giving good value for money. However, you are working on the inside and I on the out, so that you should be able to see the more clearly.

We appreciate our friend's suggestion, but what we have had in mind is the building up of a circulation that will make the paper self-supporting, and by that means avoid detracting from the usefulness of the *Freethinker* as a propagandist organ. And it is next to impossible, at the same time, to increase circulation and raise the price. As a business man, Mr. Sumner will appreciate losing on a rising circulation rather than making ends meet on a declining one.

Dr. P. Meehan M'Dermott says:—

I have much pleasure in handing you the enclosed cheque.....for our *Freethinker* whose advent is always welcomed by me as a week-end of refreshing ozonic change from the nauseating atmosphere created about me by the rampant hypocrisy of the London daily journalistic publications.....To me it is a fund of instruction and interest, and occupies a conspicuous place in my waiting-room.

C. W. B. writes:—

If earnest wishes were effective, you should have a splendid response that would make the *Freethinker* self-supporting, but, like prayer, it is '*non est inventus.*' Accept this material action as a subscription of £10 towards the Sustentation Fund, and may it be the means of putting ginger into some latent Freethinker.

A. W. B. says:—

It is with very great pleasure I enclose my small contribution to the Sustentation Fund, £5. It is very much below the amount I should like to give, but in times such as now prevail one must move cautiously. Certainly you deserve a full measure of praise for your efforts, and, may I add, sacrifices on behalf of the *Freethinker*? Personally, I desire to thank you for the pleasure I experience each week from the perusal of the best paper of its kind in the United Kingdom.

Mr. H. Jessop sends his cheque for £25 with a congratulatory letter on having pulled through the year with so small a deficit.

Mr. T. Wadsworth hopes that we shall go from victory to victory. Mr. W. R. Munton, along with cheque, offers his congratulations on the way we have pulled through a most difficult time. Major Warren, in sending his contribution, hopes that we shall have no trouble in getting all that is required, and says that although the times are hard for persons in his position, he cannot avoid contributing his mite to keep the flag flying. We can assure the Major that we fully appreciate the spirit of his letter and of his action.

Mr. J. B. Middleton is gratified at the way we have carried on, and hopes that all Freethinkers will respond to the call, and give all the help possible to make the paper go ahead. Mr. E. D. Side writes on behalf of himself and father, and encloses cheque, with a flattering reference to the "nourishing brain food supplied each week."

Mr. A. D. Corrick hopes that we shall be deluged with subscriptions, and adds: "Allow me as a reader and admirer to congratulate you on success under the most abnormal and disconcerting circumstances." Mr. W. B. Columbine sends cheque for ten guineas, and says:—

You have my heartiest good wishes for the success of your efforts to place the paper on a self-supporting basis, and I have no doubt that ultimately you will be able to do this. The steady, persistent work you are putting into the whole undertaking is sure to bring this reward.

All we can say is, if we do not get the paper in the position in which it deserves to be, it will not be for want of trying. We owe that to all who have stood by us so well in these five years' fighting.

We are holding over other letters from which we hope to quote next week.

The following represents the subscriptions received up to the time of going to press:—

### First List of Subscriptions.

Mrs. C. M. Renton, £2. Col. Stuart Graham, 10s. E. A. Macdonald, £1. T. Leitch, 2s. 6d. H. Jessop, £25. G. R. Hawker, £1. Lady Maxim, £3 3s. T. Dunbar, 5s. A. W. B. Shaw, £5. J. S. Buckle, £1. J. Sumner, £5. J. C., 5s. C. W. B., £10. C. F. Hall, £1 1s. W. and L. Briden, 2s. 6d. Dr. P. M. McDermott, £10 10s. J. Blackhall, 5s. E. L. G. (Dundee), £1. T. Robertson, £5. Mrs. H. Parsons, 10s. 6d. J. Pendlebury, £5. J. G. Finlay, £2. J. M. Gimson, £5. J. B. Middleton, £5. Major Warren, 10s. Collette Jones, £2 2s. E. Syers, £1 1s. Dr. C. R. Niven, £1 1s. W. R. Minton, £5. R. H. Side, £2 10s. E. D. Side, £2 10s. T. Wadsworth, £3 3s. Major Wallas, £1. G. White, £1. J. Hinley, 10s. R.



Allen, 3s. Robert Brown, £1. W. Allen, £1. A. Rowley, 5s. P. M. W., £1. H. Kennedy, £2 2s. C. F. Simpson, £1. J. Davie, £5. W. B. Columbine, £10 10s. J. Withy, 5s. A. D. Corrick, £1. W. Widdup, 5s. Mr. and Mrs. J. Neate, £1. J. G. Dobson, 5s. H. Silverstein, 10s. J. D. Restall, 5s. G. J. Baskerville, 10s. 6d. A. W. Coleman, £3 3s. A. W. Morrison, £1 1s. A. H. Harden, £3. A. G. Matthews, £1. G. Jones, 2s. 6d. G. Barber, 2s. 6d. A. J. Watson, 5s. E. Parker, 10s. W. F. Ambrose, 2s. A. Hawkyard, £1 1s.

Per South Shields Branch, N.S.S.:—A Friend, 5s. L. Carr, 2s. 6d. J. Hannon, 2s. R. Chapman, 2s. J. W. Freedman, 2s. J. Fothergill, 2s. Mrs. J. Fothergill, 2s. Total, £147 4s. 6d. CHAPMAN COHEN.

### To Correspondents.

C. HARPUR.—We should have no serious objection to using the words "Personalist" and "Impersonalist" in place of Naturalist and Supernaturalist, as the real issue is, as you say, whether we give to Nature a personal or an impersonal characterization. Of course, you may not be able to avoid thinking about "God"; but, on the other hand, many can avoid any reference to God, and as the statements go, one cancels the other. A statement of individual preference is never very conclusive.

T. ELMES.—We are afraid there is no chance of very cheap editions of Mr. Cohen's *Slavery and Woman*, much as we should like to see them. The price at which they are published leaves little in the way of profit as it is. If published at a price such as you suggest, someone with money enough to lose would have to bear the loss.

ALPHA.—We have considered your statements, but we see no reason to alter our opinion of the two men. We are not lacking in admiration for Haeckel, but we do not think that he could be considered as the philosophical equal to Darwin. The latter we regard as one of the leading minds of the nineteenth century. He threw away, in the shape of suggestions in the course of his main work enough to have made a reputation for a smaller man. Haeckel's greatness lay in another direction from that of Darwin's.

MRS. C. M. RENTON.—Thanks for copy of the *Ceylon Daily News*. It certainly possesses courage, and appears to be edited with ability.

L. R.—Every new subscriber gained is a source of permanent help and a step nearer financial independence. That is why we are so anxious for our readers to help in this way.

MRS. CROSS.—Mr. Foote's *Bible Romances* is out of print, and we cannot say how you could get a copy. The work may possibly be reprinted.

E. D. SIDE.—Thanks. Please give our kindest regards to your father. We have not seen him of late, which, considering his great age, is not surprising. We hope that he is well.

J. G.—Thanks for cutting. The religious marriage service is, naturally, not very flattering to woman.

A. ROWLEY.—There is not the slightest danger. Nothing short of an earthquake would be able to wreck the *Freethinker*. Our capital is the affection of our readers, and we feel quite secure here.

J. Y.—Next week. Crowded out of this issue.

DR. DUNLOP.—Very pleased to have your appreciation of the *Freethinker*. If any numbers of your papers are missing, let us know, and we will try to supply them.

J. HINLEY.—If everyone did what they could, our task would be, so far as finances are concerned, a very easy one. Your plan of putting the paper into new hands is excellent, and exactly the kind of help we want.

W. ALLAN.—It is quite accidental. We have no prejudices in the direction you indicate. And our feelings run quite the other way.

R. ALLEN.—Showing the paper to your customers is excellent. We note that you have secured new readers. This balances some other news we received of one who was threatened by his customers for showing the paper. Much, we think, depends on the man.

A. MILLAR.—We know we can always rely on your doing what is possible.

R. DARTLE.—We cannot see anything in the remark, except the insinuation that, being deformed, the Christian Church is the more fitting place in which to be.

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*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.

With extra demands on our space, we have increased our issue to sixteen pages, for "this week only." But we shall be glad when we are able to do this permanently. Another thousand readers would enable us to do so quite easily. Therefore we hope that a thousand of our present readers will take the hint, and see that he, or she, gets one of them without delay. It can be done.

*Apropos of the comments on Lord Halsbury, Mr. E. A. Hawkins writes:—*

Lord Halsbury, rich, pious, eloquent, and learned, may indeed be regarded as the embodiment of the qualities most admired in this country in the nineteenth century, but I doubt whether any Freethinker (or any woman, whether freethinking or not) who has read the minutes of the prosecution of Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant would feel able to pay such a tribute of praise to Lord Halsbury as that contained in the *Daily Chronicle* for September 2, 1919.

The comment is timely. Lord Halsbury's work as counsel for the Crown in "blasphemy" trials reflected little credit on him as a man, and hardly covered him with glory as a lawyer.

There has been great difficulty experienced in getting halls in London during the winter. Many are still in occupation by the military, although we may suppose that they will have to clear out one day. We expect there will be an improvement the other side of Christmas, and in the meantime the Executive is trying the experiment of three Sunday afternoon meetings on October 12, 19, and 26, at South Place Institute. Full particulars will be given later.

We are pleased to see in the *Railway Service Journal* a very appreciative sketch, with portrait, of our friend Mr. F. E. Willis, of Birmingham. Mr. Willis has led a very strenuous career, and has played a prominent part in Trades Union and other movements. At present he is President of the Birmingham Trades and Labour Council, and is well known for his earnest and useful work in many local movements. Mr. Willis, it is to be recorded, makes no secret of his opinions on religion, and lectures frequently for the local Branch of the N. S. S. He is now a member of the N. S. S. Executive. We confess to being a trifle jealous of the demands of other movements upon his time. We should like to see him still more active in the Freethought Movement.

One of our friends is setting about helping this paper in a very practical manner. He has arranged for an advertisement of the *Freethinker* to appear on the screen of a good



picture house for a year, and, in addition, is placing fifty of our posters on the hoardings of the same town for a similar period—the posters to be renewed as it is found necessary. Thus is salvation to be brought within reach of all who will take it; and we shall be surprised if a goodly number do not respond.

## Freethought in Unusual Places.

### I.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY KINEMA.

THE Kinema, the people's theatre, by virtue of the limitations of its possibilities, was necessarily a drastic change in dramatic representation. Action entirely without speech, which seemed to be demanded by the present development of this type of drama, was impossible, and therefore the terse note thrown on the screen was imperative for explanation of the action. The actual brevity of these notes demanded that they should be pungent and witty, containing the utmost explanation in the fewest possible words, and a brilliance of wit which would not only fix the attention of the audience, but also would make its separate appeal.

Wit knows no rule, and it is perhaps scarcely surprising to find that these explanatory words at times have a purely revolutionary tendency. Far from shocking the audience, this tendency gives rise to laughter of an uproarious kind, and proves that they are willing to accept and assimilate such strong food.

A rich example of this kind of notice was the terse perversion, "Early to bed and early to rise, makes those we work for wealthy and wise." This was received by an audience of middle-class people in a somewhat snobbish suburb with Homeric laughter. They at least accepted the truth of a witticism which is diametrically opposed to the ethics of opportunism upon which society is supposed to be based. Apparently they did not think that mere application to a laborious task would further their own ends, although they may equally not have known that mere application to a task, if it is a chosen task producing a worthy result, is one of the fundamental instincts of human character.

Beyond such humour, the actual action presented by the kinema producers, being of necessity movement, demands often an unconventional method of life, which cannot do very much to sustain the public interest in stabilizing those attitudes which are constantly presented to them as ridiculous.

In this connection the most powerful influence is that of the comedians; and, undoubtedly, Charlie Chaplin is the prince of Kinema humourists. Nothing is sacred to him. All the pomposities of life are mocked at and made a laughing-stock. Always, by means of some crude horseplay, or some fatuous, practical, often dangerous jest, he takes from his antagonist the dignity with which he is at first invested. It is granted that in the Chaplin films, dignity is only of the grotesque character, but that does not even slightly mitigate their influence. Indeed, it is rather an added factor in their revolutionary tendency.

Similarly, in more serious or less consciously humorous work, Douglas Fairbanks constantly attacks the conventionally minded. In "Mr. Fixit," he adopts the attitude of a complete "outsider" with the pompous members of a "family," bringing to their magnificent house a bevy of poverty-stricken children, in order to secure from them at least some display of human emotion which, in their desire to maintain the dignity of the family, they had never before permitted themselves. Their disgust at the intrusion changes gradually to love

for the children, and a correspondingly easier attitude towards the affections of their precious ward.

The implication of this play is an obvious one. If only people would suffer emotion, suffer friendship and companionship without a previous comparison of bank balances, there would soon be a change of outlook. Money, or its possession, having failed to make any difference in human relations, there would be an immediate impetus towards the millennium, for the possession of an aggregation of unusable wealth would connote no special advantages.

In other plays, Douglas Fairbanks uses equally unusual means to secure his ends; and he does, of course, since he is the main figure in his plays, succeed. Constant appreciation by his audiences of the presented fact, is a direct indication of the modern tendency of society, and it is possible that he is either a brilliantly subtle or quite unconscious propagandist. In the latter event, he has a wonderful judgment of the public pulse, and can make it beat fast or slow as he wishes.

Be that as it may, he and other kinema actors and producers leave very little doubt of their intentions. Under the existing system they are naturally desirous of securing large audiences, for large audiences will pay a greater revenue, and that is what they desire above all things. At the same time, the natural unconvention of their art—it has only been in existence a few years, and has not yet had time to develop a tradition—leads them into unconventional productions and unconventional witticisms, which are sharp-edged and biting, and yet accepted by the public with enthusiasm.

They perhaps would not admit that they are doing anything of any tendency at all. They would hold that they are merely earning their living by giving the public a palatable entertainment, and perhaps that view would be a true one. But the mind of man has been opened to impressions; it has become ready to regard with amusement tinged with disgust the false gods which it had raised up; and these men, as well as others who are more consciously endeavouring to bring about the inevitable changes, are in the grip of a movement not of parties, not even of nations, but of mankind. They therefore, being the successful of their kind, are representative of the "Revolutionary Kinema." That it undoubtedly is, and, being so, is perhaps a more accurate mirror of contemporary feeling than even the daily press, which seems to be seeking it knows not what, it knows not where; while by a hint here, a subtle allusion there, the kinema is provoking laughter and disdain for matters which a few short years ago would have been regarded with awe.

G. E. FUSSELL.

## Religion in Russia.

BASELESS accusations are often printed in the newspaper press to the effect that the Bolsheviks in Russia are persecuting the priesthood. As a matter of fact, the Soviet power has merely effected a separation of church from state and of school from church. A great number of Russian priests and of other "True Christians," together with the "Patriarch" (the head of the Russian Church) and the bishops, have been carrying on among the people a systematic, exceptionally intensive, counter-revolutionary, subversive agitation against the workers and peasants' government in Russia. In certain parts of Russia this activity has gone so far that the local authorities have been obliged to intervene and oppose certain "holy" Insurrectionists, who attempted everything to carry out literally the appeals and requests of the patriarch, of the holy synod (the highest governing



body), and of the Church councils. A number of priests have paid for their counter-revolutionary zeal either with imprisonment or, in some cases, with their lives. And, as a rule, the Soviet Government is altogether too tolerant in its relations to the Church and to its "faithful servants," and allows the Churches themselves to continue operating. For, proceeding from the principle of religious liberty, both the Soviet Government and the Russian Communist parties consider as their chief instrument in their struggle against this power of darkness, not measures of force, but a work of cultural enlightenment and communistic propaganda among the broad masses of the Russian people. In connection with the provocative rumours spread in recent days with particular enmity, to the effect that Moscow Soviet intends to undertake some kind of action against ecclesiastical objects, such as ikons, golden crosses, church vessels, etc., a member of the All Russian Central Executive Committee, at a meeting of this committee, delivered a categorical statement in the name of the Moscow Soviet to the effect that the Soviet had no such plans.

The only "violation" of "sacred objects" which the Soviet Government has undertaken was an investigation of the so-called "sacred relics." In certain churches, and particularly in a number of monasteries, there were preserved in Russia relics of various saints, or fragmentary portions of such relics. According to the orthodox doctrine, the bodies of saintly persons are "indestructible." A number of pilgrims visit such monasteries in which relics of particularly "celebrated" saints are preserved. Wonder-work relics have been an inexhaustible source for the enormous income of these monasteries. Therefore it has been customary for such monasteries as were lacking in such objects to purchase portions of sacred relics from some other monastery. A regular traffic in relics had been organized, for believing Christians not only are in the habit of paying for extra masses over these relics, but also purchase various souvenirs of them; for example, pictures of saints, little wooden crosses, etc.

All half-way intelligent persons in Russia have always considered such relics, as for example, a piece of the right hand of John the Baptist, or of the foot of the Apostle Thomas, and the like, which were actually exhibited in Russian monasteries, as humbug pure and simple, intended for the fleecing of the unenlightened. Yet the Czarist Government persecuted by its police and its gendarmes all the "sceptics" among the people who dared expose this deception. Such persons were declared by the priests to be dangerous sectarians, and were incarcerated in prison or were sent to Siberia. Under the protection of the highest Church functionaries and of the Government there was still flourishing in Russia in the twentieth century a form of idolatry which was almost incomprehensible to civilized human beings. We may here mention in addition a few examples of the crude misrepresentation proposed by priests and monks in Russia.

In the great monasteries at Kiev, relics of the fourteen thousand children who were killed at Bethlehem. In the Svyetogorsk monastery, in the government of Kharkov, even a strand of Christ's hair was preserved. In the monastery of the New Jerusalem there was preserved a drop of the milk of the Virgin Mary and a drop of the blood of John the Baptist. In the cathedral of the Apostle Andrew at Kiev, "the faithful" were allowed to kiss the cross which, according to a legend, had been raised by the above-named apostle on the hill on which Kiev now is situated. The "faithful" used to lie in wait for an opportunity to bite off a little piece of this wonder-working cross. An old priest once con-

fessed to Lomakin, author of an article on this fraudulent business, in *Isvestia*, that while he was in office this cross had to be replaced three times, for two of them had been actually eaten up by pious pilgrims. In one Russian monastery the monks traded in the nails with which Christ had been crucified. According to the confession, between the "holy" impostors the nails that had been sold would have sufficed for the crucifixion of at least ten thousand persons.

The "godless" Bolsheviks determined to open the eyes of the people to this humbug and to expose the "sacred relics." In a number of places the silver and golden chests were opened, and in place of indestructible corpses, in the most favourable cases, bones much the worse for time were found. But some of these splendid coffins contained wax dolls, ladies' stockings, sacks filled with bricks, cotton, nails, pins, etc. In all places where such investigations were carried on there were present, in addition to the Soviet members, also physicians and representatives of the priesthood and the population, and a precise record was kept of the proceeding.

In the Moscow newspaper, *Pravda*, there is depicted among other things the opening of the relics of the Saint Sava Storshevski, which took place on March 17, in the large well-known Svenigorodsk monastery. The record of the proceeding was signed by a physician and the others present. In the coffin was found a doll made of cotton. In the autopsy of this doll, no traces were found of the "sacred" body, but only bones that were so decayed that the physician could not even tell what kind of person they were from. Among these bones there were discovered two coins of the ten and twenty kopek denominations. These coins were introduced only during the War period. The monks had therefore recently opened the coffins, and knew the value of these relics very well, but continued permitting the people to believe in these "wonder-working remnants."

The Russian Orthodox Church had the habit of frequently "discovering" new saints, and under the government of Nicholas the Last, "holy" Russia was enriched by many new relics.

The above narrated struggle of the Soviet power against the ecclesiastic humbug constitutes an important chain of the huge work of enlightenment which is being carried out by the Bolsheviks "hostile to culture in Soviet Russia."

V. M.

—*Truthseeker* (New York).

### Chant Pagan.

My Grannie says with solemn face,  
Above the sky there is a place,  
Where Angels play on harps and things,  
And little children fly on wings.

She says that if I'm very good,  
And do what darling babies should,  
I shall go there with mum and dad,  
But if my conduct here is BAD—

There is another place call'd Hell,  
Where all the naughty babies dwell;  
Inhabited by mice and moles,  
Toasting their toes upon the coals.

There is no rabbit, rat, or mouse,  
In God the Father's holy house,  
No coals to warm my little feet,  
But just a golden, shining street.

So VERY naughty I shall be,  
And sing and eat too much at tea;  
Because the nice, I love them so—  
And where they are, there I will go.

From the *Nation*.

JAMES DALE.



Pages from Voltaire.

THE DYING WORDS OF EPICETUS TO HIS SON.

*Epictetus.*—I am about to die, my son, I hope that you will keep me in loving remembrance, and that you will not shed useless tears; I die contented since I leave you with a virtuous disposition.

*Son.*—You have been my guide in the paths of virtue; but you are aware how my mind is troubled. A new religious sect from Palestine are trying to instil remorse into me.

*Epictetus.*—Remorse, you say? Criminal minds alone feel remorse. Your hands and your heart are clean. I have instructed you in virtue and you have practised it.

*Son.*—Yes; but this new sect tells me of a new virtue of which, it would seem, I am ignorant.

*Epictetus.*—What is this new sect?

*Son.*—It is made up of Jews who deal in old rags and love-philters, and who clip the coin of the realm.

*Epictetus.*—The virtue they teach is apparently that of coining false money.

*Son.*—They declare that it is impossible for a man to be virtuous if he has not undergone a minor operation for removing an unnecessary piece of skin, or if he has not been dipped in water in the name of the Father through the Son; it is true that they are not all agreed on these points; some think the operation useless. Some believe water necessary, as Pindar did, who calls it marvellous; some dispense with it; but they all say that you must give them money.

*Epictetus.*—What do you say? Money? Without a doubt it is our duty to keep the poor who cannot work, to pay wages to those who can, and to assist our friends. It is a part of our law, our moral code. It is what I have done from the time Epaphroditus gave me my freedom, and it is what I have seen you do with a satisfaction that renders my last moments supremely happy.

*Son.*—The philosophers I am telling you about inculcate something wholly different. They wish us to lay at their feet all we possess, even to the last obol.

*Epictetus.*—If that is the case, they are thieves, and you must give notice to the pretors or centurions.

*Son.*—No! no! They are not thieves, they are dealers who give you the very best value for your money; since they promise you eternal life, why should you, when you lay your money at their feet, keep back only enough to get food for yourself? They have the power to strike you dead.

*Epictetus.*—Then your philosophers are assassins whom society should get rid of at once.

*Son.*—Not at all! they are magicians who possess wonderful secrets, and who can kill with words. The Father, they tell us, has given them this grace through the Son. One of their proselytes who smells horribly, and who is a great preacher in barns, told me yesterday that one of their brethren, by name Ananias, having sold his farm to please the Son in the name of the Father, brought the money to a magician called Barjona; but because he had kept back enough to buy food for his child, he was punished with sudden death. Afterwards his wife came to Barjona and was struck dead by one word from the magician.

*Epictetus.*—What a fine lot of criminals are here! If the thing were true, they would be the most abominable scoundrels on earth. They have been filling you with cock-and-bull stories; you are a good boy, but I fear you may turn out a fool, and that prospect is painful.

*Son.*—But, father, if a man gains eternal life by giving all he possesses to Simon Barjona, it is evident that he has the best of the bargain.

*Epictetus.*—Eternal life, communion with the Supreme Being, my son, has nothing in common, believe me, with your Simon Barjona. The great and good God, *Deus optimus maximus*, whose spirit in manifested in Cato, Scipio, Cicero, Pericles, Emilius, and Camillus, the father of the gods and of men, has placed his power in the hands of a few. I know for certain that these wretches spring from the superstitious populace of Syria, but I did not know that they carried their insanity so far as to call themselves the prime ministers of the Deity.

*Son.*—Yet, my dear father, they are continually working miracles. (*Here the good man, Epictetus, laughs sneeringly.*) You are sneering, father; you shrug your shoulders.

*Epictetus.*—Alas! a dying man has little inclination to laugh; but you make me, my dear boy. Have you ever seen any of these miracles.

*Son.*—No; but I have talked to men who have talked to women who said that friends of theirs had seen them. And then, what finer morality than the morality of the Jew who has undergone that little operation, and who has been immersed in water!

*Epictetus.*—And what are the moral precepts of these people?

*Son.*—Firstly, that a rich man cannot possibly be virtuous, and that it is more difficult for him to enter the kingdom of heaven or its garden than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, notwithstanding which every rich man must give all his possessions to the beggars who preach this kingdom and this garden. Secondly, that only imbeciles, the poor in spirit, are blessed. Thirdly, that he who refuses to listen to the assembly of beggars is to be despised as if he were a publican. Fourthly, that if a man hates not his father and his mother and his brothers, he has no part in this kingdom or garden. Fifthly, that we must bring not peace, but a sword. Sixthly, that when we give a wedding-feast we must force all passers-by to come in, and throw into the ditch at the end of the back-yard all those who have no wedding-dress.

*Epictetus.*—Alas! you silly boy. I had almost died in a fit of laughter, but now I believe you are likely to make me die of indignation and grief. If the wretches whom you are telling me of can seduce the son of Epictetus, they are likely to seduce many others. I can foresee terrible unhappiness in this world. Are there many of these wonder-working magicians?

*Son.*—Their number increases from day to day; they have a common fund from which they pay certain Greeks who write for them. They have invented mysteries; they require the strictest secrecy; they have set up oracles which decide all matters of interest to them, and that will not allow any of the sect in any case whatever to plead before the magistrates.

*Epictetus.*—*Imperium in imperio.* My son, all is lost.

Englished by GEO. UNDERWOOD.

There is a strange analogy between the fertility of error and the fertility of the lowest organisms in Nature. Not the highest, but the lowest organisms are the most prolific. Ephemeroids propagate in millions. So, too, in the region of human opinion. The history of mankind teaches us that whereas the breeding power of Error is immense, Truth and Justice increase with intolerable delay.—*W. R. Paterson* ("Benjamin Swift").

Spartans, stoics, heroes, saints, and gods use a short and positive speech. They are never off their centres. As soon as they swell and paint and find truth not enough for them, softening of the brain has already begun.—*Emerson.*



## Correspondence.

## MIND AND MATTER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In your remarks on Haeckel and his ideas about the soul, you represent him as saying that the soul or mind is inherited as something spiritual, as a definite something, side or sides of the inherited matter forming the material body. This is a metaphysical idea, and its introduction into the region of practical science and natural history is greatly to be deplored. One Siemens, I think, has gone a step further, and given us certain metaphysical particles, which he calls en-mnemes. In other words, the very thing real science attempts approximately to explain, memory, is foisted into the material elements as a metaphysical mystery, to the confusion of everything linked from one end to the other in the chain of evolution. It is just the same anthropomorphism and idolatry that is justly criticised in dualism. Seeing that both mind and matter are equally incomprehensible to us, the theory does not make things the least more comprehensible. On the other hand, what right have we, along with the Deists and idolaters, to assume that the other side or sides of matter be equivalent to what we call mind? The Buddhist conception is that soul and mind are purely illusory, and without any sort of permanent existence.

As a matter of fact, from the inorganic matter has developed a combination of matter we call organic. When this organic matter is brought into relation with its organic or inorganic surroundings, or both, certain transient phenomena occur, such as depict thought, feeling, hearing, etc., which cause in us the illusion of a permanent entity inside us which feels, hears, etc. In reality, according to Buddhism, this entity has no real existence; it is simply the congeries of thoughts, feelings, perceptions, etc., due to the relation between these organic concretions and their surroundings. An original illustration of my own was accepted by the orthodox. It is as follows: Nothing seems more completely inherent in objects, and part and parcel of them, than their colours. But this illusion is wholly due to the relation between the organic percipients and the so-called coloured thing perceived. One might go further, and demonstrate the illusive character of our other perceptions and ideas, such as times, space, and so on. In fact, as is often pointed out, the mind and soul are far more fleeting and perishable than the body. The elements of the body are, according to our present knowledge, imperishable; but the soul, being merely an illusion due to the relation of these elements, while organic with their surroundings, when they cease to be organic and lapse into the inorganic, the ego or soul is wiped out altogether. Does this mean that the soul and ego illusion indicate nothing at all in nature? It does not follow. The colour illusion points to something in the (so-called) coloured object that causes the illusion, and the same is true of that more complex illusion the soul or ego. What presumption and conceit it is for us to couple this illusion due to the accidental formation of organic matter with matter in general as its other or mythical side! It is more reasonable to conclude that, as with colour, the ego illusion is the index of something in matter which causes the illusion altogether beyond the comprehension of our illusive mentality. In every human being, the sum and composition of the inherited matter necessarily differs enormously, and this is quite sufficient to explain the differences in the illusive soul or ego, caused by different collections of organic matter—the so-called individuals—and their relations to their surroundings. This does not exclude the possibility that what our transient illusive minds indicate as existing may be not only totally different but immeasurably superior to our fleeting mental and spiritual illusions.

W. W. STRICKLAND, B.A., Trin. Coll., Cam.  
Hotel Milano, Via Balbi, Genova, Italia.

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## OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Band Stand): 6.15, Mr. W. H. Thresh, "Colonel Ingersoll, America's Freethought Orator."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Parliament Hill Fields): 6, Mr. E. Burke, A Lecture.

REGENT'S PARK BRANCH N. S. S. (near Band Stand): 3, Mr. H. Brougham Doughty, "Is There a God?"; Mr. R. Norman, "Is God on Strike?"

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15, Mr. F. Shaller, A Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford, E.): 7, Mr. T. J. Thurlow, "Charles Bradlaugh."

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Mr. Samuels; 3.15, Messrs. Dales, Saphin, Baker, and Ratcliffe.

## COUNTRY.

## INDOOR.

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