

# THE FREETHINKER

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## Views and Opinions.

### Spiritualism.

Taken on the whole, the Conway Memorial Lectures cover a range of subjects which would quite have met with the approval of the man in whose honour the lectureship was founded. The subjects selected have usually been of topical interest, and they have been well treated. The lecture for 1920 forms no exception to the rule, and in selecting as his topic, *Mysticism and the Way Out*,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Ivor Tuckett was dealing with at once a cant phrase and a prevailing superstition. Mainly, Dr. Tuckett is concerned with Spiritualism, and readers of his published writings will know the kind of work to expect. Those who read the lecture, if they do not find anything that is startlingly new, will find the case put against a prevailing craze with a strength and a restraint that does far more to convince than an over-vigorous denunciation. For our own part, we are convinced that very much of the attack upon Spiritualism falls short of completeness, and fails to secure attention in the quarter where it is most to be desired, because there is too much denunciation and too little explanation of underlying phases of our mental life. And for this reason it is pleasing to note that both the chairman and lecturer did indicate the direction in which one may hope to deal with Spiritualism along substantially the same lines as the larger superstition of religion has already been dealt with. In dealing with religion, we have two purposes in view. The one is to prevent, if we can, people coming under its influence. The other is to release from its influence those whom it already controls. And, substantially, that should be our aim with regard to Spiritualism. We have not only to tell them it is false; we must show them why they came to believe it to be true.

### Fraud and Fact.

It is for this reason that the common method of dealing with Spiritualism as though it were wholly a question of downright, deliberate fraud—a defect from which Dr. Tuckett's lecture is happily free, is so ineffective. That there is fraud is denied by none. It is huge, gross, and obvious to all. For our own part, we should be quite willing to say that all, or very nearly all, of what is called

<sup>1</sup> *Mysticism and the Way Out*. Conway Memorial Lecture for 1920. Watts & Co.; is.

physical phenomena is fraud, and nothing but fraud. But that is far from exhausting the subject, and if the belief in Spiritualism did not appear to have the effect of dulling one's critical powers, one can imagine a Spiritualist, who was at the same time a keen dialectician, meeting the charge of fraud with an unmoved front, and even proving that when all charges of fraud have been admitted, there remains another series of events upon which a Spiritualist may rest his case. Such a one might well point out that the vast majority of convinced Spiritualists are not dependent for their alleged proof of survival on paid or professional mediums. Our own experience, by no means a small one, is that the majority of Spiritualists are not very conversant with the alleged physical phenomena, and therefore much that is said leaves them untouched. These are mostly convinced by things of quite a different order, which are called subjective phenomena, and to talk about the exposure of mediums, such as Eglinton and others, when their own experience is of an entirely different order, does nothing whatever to convince them of their error. Dr. Tuckett's lecture is a decided step in the right direction, and for that reason deserves to be widely read. The great thing is to get at the Spiritualism of the home, and there is here something more than the undetected tricks of the more or less clever conjurer. We believe that a perfectly natural explanation lies at hand, even for the admittedly genuine, and a complete exploration of that would, we are sure, put a finishing touch to one of the great superstitions of the world—that of personal immortality.

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### Outflanking the Enemy.

Dr. Tuckett deals very well indeed with the initial bias that predisposes one to a given conclusion, a conclusion that is determined before the investigation really commences. And in this connection acknowledgment is made, by both the chairman and lecturer to the Freudian psychoanalysis, a line of research which many in this country seem strangely opposed to. There is a huge literature connected with this subject—as our own bookshelves witness—and we quite endorse Dr. Tuckett's high opinion of Mr. E. D. Holt's *Freudian Wish*. But there is in our opinion a far better book for a beginner, and that is the very brilliant little work by Dr. Bernard Hart in the "Cambridge Science Manuals," entitled *The Psychology of Insanity*. The newcomer who takes up that little work will, given adequate imagination, find himself approaching an explanation of whole groups of phenomena which the mass of Spiritualists regard as evidence of survival after death. For the whole truth of the matter is that when we have done with the frauds of this medium, or the imposture of the other, a line of argument that falls short of convincing those who have a personal acquaintance with Spiritualism because it covers only a portion of their experiences, we have a number of facts that come up which require a quite different handling. What we are up against is fundamentally not a question of the honesty of certain mediums, but a question of, on the one hand, a matter of the tricks

the mind plays even under normal conditions, and, on the other hand, a question of psycho-pathology. The fundamental and decisive disproof of the Spiritualist hypothesis is that all the proofs of spirit intercourse as given in trance messages, automatic writing, "Crystal gazing," and the like, may be paralleled by cases that are perfectly well known to the student of mental pathology. Those who are acquainted with the writings of men such as Boris Sidis, Moreton Prince, Binet, White, Ernest Jones, Coriat, Pierre Janet, and their fellow-workers, and the works of Freud, Jung, Abraham, and others of the Freudian school, will be in no wise dismayed by the evidence that Spiritualists are in the habit of bringing forward as decisive proof of survival. If one takes such a common case as that of trance mediumship, it is quite clear when we are assured of the genuineness of the medium, what we are really in touch with are cases of "double consciousness," or dual personality, a phenomenon that was brought forward prominently by Sir Henry Holland more than seventy years ago, and our understanding of which has been so greatly advanced during the past quarter of a century, aided to an enormous extent by the work of Freud and the neo-Freudian school. It is from this point of view that the attack on Spiritualism must be conducted if it is to be pushed to its conclusion.

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#### Science and Superstition.

Some Spiritualists—those who are really up to date, and are not clinging to the Spiritualism of forty years ago—are beginning to realize this. Sir Oliver Lodge, for instance, admits that Mrs. Piper's famous spirit control, Dr. Phinuit, is no more than a manifestation of Mrs. Piper's secondary consciousness. And Dr. Hyslop admits that the evidence which was proof of survival to men like Judge Edmonds would not to-day be evidence at all. That expresses the weakness of the Spiritualistic case. Theirs is an explanation that convince only those who do not understand what is going on before their eyes. To the better informed, and to those who are not saddled with an initial bias in favour of the supernatural—a wish (we use the word in the Freudian sense) that is expressed in the disguised or censored form of an interest in "psychic" things—the phenomena of Spiritualism fall into line with what is now known of the operations of mind in its normal and abnormal expressions. And in this connection it is to be noted that when Spiritualists parade the number of scientists who accept Spiritualism, the reply is that they are of the wrong type. Those who are conversant in other connections with the class of subjective phenomena which brings conviction to Spiritualists are neither inclined to accept the Spiritualist explanation nor greatly non-plussed by it. They see that the position is substantially what it was a few centuries ago in regard to insanity and other nervous derangements. Then we had a spiritualistic explanation in the shape of the theory of possession. That was finally killed by a better knowledge of the pathology of the nervous system. To-day we have the same explanation—in kind—offered of obscure mental phenomena. And, as usual, the theory of spirits, discredited elsewhere, seeks support in the less explored regions of human experience.

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#### Our Unsavoury Past.

For the rest, the passing craze of Spiritualism has two causes. First, there is the fact that we have for years been in a state of nervous tension with many thousands of our young men mown down by war. This has, in itself, exposed people to an attack from which they would otherwise have been immune. In the next place, religion

is fast running to seed, and the very decline of organized religion, the withdrawal of the better intellects from its service, has cleared the way for the growth and expression of various superstitions that have hitherto been more or less held in check. Always on the break up of a higher organism—whether it be sociological or biological—there is a rapid multiplication of lower forms of life, and the break up of religion offers no exception to the rule. Those who expect otherwise, overlook the immense hold that superstition has on what one may call the historic consciousness of the race, which is buried, rather than lost, and may be revived under appropriate conditions, much as it is possible under certain conditions to resurrect the buried experiences and memories of the individual. Behind all of us lie thousands of generations of superstition, from the grosser forms of which the race is only just lifting itself. And the lifting, as experimental psychology has shown in other directions, does not involve the total elimination of the mental traits upon which superstition lives. It means merely their suppression, with the possibility of their revival at any time and under many forms of disguise. That the resurgence of the savage is fatally easy, the past five years of war has shown. All the centuries of fear and superstition through which the race has passed are not to be eliminated by a mere intellectual demonstration. The savage is always there lurking immediately below the surface of consciousness. To rouse him—or it—to activity is the easiest of tasks. The religionist has thus a tremendous advantage over the Freethinker in his appeal to the people. But it is an appeal that becomes weaker with the growth of enlightenment and the development of society.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

### "Watchman, What of the Night?"

GOOD FRIDAY and Easter Sunday once more lie behind us. Many services were held and numerous sermons preached in churches and chapels all over Christendom; but what has been the result beyond the emotional revel enjoyed by the comparatively small numbers present? Good Friday and Easter Sunday have been observed for many centuries in commemoration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; but the belief in those alleged events, often so enthusiastically celebrated, has had but little effect, and that little often more evil than good, upon the social and moral life of the world. In the Catholic, Greek, and Anglican Churches every Friday is recognized as a day of abstinence, in consequence of which Friday is looked upon as an unlucky day.

But once, on a Friday ('tis ever, they say,  
A day when misfortune is aptest to fall).

Numerous calamities have occurred on this day, such as the arrival in London of the news that the Pretender had reached Derby, December 6, 1745, the financial panic of May 11, 1866, and similar disasters in New York on September 24, 1869, and September 19, 1873, which gave rise to the term Black Friday. According to mediæval romance, fairies and elves of every description were transformed into hideous animals on Friday, and remained so till Monday. When a man is dejected and melancholy, he is said to be Friday-faced. In Spain, Friday is held to be an unlucky day, and there is an old adage that "he who laughs on Friday will weep on Sunday." One Church historian, at least, informs us that "Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit on a Friday, and died on a Friday." But why is Friday held to be

an unlucky day in Christendom, and observed as a fast-day by so many Churches? Because it is believed to be the day on which Jesus was crucified for the world's redemption; and yet the Apostle Peter, on the Day of Pentecost, assured his hearers that "he was delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts ii. 23). If Peter was right, and the orthodox doctrine of the atonement is true, why should the day on which the greatest and most glorious event in all history took place be regarded as unlucky, and observed as a fast-day? If Good Friday is to be interpreted in the light of Easter Sunday, why should Lent be solemnized every year as a season of mourning and abstinence? The Catholic and Anglican Churches grieve and lament while Nature is rejoicing and preparing to put on her beautiful garments. Even in February, the thrush, filled to overflowing with "the rapture of the forward view," cannot refrain from singing. As Meredith puts it—

He sings me, out of Winter's throat,  
The young time with the life ahead;  
And my young time his leaping note  
Recalls to spirit-mirth from dead.

Lent means spring, Nature's bright morning of the summer day. To the ancient Scandinavians, Anglo-Saxons, and Germans, prior to their Christianization, Friday was a lucky day, the Anglo-Saxons calling it Frigedaeg, from Frigu, or Frigga, the Goddess of marriage and of spring, corresponding to the Roman Venus and the Greek Aphrodite. Frigga was the wife of the God Odin, and symbolized spring, love, and beauty. Being her day, Friday was a joyous day; and Lent, signifying spring, is a season for great rejoicing, a time to make merry and let the natural joy of life flow into a full tide. Does it not necessarily follow, then, that the Church's use of Lent is contrary to Nature, and consequently fundamentally wrong and morally injurious? After the fourth century, it became customary in Spain to close the Churches altogether on Good Friday, as a sign of mourning. In that country, even to-day, no carriages are driven through the streets, and both bells and organs are silent in the Churches on the anniversary of the crucifixion. Indeed, every conceivable means of deepening the sense of universal grief and sorrow on that day is resorted to. But is there not in all this a tacit confession of the practical failure of the Christian religion? Had the death and resurrection of Christ fulfilled the brilliant predictions indulged in by the Apostles, had the world been regenerated and ennobled by the infinite and omnipotent love of the crucified and risen Lord, would it have been possible for Christians to devote forty consecutive days, excluding Sundays, to what is called self-denying abstinence? Would they not have been inwardly impelled to sing songs of triumph and of fulfilled hope, in the realization of "the debt immense of endless gratitude"? But instead of pæans of congratulation, the Church has lowering dirges, and every festival is preceded and followed by vigils, fasts, and days of abstinence. In addition to the forty days of Lent, the ember days at the four seasons, the Three Rogation days, being the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Holy Thursday, and all the Fridays in the year, except Christmas Day, are days of fasting or abstinence.

Hence the first report issued by the watchman is that the night of Christianity and the Church is steadily getting deeper and blacker. At the bar of Reason both stand utterly discredited. And yet the watchman is bound to add, "The morning cometh"—the morning of sanity and common sense, of the sure reign of Reason and Truth; and for this welcome fact we are indebted to the social forces and the sciences. For several hundred years Christianity has been in the crucible, with

the inevitable result that many of its doctrines, once regarded as fundamental, have completely disappeared. Miss Maude Royden and Dr. Percy Dearmer, who describe themselves as the Church free lances, conducted a remarkable Fellowship Service the other Sunday at the Kensington Town Hall. The former read two of Blake's poems as well as passages from the Bible, while the latter, as reported in the *Daily News* for March 29, had the temerity to assert that "the great harm Germany has done to the world is that she produced Luther." We cannot agree with the reverend gentleman, our opinion being that we owe Germany a heavy debt of gratitude for giving birth to the great Reformer. It must be admitted, however, that, from Dr. Dearmer's theological point of view, his bold assertion was fully justified; but the orthodox Evangelicals praise God every day for the enormous work accomplished by Martin Luther, just as the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches recognize their indebtedness to John Calvin. We, on the other hand, are profoundly grateful to Luther for his advocacy of the right of private judgment in religious matters, the recognition of which, in conjunction with the advent of the New Learning, has contributed so largely to the undermining of all external authority in theology. Speaking generally, the Protestant Reformation and modern science have co-operated in the gradual disintegration of the Christian religion, and in opening the eyes of thoughtful people to the notorious futility of all its claims.

The *Church Times* is evidently beginning to realize that it has been grossly unjust in its attitude of bitter hostility toward the Soviet rule in Russia. The secret of its antagonism was the alleged determination of the Bolsheviks to destroy Christianity and the Church. For many months it denounced the Soviets in the strongest, most scathing terms at its disposal, simply because of its supposed anti-Christian proclivities. Now, at last, the *Church Times* is beginning to discover the truth on the subject. In its issue of March 26, the first paragraph in the "Summary" is devoted to a somewhat reluctant or perfunctory disclosure of the facts. Utilizing information recently published in *New Europe*, it says:—

In February of last year the Commissariat of Justice issued a decree regarding the toleration and non-molestation of religious worshippers. It ordered that churches are to be left at the disposal of citizens who have come to an agreement with the local Soviets regarding their uses. Religious objects are not to be removed, "even though they may be made of precious metal," on the ground that the religious feelings of citizens are affected. But a later paragraph requires that when "ikons" are removed from public places on no account must the occasion be turned into an anti-religious demonstration. Such demonstrative removal of ikons, and assaults, create, says the decree, a wrong impression, in the eyes of the population, of the Soviet methods of combating popular prejudices..... "The prejudices of religion," the decree declares, "and popular superstition must be cured, not by punishment and repression, but by good schooling, the propaganda of Communism, and the organization of public works on a Communistic basis.

The *Church Times* still maintains that at first the Soviets attempted to forcibly turn the people from their religion, and that the decree in question resulted from the failure of that policy; but of this there is no evidence. We congratulate our contemporary upon its courage in, at last, doing partial justice to the Bolsheviks and their attitude to religion. Like the Free-thinkers in all other parts of the world, what the Soviets believe in and endeavour to put into practice is religious freedom and toleration, which Christians generally have

never either believed in or practised. Religious intolerance and persecution used to be carried on in Russia on an egregiously large and cruel scale, a fact conveniently ignored by both the secular and the religious press at present.

The trend of the world in the twentieth century is distinctly towards Secularism, and it has now become so powerful that, like the tide, it is absolutely irresistible. The Churches never worked harder, or on more scientific lines, than they are doing to-day, nor had they ever more efficient and devoted leaders and workers, and yet, despite all this, they are losing ground more rapidly than at any previous period. Yes, the world's drift is destined to drive all before it, and march on to final victory. At last, superstition is dying, and the sun of knowledge is rising higher and higher, with healing in its wings. Reason is coming into its own; and already we venture to modify the first verse in a well-known hymn, and sing thus:—

Reason shall reign where'er the sun,  
Doth his successive journeys run,  
Its kingdom stretch from shore to shore,  
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

J. T. LLOYD.

### "The Splendid Outlaw."

I am convinced more and more every day, that fine writing is, next to fine doing, the top thing in the world.

—John Keats.

Amid littleness and detail he detected the genius of life, the old cunning Proteus, nestling close beside us.—Emerson.

MR. GEORGE MOORE has always worn his rue with a difference. He enjoys the rare privilege of being the one English author who has been boycotted for two generations. For his sake, that lamented tradesman, the late Mr. Mudie, assumed the functions of the Bishop of Rome, and started an *Index Expurgatorius*. And the other chaste librarians followed suit dutifully. Mr. Moore has had his revenge, and now publishes his new books privately, and at prohibitive prices to owners of slender purses.

Fortunately, to those of us who are not millionaires, Mr. Moore has a shelf full of books which may be obtained through ordinary channels at modest prices. How excellent they are! Since *The Mummer's Wife*, the most brilliant realistic novel in the language, first frightened a hypocritical and squeamish public, Mr. Moore has added masterpiece to masterpiece. His *Esther Waters* turned the tables on his pusillanimous Puritan detractors, and by the sheer force of genius compelled their unwilling admiration. From *A Drama in Muslin* to *The Untilled Field* he has revealed a cleverness of invention and construction, united to uncommonly fine writing, that has built for him a secure reputation, "four square to all the winds that blow."

Mr. Moore's greatest work is *The Mummer's Wife*, a masterpiece by a master-craftsman. The central idea of the book, an elopement by a married woman, is not unique. Many of the common or garden novelists, prime favourites with the libraries, have used this. But the erring woman of *The Mummer's Wife* is the wife of a small shopkeeper, and the author shows in plain English the fatal decline; how the woman becomes a dipsomaniac, and, step by step, loses propriety and decency, until she dies the horrible death of a drunkard. Had she been depicted as a lady of title; had her weaknesses been clothed in decorative phrases, and smothered in sentiment, then, probably, no outcry would have risen

from the timid tradesmen who purvey literature at our front-doors at reasonable prices. But because Mr. Moore chose the realistic method of depicting life as it is, and not as it never was, the result disgusted the chaste tradesmen, but it enriched English literature with a most powerful novel, and a superb picture of contemporary life.

There are many facets to Mr. Moore's genius. His *Brook Kerith* fluttered the doves of Orthodoxy, and caused hectic discussion, for the author gave a new rendering of the life of Christ, which astonished many Christians who had made a Cook's excursion through the Gospels in boyhood, and afterwards relied upon an ever-waning recollection. In *The Untilled Field* the author is in his most Voltairean vein. He traces many of the woes of Ireland to the despotic rule of the priests, which has sapped the will-power of the Catholic laity, who find themselves unable to hold their own against the increasing Protestant population. Thousands of Irish Catholics emigrate every year to escape the despotism of Priestcraft. That is Mr. Moore's view, and the cultured writer, travelling by a vastly different route, reaches the same conclusion as the despised Free-thinkers.

Mr. Moore has yet more claims on our notice. His unique and brilliant *Confessions of a Young Man* startled even his admirers. It is without a parallel in modern autobiography. Reckless and irresponsible in its criticism, it is wonderful how much underlies the biting epigrams. Its intimate knowledge, too, of the art of France, literary and pictorial, marks it off from other books.

To consider, *A Mere Accident*, after this volume of caustic criticism is a curious task. For in it the love of epigram and paradox have vanished. In its pitiless sequence of an awful tragedy, that, evolved from an accident, destroys one life and darkens others, it is true to nature, and a superb example of conscious art. Unhappily, publishers nowadays are creatures of little courage, and while the old "Vizetelly" edition of the book is complete, the later issues of this tragic story have been mutilated to please the lawn-tennis-playing "flappers," who are supposed to be the only readers of literature in a civilized country inhabited by "God's own Englishmen."

Who need apologize for his admiration of Mr. Moore's magnificent work? His power of investing common life with tragedy is true romance. Content to leave all the stage-properties of sensationalism, to abjure the footlights, and yet move thousands with the plain record of elemental passion in modern life, is certainly akin to great art. Perhaps, because of his reticence in quantity, the early reputation has been less in peril; and now with a collection of books that show fully the power and the limit of his art, it is right he should receive recognition, not merely as a magician who has charmed away dull hours by his "so potent art," but as a personal force in literature, which, to be candid, has mocked every imitator.

Historians of English literature will be compelled to consider the work of Mr. George Moore even more seriously than contemporary critics have done. His detractors have called him "the English Zola," and paid him an unwilling compliment. It is precisely because France values her "intellectuals," instead of smothering them, that she is so great as a nation. In associating his name with that of Emile Zola, even his enemies have unwittingly set the seal of approbation upon a writer who worthily carries on the literary tradition which have made the sons of Gaul the vanguard of the Army of Progress. For France is one

torrent of scepticism, from Abelard to Anatole France, and the Gallic intellect:—

Ravishing as red wine in woman's form,  
A splendid mœnad, she of the delirious laugh,  
Her body twisted flames with the smoke-cap crowned.

MIMNERMUS.

## Pages from Voltaire.

### III.

COUNT BOULAINVILLIER'S DINNER PARTY.  
SECOND CONVERSATION. DURING DINNER.

(Concluded from p. 205.)

*Mr. Freret.*—Yes, but of what value to us are the vagrant fancies of an African, at one time a Manichæan, at another a Christian; now a profligate, now a saint; now tolerant, now a persecutor; what can we make of his theological gibberish? How can we respect this insane rhetorician when he tells us in his twenty-second sermon that Mary conceived through her ear? (*imprægnavit per aurem*).

*The Countess.*—I am sure I can quite see the absurdity of it all; but I am not so sure about its divine quality. It seems to me obvious enough that Christianity should take its rise among the common people, like the Anabaptists and Quakers, the prophets of Vivarais and the Cevennes, and the Convulsionaries<sup>1</sup> of our own day. Fanaticism always ends in rascality. It is the same with religion as it is with card-playing: "You begin as a gull, and end as a sharper."

*Mr. Freret.*—Alas! It is only too true, my dear lady. The probable outcome of the chaos of stories relating to Jesus, written against him by the Jews, and for him by the Christians, is that he was a well-meaning Hebrew who wished to stand well with the populace, like the founders of the Rechabites, Essenes, Saduceans, Pharisees, Judaites, Herodians, Therapeutes, and all the other insignificant sects that sprang up in Syria, the birthplace of fanaticism. There is no doubt that he had women among his followers, as had other leaders of religious sects; that he was unwise enough to find fault with the government of the country, and that in the end he was barbarously punished. But still it is of no importance whether he was condemned under Herod the Great, as the Talmudists say, or under Herod the Tetrarch as we are told in some of the Gospels. It is asserted that his disciples were unknown before they happened to come across some Platonic philosophers in Alexandria, who confirmed the fantastic dreams of the Galileans by those of the Greek writer. The people at that time were infatuated with demons, evil spirits, obsessions, possessions, and magic, just in the same way as savages are to-day. Almost all maladies are attributed to possession by evil spirits. From time immemorial the Jews had boasted of driving out these devils with the root called *barath*, which was held under the nose of the sick person, and accompanied with a few words attributed to Solomon.<sup>2</sup> Tobias drove out devils with the smoke of a fish on the grill. Such is the origin of the wonderful Galilean miracles.

The Gentiles were fanatic enough to admit that the Galileans could produce these marvels; for the Gentiles believed in their own powers in just the same way. Like the disciples of Jesus they believed in magic. If some

maladies were cured by natural processes, they did not hesitate to say that a headache could be cured only by enchantment. They said to the Christians: "You have your secrets, and we also; you cure with words, and so do we; you have no advantage over us."

But when the Galileans had gained many followers among the populace, and began to declaim against the State religion; when, after demanding tolerance, they dared to be intolerant; when they wanted to build by their new fanaticism on the ruins of the old one, the Roman priests and magistrates were horrified, and reprimanded them for their audacity. What did they do? They advanced, as we have seen, a thousand things in their own favour; from credulous fools they became clever rogues, and added forgery to their other vices; they defended themselves by wretched frauds, being unable to use other weapons, until the time when Constantine, made emperor with Christian gold, placed their religion on the throne. Then the crafty rogues became bloodthirsty rogues. I can venture to assert that from the Council of Nicea to the sedition of the Cevennes, not a year went by without the shedding of blood by your Christians.

*Count.*—My dear, sir, that surely is an exaggeration.

*Mr. Freret.*—By no means; I am putting it too mildly. Look at the history of the Church; you will find Donatists and their opponents cudgelling each other; Athanasians and Arians filling the Roman Empire with carnage over a mere double vowel. You will find Christian barbarians complaining bitterly that the wise Emperor Julian would not let them cut each other's throats. You will note the amazing succession of massacres; the number of citizens condemned to death, princes assassinated, stakes set on fire by your councils, twelve millions of innocent men and women inhabitants of the new hemisphere, slain like wild beasts, because they did not want to be Christians; and, in our old hemisphere, Christians ever butchering one another, old men, children, mothers, wives, daughters, slaughtered by the thousands in the crusades against the Albigenses, in the Hussite wars, in those of the Lutherans, the Calvinists, and the Anabaptists, in Saint Bartholomew, in the massacres in Ireland, in Piedmont, and in the Cevennes; whilst a Roman bishop, reclining on a bed of down, extended his foot to be kissed, and amused himself by listening to music made by the soprano voices of his eunuchs. Heaven is my witness that this picture is a true one; and you dare not deny it.

*Count.*—I admit that there is an element of truth in the things you put forward; but, as the Bishop of Noyon remarked, they are not subjects for the table, but rather tables of subjects. Dinner would be indeed a wretched meal if conversation turned for any length of time on the misdeeds of the human race. Ecclesiastical history disturbs one's digestion.

*Mr. Freret.*—Facts disturb it much more.

*Count.*—The fault lies not in Christianity itself, but in its abuses.

*Mr. Freret.*—That would be true if the abuses were few and insignificant. But if priests have wanted to live at our expense ever since Paul, or someone known by that name, wrote that "they that preach the gospel shall live by the gospel.....Have we not the power to eat and to drink.....to lead about a wife"<sup>1</sup> at your charge, if the Church has ever been an invader, if she has used every possible weapon to deprive us of our possessions and our lives, since the fictitious adventure of Ananias and Sapphira,<sup>2</sup> who had sold all their possessions for the benefit of Simon Barjona, but had kept back a part of the price; if it is obvious that the history

<sup>1</sup> A sect of fanatics that sprang up in France in the early part of the eighteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> Tobias vi 8.

<sup>1</sup> Corinthians ix.

<sup>2</sup> Acts v.

of the Church is a continual sequence of quarrels, impostures, vexations, frauds, ravishments, and murders; then it is proved beyond doubt that the abuse is in the thing itself, just in the same way as a wolf is proved to be a carnivorous animal, because, in fact, it is destructive by the nature, not by the abuse of its aptitudes.

*Couet.*—You can bring the same charge against all other religions.

*Mr. Freret.*—Not at all; I defy you to show me a single war of religion in the whole of classical history, a single Roman put to death for his opinions, from Romulus to the period when the Christians barred the road to civilization. Such stupid barbarity is our peculiar possession. I can see that you appreciate the truth of my statements, and you can say nothing in reply.

*Couet.*—I admit that I cannot meet your objections. I consider that theological disputes are as absurd as they are disastrous.

*Mr. Freret.*—Then you must also admit that if the tree bears a poisonous fruit we must cut it down at the root.

*Couet.*—I certainly do not admit it; for the tree has at times borne good fruit. If a republic has always had internal dissensions, should it be destroyed? Should not its laws be altered?

*The Count.*—There is no strict analogy between a religion and a State. Venice reformed her laws, and flourished; but when there was an attempt to reform the Catholic Church, Europe was deluged with blood; and at a later time, when the celebrated John Locke attempted to harmonize the frauds of Christianity with the rights of man, and wrote his book on *The Reasonableness of Christianity*,<sup>1</sup> he had not even a half dozen disciples; a strong enough proof that Christianity and reason cannot dwell together. There is only one remedy, or rather palliative, as things are; that is to make religion absolutely dependent upon the monarch and the government.

*Mr. Freret.*—I agree with you, provided that the king and his government are intelligent, and willing to tolerate equally every kind of worship, to look upon all men as brothers, to pay no attention to what they think, and much attention to what they do; to give them liberty in their relations with God, to put compulsion on them only in their commerce with men. For we must treat as wild beasts those magistrates who use the hangman to prop up religion.

*Couet.*—But if all religions were recognized, they would fight among themselves. The Catholic, the Protestant, the Turk, the Jew, would wring each other's ears as they returned from mass, sermon, mosque, and synagogue.

*Mr. Freret.*—Then there would be a company of dragoons to scatter them.

*The Count.*—I would prefer to give them a lesson in moderation by not sending the military against them; it is surely better to teach men before you punish them.

*Couet.*—Teach them? My dear sir, do you think that they are worth teaching?

*The Count.*—I understand what you mean; you are always thinking that the average man ought to be deceived; you are only half-cured; your old complaint is always breaking out.

*The Countess.*—Allow me, please, to interrupt you. I want to ask your opinion about something I was reading yesterday, the history of Mohammedanism. One day, when Assan, the son of Ali, was in his bath, one of the slaves carelessly threw over him a bowl of boiling water.

The servants of Assan would have put the slave to the sword. But the good follower of the Prophet presented him with twenty pieces of gold. "In paradise there is one plane of glory for those who pay for services, a higher one for those who pardon evil deeds, and a still higher one for those who reward involuntary evil action." What do you think of the action and words of the good Assan?

*The Count.*—I see in him a good Mussulman of the first period of his religion.

*Couet.*—And I see in him a good Christian.

*Mr. Freret.*—For my part, I am sorry that the scalded Assan, son of Ali, should have given twenty pieces of gold for a place in paradise. I have no liking for fine deeds when they are interested. I wish that Assan had been virtuous and humane enough to pardon his slave without a thought of the reward promised by his religion.

*The Countess.*—Now we are, perhaps, ready for our coffee. I must say that, if such instructive conversation were the accompaniment of every dinner party in Paris, Vienna, Madrid, Lisbon, Rome, and Moscow, the world would be infinitely better.

Englished by GEORGE UNDERWOOD.

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## Acid Drops.

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It is hard to suppress a certain feeling of malicious satisfaction over some of the comments made by certain Nonconformist organs on the promised developments of religious education in State-supported schools. The *Christian World*, for example, asks: "Why cannot the denominational leaders get together and agree on a system of teaching of the common bases of our Christianity, and thus emphasize the agreement, and not the disagreement of the Churches?" But by what right does a Nonconformist ask this? If the State is to teach any religion it is for the State to say what religion shall be taught. And it is sheer egoistic impertinence to assume that so long as Christians can agree upon what they want the rest of the community must be content. Christianity is, after all, only a sect, and for any sect to demand that its beliefs shall be taught at the expense of the whole community is simply monstrous. The claim is only one more illustration of the fact that there is no greater subverter of a sense of right than Christianity. And until Christianity is destroyed a healthy morality is impossible.

Among the things that might be expressed differently is the statement of the Rev. F. B. Meyer that "God's plough is always at work turning down the upper crust." This is delicious in these democratic days, for "upper crust" is often used as a slang term for the aristocracy.

Canon Partridge, Secretary of the Church of England Central Board of Finance, says that "a penny a day from every communicant of the Church would be sufficient to solve her financial difficulties." What a fall is here, my countrymen! A Canon of the Church cadging for pennies. And yet there is less danger in taking the thousands of the rich than the pennies of the poor.

The Liberal Jewish section in London have thrown open the ministry to women on the same basis as men. "Pro-digious!" as old Dominie Sampson puts it.

Six archbishops and 270 bishops will attend the forthcoming Lambeth Conference in June. There are also 25,000 clergymen of the Church of England. Yet Englishmen would be surprised if they were told that they were priest-ridden.

<sup>1</sup> Published anonymously in 1695. Locke (1632-1704) was heterodox in a mild sort of way.

Mr. Mornay Williams says that the United States "has prohibition, yet is sending liquor all over the world. This is not Christian." It strikes us as being characteristically Christian. For example: In the last Christian row, thirteen millions of young men were slaughtered. Yet the Christian Bible declares definitely, "Thou shalt not kill."

There is no mistake as to the comfort that religion is able to offer people. Here is Bishop Taylor Smith, Chaplain to the Forces, pointing out that when we worry about the housing question we should remember that even in the time of Jesus there was the same trouble. But, says the Bishop, "It will finish in heaven. 'In my father's house are many mansions.' You who are inconvenienced here will not be inconvenienced there." Now, it is very soothing to the family that is turned out into the street to learn that when they get to the New Jerusalem there will be a plentiful supply of empty houses. We say empty ones, because if folk are blessed with taste they will be in no hurry to join the company of those who have left earth in the full confidence that they will go to heaven.

An advertisement of a Labour Demonstration at Southend-on-Sea appealed to "Men, Women, Clerical, &c." That was almost as unkind as the jest describing adult mankind as "men, women, and priests."

Speaking at the Free Church Council, the Rev. Dr. Selbie declared that "we were a Pagan nation." Yet Great Britain and Ireland have 50,000 parsons, a Bench of Bishops, and the Christian fetish-book in the schools.

The clergy must have stopped "starving" for a time, otherwise the following paragraph from a London daily paper would be ridiculous: "There is such a crowd of candidates to train for the Nonconformist ministry that many colleges are full, and the authorities will be able to fill next year's vacancies several times over."

The question of having "women confessors" in the High Anglican Churches is to be discussed at the Lambeth Conference. If this idea is carried out, it should add a new terror to the Christian life.

The *Daily Sketch* suggests the establishment of a school for parsons so that they might be educated in some of the things they talk about. The suggestion is monstrous, and an insult to an established order. Since when has it become necessary for a parson to know about a subject in order to talk about it? Anyone can talk about a subject if they know all about it, it is proof of something higher to talk about it while knowing nothing of it. What on earth does a parson know, or can know, about God, heaven, or hell, angels, or devils? And yet he exists mainly to talk about these things. We are evidently living in a time of revolution.

Bolshevism in the House of Lords! What is the world coming to! On the discussion of Lord Buckmaster's Divorce Bill, the Lord Chancellor said that the principle of the indissolubility of marriage disappeared from our institutions 300 years ago, and those who attempt to take the other view "are but the whisperings of the abandoned superstitions of the Middle Ages." This is more than most people in the House of Commons would dare to say. But many times during the past five years the House of Lords proved itself to be much better guardians of public liberty and common sense than did the House of Commons. That institution seems to be sinking lower and lower.

The Rev. the Hon. W. Talbot Rice, M.A., Vicar of St. Paul's, Onslow Square, London, has a shockingly poor opinion of his Lord and Master, the Prince of Peace. Preaching in St. Paul's Cathedral the other day, he said: "It is doubtful whether we, as a nation, with all our efforts, shall

ever have anything but an armed peace." He may be right; but what a humiliating confession for a minister of the God of love and peace to make.

The unconscious humour of some pious folk make delightful reading. In a life of Bishop Lefroy, a letter is quoted, which reads: "May God protect you; and please keep this camphor constantly on your person."

Father Barette, a fashionable Parisian preacher, has, according to the newspapers, "declared war upon the tango and the fox-trot." It should be a welcome change after fighting an imaginary devil.

What extraordinary ideas the clergy have! Bishop Well-ton, referring to a colonial ecclesiastic, says "his life is one of hardship, and the salary of his bishopric is, I think, only some £500 a year." Evidently, the dear Bishop imagines that ten pounds weekly is below the poverty line.

Dr. Chavasse, Bishop of Liverpool, in whose diocese the Rev. G. Vale Owen's parish is situated, has criticized Spiritualism in a sermon. A few generations ago, the Bishop would have ordered Vale Owen's funeral, and seen that the corpse was ready, but the Church cannot do such things nowadays.

"Enemy children" was a phrase we observed in connection with a newspaper paragraph on the starving babies of Central Europe, and we have observed the expression often since the Armistice. The expression is striking enough to give one pause, and, because of the mentality it reveals, worthy of study. It reveals a suppressed savagery that, to the psycho-analyst, is indicative of much that threatens social development. During the War we learned to tolerate such ebullitions of primitive ferocity for the sake of carrying on the War. But to find it used now is to give one a shock. Imagine talking of children, even babies, as *enemies!* Of course, it would be said that what is meant is the children of our enemies; but putting on one side that the *people* with whom we were at war were only technically enemies, made so by a declaration of war, and individually were no more our enemies than we were theirs, the persistence of the expression is proof of how little it takes to bring us back to the savage, first in thought and then in deed.

The frightful sufferings of the clergy do not shorten their lives. The Bishops of Carlisle and Ripon are retiring at the age of seventy-three. The Bishop of Durham, who is seventy-nine, is still following his Saviour on a Cabinet Minister's salary.

The spring is generally verdant, but it is not so green as "Dr. Spring," who, writing in the *Christian Globe*, declares that he had "never known a sceptic to die in peace, nor a believer to die in despair." Perhaps "Dr. Spring" has never met a real Freethinker. In which case he is making rare fun of the readers of the *Christian Globe*.

Referring to an Indian evangelist, the Bishop of London said that the coloured brother had "slept with leopards and snakes, and had been poisoned" without harm. What a "turn" he would make at the music-halls!

"Man is always a fighting animal," states the Rev. F. B. Meyer. Remembering the record of the clergy in the War, this implies that parsons are not men.

The Gloomy Dean of Saint Paul's says that "women who decorate themselves with plumage are repulsive objects." Perhaps Dr. Inge prefers the millinery used by the Bishop of London and other High Church ecclesiastics.

The Bishop of Peterborough would like the Christian Churches "to act on the fact that the whole earth was their

parish." Couldn't the Bishop include the solar system whilst he is on the job? —

The Pope has selected his burial-place at St. Peter's Cathedral, Rome. He should have selected another tomb for the Christian Superstition. —

One of our readers who heard us lecture recently on this aspect of affairs writes us that we seem to lack faith in the restraining power of civilized ideas. We should not put it that way; we should prefer to put it that we have a very lively sense of the small hold that civilized ideas have on people in relation to uncivilized ones. Nor is that to be wondered at. Civilization is but a thing of yesterday when compared to the age of savagery. Our savage ideas and feelings are not lost; they are only buried or suppressed, and are not only liable to a revival in primitive forms, but are continually finding expression in a more or less disguised manner. We do not so often to-day speak of hatred of the outsider; we express ourselves under the more attractive form of love of our own country; but it is most often the same thing. Not all the expressed and loudly voiced "patriotism" of the War period prevented advantage being taken of the community wherever possible. The predatory appetite was operative, but disguised under various names. And one of the functions of our current religion has been always to supply this ethical disguise for the operation of some of the most unlovely aspects of human nature. That is why the destruction of religious ideas is of such pressing importance to all clear-minded social reformers. —

Christians do not lay much stress on the value of prayer nowadays. Following the recent burglary at St. George's Cathedral, Southwark, the clergy are employing an armed guard to protect the sacred building. Fancy the brave guards shouldering their coppersticks to assist Omnipotence. —

Our blessed Saviour enjoined his disciples not to lay up treasure on earth. Hence we tremble for the fate of the Rev. W. Scratton, of Balby, Northants, who left £13,088 when he joined his Maker in the skies. The late Rev. F. W. Thurlow, of Kensington, who left £15,559, is in the same awful plight —

The Rev. Dr. Forsyth, Principal of Hackney Theological College, says the old ideals of the Free Churches are in "cold storage." Including "hell," we presume. —

A "Labour Service" was announced at Southwark Cathedral for April the second. It should have been the first of April. "All Fools' Day" would have been so much more appropriate. —

Dr. Henry Wace, the aged Dean of Canterbury, who was injured recently in a street accident, was years ago a stout defender of Orthodoxy. A London newspaper says that he "combined with Gladstone to overthrow Huxley" in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century* magazine. Unfortunately for the newspaper man, it was not Huxley who was "knocked out" in that historic contest. —

*Apropos* of the reliance which some people place upon testimony, Mr. Kennedy Jones tells the following in his *Fleet Street and Downing Street*. Unknown to most of the people present a quarrel was arranged between two eminent men at a meeting of scientists. Under pretence of obtaining legal evidence, everyone present was asked to write an account of what had happened. The meeting was composed of doctors, jurists, and psychologists, but only one report contained less than 20 per cent. of errors, thirteen had 50 per cent. and thirty-four had invented between 10 and 15 per cent. of details. And yet we find people solemnly citing as indisputable evidence the testimony of certain people as to what occurs in a gathering of Spiritualists as though the testimony was beyond question. —

At St. Anne's Church, Soho, recently, the "lessons" were read by Mr. Cyril Maude, the actor, and Mr. Charles Coborn, the famous singer of "Two Lovely Black Eyes." Oh, the divine comedy! —

The Rev. H. L. Marsh, Vicar of Mansfield, thinks it would be a good thing to hold instruction classes for courting couples. Presumably, the Vicar will occupy the chair. —

A man at Tipton, Staffordshire, has attended church for forty-five years with only five absences. It should be added that he was the organ-blower. —

An Acton parson has offered the use of the parish hall for boxing contests. In his search for attractions, the vicar is boxing the compass. —

Mr. Lansbury says that Lenin is an Agnostic. We assure Mr. Lansbury that he is mistaken. Lenin, whatever be his qualities, is hardly English enough to call himself that. He is an Atheist. Outside these islands Agnosticism has but a precarious existence, and has its being only as an importation. —

From the *Los Angeles Examiner* of March 3, we see that a grandson of the late General Booth has been charged with a "cheque fraud"—that is issuing a cheque for sixty-five dollars with intent to defraud. Booth is pastor of the Faith Church Interdenominational. We presume that this case will not be cited as proof of the elevating influence of a Christian environment. —

Mr. H. G. Wells, writing on the rise of Christianity in *The Outline of History*, says, "the garments of ritual and symbol and formula that Christianity has won, and still in many countries wears to this day, were certainly woven in the cult and temples of Jupiter, Serapis, and Isis." The expression "in many countries" is excellent—for Mr. Wells. —

## How You Can Help.

GET your newsagent to display a copy of this journal in a prominent position.

Show or hand your own copy of the paper to a friend who is not acquainted with it. It is surprising the number of new readers that can be made in this way.

If you do not file your copy, leave it in train or tram-car when read.

Send us on the name of anyone to whom you think that specimen copies of the *Freethinker* would be acceptable. We will see that they get them all right.

Send us any suggestions you have to offer as to the way in which our circulation may be increased. —

## FAMILY LIKENESS AND DIFFERENCE.

Family likeness has often a deep sadness in it. Nature, that great tragic dramatist, knits us together by bone and muscle, and divides us by the subtler web of our brains; blends yearning and repulsion; and ties us by our heart strings to the beings that jar us at every movement. We hear a voice with the very cadence of our own uttering the thoughts we despise; we see eyes—ah! so like our mother's—averted from us in cold alienation; and our last darling child startles us with the air and the gestures of the sister we parted from in bitterness long years ago. The father to whom we owe our best heritage—the mechanical instinct, the keen sensibility to harmony, the unconscious skill of the modelling hand—galls us, and puts us to shame by his daily errors; the long-lost mother, whose face we begin to see in the glass as our own wrinkles come, once fretted our young souls with her anxious humours and irrational persistence.

—George Eliot, "Adam Bede."



**C. Cohen's Lecture Engagements.**

April 11, Stratford Town Hall; April 18, Swansea: April 25, Mardy.

**To Correspondents.**

- T. VERNON.—Sorry that we are unable to print your reply to Mr. Harding, but the pressure on our space is very great just now. The *Freethinker* does not appear to be nearly large enough.
- H. JAMES.—We are always ready to quote special terms for all who wish to purchase quantities of pamphlets for distribution.
- M. GUNN.—Received with thanks. Will try and use a portion of your MSS. as at early a date as is possible.
- "S."—We do not know why the *Freethinker* is the only paper that says anything against the methods of the Salvation Army nowadays, unless it is that the "Army" is, in a sense, socially respectable, and that an attack might offend those who mistake sloppy sentiment for thinking. The "Army" is exactly what it was when we helped in the exposure some years ago, and its sociological consequences are quite as bad now as then.
- E. H. BASS.—(1) You are quite mistaken in your conclusions. In pointing out faults, one cannot justly be credited with an "anti-English bias," and our comments applied far more to those responsible for the conduct of affairs than to the British people. (2) There is a vital distinction between civil marriage as it exists in Russia and France and in this country. In both the former places it is obligatory. In this country it is only permissive. Our comment on the "development" of this country had obvious regard to this fact. And in this respect we regard both France and Russia as ahead of this country.
- C. E. GORIAN.—We quite appreciate your taste. The quotation you enclose is much older than Ingersoll; it belongs to the eighteenth century—we think to Laurence Sterne.
- D. RICHARDS.—Your copy of the paper was sent as usual. It must have gone astray, but we are sending another for the missing date.
- F. LESSELLS.—Crowded out. Shall appear next week.
- W. LEE.—Useful next week for "Acid Drops." There is nothing quite so unclean as "Christian purity."
- S. HOLMAN.—Thanks. Next week.
- The Secular Society, Limited, office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.*
- The National Secular Society's office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.*
- When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, giving as long notice as possible.*
- Lecture Notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4, by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.*
- Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4, and not to the Editor.*
- All Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed "London, City and Midland Bank, Clerkenwell Branch."*
- Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.*
- Friends who send us newspapers would enhance the favour by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.*
- The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office to any part of the world, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One year, 15s.; half year, 7s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 9d.*

**Sugar Plums.**

Next week we commence the publication of the Glasgow discussion between Mr. Cohen and Mr. H. Leaf. We hope that all who desire extra copies have placed their orders. This will prevent disappointment, and will enable us to fix our printing order with greater accuracy. It is a capital opportunity for introducing the paper to new readers.

To-day (April 11) Mr. Cohen lectures in the Stratford Town Hall on "Do the Dead Live?" The subject seems very much to the fore just now, and we expect that it will attract a large audience. Admission is free, but there will be the usual collection. Stratford Town Hall is easily reached by bus, tram, or train.

We have several new publications from Messrs. Watts and Co., some of which we hope to notice in the near future. Of these we may draw special attention to Mr. J. M. Robertson's *Short History of Morals*—short only in relation to the subject, as it forms a large volume of nearly 500 pages—price 18s. net. This is a work that cannot be dismissed in a paragraph, and must wait for more extended notice. There is a new edition of Mr. C. E. Hooper's *Common Sense and the Rudiments of Philosophy* (pp. 130, 4s. 6d. net), which is a successful attempt to bring the essentials of philosophical enquiry within the ken of the average individual. Mr. Hooper's book is to be commended as an attempt to explain what the subject of dispute is about, and to lay down his own conclusions rather than to make a parade of other people's opinions side by side with his own comments, which is so often the mark of mental incapacity, and is likely to merely dazzle the reader with a parade of learning. Most men and women want to know what the subject is all about, and not a catalogue of every writer's opinions concerning it. These will read Mr. Hooper's book with with pleasure and profit.

The Rationalist Press issues four new pamphlets intended for the work of popular propaganda, at the uniform price of twopence. Mr. McCabe writes very forcefully on *Does Democracy Need Religion?* and there is no doubt as to the reply. Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner is responsible for one on *Belief, Make-Belief, and Unbelief*; Mr. A. G. Whyte furnishes a topical essay on *The Great Ghost Illusion*; and Mr. C. T. Gorbam provides a very useful and informing statement of *The Truth About the Bible and Christianity*. The whole form four useful pamphlets, and we hope they will do the work they are intended to do.

Mr. A. B. Moss lectures to-day (April 11) in the Trade Union Hall, 30 Brixton Road, at 7. His subject is "Free-thought and Reconstruction." We hope that all our South London readers will do their best to see that the hall is well filled. The hall is quite close to Kennington Oval Tube Station.

A Social and Dance will be given by the Manchester Branch at the Co-operative Hall, Downing Street, Ardwick, Manchester, on Saturday, April 10. The function will commence at 6.30, and refreshments will be served. At 3 o'clock, in the same hall, on the same date, the annual meeting of the Branch will be held. It is requested that all members make a special effort to attend, as business of great importance will be discussed.

*Poems from Beyond*, by Reddie Mallet (Watts & Co.; 3s. 6d. net), is quite thoughtfully described by the publishers, presumably for the benefit of the tired and not too intelligent reviewer, as the "Work of a Gifted Poet." The charming eulogy on the dust-cover is supplemented by a paragraph of subtle and discriminating criticism, which really leaves nothing for us to say. We cannot do better than quote the words of our critic, in whom we see a potential Arnold—or, shall we say, a Hamilton Fyfe? Mr. Mallet, we are assured,

presents to us the experiences and cogitations of one who is supposed to have passed from this bewildering plane to the vastness of the Afterworld. He displays deep insight from his novel standpoint; and, while aiming many a well-directed shaft at our conventional weaknesses, he commands a wide and healthy view of human destiny, and of the way in which true progress lies. His language is conversational and clear, often sparkling with an individual vein of humour; and his message, if it be touched with irony here and there, is uplifting in its inspiration. It is an interesting volume, by reason of its warm humanity, and it will leave an impression because of its originality, power, and truthfulness.

Frankly, we do not quite see eye to eye with our critic; but that may be our misfortune. We find his verse fluent and commonplace alike in rhythm and sentiment. His heart, of course, may be in the right place, but fine poetry is something more than mere emotion; it is emotion raised to a higher power by art.

Philosophy can add to our happiness in no other manner but by diminishing our misery.—*Goldsmith*.

## Tricks of the Trade.

THE Pious Editor is to be met with everywhere. His judgments concerning the moral fibre of the people are often remarkable. He fears to publish anything in which his sensitive spiritual nose fails to detect the odour of sanctity, lest the public morals should be "totally subverted" by the untimely disclosure of some scientific fact established half a century ago. It is he who, by the suppression of all contrary expressions of opinion in his journal, creates the impression of a unanimous, satisfied, and orthodox public opinion. Such are his functions in the realm of journalism; but he has also an important task to perform in the editing of the less orthodox of the world's classics. In this he employs two methods. He will either prove that the author was a profligate and a brute, as he could not fail to be with his unchristian opinions; or, granting his good qualities, he will prove that the author, though occasionally in his younger days expressing himself carelessly on religious matters, was essentially, at heart, and with every year increasingly, a Christian, a Theist, or a "Mystic." It is rather amusing when both methods happen to be adopted in dealing with the same author, as has frequently occurred. The treatment of Shelley by his editors is a case in point; and the object of this article is to expose one such piece of tampering with our greatest Atheist singer.

I possess two editions of Shelley. The first (Finch, Pooley & Co.) has a memoir of the poet, the tenour of which can be judged by the following tit-bits:—

These harmless eccentricities were, however, destined to be followed by much more objectionable developments.....He embraced the wildest dogmas of the day, and actually published a pamphlet entitled *The Necessity of Atheism*.....He had an illegitimate son by Mary Godwin; he had written a poem wholly against Christianity; therefore we think that the law rightly adjudged the guardianship of the children to wiser hands than Shelley's.

These wiser hands, be it remembered, were those of a clergyman, to whom the children of the Atheist poet were delivered to be "educated"!

The other edition is one of the excellent "Everyman" series, and the editor in this case is Mr. A. H. Koszul. Mr. Koszul is, I believe, a Shelley enthusiast, and author of a concordance of Shelley's works. None the less, although perfectly fair in his estimate of Shelley's character, he is guilty of a grave misrepresentation in this Introduction. This is what he says:—

He has led us far from the "There is no God!" of *Queen Mab* to the awe-stricken answers of Demogorgon in *Prometheus* (ii., 4).

Who made the living world?

God.

Who made all  
That it contains; thought, passion, reason, will,  
Imagination?

God, Almighty God!

The inference here is clearly that Shelley advanced from his early Atheistic position to a clearly Theistic one in his highest production. But look what a difference, when the passage is quoted in full!

*Asia*: And who made terror, madness, crime, remorse,  
Which from the links of the great chain of things  
To every thought within the mind of man  
Sway and drag heavily, and each one reels  
Under the load towards the pit of death;  
Abandoned hope, and love that turns to hate;  
And self-contempt, bitterer to drink than blood;  
Pain, whose unheeded and familiar speech  
Is howling, and keen shrieks, day after day;  
And hell, or the sharp fear of hell?

*Demogorgon*.

He reigns

*Asia*: • Utter his name: a world pining in pain  
Asks but his name; curses shall drag him down!

Now, lest anyone should still find it possible, after reading that passage, to believe that Shelley regarded as a reality the existence of this monstrous God, let me quote the most admirable and lucid criticism of the *Prometheus* which I have yet seen:—

The year 1819 produced the sublime ideal drama *Prometheus Unbound*, which we have no hesitation in calling his masterpiece. It embodies, in forms of surpassing imagination and beauty, Shelley's deepest and most daring conceptions. Prometheus, the human mind, has invested with the powers proper to himself Jupiter, the God of Heaven, who thereupon chains and torments Prometheus and oppresses mankind; in other words, the anthropomorphic God of religion is a creation of the human mind, and both the mind of man and man himself are enslaved so long as this God exercises his delegated but non-absolute power. Prometheus, who is of old wedded to Asia, or nature, protests against and anathematizes the usurper enthroned by himself. At last the anathema takes effect. Eternity, Demogorgon, dismisses Jupiter to unending nothingness. Prometheus is at once unbound, the human mind is free; man is reunited to his spouse nature, and the world of man passes from its thralldom, and its degradation to limitless progression, moral and natural. To invent *Prometheus Unbound* was to be the poet of the future.

It may surprise those who do not recognize this passage to learn that it is taken, not from a *Freethinker* leading article, but from that most august and unimpeachable authority, the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

H. TRUCKELL.

## Spiritualism.

### VIII.

#### AUTOMATIC WRITING.—I.

By automatic writing is meant script produced unconsciously or involuntarily, although the writer may be to all appearances in his normal condition. The hand writes, but the sifter plays no conscious part in its direction. In most cases the writer does not know what is being written, and the results are often better if his attention is directed to other matters whilst the script is being produced. Planchette, the Ouija Board, and similar contrivances are merely pieces of mechanical apparatus which assist in the process of automatic writing, and have no mysterious powers of their own, as some people are apt erroneously to suppose. The fact that a person's hand is able to write out long messages, often of an edifying character to those religiously disposed, and purporting to come from some deceased individual, has led uneducated people to take the communicants at their face value, and to believe that the hand is for the moment controlled by a discarnate entity. Taken broadly this is the spiritistic explanation of automatic writing, but it is not the view held by the great majority of experienced psychologists, who deem it not only erroneous, but also mischievous. Before we pass on to illustrate the psychological point of view, it will be well if we try and get some sort of idea as to what we mean when we speak of the "subconscious." The confusion as to the precise meaning of this term is very general, and is easily accounted for by the fact that its signification varies in different countries. According to the American view, the subconscious can be divided into distinct classes (a) the *unconscious* or neutral dispositions and processes, and (b) *conscious*, which com-

prises actual subconscious ideas which do not enter the conscious sufficiently for the percipient to become aware of them. The *subliminal consciousness* of F. W. H. Myers is slightly similar to the American idea of the subconscious, although it differs in many important details, its chief exponent pointing out by many striking analogies how our supraliminal consciousness constitutes but a very small part of our entire being. Beneath the threshold of our conscious life lies hidden, but none the less intensely alive, another life consisting, according to Myers of various faculties which are now no longer in use. Another theory which in modified forms is now held by the bulk of modern psychologists is that the subconscious mind consists mainly of dissociated ideas and wishes, together with those mental happenings which the conscious mind has itself forgotten. It is in this connection that the work of Prof. Freud is especially valuable. Although we cannot enter here into a discussion of the principles underlying the practice of psychoanalysis, it is as well to point out how, through the special form of analysis associated with the Freudian method, the contents of the subconscious are tapped, and the interpretation of the dream life becomes a possibility. In man's struggle against the physical and intellectual conditions of modern civilization, many of the primitive desires and wishes which still exist within him have to be repressed, and then, even if they are forgotten by the conscious mind, they still make their presence felt in various symbolic forms.

Now, if we analyse any specimen of ordinary automatic writing, it is found to contain to a considerable extent references to, and memories of, events which happened in the forgotten past of the sitter's life, and thus seems clearly a part of the writer's own subconscious mind. There are some striking examples of this recorded, and I propose selecting a specimen for my readers' consideration which Mr. Dickinson kindly contributed to the *Journal of the S.P.R.* in 1911. The case is especially interesting, since it was the automatic writing which gave the key to the apparent mystery.

A young woman of about 25 years of age, whom we will call Miss C., was accustomed, as is the case with many mediums, to go into trance state and become "controlled" by the "spirit" of a deceased person. On one occasion a "spirit" spoke through her who purported to be an individual who had lived about the time of Richard II., and many details were given of a genealogical and historical character, which on research were found to be correct, but of which Miss C. appeared to be utterly ignorant. Through automatic writing it was, however, discovered that the information was to be found in a certain book entitled *The Countess Maud*, and it later transpired that this book had been read aloud to Miss C. by her aunt *fourteen years previously*. So long, indeed, was the interval between the time that it was first read and the time that it was reproduced through trance, that neither Miss C. nor her aunt could even so much as remember the historical period with which the book was dealing. All the details, however, were retained in Miss C.'s subconscious mind, and as we have seen were later reproduced by a non-existent "spirit." The same thing has constantly been noticed by other automatic writers who take the trouble to investigate their results, and there seems to be absolutely no doubt that in many cases the content of the automatic script

does reveal the substance, and often the detail of long-forgotten memories and repressed wishes and desires. This being so, the hypothesis put forward by the spiritists, namely, that in automatic writing and trance speaking, the medium is controlled by a spirit, can no longer be entertained, and a great number of more intelligent psychical researchers who believe in the spiritist theory are willing to admit that, in many cases, automatic writing is actually the product of the medium's own faculties, and has no connection with discarnate intelligences. But for those who know nothing of abnormal psychology, and who, ignorant and uneducated, accept the spiritistic theory without question, it can readily be understood how dangerous such practices as writing with a Planchette might easily become. In some cases the communications are so obviously untrue that the sitter is disgusted and gives the writing up almost at once, but in others, especially in neurotic subjects, it is continued with undoubtedly harmful results to their mental equilibrium. They gradually become a prey to a sort of writing mania, and many cases are on record in which the desire to write has been so insistent that the victim is obliged to get up in the middle of the night to satisfy the morbid craving. Some persons obtain communications of an obscene character, often containing words and phrases which they declare they never heard of until they saw them in the script. Believing that a spirit is controlling their hand, they become nervous, but the fascination is too great, the writing is continued, the communications grow worse, and they jump to the conclusion that they are possessed by a demon. This often marks the beginning of the end, and other symptoms begin to appear. The communications, which up till now have been received through the hand, commence to be heard; voices are continually audible to the wretched sufferer, which often abuse and taunt him, and sometimes advise him to commit suicide. In a few cases he does so, and thus his misery ceases; but in others he still drags on a forlorn existence, either looked after in an asylum or by his relatives. To all intents and purposes he is now insane, the cause of his malady being practically identical with that at the basis of common religious mania. Ignorant and credulous, he has believed the rubbish that his spiritual pastors and masters have imparted to him, and now he is paying the full penalty. How modern psychology explains these cases of "possession" we shall see in a later article, and next week, if space allows, I shall give my readers an account of an almost classic case of a "deceiving spirit."

One of the most interesting cases of automatic writing in which the sitter obtained communications from a person who declared himself dead, although he was really alive, is that usually known as the case of Mme. Dupond. The lady in question, who at the time that the phenomena took place was 45 years of age, was well educated and of a religious and philosophical turn of mind. Although she herself had had no spiritualistic experiences prior to the automatic writing about to be considered, her family show slight inclinations in that direction, and it is probable that she inherited at least a taint of the mediumistic faculty. In 1881 she became interested in the phenomena of spiritualism, and sat in several *séances* for table movements, without, however, obtaining any very striking results. Soon after this she began to try automatic writing, and after eight days

she obtained the names of relatives and friends who had previously died. The messages received were of a religious or philosophical nature, and had nothing particularly remarkable about them. But three days afterwards, whilst engaged in writing, her pencil, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, wrote down the name of a certain M. Rodolphe . . . a young French gentleman with whom she was acquainted, and who had recently entered a religious order in Italy. Not having heard that he had died, she was profoundly struck by this occurrence, but her pencil rapidly proceeded to confirm this sad piece of news. "I am Rodolphe," it wrote; "I died yesterday at 11 p.m. You must believe what I say to you. I am happy and have completed my probation." The communicator then went on to mention his illness and death, saying that Mme. Dupond was much in his thoughts, and that he was very happy because her father had shown him how communications could be set up with the terrestrial sphere. After her first period of surprise was over, Mme. Dupond could hardly help crediting the story, and began to look upon the occurrence as a proof of spiritism, especially as the communications continued for almost a week after the first was received. But on April 30th, six days after her pencil had first traced his name, a letter from Rodolphe himself arrived, writing in his usual strain, and apparently enjoying excellent health. This circumstance so discouraged Mme. Dupond that, although she never lost her interest in spiritualism, she never again attempted to write automatically or to indulge in other forms of practical mediumship.

Thanks to the information which Mme. Dupond was able to furnish, Prof. Flournoy succeeded in analysing a great part of the case, and explained how these deceptive communications originated. It appears that during the spring, before Mme. Dupond commenced automatism, she first met Rodolphe in Italy, and their acquaintance soon ripened into an intimate and permanent friendship. Herself a Protestant, Mme. Dupond was grieved at his firm adherence to the Catholic faith, and she did all in her power to convert him to her way of thinking. With feeling bordering almost upon the maternal, she believed that his attainments would fit him for a brilliant worldly career, whilst he, on his part, mystical and spiritual in outlook, endeavoured to indicate to her the mundane character of the Protestant persuasion. Both, however, failed in their attempts at proselytism, and Rodolphe soon fell under the influence of an Italian preacher, later entering a monastic order. Mme. Dupond was at first somewhat grieved at the course affairs had taken, but managed to console herself by thinking that differences of creed did not wholly separate true believers, the Church Invisible being large enough to include all those who served God faithfully and with their whole hearts. The fact of Rodolphe entering a religious order did not cause any immediate cessation in their mutual correspondence, a letter from the young man being expected at the time that the automatic writing first began to take place.

Now, how are we to account for this extraordinary case? The spiritualist, always ready to invent an ingenious hypothesis, and usually very unwilling to give up his pet theory of "spirits," immediately jumps to the conclusion that some deceiving, lying entity is at work, who impersonates Rodolphe for the purpose of making Mme. Dupond miserable.

Such phenomena are simple to the seasoned spiritualist. If the communications purport to come from persons who are, as a matter of fact, dead, then, of course, spirits are at work; but if it is subsequently discovered that the persons are still living, then bad spirits are impersonating them. Fortunately, the psychologist is too well acquainted with these matters to be obliged to assume the agency of spirits until every other hypothesis is found wanting. In the case of Mme. Dupond the problem is not really so profoundly difficult. After having obtained messages for some time from deceased relatives, it is quite natural that she would wish to see the number of her spirit communicators increase. Deep down in her heart was buried a tender solicitude for Rodolphe, and the advent of a sudden cold snap in the weather might easily have made her a little nervous as to his health, particularly as she knew that his chest was weak, and she had not received a letter from him for some time. The final conversion of Rodolphe was also, as we have seen, a disappointment to her, and she had only managed to comfort herself by the reflection that in Heaven, or in the invisible Church on earth, such differences as those which separated them were not really fundamental. Thus within her subconscious mind the little drama was being worked out, and a death such as she herself would have thought worthy of her friend, became part of the fertile romance. Whether Mme. Dupond did actually desire the death of Rodolphe is not certain; but the evidence rather points to the assumption that such a feeling was present in her subconscious mind, and an analysis of her dream life would probably have made this quite clear. However that may be, it does not seem really necessary to adopt the theory of deceiving spirits in spite of offending the susceptibilities of spiritualists on the one hand and Christians on the other. In the first case such phenomena as those outlined above are considered to be proof of mischievous entities; as, for example, the waggish Diakka, whilst in the latter such lying communications are clearly from Satan, and prove the diabolic nature of modern spiritualism. As presumably the sportive entities can impersonate a dead person as well as a living one, it is a little difficult to see where the comfort of such occult communications is to be found, but we must remember that religious people generally are not willing to recognise difficulties of this kind. Even if the question was put to them it is perfectly certain that they would have a ready answer, just as they dispose of difficulties about the conditions of Summerland. It has often been noticed that what is chiefly remarkable in spiritualists is the want of a due sense of proportion and quite an extraordinary lack of humour. I remember one instance of this which is worth quoting. In his zeal to prove that Summerland is a place where age and ugliness is not, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle explained to an audience at the City Temple the other day that old age was brought on, to a certain extent, by the presence of lime in the human body. Then, with an ecstatic expression upon his face, he solemnly assured his credulous congregation, in referring to Heaven, that "*there is no lime there.*" I was unable to refrain from laughing at this remark, which brought down upon my head the reproofs of several persons seated around me; but the fact that such a statement can be received without any appreciation of its inherent humour is a noteworthy fact in connection with the

psychology of the spiritualist. Next week, if space permits, I shall try and give my readers an idea of what modern investigators mean by "dissociation," and then we shall be able to understand more clearly the psychological interpretation of automatic writing and trance speaking.

E. J. D.

(To be continued.)

## V. D.

### A DIALOGUE.

[The following dialogue represents the substance of an actual conversation between one of the medical officials and a number of Army Chaplains. We believe that the article will commend itself to all our readers.—ED ]

*Army Medical Officer.*—Of all the contagious diseases, this is the worst. The damage it inflicts on the race is enormous. It takes an appalling toll of infant life, and it rivals tuberculosis as a cause of incapacity and suffering. A whole crop of afflictions spring from it—insanity, paralysis, aneurism, apoplexy, blindness. It is held by some authorities to be the principal cause of nearly all disease and death prior to senility. And after every great war it spreads like a plague. My method is prophylactic. Prevention is better than cure, and in this case much easier.

*Army Chaplain.*—But is it not better to prevent sin than the consequences of sin?

*A. M. O.*—Assuredly; and if you can only keep men from sinning, the need to protect them against the consequences will not arise. But can you? You have tried, for hundreds of years your Church has tried, and failed absolutely. Hence the need for other measures.

*A. C.*—Measures to secure a man beforehand against the penalties of transgression; measures which encourage sin. Your method—

*A. M. O.*—Has no more to do with sin than sewage-pipes; it is a measure of sanitation. In protecting the individual I am safeguarding the public. An infected person is a vehicle of disease, and a danger to all about him. He may poison the child he kisses, the friend who drinks from his cup, even though the friend be a priest. The penalties of sin! Do you know that half the victims of this infernal "penalty" are innocent of sin?

*A. C.*—It is terrible. I grieve for the innocent, but to spare the guilty.....

*A. M. O.*—Rather than spare the guilty you would damn the innocent. You would add murder to vengeance. Have you no ruth for the children, the helpless children? Tens of thousands are agonizing to-day; millions have perished miserably in the past.

*A. C.*—For the sins of the fathers, alas! To the third and fourth generation, says the law.

*A. M. O.*—My dear sir, there is no such law. The disease is never transmitted to the third generation. It is not a natural effect, a necessary consequence, of immorality, as you assume. If it were, most civilized communities would have perished, as few men are continent before marriage. The most immoral races in the world, the Polynesians, the Australians, the Andamanese, were free from disease until the higher races conveyed it to them—started to civilize and syphilize them. Now they are tending towards extinction. Considered as a punishment, disease is monstrous, as monstrous as the old Moslem plan of pouring boiling oil down the drunkard's throat to punish drunkenness. Besides, it is useless; it does not deter.

*A. C.*—Surely it deters some. If only a few are saved—

*A. M. O.*—A few who dodge the risk, the cold-blooded seducers of innocence—saved not from sin but the dangers of sin. For the rest, how little it deters its history shows. The fundamental fact to remember is that half the sufferers from this pitiless affliction, chiefly women and children, are not in any way responsible for their sufferings.

*A. C.*—I am deeply pained. Were I convinced that to lessen suffering would not increase sin.

*A. M. O.*—You trifle with tragedy. What are the sins you fear compared with the horrors you ignore? This vast flood of human suffering, this holocaust of human lives, the sins of all the ages would justify them. This massacre of the innocents. Do they realize their awful responsibility, they who would strike down the hand stretched out to save.....the least of these little ones?..... Do they know they are accessory to murder, murder most foul? It were better that a mill-stone were hanged about their neck.....

*A. C.*—You speak strongly.

*A. M. O.*—Disease is decimating the race and you prattle about retribution. The children perish and you palter with the question whether sin or suffering be the worse evil. I speak with the freedom of an old friend.

*A. C.*—You speak with knowledge. Perhaps I grasp its import slowly; it is new and strange. We need more light. I almost wish.....

*A. M. O.*—That the veil of make-believe which hides the truth in this country were torn asunder, and the naked horror bared to all eyes—is that your wish?

*A. C.*—We need more light. I think the truth, the whole truth, should be known.

*A. M. O.*—In a great country overseas a Government alive to the menace took the whole community into its confidence. The results of a searching investigation were handed to the daily Press for publication, and the Press was asked to publish the facts expurgated, and to call the disease by its proper name. The Press responded. Women helped in the work of enlightenment, and the clergy opened their pulpits to doctors willing to address their congregations on the subject. The urgency of protective measures was impressed on all. In this country—you know how every attempt to curb the evil in the past has been the signal for an outburst of moral hysteria. We are not a vocal crowd, we doctors; we can deal with the microbe—given a free hand we could put a stop to its ravages in less than a year; but we are ill-armed against its claimant defenders, the so-called "Purity" people. And now the plague is spreading. Four centuries ago, following war, it ravaged the world, striking down saint and sinner, invading hovel, palace, and presbytery. Must we fold helpless hands while history repeats itself? I appeal to your second thoughts, your riper judgment; if you cannot help in the great bond of redemption at least you will not hinder.

*A. C.*—At least, I will not hinder.

*A. M. O.*—That is all I ask. Thanks.

W. WAUDBY.

When Reason's voice,  
Loud as the voice of Nature, shall have waked  
The Nations, and mankind perceive that vice  
Is discord, war and misery; that virtue  
Is peace and happiness and harmony;  
When man's maturer nature shall disdain  
The playthings of its childhood; kingly glare  
Shall lose its power to dazzle; its authority  
Shall silently pass by; the gorgeous throne  
Shall stand unnoticed in the regal hall  
Fast falling to decay; whilst falsehood's trade  
Shall be as unprofitable as that of truth is now.

—Shelley.

## Correspondence.

## THE ETHICAL CODE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mr. Robert Harding in your issue of March 28 has set us between "the horns of a dilemma." He challenges us to show reason why we shouldn't declare ourselves as Anarchists or Muddle-heads, if we declare ourselves to be "Non-ethicists"; by which term I presume he means an acceptance of rules of life which tend, on the whole, to bring most happiness. He claims that governments flagrantly abuse a moral code, the breach of which is only permissible to the individual under circumstances of direst extremity. I would respectfully suggest that Mr. Harding is in a state of confusion owing to, at least, an apparent failure to fully appreciate the terms such as government, Parliament, etc., which he flings about so airily. Surely it is absurd to say that our modern elected Parliaments assume absolutism in a sense at all to be compared to the old-world idea of government. My understanding of the subject compels me to believe in government and ethics, even at the risk of being driven to resign my claim to sanity. I cannot estimate the length of my "yard-stick," it may not reach to infinity, its inches may be of a limited number, but I know that it is composed of reason and knowledge. It seems to me that Mr. Harding is wedded to the idea of "individualism," a term which I still love to dally with. I heard a Mr. Harding many years ago champion the claims of "individualism." I still sit at his feet; but I have lived much and, I hope, learnt a little during the interval. It may be true to say that our fight for liberty is against governmental law; but that truth should not blind us to the fact that law is needed to secure liberty. It appears that the first stone in the edifice of our "discredited" constitution, which provided for the liberty of the individual, was an act of law. The idea that liberty is secured by removing laws is not all the truth. Law is necessary to free the individual from the thralldom of the old customs. It would be interesting to see how religions have been great, in so far as they embodied Freethought and politics, and abolished law. But truth is an "arrant jade." I would suggest that the web which Mr. Harding has woven is of an exceeding flimsy texture.

J. FOTHERGILL.

## REVENGE OF INJURIES.

The fairest action of our human life  
Is scorning to revenge an injury;  
For who forgives without a further strife,  
His adversary's heart to him doth tie.  
And 'tis a firmer conquest, truly said,  
To win the heart, than overthrow the head.

If we a worthy enemy do find,  
To yield to worth it must be nobly done;  
But if of baser metal be his mind,  
In base revenge there is no honour won.  
Who would a worthy courage overthrow,  
And who would wrestle with a worthless foe?

A noble heart doth teach a virtuous scorn;  
To scorn to owe a duty overlong;  
To scorn to be for benefits forborne;  
To scorn to lie, to scorn to do a wrong;  
To scorn to bear an injury in mind;  
To scorn a free born heart slave-like to bind.

—Lady E. Carew.

Life is girt all round with a zodiac of sciences, the contributions of men who have perished to add their point of light to our sky.—Emerson.

The reason why the orthodox creeds have become unpopular is that all teach the dogma of eternal pain.—Ingersoll.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

## LONDON.

## INDOOR.

METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Johnson's Dancing Academy, 241 Marylebone Road, near Edgware Road): 8, Mr. J. J. Murphy, A Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Trade Union Hall, 30 Brixton Road, S.W., three minutes from Kennington Oval Tube Station and Kennington Gate): 7, Mr. A. B. Moss, "Freethought and Reconstruction."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C. 2): 11, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., "Poetry and Social Idealism."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Stratford Town Hall): 7, Mr. Chapman Cohen, "Do the Dead Live?"

## OUTDOOR.

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

## COUNTRY.

## INDOOR.

LEEDS SECULAR SOCIETY (Youngman's Rooms, 19 Lowerhead Row, Leeds): Every Sunday at 6.30.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Co-operative Small Hall, Downing Street): Saturday, April 10, at 3.30, Annual Meeting of Members, to be followed by a Social at 6 p.m.

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