

The

# FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

EDITED BY CHAPMAN COHEN · · · EDITOR 1881-1915 · G. W. FOOTE

Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper.

Vol. XL.—No. 36

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1920

PRICE THREEPENCE

## PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page.
<i>Man and the Social Forces.—The Editor</i> . . . . .	561
<i>On Attacking Christianity.—J. T. Lloyd</i> . . . . .	563
<i>Priests, Platitudes and Promises.—Mimnermus</i> . . . . .	564
<i>Science and the Occult.—W. Mann</i> . . . . .	565
<i>Bundling and Spirituality.—Theodore Schroeder</i> . . . . .	566
<i>The Priest Ridden Deaf.—L. A. Motler</i> . . . . .	570
<i>A Four Months' Experiment.—F. J. Gould</i> . . . . .	571
<i>A Story.—Ignotus</i> . . . . .	572
<i>Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc..</i>	

## Views and Opinions.

(Concluded from p. 546.)

### Man and the Social Forces.

A great deal of criticism has been directed against the conclusion of Buckle that improvement in the state of mankind has chiefly resulted from a development in the intellectual outlook. And yet when stated with the necessary understanding the generalisation is as sound as it may well be. The belief held in some quarters, and expressed in different forms, that the material environment is the active force which is ever urging to new mental development will not fit the facts, for, as we have seen, the environment to which human nature must adapt itself is mainly mental in character—that is, it is made up in an increasing measure of the products of man's mental life—and, as a consequence, the adaptation must be mental in form. The theory of the sentimental religionist that the evil in the world results from a defective moral nature and can only be cured by the appearance of a lofty one is equally wide of the mark. Soft heads have far more to do with the evil in the world than has hard hearts, and one of the standing difficulties of the orthodox moralist is, not the bad deeds of evil men, they explain themselves, but the evil that is done by "good" men, and often as a direct consequence of their "goodness." After all, the moral monster is a rarity; a distorted sense of justice, a wrong viewpoint, are far more potent conditions for the working of evil than the clear perception of wrong and the deliberate resolve to pursue it. Paradoxical as it may sound, the outlook would be far more hopeful than if it were otherwise. The world has always found it a matter of comparative ease to deal with its bad characters; it is the "good" ones that have been most difficult to handle.

\* \* \*

### A Condition of Right Action.

One may illustrate this from several points of view. First I may take the familiar case of religious persecution. On the ground of either moral conviction or moral conduct there was little to choose between Catholic and Protestant. Each was quite honest in his detestation of the persecution and the doctrines of the other, and it has often been noted, with surprise, that the men who administered the affairs of the Inquisition were not really bad men. Even the mass of the people were quite sincere in their conviction that in rooting out the heretic the Inquisitor was performing a public and a religious duty. It would, indeed, have been impossible to have maintained so brutal an institution in the face of a general conviction of its unrighteousness. In private life the men who could deliver over their fellows to the torture were not worse husbands, parents, or friends than were others. There was often little or no difference between torturer and tortured. The difference was mainly one of intellectual conviction, and given certain religious convictions persecution became a logical necessity. The moral output was poor because the intellectual outlook was wrong. We should realise this easily enough if we were only to rid ourselves of the delusion that human nature was fundamentally different five hundred or a thousand years ago from what it is to-day. The motives that animate men and women do not vary, it is their form and direction that change. And in the light of what we know of human nature to-day we may safely conclude that bad institutions flourished in the past for the same reason that they flourish to-day. People must be blind to their badness, and in any case it is the perception of their badness which leads ultimately to their abolition.

\* \* \*

### Points of View.

We may take as illustrating the same point the fact of crime. Against crime, as such, society is as set as ever, but our attitude towards the criminal has undergone a profound alteration. In this respect we have returned to the point of view of the ancient Greeks. Crime, said the best of the Greek thinkers, is the outcome of ignorance. To-day we put the same idea in another form. Crime, we say, is the outcome of an undeveloped nature, or of a degenerate one, or the play of defective social conditions on a susceptible organism. And our handling of the problem has become effective in proportion as we have learned to approach the subject from this new intellectual point of view. We may, indeed, put it generally by saying that improvement, even in morals, comes from a different way of looking at things. Common observation shows that people will go on, year after year, contemplating forms of brutality, without being in the slightest degree affected by their wrongness. Largely it is a question of familiarity. In the seventeenth century the people who could see nothing very wrong in burning

an old woman for supposed intercourse with the devil were outraged by the sight of young men and women singing "profane" songs on Sunday. And not so long ago in this country duels were fought by "gentlemen" under a sense of moral compulsion which only weakened when a changed point of view made apparent the absurdity of deciding the justice of a cause or the truth of a charge by determining which was the more proficient with sword or pistol. And even to-day the mass of people see nothing absurd in the existence of those larger duels fought by nations, in which we have manifested the same ideas, and where we have the added absurdity of maintaining a number of professional duelists ready to engage on a colossal contest whether they have any personal feeling in the fight or not. In all such cases the moral sense is improved by the growth of new ideas, by the impact of new and more accurate knowledge, leading to a revaluation of those things which are the subject of moral judgment. The question of whether men ought or ought not to be burned on account of their opinions concerning religion, was never one that could be settled by reference to the moral qualities of the disputants. It was wholly a question of acquiring a different point of view from which to examine the matter. Until that was done the whole power of the moral sense was on the side of the persecutor, and the motive for persecution was stronger as the moral sense of the persecutor was the more active. The better man the persecutor was the greater social danger he became. It was mental enlightenment that was needed, not intensified moral fervour.

\* \* \*

#### Ideas as Forces.

The question of social progress thus becomes in the main a matter of the impact of new ideas on old ones and leading to the formation of new mental groupings. A society shut in on itself is always comparatively unprogressive, and would be completely so were it not for the movement of ideas that takes place due to the existence of classes within the State. The more closely the history of civilisation is studied the more clearly this is seen. Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and modern civilisation show us this principle at work. It is plainly seen in the rise of modern Japan, where we have an ancient civilisation transformed through the impact of Western ideas. A fight of old ideas against new ones, a clashing of culture levels, a struggle to get old things looked at from a new point of view, these are the features that characterise all efforts after reform. Any given form of society persists because it is held together by a common life constituted by a common stock of ideas, customs, ideals, and beliefs. It is really this that makes each of us a member of a given society, Chinese, American, British, or Choctaw. There is no discriminating feature in what are called the economic needs of a people. The need for food, clothing, and shelter, are not even distinctively human. They are needs which man has in common with the animal world. The distinctive human group only arises with the emergence of a common psychical outfit. We see this even within a society, and in relation to certain specific groups. A man is never a member of a society of artists, doctors or lawyers by the payment of an annual subscription. He is that only when he becomes a genuine participant in the mental life of the group. And

every modification of the ideas and ideals of a group of people effects a change in the group structure. The Army, the Church, the Throne are only the material forms which express the psychic fact. And it is by way of attack and defence of the psychologic fact that social progress is effected.

\* \* \*

#### The Fight for Reform.

To do the Churches and kindred vested interests justice, it must be admitted that they have never lost sight of this fact. And it would have been better had others been equally alive to its importance. The Churches have never ceased to fight for the control of the organs that make for the formation of public opinion, and they have been only too successful in their efforts. At bottom the struggle for the control of the school is just this. In one sense it is untrue to say that the Churches have neglected education. On the contrary it is they who have attended to it, and others who have been blind to its importance. But the Churches have never lost sight of the fact that the educational influences which surround a human being in its earlier years are all-important in determining the part it shall play in social life. Whatever they may have taught they have shown by their conduct they were well aware that it was what men thought about things that was of vital importance. They have always opposed the introduction of new ideas and fought for the retention of old ones. This is not characteristic of the Churches alone, it applies to all forms of social control that resist improvement, and is an admission that once the power of traditional thought forms is broken their sway is gone. "Man is what he thinks," if not the whole truth, may be taken as at least nearer the truth than the once famous saying, "Man is what he eats." From the earliest forms of human group life the forms of the institutions which mould the life of each of us are determined by man's opinions about himself and the world. Everywhere history teaches the lesson that so long as opinion concerning these institutions remains unchanged reform is impossible. It is not, after all, the slave master that makes the slave, the truth is the other way about. As a member of a social group man is dominated by his ideas about himself and the world, and any clearly conceived movement of reform must take cognisance of that fact if it is to cherish a reasonable prospect of success.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

---

Certain biases, talents, executive skills, are special to each individual; but the high, contemplative, all-absorbing vision, the sense of Right and Wrong, is alike in all. Its attributes are self-existence, eternity, intuition and command. It is the mind of the mind. We belong to it, not it to us. It is in all men, and constitute them men. In bad men it is dormant, as health is in men entranced or drunken; but, however inoperative, it exists underneath whatever vices and errors. The extreme simplicity of this intuition embarrasses every attempt at analysis. We can only mark, one by one, the perfections which it combines in every act. It admits of no appeal, looks to no superior essence. It is the reason of things. The antagonist nature is the individual, formed into a finite body of exact dimensions, with appetites which take from everybody else what they appropriate to themselves, and would enlist the entire spiritual faculty of the individual, if it were possible, in catering for them. On the perpetual conflict between the dictate of this universal mind and the wishes and interests of the individual, the moral discipline of life is built.—Emerson.

## Oz Attacking Christianity.

Matthew Arnold, in the Preface to the popular edition of *Literature and Dogma*, declares that this famous book is not only not an attack upon Christianity, but "not even an attack upon the errors of popular Christianity." Then occurs the following remarkable passage:—

Those errors (of popular Christianity) are very open to attack. They are much attacked already, and in a fashion, often, which I dislike and condemn; they will certainly be attacked more and more until they perish. But it is not the object of *Literature and Dogma* to attack them. Neither, on the other hand, is it the object of *Literature and Dogma* to contend with the enemies and deniers of Christianity, and to convince them of their error. Sooner or later, indeed, they will be convinced of it, but by other agencies and through a quite other force than mine; it is not the object of *Literature and Dogma* to confute them (pp. 18-19).

Matthew Arnold, as is well known, was the eldest son of Thomas Arnold, the distinguished headmaster of Rugby School, "who, we are told, did not govern by love, but by fear" (Benn's *Modern England*, p. 205). Early in 1832, the great teacher was consulted by Lady Frances Egerton on the subject of the conversion of a person with Atheistical opinions. He wrote two long letters in reply, in both of which he treated the entertainment of Sceptical views as an infallible sign of mental aberration, affirming that it implies "a state of mental disease," and that the subject of it is in grave peril of losing himself morally as well as intellectually. In the second letter he went so far as to confess his belief that conscientious Atheism does not exist, and that, "generally, he who has rejected God must be morally faulty, and therefore justly liable to punishment" (Dean Stanley's *Life and Correspondence of Dr. Thomas Arnold*, Vol. 1, pp. 318-22). Thus, in the estimation of Dr. Arnold, honest Atheism was an impossibility, whilst the teaching of it must have been the most heinous of sins. At the same time, it must be admitted that the famous headmaster was a liberal theologian, and more than once suspected of heterodoxy; and yet, so powerful was his Christian bias that everyone who professed Atheism was, in his sight, of necessity a hypocrite.

It was under the direct influence of such a dominating intellect that Matthew Arnold was brought up; but he did not follow in his father's theological footsteps. From an early age he claimed and practised freedom of thought; and in his forty-fifth year he published an important poem, *Obermann Once More*, in which Christianity is boldly described, if not as a fraud, at least as an obvious illusion. Six years later, *Literature and Dogma* appeared, by which the religious world's temperature was flung up to more than fever-heat of delirious indignation and personal abuse. Here was presented the hideous spectacle of the son of a distinguished Anglican clergyman indulging in a wicked attack upon Christianity, holding up to ridicule the fundamental doctrines in the creeds of Christendom, and apparently enjoying himself thoroughly while doing so. No condemnation of such a flippant writer

could be too severe. This angry charge was hurled at him from all directions; and it was a perfectly true charge. Utterly futile were the author's attempts to disprove it. He said, in the 1883 Preface:—

The object of *Literature and Dogma* is to reassure those who feel attachment to Christianity, to the Bible, but who recognise the growing discredit befalling miracles and the supernatural. Such persons are to be reassured, not by disguising or extenuating the discredit which has befallen miracles and the supernatural, but by insisting on the natural truth of Christianity. That miracles have fallen into discredit is to be frankly admitted; that they have fallen into discredit justly and necessarily, and through the same natural and salutary process which had previously extinguished our belief in witchcraft, is to be frankly admitted also. Even ten years ago, when *Literature and Dogma* was first published, lucidity on this matter was, on the whole, not expedient to-day. It has become even yet more dangerous, but expedient; it is even yet more manifest that by the sanction of miracles Christianity can no longer stand; it can stand only by its natural truth.

That was written thirty-seven years ago, when Bradlaugh, the Atheist, was at the zenith of his popularity and power, and when the National Secular Society, under his presidency, was already doing enormous work in all parts of the country; and Arnold candidly admitted that "those among the working class, who eschew the teachings of the orthodox, slide off towards, not the late Mr. Maurice, nor yet Professor Huxley, but towards Mr. Bradlaugh." Now, curiously enough, Arnold, while almost entirely sharing Bradlaugh's views on the Bible and Christianity, posed as a zealous defender of both. Bradlaugh consistently rejected the Bible and its religion, whilst Arnold inconsistently regretted the rejection as much "as the clergy and ministers of religion do." Indeed, it was this critic's proud claim that he did not attack anything, neither the errors of popular Christianity, nor yet its enemies and deniers. His father would have called Bradlaugh and his followers hypocrites of the deepest dye, because they professed an impossible creed. Matthew Arnold merely declared that they were in error, of which it was not his intention to convince them. We maintain, however, that he, too, was in error, even as to the nature of his own work. Three of his books, *St. Paul and Protestantism*, *Literature and Dogma*, and *God and the Bible*, are, in reality, attacks upon Christianity, for Christianity claims to be a supernatural religion, both in its origin and nature. To give up miracles and the supernatural is to reject Jesus and St. Paul, both of whom are reported to have performed miracles and constantly appealed to the supernatural. And yet the author of *Literature and Dogma* has the temerity to affirm that, whilst admitting that the belief in miracles and the supernatural has given way and cannot be restored, he makes no attack upon them. Technically speaking, that may be true; but, virtually, to express unbelief in anything is tantamount to attacking it. To those who still believe in miracles and the supernatural the treatment of them in Arnold's theological works is certainly equivalent to an assault.

From the orthodox point of view, Matthew Arnold assails Theism itself, as well as Christianity. He who denies the personality of God is, indeed, an Atheist. To make fun of the divines who "ask for our attention because of what has passed 'in the council of the Trinity,' and been promulgated, for our direction, by 'a Personal First Cause, the moral and intelligent Governor of the universe,'" is surely one fashion of advocating Atheism. Matthew Arnold laughed at the then Bishops of Winchester and Gloucester, who made, in convocation, their remarkable effort "to do something for the honour of our Lord's Godhead," and to mark their sense of that infinite separatism for time and for eternity which is involved in rejecting the Godhead of the Eternal Son"; but such laughter necessarily indicated that he himself did not believe in Christ's Deity.

Without formally attacking them Arnold regarded "the enemies and deniers" of Christianity as guilty of a great error. It is not the object of *Literature and Dogma*, he says, to contend with them, "and to convince them of their error." In our judgment, it was Matthew Arnold who was in error, and needed to be convinced of it. Bradlaugh was more consistent, as well as more logical. He disbelieved and rejected the Bible and its religion. Convinced that Christianity is wholly untrue, he formally and violently attacked it in order to emancipate his fellow-beings from its tyrannical power. Arnold disbelieved all its dogmas as formulated by the divines, from St. Paul downwards, but he did not renounce it, because he maintained that it existed independently of all its doctrines. Miracles do not happen, and therefore there was no Incarnation—no virgin birth, no atoning death, and no resurrection; but after the renunciation of all such miracles, there remained for Arnold what he called the "natural truth of Christianity." We contend, on the contrary, that, apart from its dogmas, Christianity ceases to be. In other words, popular or historical Christianity is the only type known to us; and it is this alone that we attack, because we hold, with Arnold, that it is not true.

J. T. LLOYD.

## Priests, Platitudes, and Promises.

A merciful Providence fashioned us hollow,  
In order that we might our principles swallow.

—Lowell, "The Biglow Papers."

The system which begins by making mental indolence a virtue and intellectual narrowness a part of sanctity, ends by putting a premium on something too like hypocrisy.

—Lord Morley.

Nearly two generations ago Lord Shaftesbury, himself an earnest Christian, asked indignantly, "Of what use are the Bishops?" He was speaking especially of the action of the lawn-sleeved legislators in the House of Lords, but his pointed question will be echoed on the perusal of the report of the Lambeth Conference of Bishops, issued by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge.

The work is one of the finest pieces of Christian apologetics published for many a day. It reveals the Church of England's policy with regard to some of the most momentous questions, pressing for solution in the modern world. This policy is simply the expedient of the ostrich hiding its head in the sand

in order to escape the hunters. The whole report is simply a kaleidoscope of half-truths, reservations, promises and platitudes, and is sufficient in itself to show the extraordinary state of mind which could have conceived and carried to the point of publication a document in which cowardice is written on every page.

To emancipated woman the Church of Christ offers little beyond a few fair words. For a whole month two hundred and fifty Anglican bishops considered questions of importance, among them being the position of women in the Church. The report shows that the bishops are as firm as adamant against the admission of women to the priesthood, but they suggest a restoration of deaconesses. In plain English, they refuse to move in the matter at all. Women must be content with the subordinate position because the equalisation of the sexes was an abhorrent proposition to the celibate priests of the sixth century. Indeed, on all sexual problems the modern bishops are in an altogether ridiculous position. The bishops condemn divorce and Neo-Malthusianism equally, and are still guided by the quaint ideas of their neurotic predecessors.

To the working-man the bishops offer more verbiage. Knowing their own record, they seek to gloss it over by saying "We cannot claim a good record with regard to Labour questions." This evasion is somewhat too transparent. As legislators the bishops hindered progress for generations and were the despair of reformers. Inspired by the Holy Ghost, these prelates could not be got to see that in a civilised country it was wrong to hang people for stealing articles of the value of a few shillings. They could not understand that large masses of the population should not be excluded from political power. When Robert Owen advocated a new moral world of universal brotherhood the bishops called loudly upon the Government to put down the heretics. The bishops had no good words for the Chartists, and when Joseph Arch voiced the claims of the agricultural labourer, it was a Right-Reverend Father-in-God who suggested that the proper place for a rural agitator was the horse-pond. In its weakness the Labour movement always found the bishops among its enemies. To-day, when Labour is a force in politics, the bishops speak politely—and do nothing. We should never forget that the theory of the bishops is that the State should be subordinate to the Church of Christ. Too many citizens are indifferent to great questions, or only concern themselves with bread-and-butter politics. A revival of priestly power, working alliance between High Church, Roman Catholics, and Free-Churchmen, is one of the dangers of the age, perilous alike to liberty and to progress. While talking of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, the priests of the Church of Christ are working for the degradation of democracy.

MIMNERMUS.

Although the Devil be the father of lies, he seems, like other great inventors, to have lost much of his reputation by the continual improvements that have been made upon him.—Swift.

Who'er amidst the sons  
Of reason, valour, liberty and virtue,  
Displays distinguished merit, is a noble  
Of nature's own creating. —Thompson.

## Science and the Occult.

### X.

(Continued from p. 551.)

History discloses how the mind passes from wonderment at the miraculous to the discernment of order, from sorcery to science . . . Henceforth, familiarity with exact descriptions and demonstrations creates a habit of mind which renders miracles inconceivable, and caprice in the succession of events absurd. All our experiences and all our explanations are now dominated by a steady faith in a fixed order, and our efforts are directed towards the ascertainment of what that order is. To the mind thus organized, the fluctuating belief in accident and caprice which our ancestors held, is as the babble of infants.—G. H. Lewes, "Problems of Life and Mind"; 1879, p. 155.

experience proves that prepossession in favour of some 'occult agency' is almost sure to lead the investigator to the too ready acceptance of evidence of its operation.—Dr. W. B. Carpenter, "Mesmerism, Spiritualism, etc., Historically and Scientifically considered"; 1877, p. 6.

In many cases where people have been mysteriously missing from home, recourse has been had to mediums but without success. The mediums only reproducing the guesses made in the daily press. In murder mysteries they have been equally unsuccessful. Some day, perhaps, a medium will make a successful guess, and then our glorious free and independent press will rave again about there being more in heaven and earth than we dream of in our philosophy; keeping a direct silence about all the previous failures. As we have said before, the public only count the hits, they ignore the misses.

One of these failures has indeed been put on record, and a remarkable record it is too. It not only demonstrates the utter futility of trusting to occult agencies in the practical affairs of life, but also to the very real danger of such practice. We refer to the case of the American, Dean Bridgman Connor; a case everybody interested in Spiritualism and the Occult should be acquainted with, as nothing could illustrate better the mentality of the believers in Spiritualism. As this case has not attracted the attention in this country which it deserves we propose giving an account of it.

Dean Bridgman Connor then, was a respected young man, twenty-seven years of age, when he left the United States for the City of Mexico, in the latter part of 1894, to fill the position of electrician and manager of lights in Orrin's circus and theatre. After his arrival in the city he worked about ten weeks, when he was taken seriously ill with typhoid fever. After the first week he was removed to the American hospital on the outskirts of the city. Twenty-three days later the American Consul-General, in the City of Mexico, Crittenden, sent word to Mr. H. H. Connor, assistant postmaster, of Burlington, Vermont, that his son, Dean Bridgman Connor, had died in the American hospital, and had been buried in the American cemetery near the hospital.

Soon after the funeral, the Consul-General forwarded the luggage and personal effects to the parents, with a letter in which he stated that he had done all that was possible for their son during his illness; that he had attended the funeral and placed a flower, moistened with tears, on the young man's grave. No wonder then that Consul-General Crittenden should, in the language of diplomacy "consider the incident closed." But it was not closed by any means.

From the day when word was received of the young man's death, there had been an undercurrent of suspicion and doubt over the affair in the minds of the relatives and friends of the dead man as there is always apt to be in the case of one who is near and

dear dying among strangers. People are apt to think there has been neglect, or worse, that matters would have been different if they had only been there.

Among the friends were a Mr. and Mrs. Prentiss C. Dodge, who had known the deceased man from childhood, and looked upon him as almost a member of their own household. Mrs. Dodge felt there was something wrong—some mystery—about his reported death. In fact, she could not bring herself to believe that he actually was dead, and she communicated her suspicions to her husband and the young man's father.

When people are under the influence of a strong suspicion, they take notice of everything that tends to strengthen their suspicion, and ignore everything that tends to weaken it. Letters they received in response to inquiries in Mexico tended to confirm their suspicions; no responsible person seems to have actually seen the body of the young man after death. Moreover, jewels of an unknown value, said to have been possessed by the young man, had not been returned with his effects from Mexico.

Such was the position of affairs when, on a night, some months after the reported death of Dean Bridgman Connor in Mexico City, Mr. W. H. H. Connor had a vivid dream in which his son appeared and said he was not dead, but was alive, and held a captive in Mexico. To Mr. and Mrs. Dodge and others this dramatic dream seemed like an occult demonstration—a voice out of oblivion—that gave weight and authority to existing doubts and suspicions. Mr. and Mrs. Dodge were already interested in the mysteries of Spiritualism, the dream, therefore, fitted in perfectly with their suspicions. But in order to confirm the information—they submitted the dream to Dr. Richard Hodgson, the secretary of the American Branch of the Society for Psychical Research. Dr. Hodgson at once appealed for some personal effects belonging to the subject, in the shape of clothes or trinkets, and when these were forwarded he proceeded to hold a "sitting" with that famous medium, Mrs. Leonora E. Piper.

At the first "sitting" Mrs. Piper's spirit "controls" could do nothing. This, as we have pointed out, is invariably the case with a first sitting, because the Medium knows nothing, she has to feel her way, to "fish," to work up the case.

At the next sitting, the "spirits" had evidently worked overtime on the case, for they were overflowing with information.

Mrs. Piper gave the name of the young man, described in detail his trip by steamer from New York to Vera Cruz, and thence overland to the City of Mexico; his work in the circus; his sickness in the hospital, from which she claimed he had been kidnapped the night of his reported death, while the body of a patient, who had died in the next ward or room, had been substituted for Dean Bridgman Connor, and had been buried in the American cemetery under Connor's name. Mrs. Piper also described the American hospital very minutely; the matron of the institution, and gave her name; the head physician, and gave his name; and explained that the young man during his illness had been confined in a room at the rear of the main building. She claimed that he had been taken from the hospital at night by the 'south road,' and vaguely intimated that he was being held for ransom or some other dark purpose.<sup>1</sup>

That was all the information she could give at that time and for some months thereafter, owing to an illness during which Mrs. Piper could give no "sittings." But it was enough. The dream had been

<sup>1</sup> A. J. Philpott, *The Quest for Dean Bridgman Connor*, 1915, p. 14.

confirmed by the greatest medium in the world. People, eminent people, scientific people, came from all over the world to consult the spirits who communicated through her. Her automatic writings and utterances, while in the trance state, were regarded with as much faith as the Delphic oracles by the ancient Greeks.

At this time, Mrs. Piper had placed her powers at the disposal of the American Society for Psychical Research, and Dr. Hodgson—the Secretary of the Society, conducted the *seances*. Dr. Hodgson had the greatest faith in her mysterious powers, and used her as a sort of “official medium” and demonstrator of the occult for the Society.

Dr. Hodgson was no fool; he had exploded the frauds of Madame Blavatsky, also the trickery of Eusapia Pallidino, in spite of the protestations of Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Richet, and Mr. Myers, that trickery was impossible. He was a terror to fake spiritualists, fake mediums, and fakes generally. So, naturally, when he put the stamp of his approval upon any occult phenomena, it was regarded as authoritative.

In the meanwhile the people of Burlington had made further investigations, by correspondence, and a photograph of the hospital had been received from the Consul-General, on which he marked a window in the front of the house as the room in which Dean had died. When, as a matter of fact, it was learned that the young man had been placed in the contagious ward at the rear. Why did the Consul-General make this statement? The fact is, the Consul-General when he communicated the particulars of the death and burial of Dean, desired to relieve the minds of his parents, at the expense of a little fiction, trusting to the 4,000 miles dividing Mexico from Burlington preventing the detection. Hence his tale of having done everything possible for the sick man, attending the funeral, and placing a tear-stained flower upon the grave, etc., when he had really done nothing at all. He marked the front window to show that he knew where the death took place. In reality, it was a blind guess.

“But,” it will be asked, “how did Mrs. Piper—or her spirit controls—know which room he died in.” Mr. Philpott, in his book, does not explicitly state whether the information arrived first through the correspondence, or through Mrs. Piper. But granting that Mrs. Piper first revealed it, we must remember that at the first sitting, Mrs. Piper knew absolutely nothing about the case. But at the second sitting she was able to describe the hospital minutely, and give the names of the head physician and the matron. It is evident that Mrs. Piper—between the first and second sitting—had had access to some source of information, probably a guide-book of the City of Mexico, containing a description of the American Hospital there. From the same source she would learn that the contagious ward was at the back of the hospital, and as Dean’s case was contagious, of course she placed him there.

This obtaining information in between the sittings, is an old trick of Mrs. Piper’s, as I have pointed out elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

W. MANN.

(To be continued.)

The man of sense knows that no God exists, and thereupon he affirms that the orthodox doctrine is infinitely absurd. That is called a “negation.” But to my mind it is an affirmation, and is a part of the positive side of Freethought.

—Ingersoll.

<sup>1</sup> W. Mann, *The Follies and Frauds of Spiritualism*, p. 169.

## Bundling and Spirituality.

THE “bundling” habit has ever been esteemed a spiritual enjoyment by its religious indulgers. This tends to prove that “spiritual joy” is but an unidentified and, therefore, misinterpreted sex ecstasy. Among early Christians bundling was extensively practised, even by monks and consecrated virgins. So general was it at the time of Chrysostom, that he wrote several treatises against the practice. Jerome condemns it in these words:—

I blush to say it, but alas! it is true. Oh, whence came that pest into the church—of clergymen keeping mistresses? unmarried women not called wives? They occupy the same house, the same chambers, and sometimes the same bed, yet they complain that we are suspicious. The brother forsakes his virgin sister for another, the virgin spurns her unmarried kinsman, and seeks a brother of a different family; though the brother and sister both pretend to have the same purpose of living in unmarried purity; yet they seek *spiritual comfort* in connection with others, that they may have carnal intercourse at home.<sup>1</sup>

Tertullian writes that: “The brethren gladly receive and support virgins.”<sup>2</sup> Serverus says: “The virgin despises an unmarried man who is a real brother, she seeks a connection with one who is not of her own family,” thus “showing that the same practice was common in Gaul, where Serverus lived and wrote.”<sup>3</sup>

The Rev. Dr. Ruffner, after quoting these and other evidences of the practice, summarizes as follows:—

The practice of unmarried men—some of them clergymen—and consecrated virgins living together, seems to have prevailed to a considerable extent even at this early period; but then the parties professed that there was no harm in it, seeing that there was all the while a chaste familiarity, a *purely spiritual conjunction*.<sup>4</sup>

Some confessors, like Robert d’Arbrissel (and the same has been said of Adhelm, an English saint who lived before the Conquest), have induced young women to lie with them in the same beds, giving them to understand, that, if they could prove superior to every temptation, and rise from bed as they went to it, it would be in the highest degree meritorious. Others, Menas, for instance, a Spanish monk, whose case was quoted in the case against Gerard, persuaded young women to lie with him in a kind of holy conjugal union which he described to them, but which did not, however, end, at last, in that intellectual manner which the father had promised.<sup>5</sup>

Washington Irving indicated that the “bundling” habit, so extensive in early New England, which followed not far removed from a revival epidemic, also had its origin in a combination of religion and lust. He speaks of bundling as “a *superstitious rite* observed by the young people of both sexes with which they terminated their festivities, and which was kept up with *religious strictness* by the more *bigoted* and vulgar portion of the community.”<sup>6</sup>

The practice was permitted by the Puritans,<sup>7</sup> and found defenders among the clergy, as a custom that prevailed “among all classes to the great honour of the country, *its religion*, and the ladies.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Fathers of the Desert*, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> *Fathers of the Desert*, p. 227.

<sup>3</sup> *Fathers of the Desert*, p. 283.

<sup>4</sup> *Fathers of the Desert*, p. 232. See also Mosheim’s *Ecc. Hist.*, p. 64, Balt. ed., 1833; Gibbon’s *History of Christianity*, p. 161; and authorities cited.

<sup>5</sup> A paraphrase on *Historia Flagellantium*, pp. 246 7.

*Knickerbocker History of N.Y.*, 4 Am. Ed., p. 211. Stiles *Bundling*, p. 49.

<sup>7</sup> Stiles *History of Bundling*, p. 51.

<sup>8</sup> Stiles *History of Bundling*, p. 58.

Among the Quakers, the spiritual wife doctrine, which is so intimately connected with the "bundling" habit, found a clue for its defence in the writings of Theophilus Gates, a philosopher of the Quaker City, "who is said to have put religion on his shoulders, as a cloak under which he might openly proclaim, like John of Leyden, his policy of a community of wives."<sup>1</sup>

Tolstoi, true to his mystical predilections, finds in the emotions which naturally grow out of sex stimuli the real "spiritual affinity" and "spiritual wedlock." He tells us that in parts of Russia young people during the years of betrothal spend their nights together without losing their virginity. This pleasant ecstasy of bundling he deems to be an illustration of the blessed possibility of spiritual communion, untainted by yielding to fleshly desire.<sup>2</sup>

These brief histories again tend to show that in those with whom "spirituality" is most developed, its growth is through conditions which are generally accepted as being specially adapted to induce sex passion. This has found other confirmation in facts already recorded in other essays of mine and in Mr. Chapman Cohen's latest book on *Religion and Sex*, and will receive special confirmation when we come to study the discovery and growth of spiritual affinities in some particular individuals, and the origin of American "free-love" societies. An evolutionary psychologist could find much to commend in the "bundling" practice, in preference to some more ascetic devices. However, at present, we are not concerned with the problem of deciding what is most conducive to psycho-sexual normality.

THEODORE SHROEDER.

### Acid Drops.

Among the more or less silly and irrelevant batches of criticisms of Mr. Maugham's play, which are being published by the "Daily Mirror," is one by Prebendary Reynolds, of St. Paul's. His contribution to a solution of the question, "Why God permits such things as war," is that he allows them when they are necessary to teach us what he wishes us to learn, and when we deserve it for past sins. Some of the criticisms of the play, from the religious side, run that the vicar in the play was not true to life; he was too silly and ineffective. Prebendary Reynolds is the best reply to that. He might have stood for the model of the vicar on the stage. For anything sillier could hardly be imagined. The "Mirror" calls it a "suggestive" message. Of what? It is not suggestive, it is indicative—of the low level of ability of the clergy. It has all the inanity of the theology of a hundred years ago; and it is all the more indicative because there was no need for Mr. Reynolds to have said anything at all. It is a gratuitous exhibition of hopeless stupidity.

God permits war to teach us something he wishes us to learn. Good, but who does he wish to learn the lesson? The young men went away and got killed. Evidently the war was not meant to teach them anything. They were done. Perhaps he meant to teach the old men, who stayed at home making money out of the war, something. In that case the message needs rewriting, and it should read: "God killed a number of young men in order to teach certain other people something, although these other people are not clear as to what it is he wishes to teach them, and God is not certain whether they will learn the lesson when it is presented to them. All that one can say is that God and his worshippers are well matched, for it would be indeed difficult to imagine a pair of stupidities more admirably adjusted. And then one may ask whether the people have really learned much from the killing of

several millions of men? They have not learned to avoid war, for wars are still going on, and all, except Germany, are openly laying preparations for new wars on a more extended scale. The Allies are taking every care that she shall be in no position to make war in the future. They have not learned to cease from stealing other people's land, for they are still at that game—all, that is, except Germany, and she is without the power to do so at present. So, perhaps, if Prebendary Reynolds is right, God allowed the war to happen because he wanted to benefit the Germans, and they are really God's people, as the Kaiser claimed, and our own clergy, and Mr. Bottomley, were wrong when they put in that claim on behalf of the British. And after such an exhibition as that of Prebendary Reynolds we are told that we ought to treat the clergy with respect! Good God!

About six thousand excursionists travelled from London to the seaside when the National Sunday League ran the first Sunday trips since 1914. No one was struck by lightning by an outraged deity.

The late Very Rev. James Parkinson, of Tully, Queen's County, left £3,133, all of which goes to Roman Catholic churches and for masses. If there is no joy in heaven, there should be joy in church circles.

We are told by Gibbon that in the palmy days of the Roman Empire, peace was maintained with a standing army of 400,000 men. Under Christian auspices the same extent of territory counts its soldiers by the million, and in the war that has been partly concluded, somewhere between thirty and forty million soldiers were engaged. So much for the results of Christian control and peace. Again, under Mohammedan rule, the Mesopotamian territory was kept in order with about twenty thousand men. Christian England has, according to the official figures—on the accuracy of which no one with sense would place much reliance—an army of nearly one hundred thousand soldiers, and is crying out for more. If such changes had taken place after a transference from Christian control, we should have had all the pulpits in Britain ringing with denunciations of the non-Christian faith. What is the conclusion that one ought to draw from such facts as those given above?

The truth is that the huge imposture of Christianity has, ever since its establishment, been one of the great outstanding threats to the peaceful progress of the world. Ever since the break up of the Roman Empire we have had the peoples of Western Europe conducting all over the world a series of thinly disguised piratical enterprises. For centuries with all the nations of Europe, the main question between them has been which could steal the most. And they have measured their greatness in terms of the size and value of the plunder. And to this the missionary zeal of the Christian has lent itself in a most accommodating and profitable manner. It has cast a veil of morality over proceedings of which the true nature might otherwise have been apparent. In this way Christianity has acted as a moral drug. Its greatest crime against civilization has been, not the direct offences it has committed, but the degree to which it has made the committal of offences easier to others. No greater anti-moral force has ever appeared in the whole history of the world.

At Manchester an application was recently made to hold Sunday concerts during the winter. Permission was given, but the concerts were not to begin until 8.15. The reason for the time is obvious; it is that they shall not interfere with the churches. That is only one of the many instances in which the authorities play to the parsons, and we should like to learn what the new labour members on the various councils, and who are so vociferous about the rights of the people, are doing about it. Why should people be prevented going to a concert on a Sunday evening until a late hour so that there should be no competition with the Churches? Such a condition could not be made in any community where a sense of justice was not distorted by religion.

<sup>1</sup> Dixon's *Spiritual Wives*, vol. i., p. 83-84.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Sexuelle Frage*, 36-88.

On a further application to hold a series of Sunday afternoon concerts, the Chairman said, in refusing, "You will interfere with Sunday Schools and one thing and another." That is perfectly plain. Where religion is concerned even the pretence of impartiality may be dispensed with. There is really only one sure way of getting religious people to act fairly, and that is to put it beyond their power to act otherwise. The only gods that are really harmless are those in a museum.

We see that the escaped Australian nun, who was arrested at the instance of the Roman Catholic Bishop on a charge of insanity, has been declared by the courts to be sane, and is at liberty. The fact of the charge being brought is an indication of the lengths to which people will go in the interests of religion. There can be little doubt that had Catholic influence been strong enough the woman would have been confined for life in a lunatic asylum.

Mr. Philip Snowden is astonished that in these times, when the issue of peace and war trembles in the balance, the voice of the Churches should be silent. They are, he says, too cowardly to make their voices heard for peace. Well, what does Mr. Snowden expect? The Churches are only acting in a way in which they have always acted. They are cowardly, but religion is a cowardly thing at bottom, and in moments of crisis it is the real nature of a thing which finds expression. We suggest, too, to Mr. Snowden, that had he and others shown more courage in the face of religious prejudice, and spoken out about religion, instead of indulging in empty commonplaces about "true religion," and "real Christianity," and "our brother Christ," the power of Churches for evil would be much less than what they are. In these matters there is nothing that pays so well in the long run as intellectual straightforwardness and courage. These are rare virtues, but they are the all important ones.

The late Charles Spurgeon's Aunt has just reached the respectable age of one hundred and one, and has enjoyed good health until the last few months. The old lady, who still believes in witchcraft, told an "Evening News" interviewer that in her young days in the village in which she lived witchcraft was a terror to the people, the very bane of their lives. The remark enables one to realise what a very short distance we are removed from the grossest of superstitions, and even now in villages in the British Isles, the belief maintains its hold over large numbers of men and women. One need not travel far afield to find life as primitive as anything that exists among those whom we are in the habit of looking down upon as uncivilised.

A report has been issued by the Board of Education on the subject of Juvenile offenders. This subject is always before us, but the methods employed are usually of a questionable nature. At any rate, with the demoralising influence of the war, and so many of the heads of families away, a certain development of juvenile lawlessness was inevitable. And considering the way in which the Government used the schools to keep alive the war spirit, it cannot be held free from responsibility for any increase in juvenile misbehaviour that may have occurred. You cannot go on teaching children the nobility of war, familiarise their minds to accounts of bloodshed, and teach them to associate a sense of heroism and greatness with militarism, and then reasonably expect that the consequences will show themselves only in such directions as you please to indicate. If you will have militarism in the schools, you should have at least the courage to pay the price. What that price is Germany showed very clearly. But the rest of the world does not seem to have profited much from the lesson. And those who have suffered most seemed to have learned the least.

There is one passage in the report that is of interest. It says, "Sunday, the day of leisure, has by far the

highest record of offences in three out of the four towns from which reports were received." Again, what would one expect? We will not allow the children to play in their own public playgrounds on Sunday, we make it a day of idleness, shut the children off from healthy enjoyment and recreation, and then profess surprise that the results are not pleasant. It is not without some justice that we have been called by angry foreigners the most stupid people in Europe. We are not naturally so, but we happen to have a form of religion in this country that would in time demoralise anyone or anything.

This is the way Mr. G. K. Chesterton writes in the "Daily Telegraph" of the Agnostics: "The word Agnostic has ceased to be a polite word for Atheist. It has become a very real word for a very real state of mind, conscious of many possibilities beyond that of the Atheist, not excluding that of the Polytheist." Now, we have met many curious kinds of Agnostics, but the Agnostic who is also a Polytheist strikes us as the most curious of all. Perhaps Mr. Chesterton means that if a man is in doubt as to whether there is one god or not, he may equally well be in doubt as to whether there may not exist clusters of them. There may be something in the contention; and if so, it only shows the danger of taking up an illogical position. It is bound to lead to other illogicalities before one is through. But so far as we are aware "Agnostic" still remains the polite equivalent for the much dreaded "Atheist."

An American anthropologist claims to have discovered a race of pygmies in Central Africa, hitherto unknown. According to him they neither lie nor steal, and they have, of course, nothing of the higher civilisation in the shape of prisons, casual wards, churches, or public houses. They haven't a slum to bless themselves with. We have no doubt but that all this will be altered so soon as our missionaries get to work. Politicians and parsons will soon make good the first-named deficiency on the list, and we may trust to colonisers to attend to the second. And before long we may trust to see them lying and stealing, just as though they had lived in a Christian country from their infancy.

We hear much of the consolations of religion from our opponents, although it seems to console those who deserve it least, and to pass by those whom one would like to see consoled. The following, which we take from the *Los Angeles Times*, via our spirited contemporary, the *New York Truthseeker*, is illuminating :—

Mose Gibson, bestial negro slayer of Roy C. Trapp and assailant of Mrs. Trapp, started for San Quentin and the gallows last night with a Bible in one hand and a cigarette in the other.

Gibson was sentenced early yesterday morning at Santa Anna to be hanged on September 24.

Shortly before his removal from the county jail here last evening, Gibson was found in his solitary cell, kneeling on the concrete floor in fervent prayer. His cell was barren, except for a spoon that hung on the steel wall and a big crust of bread wedged between the heavy bars. He paid no heed to his visitors and continued to pray. A few minutes later he arose.

"Excuse me," he said, "but I wanted to finish my prayer."

And then, his black hands clutching the bars and his misshapen head tossing like that of a giant gorilla, he talked for the first time to a newspaper reporter.

"I've done made peace with the Lord," said he, rolling his eyes heavenward. "I feel restful now that it's over wit. And I'm glad it's over with because I've surrendered to my Maker, and now I'm ready for the end."

"I am very tired, for at night I've prayed continually to be washed of my sins, and at day I have been kept awake by the taunts and curses of the other prisoners. I haven't had no sleep since I've been in jail."

"I know I am going to die for my sins, but I have no fear now. I thought at first I would be hung right away and would not have time to prepare myself for meeting the Lord. But now I have two months to live and prepare myself for admittance to heaven."

No one can say after that that religion has not its uses. The prospect of Roy C. Trapp being without the comforts of religion would be very distressing.



## To Correspondents.

S. KNOWLES.—Pleased to hear from a new reader of this Paper, and that he has so high an opinion of its tone and contents. There is really no reason for a writer to be stodgy in order to be profound. Sound truth is simple, and should be when the writer has a firm grip of his subject.

H. BAYFORD.—Sorry you missed your Paper. Would have sent you on a copy had you enclosed your present address. Hope you will have had a pleasant holiday.

TAB CAN.—Many thanks for cuttings. They are very useful.

C. W. B.—Your useful weekly batch of cuttings to hand.

A. ALDWINKLE.—Thanks. We have written as we said we would, and will let you know the result. Advertising is a big problem, and we have only been able to take one or two nibbles up to the present. Perhaps one day we may be able to afford more.

T. MARTIN.—Mr. Cohen's book on Atheism is only being held up over the question of paper. That is still at so high a price, that we have been waiting to see if there was any chance of it coming down a little. Still, we shall get on with it as early as possible. We believe there is a need for it, which is the only reason why it has been written.

H. J. SHARP.—Sends us hearty congratulations on what he calls our "constant struggle for the past twenty years in the cause of freedom of the intellect from slavery." Appreciation is always welcome, but we complete, in another month, thirty years' work in the "best of causes," and we hope to put in another good slice of work before we finish up. And we can say with truth, that we know of no life's work that would have brought us more satisfaction than our present work has done.

R. L.—Mr. Cohen has written upon the subject of Materialism before, but he may take the first opportunity of returning to the subject. We agree with you that there exists a deal of confusion on the subject. That is because so many fail to do their own thinking, even on advanced subjects. Defining Materialism in terms of "matter," is to lose sight of what is the essence of the materialistic position. We are compelled to hold over some replies to correspondents until our next issue.

**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 B. 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:—**

**The United Kingdom—One year, 17s. 6d.; half year, 8s. 9d.; three months, 4s. 6d.**

**Foreign and Colonial—One year, 15s.; half year, 7s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 9d.**

## Sugar Plums.

With the issue of the last number of the *Freethinker*, the halfpenny postage came to an end. In future the cost of sending it through the post will be one penny. This will mean a raising of our subscriptions by the amount of the increased postage to new subscribers, but to those whose subscriptions are already paid, the Paper will be sent on and our contract with them duly discharged. This will mean a weekly loss, but there are other ways in which those who feel inclined can make it up. Our concern is to carry out the contract we have already made. The above refers to home subscribers only. To foreign

and Colonial subscribers the postage is still one halfpenny.

Of course, the *Freethinker* does not benefit from the increased charges. On the contrary, it stands to lose a little. For every increase in the cost of carriage or postage makes business more difficult. It may not affect those who are already subscribers but it does make it more difficult to get new ones. The change will not affect those who order their paper through a newsagent, but only those who have it sent through the post. But in view of what we have said, we hope that our friends will not relax their efforts to secure new readers. Prices are still rising, and we may expect another advance in wages between now and the end of September. The matter is at present under discussion. Wages are, at present, about 150 per cent. above the pre-War level. We believe the advance asked for will raise it to 200 per cent. We don't think that a month passes without an advance in some direction.

We publish this week the report of the debate between Mr. Horace Leaf, who represented the Glasgow Spiritualist Association, and Mr. Cohen, on the subject of "Does Man Survive Death"? The report is bound in a neat-coloured wrapper, and is published at the low price of 7d. Whatever else our opponents may accuse us of, they cannot charge us with profiteering out of the War. Our aim is circulation, and while that is so, it is policy to keep prices as low as they can be. Sevenpence for such a report is practically only pre-war price. In 1914 it would not have been sold under sixpence.

We see that the grave of brave old Henry Fielding, at Lisbon, is in need of repair, and an appeal has been made through the columns of the *Times* for £10 to do what is required. Ten pounds! Think of a government that can spend what our government can spend, and allowing begging to go on for keeping in repair the grave of one of our greatest men of letters! If there is one thing of which we should be ashamed, this is it. Had Fielding been a soldier, or one of our modern pirates, otherwise called colonisers, we should have made sure that a substantial monument was erected to his memory and kept in repair, and should have been told by our Cabinet Ministers of how much we owed to such a great man. But a man of letters! That is quite another question. We are a great people. If proof be needed, look at our army and our navy and our cash. To the Christian conscience the proof is decisive.

Mr. Andrew Millar will be pleased to learn that his article urging upon Freethinkers the need for organization has had an effect upon at least one person, who sends along an N.S.S. membership form with his subscription. We see no reason why this should not be followed up by a very large number of *Freethinker* readers. And we fancy that it is nothing but sheer carelessness in the matter that prevents their doing so. That is why we commend to their notice a very admirable example.

The next "ramble" of the Manchester Branch of the N.S.S. will take place to-day, September 5, from Middlewood to Disley. Friends will meet at Victoria Mount, Piccadilly, for the 1.30 car to Hazel Grove. We hope the weather will be favourable.

We should like to again call the attention of Freethinkers throughout the country to the necessity of getting together in order to forward the work of organization. There should be plenty of opportunities just now, and plenty of scope for young men who desire to devote themselves to the work. The National Secular Society's Executive will gladly co-operate with any such efforts that may be made, and will assist in all possible directions. Those who feel that work can be done in their locality should write headquarters without delay. They need not be afraid of giving too much trouble.

Most of our readers will have noticed the stupid stories of the "miracles" of the bleeding statues in Ireland, with

their usual crop of cures. It is a pity that the statues are not able to work a miracle and cure the troubles of the Irish people while they are about. One of our readers writes with well-merited indignation at the currency of such stories among a people claiming to be civilized, and adds: "My firm conviction is superstition is at the bottom of the Irish problem, and until it is ruthlessly exposed the 'sorrows of Pat' will continue to torture an otherwise intellectual and good-hearted race." That is a sentiment with which we cordially agree, and it is what we have said ourselves times out of number. The pity of it is that none of the politicians who are managing, or mismanaging, Irish affairs have the courage to tell the simple truth. Ireland is cursed with a narrow form of Protestant intolerance and an ignorant form of Christian belief in the shape of Roman Catholicism. The man who could clear both out of the country would be the real liberator to Ireland.

## The Priest-Ridden Deaf.

(NOTE.—The writer, a deaf mute, from the age of five years, is editor of *Labour's Voice*, and an extensive collaborator to journals of the so-called Left Wing of the advanced labour movement. He has also published a book of verse, a rare accomplishment in the case of one who lost hearing so early in life.)

Freethinkers perhaps seldom hear of or meet with deaf-mutes who are themselves in the Freethought Movement. There is, of course, the case of Helen Keller, who lost speech and hearing in infancy. (She was not born deaf and dumb as is generally believed, but like myself spoke to some extent at a very early age.) But the ordinary deaf-mute does not always have the opportunities that Helen Keller had.

There is perhaps hardly a school for the deaf in the British Isles not controlled to some extent by the clergy. The only Roman Catholic school of the kind in England is controlled by nuns of St. Vincent de Paul. Having been educated there myself, I can vouch for the fact that religious instruction counts first and last and in-between. The pupils rise before seven a.m., when there is a mass said *practically every day in the year*, at which, of course, they all attend. The first thing in the morning lessons is inevitably catechism, and on Sundays this is made a special subject for the elder pupils.

In the early classes, where the first attempts at teaching the deaf are made, there is always some endeavour to entwine religious hints into the lessons. (Religious *instruction* being impossible even at the age of seven, when—according to the Roman Catholic creed—the child begins to "sin consciously." This is because the deaf are usually neglected by their parents, and when they are sent to schools for the deaf, their knowledge is practically nil.) However, the good sisters always have the hope that the daily mass will somehow drive into their little brains the requisite knowledge and fear of God.

Taking London, it will be found that very nearly all of the clubs for use of the deaf and dumb are presided over by the inevitable clergyman or missionary. In fact, the manual sign for "club" is interchangeable with "church." And going to the club is indeed the same thing as going to religious service. The church, or chapel, is next door to the billiard room.

There are slate clubs, insurance societies, friendly societies for the deaf and dumb, and, of course, the Rev. Somebody-or-other has his name on the official

stationery. There is a Society of Missioners to the Deaf, a Council of Church Missioners to the Deaf, and at the annual meeting of the Royal Association in Aid of the Deaf and Dumb, on June 22nd, the Dean of Ripon "again presided" as reported in "Ephphatha."

There are only a few papers catering specially for the deaf-mutes, and where these are not edited by the clergy, they are deeply and piously religious. Take this tit-bit of unvarnished history from the July-August issue of the "British Deaf Times":—

"It is on record that a Lord Castlereagh worked seven days a week, disregarded the Sabbath Day entirely, and spoke lightly of the Bible. He eventually committed suicide, and Wilberforce said of him 'Poor Castlereagh, he brought on his own death by breaking the Sabbath Day.'"

I shudder to think what Poor Castlereagh's end would have been had he spoken heavily of the Bible.

There are about 30,000 deaf-mutes in the United Kingdom, and in most large towns there is the inevitable mission, with the equally inevitable missionary. Some of these are, of course, laymen, but their avowed object is to "minister to the spiritual, moral and intellectual needs of the deaf and dumb." They are, as it were, a source of truth and a fountain of light. And they take care that the deaf seldom sample anything except the special menu served at the missions for the good of their souls.

It is notorious that half the deaf and dumb in these isles leave school practically as yet untutored in English. These, naturally, prejudice normal people, including employers, against the intelligent half; and the result is that the deaf are expected to accept a lower wage standard than the normal man. And yet the deaf are invariably what is termed "good workmen," as they do not waste time in talking at work. Most employers hold a contrary opinion, because when a deaf worker does talk, he has to have recourse to pencil and paper, a spectacle obvious to everybody, and so more noticeable from the employer's position. I know it for a fact, however, that on piece-work and payment by results the deaf more than hold their own.

It is, however, with the intellectual side of the matter I am here dealing with. It is next to impossible to improve the deaf-mute intellectually, chiefly owing to the hold the missionary has on him. Deaf-mutes, except where of exceptional intelligence and strength of character, are driven to avoid normal people and to associate together. And the only place open to them is the club-mission, attendance at which invariably implies attention at "service" as a *quid pro quo*.

And, as I have already explained, these missions transact almost all the affairs of life for their congregations; they marry them, baptise them, insure them, find work for them, "instruct" them, and finally bury them. It is hardly to be expected, therefore, that any progress could be made in giving them an advanced knowledge. The very livings of the missionaries would be threatened should the deaf ever become self-reliant, self-dependent citizens.

Further, it should not be imagined that the missionaries' influence abides only with those of mediocre intelligence. I once read an admirable

article by a very intelligent deaf-mute of his travels in France and his struggles with the French tongue—on paper, of course—in a "Deaf Monthly." Something urged me to write him, setting forth my views on the questions in this article, which I accordingly did. Judge my astonishment when I received a very curt note from him suggesting that the best thing I should do would be to "get locked up at once" for my own good!

L. A. MOTLER.

### A Four Months' Experiment.

Having kept a humble stall in Pioneer Market for many years, and watched the life and manners of the Pioneer community—free-thought types and others—I have become both familiar with the business, and familiar with the general psychology of the dear old (and young!) Pioneers. To praise my own flesh and blood very highly would savour of improper vanity. To blame them severely for their faults would bring down the broomstick (as I have, to speak figuratively, more than once discovered) upon my sorrowful grey hairs. So, on the present occasion, I shall hint at one fault in most polite and gentle language; and I shall venture to observe that members of the Pioneer Tribe (upon whom be blessing!) are too apt to fancy the world can be conquered by programmes, regardless of the influence of social history and environment.

For example, the ancient Jews, had, in my opinion, a quite superior conception of ethical religion to those conceptions held by their Philistine, Hittite, Egyptian and other neighbours. You will find this conception pictured out in the Psalms and Prophecies of the Old Testament. So proud were the Jews of their achievement that they invented a legend of Yahweh, giving them the Law and the Mosaic Religion amid the thunders and lightning-flashes of Mount Sinai. And a considerable part of their religious time was occupied in cursing and damning the surrounding nations who would not oblige the Jews by accepting the Jewish programme. The social history and environment of the Hittites, etc., being what they were, it was unreasonable to expect them to be rushed into a hasty conversion to Judaism. As a matter of fact, the Jewish social experiment itself broke down, as anybody may see who examines the Bible accounts of Israel, Judah, Jerusalem, and the Hebrew Dispersion.

Christianity made the same mistake. It made up an elaborate programme—a Code of Fraternity, a Sermon on the Mount, a Pauline theology, a Fire-and-Blood Apocalypse, etc.—and flung it at the head of the Roman Empire, with a sort of "Take-it-or-leave-it" air, with the result that Western Europe evolved a new type of religion called Catholicism, and, in 1920, certain earnest folk assure us that real Christianity has never been tried. Of course, some portions of the programme (such as "Ye shall lay hands on the sick that they shall recover") are absurd. But the better and moral elements of the Gospel needed a vast system of education, discipline, social institutions, etc., to be created first in order to render human nature receptive. Such changes demanded a science and intelligence which the Christian Pioneers did not

possess. As Auguste Comte wisely said, "Love, when real, ever desires *light* in order to attain its ends." A benevolent programme is not enough.

The "Diggers" of Cromwell's time, the disciples of Robert Owen, and the idealists who followed Fourier, and the rest, have committed a like error. No doubt, many of these noble Pioneers gave money, time and immense labour to the service of their splendid Dreams. But no heroism can wipe out the stern fact that social progress is only possible under certain social conditions.

During four months—that is, March 21st to August 1st, 1919—a republic was established in Hungary. Of the purely political aspects of this episode I cannot now speak. But a few lines may be devoted to the very interesting experiment in education.

The basis was laid by instituting the One Class School. That is to say, the common school, universally established, was planned for all children, of all classes of society alike, for eight years (ages six to fourteen); and this was to link up with a Middle School, or four years of secondary education, open to all young people in the republic. All examinations were abolished. Play centres were opened in every village as well as every town. The rudiments of a foreign language were to be taught in the earliest stages of school life. Industrial and artistic classes were opened for adolescents, and universities and university Summer-schools flung their doors wide to the people. Maintenance was provided for all adolescents who stood in need. On such topics I would gladly dwell, but I must pass on to notice one particular point in the programme:—

Scripture lessons were abolished within the school, religious teaching on a denominational basis being undertaken outside the school by the priests, if in accordance with the wishes of parents and pupils. No difference was made among the pupils on account of their creed; they were not even asked to which they adhered.

The republic did not simply delete the "Religious Instruction." It provided another method of moral appeal:—

"A new kind of social ethical course was introduced. In these lessons, the ethical and ultimate value of all subjects taught at school was discussed. Legends and fairy-tales were told in the lower classes, Christ being depicted in all of them, but with human characterization."

Perhaps, after what I have just said about the undue haste of Pioneers, it is but just to the Hungarian prophets to quote two more sentences:—

"In the upper classes, events of the day were debated from the ethical point of view. Whether actually summed up in these words or not, the chief topic was evidently the Ideal State, and conditions at home and abroad in relation to this Ideal, and the possibilities and means of achieving such a State, and transforming the present to meet the hopes of the Future."\*

Yes, you see the republicans had a haunting suspicion that "conditions" were of importance.

\* My quotations are from the type-written *International Review of Education*, published by the "Deutsche Liga für Voelkerbund," and edited by Dr. Elisabeth Rotten (Unter den Linden, 78, Berlin); 6s. yearly.

The Hungarian experiment adopted, so far as can be judged from the foregoing brief description, much the same plan as I have advocated myself for the last thirty years; that is, the removal of "religious instruction" as officially understood by churches and bureaucrats, and the institution of moral and civic instruction, suitable for all children alike, and including the legends and best ethical elements of all faiths, treated on non-theological lines. Readers of the *Freethinker* may recall that, a few years ago, I gave in its pages a "human characterization" of Jesus, the chapters having since been reprinted.\* I believe that, in the same way, young people could make acquaintance with the "selected teachings, and with the biographies (authentic or legendary, no matter) of Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, Moses, aPul, Socrates, Amelius, St. Francis of Assisi, and other famous Pioneers. In order to clear the subject from all misunderstandings, I may also say that I would introduce records of Bruno, Voltaire, Bradlaugh, Comte, Foote, and others such. In every case, the object should be to build up all-round ideas of citizenship and duty, and not to raise controversy.

I have not the least doubt that, in time, the whole civilized world will reach the educational stage just indicated. The signs point that way even now. It is of no use, however, to hurry in front of public opinion, and set up crude experiments, and then, after failure, like Jeremiah or Isaiah, to cry woe and imprecation on an unbelieving and stiff-necked world. It is, nevertheless, a great help to form a distinct and decisive conception of the goal towards which we would travel.

Everybody knows that the Hungarian republic, in its Soviet form, no longer functions. Meanwhile, I trust the educational experiment has not altogether lapsed. Some good fragments may remain. If I learn further particulars, I will ask leave to recite them in these columns.

F. J. GOULD.

### A Story.

In the *Freethinker* of August 22, Frances Prewett mentions in her article on "Woman and the Church," that the Apostle Peter is credited (why not "debited"?) with having had experience of married life. Quite right. Do we not read that Peter's wife's mother once lay sick of a fever? One doleful Sunday, away back in the seventies, a Scotch commercial man was stranded in a small Scotch town situated on the shores of a firth where was a steam ferry. He went to the auld Kirk in the forenoon, and was treated to a long discourse on the words quoted above "Now Peter's wife's mother lay sick of a fever." In the afternoon he went to the Free Kirk and listened to a sermon on the same words. In the evening he visited the U.P.'s., and got another dose on the same depressing topic. On Monday morning he was standing at the railway station near one of the clerics, when a bell tolled out (the ferry boat's signal). The cleric turned to the traveller and asked "What bell is that, do you know?" "Well," replied the disgruntled bagman, "I'm no' just sure, but I think it maun be the funeral o' Peter's wife's mither. If she's no deed by this time, she should be."

IGNOTUS.

\* It may be added that not a single soul, so far as I know, has raised any protest against the language or the spirit of the book, namely, *Legends from the New Testament*.

## Correspondence.

### FREE SPEECH IN HYDE PARK.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Free speech no longer exists in Hyde Park. In spite of the standard maintained on the Secular platform—possibly because of it—arrests are now so frequent, that the meetings have had to be temporarily suspended. The following speakers have been arrested three times each, viz., Mr. Dales, Mr. Yates, and Mr. H. B. Samuels, and once each, Mr. Saphin, Mr. Shaller and Mr. Ratchiffe. All these have been taken from the platform while addressing large meetings. For engaging in discussions on the ground, or asking questions in C.E. or other religious meetings, Mr. Kells, Mr. Josephs, Mr. Brooks and Mr. Wilson have also been arrested and fined or bound over. The fines already paid amount to nearly £40.

The methods adopted by the police point unmistakably to a definite intention to suppress free speech. The speakers are arrested under the Park Regulation which forbids the use of "blasphemous words or gestures." This regulation has been a dead letter for years, but during the last two or three years has been most arbitrarily revived. The speakers are arrested for blasphemy, but in court they are always charged with and fined for, "using words calculated to cause a breach of the peace." There has never once been the faintest chance or possibility of a breach of the peace. It is simply religious intolerance and bigotry. No reports are allowed to get into the papers. If a Freethinker asks a question in a religious meeting he is arrested for insulting behaviour. If a Christian asks a question in a Secular meeting the lecturer is arrested for holding a disorderly meeting. Sometimes the arrest of the lecturer is so prompt that it is clear there must be collusion between the interrupter and the police.

The police evidence is invariably accepted by the magistrate. At one hearing the magistrate said "People's religion is dear to them, and you must not outrage their feelings," and on another, "You people go out determined to insult people."

The position is most serious, and a meeting was held on Monday, August 23, about sixty attending, when it was unanimously agreed, that, as the magistrates support the police every time, it is only throwing money away to continue in Hyde Park, but the indoor meetings will be resumed at Johnson's Dancing Academy, 241 Marylebone Road, on Sunday, October 3 at 7.30, when all friends will be welcome.

The *Star* on Monday, August 23, had an account of the arrest of a young Irish cook at a meeting in Hyde Park, on a charge of insulting behaviour. He wore a button photo of Dr. Mannix. He was immediately released. If he had worn a button photo of Charles Bradlaugh he would most likely have been doing time.

E. C. S.

### NATURE AND MORALITY.

SIR,—I must challenge your contributor "W. H. Morris" in his article in the *Freethinker* of August 15, when he says:—

Moral conduct, then, is the guidance of actions so that they may be in harmony with natural laws. Those lines of conduct which bring pain and unhappiness are those which violate some law of Nature.

Generations of social discipline have (among other things) been weeding out those individuals least prepared to respect the rights of others, or least able to subordinate their passions to communal needs.

I think that the truer view is that Nature is non-moral, producing good and bad in profusion, without any object, as far as we can see. Morality would then appear to be a set of man-made practical rules whereby man strives with varying success to escape the evil wherever he can. If evil itself is not natural, or produced by natural law, it must be a special creation like the soul.

With regard to elimination, my experience is that good men, and especially honest men, are being slowly eliminated from society, whilst the cleverer, but less honest types, always thrives. Some ancient philosopher has said "honesty is highly commended, and left to starve."

Y. C.

WHAT IS ATHEISM ?

SIR,—The old, old trouble blows up once more ! Mr. Arnison accuses me of imputing vice and vileness to "Atheists," whom he firmly believes to be a noble and wonderful cult of righteous men. Now, "Atheism" means nothing less and *nothing more* than the denial of any sort of God in the universe. It is a negative term and nothing in the world can make it more than a negative term. Worthy but muddle-headed people may fancy that, by giving the word a capital letter and calling themselves Atheists, they can convey to the world generally that they stand for Truth, Social Service, and all sorts of good things, but it is a misleading fancy. When I wish to describe a man who, whatever his religious professions may be, gives clear evidence that he has no sense of any sort of God in his heart, I have to write of his "fundamental atheism." How else can I describe it ? Or does Mr. Arnison really believe that simply by disbelieving, a man can achieve all the virtues. If so, here is a beautiful negative form of Salvation by Faith Alone. As for my "sharply disliking" Atheism, that is utter nonsense. I have pointed out that it is imposible to build any rule of conduct or any scheme of life on a negative. Outspoken Atheism I have always respected, but as I have written, "By faith we disbelieve." A man who stands up to unpopularity or persecution by proclaiming his disbelief in a God, *does* believe in something. He believes in truth and the duty of truth anyhow. Why doesn't he call himself by some name which states what he is, instead of using a term which states what he isn't, and then losing his temper when he finds that a considerable variety of scoundrels can be swept in under the same comprehensive negative.

H. G. WELLS.

[Owing to want of space several letters are held over until next week.]

Obituary.

It is with the deepest regret that we record the death of Mr. Thomas Eastman Hinley, of Kingston-on Thames, on Sunday, August 22, at the age of forty-seven. The deceased gentleman, who was a member of the N.S.S. and a most devoted and energetic supporter of our cause, particularly of the *Freethinker*, had suffered for some time from heart weakness, and succumbed from the exertion of starting his motor car. Owing to delay in connection with the inquest, the sad news of his death, with the request for a Secular Burial Service, to the lasting regret of all concerned, did not reach us until the actual time of his cremation at Norwood. We tender our sincerest sympathy to Mrs. Hinley in her irreparable loss of a devoted husband, with whom she had always been a staunch co-operator in their mutual activities for the spread of the Freethought cause. E. M. V.

It is with great regret that I have to record the death in her eighteenth year of Constance Marthe (Connie) Harris. The daughter of an earnest member of our new Plymouth Branch, her simple and naturally happy disposition endeared her to all who knew her, and found expression in her gifts as a musician, in which she showed great promise. The deepest sympathy of the Plymouth Branch will be extended to the sorrowing parents, to whom time and faith in our principles can alone bring consolation. The funeral took place at the Corporation Cemetery on August 24, the writer reading a Secular Burial Service at the graveside. G. F. H. McCLUSKEY.

But does it not occur to you that one may love truth as he sees it, and his race as he views it, better than even the sympathy and approbation of many good men, whom he honours—better than sleeping to the sound of the "Mis-erere," or listening to the repetition of an effete "Confession of Faith" ?—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON AUGUST 26, 1920.

The President, Mr. C. Cohen occupied the chair. Also present : Messrs. Moss, Neate, Rosetti, Samuels and Quinton ; Miss Kough, Miss Pitcher and the Secretary.

Minutes of last meeting read and confirmed. Monthly cash statement presented and adopted.

New members were received for Manchester and Swansea Branches, and the Parent Society.

Correspondence was received from West Ham, Maesteg and Sheffield *re* winter propaganda, and the Secretary instructed to make arrangements.

The receipt of £50 on account of the Grimsby Hall shares was reported, and it was resolved to make a contribution of £5 towards the expenses of the Prague Congress.

A further discussion on the Registration of the N.S.S. was adjourned until the next meeting.

The attitude of the police in Hyde Park towards Free-thought speakers, belonging to the Metropolitan Secular Society, having been reported to the President, the Secretary and other members of the Executive undertook to obtain further information and report. Minor details of business were transacted, and the meeting adjourned.

E. M. VANCE, *General Secretary.*

SHELLEY AN ATHEIST.

In religion, Shelley was an Athelst. There is nothing uncommon in that; but he actually called himself one, and urged others to follow his example. He never trifled with the word God: he knew that it meant a personal First Cause, Almighty Creator, and Supreme Judge and Ruler of the Universe, and that it did not mean anything else, never had meant anything else, and never whilst the English language lasted would mean anything else. Knowing perfectly well that there was no such person, he did not pretend that the question was an open one, or imply, by calling himself an Agnostic, that there might be such a person for all he knew to the contrary. He did know to the contrary; and he said so. Further, though there never was a man with so abiding and full a consciousness of the omnipresence of a living force, manifesting itself here in the germination and growth of a tree, there in the organization of a poet's brain, and elsewhere in the putrefaction of a dead dog, he never condescended to beg off being an Athelst by calling this omnipresent energy God, or even Pan. He lived and died professedly, almost boastfully, godless. In his time, however, as at present, God was little more than a word to the English people. What they really worshipped was the Bible; and our modern Church movement to get away from Bible fetishism and back to some presentable sort of Christianity (*vide* Mr. Horton's speech at Grindelwald the other day, for example) had not then come to the surface. The preliminary pickaxing work of Bible smashing had yet to be done; and Shelley, who found the moral atmosphere of the Old Testament murderous and abominable, and the asceticism of the New suicidal and pessimistic, smashed away at the Bible with all his might and main.—*G. B. Shaw in the "Albemarle" (Sept., 1892).*

ANCIENT HINDU SCEPTICISM.

Did God exist, omniscient, kind,  
And never speak his will in vain,  
'Twould cost him but a word, and then  
His suppliants all they wish would find.  
If God to men allotted woe  
Although that woe the fruit must be  
Of men's own actions, then were he  
Without a cause his creatures' foe,  
More cruel thus than men who ne'er  
To others causeless malice bear.

—*Muir's "Religious and Moral Sentiments from Sanscrit Writers."*

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.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C. 2): 11, Sir George Paish, "Economics and Ethics."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.15, Mr. E. Burke, A Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6.30, R. H. Rosetti, A Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15, Mr. J. B. Johnson, "Bible Truths."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Outside Maryland Point Station, Stratford, E.): 7, Mr. H. White, "The Impossibility of Being Christian."

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Mr. Samuels; 3.15, Messrs. Dales, Ratcliffe, and Shaller. Every Wednesday, 6.30, Messrs. Hyatt and Saphin.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

LEEDS BRANCH N. S. S. (Youngman's Rooms, 19 Lowerhead Row, Leeds): Every Sunday at 6.30.

GLASGOW BRANCH N. S. S.—Ramble to Cathkin Braes. Members and friends assemble at Ruthery Glen Town Hall, 12 noon. Bring rations.

PROPAGANDIST LEAFLETS. New Issue. 1. Christianity a Stupendous Failure, J. T. Lloyd; 2. Bible and Teetotalism, J. M. Wheeler; 3. Principles of Secularism, C. Watts; 4. Where Are Your Hospitals? R. Ingersoll; 5. Because the Bible Tells Me So, W. P. Ball; 6. Why Be Good? G. W. Foote. The Parson's Creed. Often the means of arresting attention and making new members. Price 1s. per hundred, post free 1s. 2d. Samples on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—N. S. S. SECRETARY, 62 Farringdon Street, E.C. 4.

FREETHINKER seeks position as Organiser, Business Representative, Agent, or any position of trust. Testimonials.—Address H. B. SAMUELS, 30 Birchington Road, N.W. 6.

MR. ARTHUR B. MOSS, the well-known and popular Freethought Advocate, is open to accept Engagements to Lecture in London and the Provinces, commencing September. He is also open to give Dramatic Recitals from the works of Shakespeare, Shelley, Tennyson, Hood, Buchanan, and other favourite poets.—For Dates and Terms please address 42 Ansdell Road, Queens Road, Peckham, London, S.E. 15.

BOOKS ON ALL SUBJECTS for every need, every taste, & every pocket Sent on Approval. SECOND-HAND AND NEW. 1,000,000 Volumes in Stock. Write to-day for Catalogue. State wants. Books Bought at Best Prices. W. & G. FOYLE, Ltd., 121-5 Charing Cross Road, W.C. 2. Phone: Gerrard 5180.

LINOTYPE OPERATOR WANTED.—(Society.) A permanency to a suitable man.—Apply Freethinker Office, 61 Farringdon Street, E.C. 4.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

President:

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Secretary:

MISS E. M. VANCE, 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

Principles and Objects.

Secularism teaches that conduct should be based on reason and knowledge. It knows nothing of divine guidance or interference; it excludes supernatural hopes and fears; it regards happiness as man's proper aim, and utility as his moral guide.

Secularism affirms that Progress is only possible through Liberty, which is at once a right and a duty; and therefore seeks to remove every barrier to the fullest equal freedom of thought, action, and speech.

Secularism declares that theology is condemned by reason as superstitious, and by experience as mischievous, and assails it as the historic enemy of Progress.

Secularism accordingly seeks to dispel superstition; to spread education; to disestablish religion; to rationalize morality; to promote peace; to dignify labour; to extend material well-being; and to realize the self-government of the people.

Membership.

Any person is eligible as a member on signing the following declaration:—

I desire to join the National Secular Society, and I pledge myself, if admitted as a member, to co-operate in promoting its objects.

Name.....

Address .....

Occupation .....

Dated this.....day of.....19.....

This declaration should be transmitted to the Secretary with a subscription.

P.S.—Beyond a minimum of Two Shillings per year, every member is left to fix his own subscription according to his means and interest in the cause.

TO MANUFACTURERS.

AGENCY REQUIRED by a Fighting Atheist for the Union of South Africa and adjacent territories in the following lines:—

General Merchandise, Hardware, Fancy Goods, and Provisions.

Fifteen years experience as Salesman throughout every corner of South Africa.—J. L., c/o The Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, E.C. 4.

**Pamphlets.**

By G. W. FOOTE.

CHRISTIANITY AND PROGRESS. Price 2d., postage 1d.  
 THE MOTHER OF GOD. With Preface. Price 2d.,  
 postage 1d.  
 THE PHILOSOPHY OF SECULARISM. Price 2d.,  
 postage 1d.

THE JEWISH LIFE OF CHRIST. Being the Sepher  
 Toldoth Jeshu, or Book of the Generation of Jesus.  
 With an Historical Preface and Voluminous Notes.  
 By G. W. FOOTE and J. M. WHEELER. Price 6d.,  
 postage 1d.

VOLTAIRE'S PHILOSOPHICAL DICTIONARY. Vol.  
 I., 128 pp., with Fine Cover Portrait, and Preface by  
 CHAPMAN COHEN. Price 1s. 3d. postage 1 1/2d.

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

DEITY AND DESIGN. Price 1d., postage 1/2d.  
 WAR AND CIVILIZATION. Price 1d., postage 1/2d.  
 RELIGION AND THE CHILD. Price 1d., postage 1/2d.  
 GOD AND MAN: An Essay in Common Sense and Natural  
 Morality. Price 3d., postage 1/2d.  
 CHRISTIANITY AND SLAVERY: With a Chapter on  
 Christianity and the Labour Movement. Price 1s.,  
 postage 1 1/2d.  
 WOMAN AND CHRISTIANITY: The Subjection and  
 Exploitation of a Sex. Price 1s., postage 1 1/2d.  
 CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL ETHICS. Price 1d.,  
 postage 1d.  
 SOCIALISM AND THE CHURCHES. Price 3d., post-  
 age 1d.  
 CREED AND CHARACTER. The Influence of Religion  
 on Racial Life. Price 7d., postage 1 1/2d.

By J. T. LLOYD.

PRAYER: ITS ORIGIN, HISTORY, AND FUTILITY.  
 Price 2d., postage 1d.

By MIMNERMUS.

FREETHOUGHT AND LITERATURE. Price 1d., post-  
 age 1/2d.

By WALTER MANN.

PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN MORALITY. Price 2d.,  
 postage 1/2d.  
 SCIENCE AND THE SOUL. With a Chapter on Infidel  
 Death-Beds. Price 7d., postage 1 1/2d.

By H. G. FARMER.

HERESY IN ART. The Religious Opinions of Famous  
 Artists and Musicians. Price 3d., postage 1/2d.

By A. MILLAR.

THE ROBES OF PAN: And Other Prose Fantasies.  
 Price 1s., postage 1 1/2d.

By COLONEL INGERSOLL.

IS SUICIDE A SIN? AND LAST WORDS ON  
 SUICIDE. Price 2d., postage 1d.  
 LIMITS OF TOLERATION. Price 1d., postage 1d.  
 CREEDS AND SPIRITUALITY. Price 1d., postage 1/2d.  
 FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH. Price 2d., postage 1d.

By D. HUME.

ESSAY ON SUICIDE. Price 1d., postage 1/2d.  
 LIBERTY AND NECESSITY. Price 1d., postage 1d.

About 1d in the 1s. should be added on all Foreign and  
 Colonial Orders.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C. 4.

**The Parson and the Atheist.**

*A Friendly Discussion on*

**RELIGION AND LIFE.**

BETWEEN

Rev. the Hon. EDWARD LYTTTELTON, D.D.  
*(Late Headmaster of Eton College)*

AND

**CHAPMAN COHEN**

*(President of the N. S. S.)*

With Preface by Chapman Cohen and Appendix  
 by Dr. Lyttelton.

The Discussion ranges over a number of different topics—  
 Historical, Ethical, and Religious—and should prove both  
 interesting and useful to Christians and Freethinkers alike.  
 Well printed on good paper, with Coloured Wrapper.  
 144 pages.

Price 1s. 6d., postage 2d.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C. 4.

**Gentlemen's High-Class Bespoke Tailoring.**

Fit and Finish of the best, and Prices un-  
 usually moderate.

Generous Patterns and Illustrated Self-  
 Measurement Forms sent anywhere on  
 application.

MACCONNELL & MABE,  
 New Street, Bakewell.

Fine Sepia-toned Photograph of

**Mr. CHAPMAN COHEN.**

Printed on Cream Carbon Bromide-de-Luxe.

Mounted on Art Mount, 11 by 8. A High Class  
 Production.

Price 2s. 3d., post free.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C. 4.

**PIONEER LEAFLETS.**

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

- No. 1. What Will You Put in its Place?
- No. 2. What is the Use of the Clergy?
- No. 3. Dying Freethinkers.
- No. 4. The Beliefs of Unbelievers.
- No. 5. Are Christians inferior to Freethinkers?
- No. 6. Does Man Desire God?

Price 1s. 6d. per 100.  
 (Postage 3d.)

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C. 4.

**A FIGHT FOR RIGHT.**

A Verbatim Report of the Decision in the House of Lords  
*in re*

Bowman and Others v. The Secular Society, Limited.

With Introduction by CHAPMAN COHEN.

Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.

Price One Shilling. Postage 1 1/2d.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.

Freethinkers please note—Support those who support the "Freethinker."

# WHAT IS NEUMETAL ?

It requires no Tools. No Acids. No Heat.

It Permanently Stops Leaks. Mends Cracks. Plugs Holes.

Useful in every Home. Needed by every Mechanic. Handy for every Motorist.

A Tube of Neumetal is a Time, Money, and Labour Saver.

Iron, Tin, Aluminium, Granite Ware, Tanks, Boilers, Stoves, Pipes, Roofs, Household Utensils.

Large Tube (six times the size of a small tube), **2s. 6d.**; Small Tube, **1s.** (post free).

*Directions given with every tube.*

When Ordering state for what purpose required, as Neumetal is stocked in two qualities—WHITE LABEL for Aluminium, Tin, Porcelain, etc.; YELLOW LABEL for Iron, Stoves, Gaspipes, etc.

**THOMAS CRANE, Limited,**

(Dept. 31) **43 DOYER STREET, PICCADILLY, LONDON, W. 1.**

New Pamphlets.

## SOCIETY and SUPERSTITION

By **ROBERT ARCH.**

CONTENTS: What is a Freethinker?—Freethought, Ethics, and Politics.—Religious Education.—The Philosophy of the Future.

Price **6d.**, Postage **1d.**

## MISTAKES OF MOSES.

By **COLONEL INGERSOLL**

*(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.)*

32 pages. **One Penny**, postage  $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

Should be circulated by the thousand. Issued for Propagandist purposes. 50 copies sent, post free, for 4s.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C. 4.

A BOOK FOR ALL TO READ.

## Determinism or Free-Will?

By **CHAPMAN COHEN.**

**NEW EDITION** Revised and Enlarged.

CONTENTS: Chapter I.—The Question Stated. Chapter II.—"Freedom" and "Will." Chapter III.—Consciousness, Deliberation, and Choice. Chapter IV.—Some Alleged Consequences of Determinism. Chapter V.—Professor James on the "Dilemma of Determinism." Chapter VI.—The Nature and Implications of Responsibility. Chapter VII.—Determinism and Character. Chapter VIII.—A Problem in Determinism. Chapter IX.—Environment.

Well printed on good paper.

Price, Wrappers **1s. 9d.**, by post **1s. 11d.**; or strongly bound in Half-Cloth **2s. 6d.**, by post **2s. 9d.**

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C. 4.

## Population Question and Birth-Control.

POST FREE THREE HALFPENCE

**MALTHUSIAN LEAGUE,**

**48 BROADWAY, WESTMINSTER, S.W. 1.**

## DOES MAN SURVIVE DEATH?

Is the Belief Reasonable?

Verbatim Report of a Discussion

BETWEEN

**Mr. HORACE LEAF**

*(Representing the Glasgow Spiritualist Association)*

AND

**Mr. CHAPMAN COHEN**

IN THE

**St. Andrew's Halls, Glasgow.**

Neatly Bound in Coloured Wrapper. Price **7d.**  
Postage  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.

*Special Terms for quantities for propaganda purposes.*

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C. 4.

A Book that no Freethinker should Miss.

## Religion and Sex.

Studies in the Pathology  
of Religious Development.

BY

**CHAPMAN COHEN.**

A Systematic and Comprehensive Survey of the relations between the sexual instinct and morbid and abnormal mental states and the sense of religious exaltation and illumination. The ground covered ranges from the primitive culture stage to present-day revivalism and mysticism. The work is scientific in tone, but written in a style that will make it quite acceptable to the general reader, and should prove of interest no less to the Sociologist than to the Student of religion. It is a work that should be in the hands of all interested in Sociology, Religion, or Psychology.

Large 8vo, well printed on superior paper, cloth bound, and gilt lettered.

Price **Six Shillings.**  
(Postage 6d.)

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C. 4.