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## Views and Opinions.

### Immortality.

Recently we were discussing in these columns the question of whether there existed a genuine desire for a future life or not. The conclusion reached was that no such desire exists, and that the conviction to the contrary owes its existence to the unthinking way in which people repeat current phrases, and to the lack of a clear understanding of even their own state of mind on particular issues. My present purpose is to prove that this last statement is true of the question of immortality as a whole, and that if those who profess a belief in immortality were to ask themselves, What exactly do I mean by it? this much would be realized. Then it would be seen, either that an assertion is made which their own knowledge is able to disprove, that they are bringing together terms that are mutually destructive, or that whatever intelligibility the proposition possesses is owing to a lack of knowledge of facts that bear upon the matter. It is, for example, easy enough to say that one believes twice two equals five. But this can only be said so long as we are ignorant of the power of two, or because we refrain from asking just what the statement involves. To assert the existence of a belief, and to have a belief, are not, of necessity, identical propositions. And I think it can be shown that the belief in immortality is one that if people would only ask themselves what it is they mean by it, would stand condemned by its own inherent weakness. There may easily be truths with which we are unacquainted, but there cannot well be truths that are in flat contradiction with what we already know to be true, and the terms of which cannot be brought together in the same conception.

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### Clearing the Ground.

Now what is it that ought to be meant when people speak of personal immortality as a fact? Clearly it will not do to say that the individual persists under a new form. In some form or other everything persists. That is a postulate of the most rigid determinism and of the most uncompromising materialism. Besides, a changed form of *me* is not *me* at all; it is someone, or something, else. John Smith, with a new set of bodily and mental characteristics is no more the original John Smith, even though all the same materials be in some way maintained, than one can call a baked pudding the

same as a boiled one merely because the cook uses the same ingredients. A belief in personal immortality, or in personal survival beyond death, implies the persistence of the individual *as we know him*. If I am not the same after as I am before death, then it is not *me* that persists, and my personal interest in the matter disappears. Not only does the conception of immortality properly involve this, but all the popular and emotional pleas for a future life imply it also. Without it the talk of meeting our loved ones again is the veriest rubbish. The husband who is looking forward to meeting his wife, the wife who is expecting to meet her husband, or the parent the child, must all be expecting the same bodily form, manifesting the same qualities that they knew this side the grave. Nothing else will do. To offer them anything different would be like expecting a mother who had lost a child to be quite content with having a free pick from an orphan asylum. To be real, the individual must exist the other side the grave as he does here. And I think it can be shown that this idea can only be entertained so long as we refrain from bringing the various terms of the proposition clearly before the mind.

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### Personality.

The moment we raise the issue in this clear and unambiguous form the unintelligibility of the belief begins to emerge. When we speak of man as an individual what is it we mean? Primarily man is known to us as an organism manifesting certain qualities or discharging certain functions. That he is more than this is pure assumption. But it is quite certain that if we empty our minds of this conception of man, all that we have left is a blank. To think of a function without an organ is a sheer impossibility. A function must be a function of something, as wetness is a quality of something that is wet and heat of something that is hot. We repeat the sentence, "Man Survives Death," much as we might repeat the formula in the Athanasian Creed about the three incomprehensibles, and only persuade ourselves that we believe it because we never ask ourselves what the deuce we mean. The reality of a survival of personality becomes the more unthinkable when we realize that personality is not a constant, but a variable. Personality is not a something that an individual starts life with, and which remains unchanged throughout. It is something that is slowly built up, and which is always undergoing a process of modification more or less drastic. Strictly speaking, a man in the course of his life manifests many personalities. There is that of the child, of the youth, and of maturity, and of old age. Which personality is it that survives death and which we are to meet again the other side of the grave? And why should one survive rather than the others? And if all do not survive, why should any? And if only one survives, then the destruction of personality is not a theory, but a fact. We all witness, or we all can witness if we only open our eyes, the destruction of personality continually going on. There are many other reasons equally decisive against the survival of personality beyond death, but for the moment I am testing the idea from the point of view of intelligibility, and in order to show that it

belongs to the by no means small class of beliefs that owe their strength to the fact that so many repeat strings of words and mistake them for definite ideas. It is like the formulas of magic that were so much in vogue in the middle ages, and which owed their power to the fact that no one knew what they meant.

What is "Self" ?

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It is not merely on the ground of lack of intelligibility that one may dismiss the theory of personal survival; the same conclusion may be reached from what we actually know of the nature of the sense of self. What sense of self has a very young child? So far as we can see, none at all. Even the knowledge of its having a body appears to be in the nature of a discovery. The sense of touch—the mother sense here as elsewhere—is probably the starting point, and with growth the notion of a physical self is gradually elaborated. On the mental side there is a corresponding growth. Experience of mother, home, playmates, the larger experience of the social world, all contribute their share to building up the personal consciousness of each of us, and in such a way that if one thinks of these experiences being different from what they are, one could not help thinking of the resulting personality being different likewise. The self, the "ego," is not something that is simple and indecomposable, but is complex and decomposable. It is built up before our very eyes, and can also be seen undergoing decomposition under the influence of disease. In some cases we have a complete loss of memory, which results in an absolute break between the existing "self" and the previous one. In other instances we have the temporary suppression of the normal self, as in alternating personality. In such cases, as in the whole range of mental disease, there is not a medical practitioner in the country who fails to draw the plain and obvious inference that we are dealing, not with the vagaries of an immaterial "soul," but with the temporary or permanent disorganisation and disintegration of a personality that has been slowly organized and integrated. And the building up of experiences, which on the psychological side gives us the sense of personality, has its analogue on the biological side. For the life of the organism is not single, but multiple. It is the expression of the combination of myriads of cell lives that meet us in the life of a particular organism. In a rough and ready way we may say that what the individual life is to national life, the cell is to the individual. As the former is the total of the individuals comprising the nation, so the life of the individual is the total of the energies possessed by the cells that make up the animal organism. But eliminate the individuals comprising a nation, and what becomes of that specific national life? Destroy the life of the cells, and what becomes of the life of the individual? Is it not as rational to talk of national life persisting in the absence of individuals as it is to think of human life persisting after the cells which compose the organism have been destroyed?

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Playing with Words.

In what has been said I have not touched upon many of the facts—real or alleged—upon which modern believers claim that the belief in immortality rests. These will be dealt with later. For the present I have been concerned with the attempt to show that when the proposition that man survives death is analyzed, it is found to be quite unintelligible, or, if otherwise, it owes its intelligibility to the absence of a knowledge of such facts as would make it unintelligible. To make my meaning quite clear, one may take an illustration from the law of gravitation. So long as one thinks of gravitation as merely pulling downward, the proposition that the same force which holds people on the earth here is pushing them off into space at the Anti-

podes is rational. But when we realize that the proper conception of gravitation is that of a force pulling towards a centre, the proposition at once becomes unintelligible and unthinkable. The conception of survival beyond death we know to have been born at a time when man was unacquainted with the real nature of the human organism and its functions. At that stage the conception of a double inhabiting the body and getting out of it at death and during sleep was quite an intelligible one. But what is intelligible at one stage becomes unintelligible in the light of fuller knowledge. And when we to-day bear in mind all that is implied in the conception of the continuance of individual life after death, we find that we are faced with nothing but a series of mutually destructive propositions. We cannot think of the organism existing in another world without assuming that the same conditions which exist here exist there, and then must dismiss from our minds the knowledge that the disintegration of the physical structure is absolutely complete. We cannot think of the functions of an organism existing in the absence of the organism because that outrages all we know of fact. And we cannot think of the survival of personality, as a psychological fact, once we realise the nature of personality, with all its permutations, cancellations, buildings, and rebuildings. At every point the belief in human survival receives a check from the positive knowledge which we actually possess. It can be retained only by our narcotizing ourselves with words, and closing our minds to some of the most easily ascertained facts of scientific investigation.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## Correspondence.

### IS REASONABLE RELIGION POSSIBLE?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mr. Harding's letters on this question show all the efflorescence of a busy, inquiring mind. While I appreciate his scholarly method, I must answer No! Astronomers recognize two horizons; the sensible, above which celestial bodies *apparently* rise; and the reasonable, above which they *really* rise. In the mental sphere two similar horizons obtain, and the Cosmo-theist would seem to measure his angular distances from the apparent.

Mr. Harding says, "Cosmo-theism asserts that the universe can be proved to have sublime *tendency*," but life is a battle, a struggle in four phases: (a) against destructive natural forces, (b) privation through excessive competition for food, (c) the carnivorous world, (d) the perpetual raids of a microbial sub-world. Man has achieved almost complete victory over the first three, and will in all probability conquer the last. All history seems to show that no religion has aided man in this struggle; but retardation of the final conquest, and of the entrance into what Sir E. Ray Lankester happily calls the Kingdom of Man is common to every religion.

Our intellectual emperors have been, not religionists, but those who, keeping their eyes fixed upon the reasonable mental horizon, either identified real facts about nature and man, or grouped those facts identified by others, explaining to us the universal laws which they obey. Einstein is the great living example of the latter class. The fatality accompanying all religions with which I have a nodding acquaintance seems to be that they build on ultimate events, but I suggest that positive knowledge of the universe can alone ameliorate the condition of humanity. Of Cosmo-theism I know little; I do know, however, that the virtues added a warm glow to all our great Freethinkers who were certainly not Cosmo-theists.

ARTHUR T. BARNARD.

## Dean Inge's Outlook Upon Life.

THE DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S is often characterized as a pessimist simply because he has the honesty to recognize facts, or because he does not believe in the triumph of the Church. Speaking recently of the Church of England, he said it must be "the Church of the English people," an honour which it does not at present enjoy. He frankly admits "that the last seventy years of Church life has been a period of decline." Upon this he positively insists, since the contrary is so often asserted. The Catholic party alone can be described as victorious, while the Evangelical and Liberal parties are extremely weak, and steadily losing ground. As reported in the *Daily Telegraph* for November 1, Dr. Inge is convinced that even the Catholic movement has "now about reached its height, and must soon begin to break up, owing to certain internal contradictions which the enthusiasm of its adherents has hitherto masked or ignored." Of course, the query naturally arises, what is the cause of the comparative weakness and failure of the Evangelicals in the Anglican Church? Dealing with this question, the Dean is reported to have pointed out:—

That a religious fact is a chapter in religious history, its meaning and reality being bound up with the meaning and reality of the religion. The whole subject was religious, and if they took it out of the religious sphere and investigated it as a mere occurrence in history they were ripping it out of its context, and the thing which they had in their hands for dissection was not the religious fact which they wanted to investigate. The dogmas of the Church's creeds, to come to close grips with the burning question, were not believed in as brute facts, but as something rather different. This was a matter which touched Conservative and Liberal alike, and it was a most difficult and delicate problem.

There is nothing new in that extract. Even the late Professor Henry Drummond regarded the Fall as something rather different from a "brute fact," as, indeed, a parable or allegory. He contributed an article on the subject to the *Nineteenth Century* as long ago as the year 1886, in connection with the famous debate between Professor Huxley and Mr. Gladstone. Ever since Liberal Theology came into existence, it has treated most of the facts of orthodoxy very largely as fables. Dean Inge asked his hearers to put his statement to a personal test as follows:—

Suppose they were offered a ride on H. G. Wells's "Time Machine," would they at once go and prove by ocular demonstration the two dogmas which were now so much controverted? Would they go to Bethlehem and witness the accouchement of the Virgin Mary, and satisfy themselves that her physical condition was not that of other married women? Then they would go to Joseph's garden, very early in the morning, and watch the angels rolling away the heavy stone, helping the risen Lord out of his grave-clothes, folding them up and laying them in a corner, handing him the new clothes which they had brought with them—for they could not suppose that he appeared to Mary Magdalene without them—and then watch him issuing from the vault. Having seen all this, would they say, "Thank God, my faith is now established on an absolutely sure basis; Christ was certainly God"? Or would they feel that somehow these precious doctrines had lost some of their value for them by being reduced to banal, brute facts? If they would face this question fairly, he thought it would take them to the heart of the problem about miracles, though not, alas, to the solution of it.

The natural inference from such language is that to the Dean neither the Virgin Birth nor the Resurrection is an historical fact. Both dogmas form part of the very texture of Christianity, and to pluck them out of it would involve an irretrievable loss. And yet we are warned against taking them as phenomena, "just like

other phenomena." What the Dean's real position is it is exceedingly difficult to ascertain. If the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection are not "banal, brute facts," are they facts at all? Was Jesus the son of a Virgin, and did he rise from the dead? Dr. Inge's answer seems to be "Yes" and "No" in one breath, which makes it unspeakably absurd. But how can a thing be and not be at one and the same time? The answer is that it can, though not in the same sense or way. But can it?

The Modernists were wrong in saying that, though the historical Jesus was the son of Joseph, and though his body rotted in the ditch into which it was probably thrown, yet still the contrary assertions were true for faith, so that they might recite the Nicene and Athanasian creeds with enthusiasm. That was the open sore, the unsolved, and as yet insoluble problem which at present reduced Liberal Christianity to a perplexed and trouble silence.

That insoluble problem the Dean lets alone. The Modernists are declared to be wrong, but wherein their error consists he does not tell us. The complexity of the problem is so great as to render a solution by purely critical methods impossible. To plain people, however, the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, not being banal, brute facts, or phenomena, are wholly unbelievable, and must be repudiated. They are driven to reject, not only the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, but even the very existence of the Gospel Jesus. To them a Godman is an unnatural, impossible being, like Osiris, Adonis, Attis, Mithra. All Saviour-Gods belong to the same category. Some Liberal theologians admit the unhistoricity of the Gospel Jesus, though believing that a historical Jesus did exist, and may yet be discovered in the Gospels themselves, as the result of a careful and rational examination of the materials contained therein.

The Dean recommends the relegation into the background of all puzzling theological questions, such as those relating to the inspiration of the Bible. Everybody is aware that on matters of fact the Bible is deplorably unreliable, and the deduction is, in the circumstances, perfectly reasonable that it is not likely to be more reliable on matters of speculation and conjecture. If its cosmogony is known to be false, why should its teaching about the existence and activities of God be received as true? Its writers knew no more about the supernatural than we do, and it is needless to add that we know absolutely nothing. These are questions which the Dean advises us to relegate into the background; but the curious thing is that the reverend gentleman derives his theology, such as it is, from the Bible. If he did not believe in the Bible, he would not be a Christian at all. It is as a believer in the Bible that he urges his hearers to "concentrate their attention on the growth and increase of the spiritual life, and the cause of its decay." The spiritual life is a life of faith in and communion with the God of the Bible, in the actual living of which this world and its life sink into comparative insignificance and worthlessness, the unseen world and its life alone being worthy of our consideration and service. Spiritual religion in its purest and simplest form consists in other-worldliness. The Dean affirms that our greatest need at present is a "new yearning for the Beyond, a new faith and hope in the eternal and unseen." He asserts dogmatically that this world can never give us the complete satisfaction of our desires or the fulfilment of our hopes. He tells us this, not as a man, but as a Christian minister, for, according to him, the chief attraction of Christianity lies in the fact "that it is unquestionably an other-worldreligion." He holds and expresses this view simply because he is a believer in the Bible. The Bible says: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the

love of the Father is not in him"; "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth." It is purely a Biblical conception that there exists an unseen and eternal world, and Christianity is a religion that treats it as the supreme reality. As an expounder of the Bible, the Dean solemnly assures us that "secularized Christianity, the religion of the platform, has neither savour nor salt." Then he logically adds: "It is otherworldliness that can alone transform the world." To transform the world means, of course, to make it God-fearing, God-loving, and God-serving, or, in other words, to make it untrue to itself and its social obligations. Such teaching is not only untrue, but positively iniquitous and morally baneful. When the nurse in Tennyson's *Children's Hospital* was told that "the good Lord Jesus has had his day," she exclaimed:—

Had? Has it come? It has only dawn'd. It will come by and by.

O, how could I serve in the wards if the hope of the world were a lie?

How could I bear with the sights and the loathsome smells of disease,

But that he said, "Ye do it to me, when ye do it to these?"

As a matter of fact, there are thousands of people who devote themselves to the noble task of improving the conditions of life in this world without the least hope of immortality beyond the tomb, their only motive being love of their fellow-beings. To such people this world does give the satisfaction of their desires and the fulfilment of their hopes.

J. T. LLOYD.

## A Professor's Progress.

Understand that well, it is the deep commandment, dimmer or clearer, of our whole being, to be free. Freedom is the one purport, wisely aimed at, or unwisely, of all man's struggles, toilings, and sufferings on this earth.  
*Thomas Carlyle.*

THE name of John Henry Newman, the famous cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church, is known the world over; that of his younger brother, Francis, is known to but few. Yet Francis did substantial good during his lifetime, which extended almost throughout the nineteenth century. Born at the beginning of the century, he lived until very near its close, working, as he himself said, to do something for the good of those who had fewer advantages than himself.

Francis William Newman was born in a religious family, and he had the same early training as his elder brother, who became one of the foremost ecclesiastics of his generation. Educated at Oxford University, he was elected to a fellowship at Balliol College, but resigned, being unable conscientiously to comply with the regulations of the Test Act then in force. After journeying into Syria as a missionary, Francis Newman abandoned all thoughts of taking holy orders, as he had contemplated. While his brother, John, was attracted by the authority of the Church, Francis found himself seceding more and more from her, drifting slowly, but surely, into Freethought. The Church's loss was the world's gain, for the good work he was to do was not within the very narrow confines of the cloister, but in the broad expanses of the busy world. Francis became Classical Professor in Manchester New College, and afterwards Latin Professor at London University. By the middle of the century Francis had given up Christianity, and had written his memorable *Phases of Faith*, a work which still lives, and will continue to live, as an expression of a remarkable personality, and a "human document" of extraordinary interest.

The book is a veritable pilgrim's progress from Christianity to Freethought. It is a plain, unvarnished account of the reasons why Francis Newman gave up his belief in Orthodoxy. Beginning as a believer of the narrowest type, he shows, step by step, how he relinquished article after article of the creed he had been brought up in. Its great merit is the transparent honesty of the writer, which shines on every page. It needed courage, too, to write such a book, for Newman was a University professor, and ran the risk of dismissal, not only from his post, but from any academic position in any English University. Indeed, ostracism was then, as now, a very formidable weapon in the hands of the Church of Christ, which, professing to love its enemies, always had a knife up its sleeve.

Intolerance was more marked in the middle of the nineteenth century than now. A work which, for the first time, put the arguments for evolution in popular language, the famous *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (1844), had to be issued anonymously, or its author would have been ruined. Professor Newman had more courage than Robert Chambers. Referring to his own youthful creed, he said plainly:

I knew not then, and I know not now, why bishops, as such, should be more revered than common clergymen; or clergymen, as such, more than common men.

It needed audacity to write such things. It is true that Richard Carlile and other working-class pioneers had written as plainly, and had suffered imprisonment, but Francis Newman lived in another stratum of society. Such declarations, over the signature of a University professor were not pleasant reading for the orthodox. Moreover, they were written in a way that all could understand, and not in the veiled language of the learned. In academic circles plain speech is not esteemed at its proper value. Ruskin once said, laughingly, that people no longer thought him a fine writer because, if he thought a man's house was burning, he said, "Sir, your house is on fire," whereas formerly he used to say, "Sir, the abode in which you passed the delightful days of your adolescence is in imminent danger of conflagration."

Like the majority of Freethinkers, Francis Newman was a zealous reformer. No sooner did his eye alight on an abuse, or become aware of a canker in society, than he burned to remedy the one and pluck out the other. In every civilization there will always be found, sheltering under the wall, evil things not yet brought to account, not yet seen in their true nature, but still dragging back the wheels of progress and the betterment of humanity. Four of such evils Francis Newman spent years of his life in combatting; cruelty to animals, intemperance, militarism, and the cruelty of the criminal code. Newman was no half-hearted reformer, and he wielded a swift, live pen. How pointed is his question, "Why does one murder make a villain, but the murder of thousands a hero?" And again, "Why do princes and statesmen, who would scorn to steal a shilling, make no difficulty in stealing a kingdom?"

Newman was a determined opponent of the system of long terms of imprisonment, and pointed out the evils that arose from the offence of one pauperising the many dependent on the criminal. His strenuous advocacy of land reform was by no means the least service rendered by this noble-hearted enthusiast. Hear his plain speech:—

That a man should be able to buy up large tracts of land, and make himself the owner of them—to keep them in or out of culture as he pleases—to keep or open roads, and dictate where houses should be built—this is no natural right; but is an artificial creation of arbitrary law; law made by legislation for personal convenience—certainly not for the benefit of the nation.

This country is far behind the whole of Europe in this matter. "We know not whither, beside England," Newman wrote, "to look for a nation living by wages, and divorced from all rights in the crops which they raise."

Brave old man! His more famous brother, the lonely cardinal of a reactionary Church, may be better known to the world, but to us Francis Newman is the greater and the nobler man. He was of the stuff of which pioneers are made. Always boldest when there was a cause that needed fighting for, or on behalf of fellow-citizens who were powerless to right their own wrongs, and who required someone to voice them, his pen was tireless on behalf of progress. We salute the memory of one who, in the midst of difficulties, and breathing an atmosphere heavy with superstition, yet showed himself a good and a wise man.

MIMNERMUS.

### Orthodoxy; The Glorification of Self-Contradictory Belief.

A VERY peculiar strain of human perversity and unreason is revealed in the fact that the further a theosophic or metaphysical belief, tenet, or doctrine is removed from the logic of common sense, the more orthodox it is claimed to be. There has never been an exception to this rule from Gnostic times to our own day. During all the disputes, divisions, wrangles, and sanguinary conflicts which raged throughout Christendom for a millennium and a half, the section which espoused the more irrational, self-contradictory, or impossible tenet, dogma, or doctrine was always the self-styled orthodox party.

And as a sense of orthodoxy fills the believer with an arrogant pride, he is wont to look down upon those whom he denounces as heretics with a feeling of disdain more or less mingled with a kind of supercilious pity. This strange and sad characteristic reveals itself not only in Theosophy, but equally so in metaphysics. And that fact is not surprising, for the theologian and the metaphysician have ties of close kinship. In fact, they have a community of origin in Plato; and during the Dark Ages they were one and the same body. It is only during comparatively recent times that they have segregated into separate camps, flying flags with distinct titles.

Inspired by the same mental perversity, the "pure metaphysician," from Plato to Bergson, holds the less pure variety in contempt. And as the orthodox divine has always, more or less openly, denied the epithet Christian to Socinians and Unitarians, so the metaphysician refuses with considerable hauteur the title of "philosopher" to anyone who is guilty of coquetting with "the evidence of the senses" or the data of experience.

The fact that the latest metaphysical knight always demolishes the airy castles of his predecessors, has had not the slightest effect upon his complacent self-assurance or upon the vanity of his conceit.

Moreover, they have a community not only of origin, but of "foe." The Gnostic or Early Christian fulminated his fierce anathemas against "matter," "the body," or "this world." Matter was to him the embodiment of all evil; the curse of man and of Gods—even Satan was its offspring. And it remains to this day the one target at which the modern theologian or metaphysician hurls his javelins and directs his arrows. "Materialism" is their perpetual foe, notwithstanding that the "matter" of the ancient Gnostic and that of modern science are nigh as unlike as a piece of stone and a living creature; for a knowledge of the phenomenal universe in terms of physical and chemical energy was non-existent prior to the birth of modern science.

Let us now exemplify this trait of perversity from the famous heresies of the first few centuries. It will be seen that in every case the so-called heresy was simply the resentment, the opposition, and the resistance of the rational faculty in man, struggling against being "gagged and bound."

In every case it was an honest effort to retain the dogma, and at the same time to save human reason from being strangled.

It should be particularly observed that in no case was it a rebellion against the teaching of error or false science. Nor yet against the fantastic creations—the "screaming burlesques" which the Gnostic "staged" in the spirit world for human entertainment—no, it was not against either, but only against palpable self-contradictions, that is, against statements which deny in the predicate what is asserted in the subject or vice-versa, e.g., a circle is a square; black is white; two and two make five; three is one; a thing is and is not at the same instant, etc. It was against such self-contradictions that the ancient mind rebelled.

And it was quite natural that it did so. For if such contradictions are heard for the first time when the mind has reached its maturity, they tend to startle and shock it.

Now, the dogmas of Christianity, as they gradually crystallized out, were found to be full of such contradictory elements. Before they could be believed in their final form, human reason had to abdicate. But for centuries there were thousands of people in the Mediterranean world who refused to surrender and allow their reason to be thus strangled. So, to retain a dogma, they often gave it a meaning which made it more or less plausibly rational.

These efforts the party of self-contradiction denounced as "heresies," and arrogated to itself the title of "orthodox!"

Why was Christianity such a conglomerate of contradictions? Because it was a *Coalition Religion*—a synthesis of two confluent streams, the Gnostic and the Jewish, whose tenets were not only distinct, but inconsistent, and even contradictory. So, if both sets were to be retained, the votary was placed between the horns of a dilemma—he had either to believe the contradiction or to effect some compromise between the conflicting tenets.

If we view the famous schisms in that light we shall see the rationale of each heresy and get to understand what otherwise is a mere mental record of historical facts.

We will now briefly consider each of the four fundamental credal collisions which a religious coalition brought in its train:—

I.—In the first place, Judaism was an arrogant, uncompromising monotheism. Jahveh, the titular God of the Jews, had been elevated by the priesthood, or more especially by the Hebrew prophets, from the grade of a tribal deity to that of a supreme God. This "promotion" reflected the character of the people. It was an index of a peculiar characteristic of the race, and perhaps of the entire Semitic family—viz., being obsessed by a superlative national conceit.

Gnosticism, on the contrary, admitted the existence of a number of Gods, good and bad, and of various grades and rank; but it inculcated the belief in a supreme nameless Godhead of absolute perfection and goodness.

But the Pauline section of the new religion had taken over the Jewish Old Testament, and recognised it as an inspired book. They were therefore compelled to identify its God, Jahveh, with the nameless, perfect Deity of the Gnostics. But as the former is cruel, erratic, partial, despotic, and unjust, it was impossible to do so without abrogating the rights of human reason. With a view, therefore, to retaining him in the new pantheon, despite his moral imperfections,

*Marcion*, the great Christian Gnostic, propounded a creed in which he could be retained without a contradiction that would shock the moral reason. And for his rationalising troubles he was rewarded by being branded as the arch-heretic; while they who identified gross immorality with moral perfection arrogantly claimed for themselves the title of "orthodoxy" or "right-belief." How many millions has this orthodoxy done to death for the crime of not accepting an impossible object of belief?

II.—The dogma of monotheism, however, landed them in another dilemma. The recognition and acceptance of the Messiah of the Old Testament as the suffering-God of the Gnostic world demanded in the name of logical consistency the abandonment of the one-God dogma or tenet.

So, to save the situation and to incorporate both deities in the new creed without crushing and silencing "human reason," two brave men, *Arius* and *Sabellius*, formulated creeds with tenets that would make the new religion monotheistic without becoming an embodied absurdity.

So a life and death struggle between reason and unreason raged for ages, ending in an ignominious defeat for the former and a triumphant victory for the latter. Arianism and Sabellianism were accordingly anathematized as "heresies," which finally came to be looked upon as the very machinations of the devil! And glorified unreason, under the name of orthodoxy! remained in possession of the field.

III.—There was still another circle to be squared in the new coalition-religion of greater difficulty still, if "impossibles" have degrees of comparison.

The new suffering-God had two natures—the divine and the human.

How could two such incompatibles be united without self-contradiction?

How could the same person, as a God, be all-knowing, and, as a Jewish peasant, be all-ignorant?

How could he, as a God, be omnipotent, and as a man impotent? How as a human being could he be asleep, and as a divinity be eternally awake? How could two consciousnesses so incompatible and contradictory be ever unified? Such was the nature of the circle to be squared!

The orthodox demanded under penalty of eternal damnation implicit belief in the two series of self-contradictions!

But Reason found brave champions in the *Docetae*, in the *Monophysites*, and, in a less degree, in the *Nestorians*. But they were all denounced as wicked heretics, instigated by Satan. By the by, it follows from this that Satan was the first Rationalist, and his august majesty ought to be enrolled by the R.P.A. as its divine founder!

IV.—Again, the dogma of human depravity consequent upon the myth of Adam's fall and that of an eternal hell, combined with the rite of baptism led to the most abhorrent and fiendish belief ever conceived by a human being, viz., that unbaptized infants were doomed to eternal torments!

Such tenets were not only repulsive to the feelings of even a human monster, but were wholly irrational. So Pelagius, a British monk (was not his real name Morgan, of which Pelagius was a kind of Greek rendering?), had the courage to oppose and denounce the ludicrous dogma of "original sin," and therefore denied the damnation of unbaptized infants and of virtuous unbaptized adults.

But, as in all other cases, this bit of human sanity and mercy was soon branded as "heresy," which, with the aid of the brutal forces that "orthodoxy" could then wield, was finally put down.

And so, after a credal war of some eight centuries, Unreason under the name of Orthodoxy conquered the whole Christian world.

Why have these struggles ceased for the last thousand years? Simply because the mind is now drugged in youth; because it is inoculated with the virus of creed before reason is awakened within it. The moment that orthodoxy, which means the Catholic Church, became powerful enough to capture the child, it knew full well that the battle was over, and that the war of unreason was won. And for a millennium or more glorified irrationality reigned supreme over the minds of men with virtually undisputed sway, until Protestantism arose, when the struggle was renewed with all its ancient fury and ferocity as we see it now in Ireland, where it brings "peace and goodwill unto men" in its truly characteristic way.

It should, however, be noted that Protestantism has no claim whatever to the perspicacious rationality of the ancient heresies, for it is mainly or solely a revolt against the absurdity of rites, and not of creeds. The basic self-contradictions of Christian orthodoxy it has left untouched.

Even the two celebrated heresies associated with the names of *Montanus* and *Manichæus*, though not directly concerned with the conflicting basic ideas of the new Faith, had a much better claim to rationality than the Protestant, for they stood for consistency between creed and practice. They maintained, for example, that those who pretended to believe in the immediate end of the world should live consistently with that belief; and that if miracles were facts 200 years before, they must be possible then.

In this manner the term orthodoxy became synonymous with glorified belief in inconsistency and self-contradiction.

KERIDON.

## A Short History of the Art of Writing.

### V.

(Concluded from p. 715.)

VARIOUS other systems, requiring a prodigious memory and unremitting toil by the student for their mastery, followed: but the first Shorthand system worthy of the name was invented by another clergyman, John Willis, whose system, published as *The Art of Stenographie*, in 1602, was based upon the alphabet. ".....the clumsiness of his alphabet of Shorthand characters, and the confused laborious contractions by which he denotes prefixes and terminations, involving the continual lifting of the pen would seem to render his method almost as slow as longhand."

Willis had many imitators. Two systems which preceded Phonography were fairly successful: the first, devised by William Mason, and set forth in his *Pen Pluck'd from an Eagle's Wing*, was used in the trial of Warren Hastings: the second, *The Universal English Shorthand*, was invented by a poet, John Byrom. Among the latter's pupils were Horace Walpole, Charles Wesley, and Lord Chesterfield.

In 1837 Mr. (afterwards Sir) Isaac Pitman issued the first book in which his system of Shorthand (to which he gave the name "Phonography") was explained. Unlike most of its predecessors, it was not based upon the common alphabet, but upon an enlarged alphabet of twenty-four consonants (including the aspirate), and twelve vowels. His system, which effected a revolution in English Shorthand methods, became very popular, and it has been adapted to the use of more than twenty languages. Nathan Behrin at New York, in 1912, achieved a record with Pitman's Shorthand, writing at the rate of 278 words per minutes, for five minutes.

The two most important foreign systems are those of Gabelsberger (1789-1849), which has become the

basis of the German systems; and Duployé, whose system is taught in the State schools of France.

Mr. J. M. Sloan, a Scotsman much interested in the study of comparative stenography, perceived the possibilities of the latter of these two systems, and obtained permission from M. Duployé to construct an English system, using the Duployan alphabet as its foundation. Since its introduction into this country in 1882, the Sloan-Duployan has come to rival Pitman's in popularity, over half a million copies of the *Instructor* (in which an exposition of the system is contained), having been sold. It has also been adapted to fourteen other languages, including Chinook, the tongue of a North American tribe. The history of the introduction of Shorthand to the American aborigines is exceedingly interesting. A Breton priest, Father Le Jeune, the missionary in charge of a large territory in British Columbia, had failed, after repeated endeavours, to teach the natives to write in longhand characters, and conceived the idea of teaching them to read and write their language by means of Duployan Shorthand symbols. It says much for the simplicity of the system that his experiment proved a complete success; and to-day there are thousands of Indian Shorthand writers in the Canadian North-West, and a paper, printed entirely in Shorthand, which circulates among them.

About 150 words per minute is usually reckoned as a sufficiently high speed for verbatim reporting of ordinary public speakers; although some public men speak at a greater rate. The most extraordinary feat done with Sloan-Duployan Shorthand was the report that Mr. Edward O'Shaughnessy, a Parliamentary reporter, made of a speech delivered by the Hon. Mr. Blake in the House of Commons. "Such a feat," wrote Mr. P. Connolly in the *Clerk* for May, 1911, "entailing an hour and a quarter's incessant writing at the phenomenal rate of 225 to 230 words per minute, and resulting in a thoroughly correct report, and the special congratulations of the orator, is without equal in the stenographic annals of any country."

W. H. MORRIS.

### Acid Drops.

There used to be a seat of learning in Edinburgh called the University. Presumably it is trying to get rid of that reputation, since it has just elected Mr. Lloyd George as its Lord Rector and rejected Professor Gilbert Murray. Of course, the election was determined by political preferences, which, we think, should not, in such an election, be allowed to operate. But it does seem clear to us that in electing a Lord Rector a University such as Edinburgh should have paid some regard to learning and scholarship, and it is notorious that in neither direction can any claim be set up on behalf of Mr. Lloyd George. In a political contest comment would be unnecessary, but for a University to reject a scholar of the standing of Professor Murray, and to elect one who cannot lay the smallest possible claim to learning—classical, historical, scientific, or literary—causes one to realize more keenly than ever how demoralizing an influence politics may become. We think too highly of the Scottish universities not to hope that the students will soon overcome this attack of delirium.

Mr. Rider Haggard says that there is more ill-treatment of children among certain sections of our civilized people than there is among savages. We believe that ill-treatment of children among uncivilized people is very rare. It is also rare among people such as the Japanese. It is a curious fact that there is more ill-treatment of children among the Christian peoples of the world than among any others. Japan is declared to be a child's paradise, and Nansen said that the Esquimaux simply could not realize his meaning when he asked them if they

ever beat their children. Still, we have no doubt but that things will change when once Christianity gets a proper hold of them.

Mr. Hilaire Belloc, who is a hard-shell Roman Catholic, has written a book, entitled *Europe and the Faith*. His conclusion is that "Europe will return to the Faith, or she will perish." We think that Mr. Belloc is as mistaken in this matter as he was in his war-time prophecies. And Mr. Belloc as a prophet kept us all smiling through troubled times.

Pity the sorrows of a poor, old deity! Glasgow temperance folk organized a whole night of prayer for deliverance from drink.

The begging appeals on behalf of repairing Westminster Abbey are described by the obsequious Pressmen as "the fund to save the Abbey." The Church of England is the wealthiest in the world, and there is no more chance of the Abbey falling down than there is of the bishops parting with their emoluments.

A writer in the *New Age* very rightly complains at the way in which the churches play fast and loose with language and its meanings. That makes it all the more advisable that such critics should be very careful against committing the sins with which they charge others. What, for instance, is one to make of the following:—"The hope for religion lies now in science; for, while established religion is becoming materialist, science, in its researches into psychology, is becoming spiritual." "Spiritual" is a rather useful word, to which we have no objection when properly used. But here, if it has any meaning at all, it is as the equivalent of "religious," and that certainly does not express the truth. So long as we use the word "religious" rightly, science is becoming, in an increasing measure, consciously non-religious, as it was always actually so. The very word "psychology" is here somewhat misleading, since it suggests to the uninformed mind, or to the cloudy intelligence, something of a mystical—or misty—character. The truth is that scientific psychology is becoming definitely deterministic in character, and is thus removing any possibility of religion getting help from that quarter. Why presumably Freethinking writers should disclose so often the anxiety they do to prove that the views they favour are really religious would be a mystery were it not that one sees so many examples of the hesitancy with which people affront the master superstition of the ages.

A retired banker, of Queen Anne's Mansions, London, died whilst kneeling at his bedside at prayer. There is no moral.

The Bishop of Riverina, N.S.W., told a Derby audience the other day that he would like some more clergymen out there, and then added, by way of encouragement, that they need have no fear as to salary, while six of his clergymen had recently been presented with motor cars. It sounds like one of our Government advertisements advising our young men to join the army and see the world free—that is, at the expense of the ratepayers. The Bishop mentioned that he had had a car given to him, but had sold it before coming to England. Doubtless some of the Derby clergy will now hear the "call" of the Lord to go to New South Wales—or will it be the hoot of the motor horn?

Edison is said to have invented a microphone for the purpose of enabling ghosts to deliver their messages at first hand instead of resorting to a Spiritualist medium. We have ourselves suggested that they might rap out their messages through a typewriter, but the suggestion does not appear to have been acted on. But certainly, if they would use a microphone and a typewriter instead of mediums, a great deal of suspicion would be allayed. But ghosts have themselves to blame if they will insist on giving their messages in circumstances that never fail to rouse doubts as to their genuineness.

At a Presbyterian church meeting at Southend-on-Sea, a speaker, giving an address on "Ireland," said, "Both among the Orangemen and the Roman Catholics the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount held sway in theory." Apparently, any high-sounding nonsense is considered good enough for a Christian congregation.

Apparently, there is a "Press Prayer League." A little prayer-card has been sent through the post to a member of our staff. It contains a twelve-line appeal, asking "God" to help "all writers of books and newspapers." Judging by the imprint, the card comes from South London—and the idea is distinctly suburban.

Some Oxford professors, among them the Poet Laureate, Dr. Robert Bridges, recently committed the offence of expressing a desire for the renewal of more friendly relations with German scientific and literary men. This aroused the wrath of the *Times*, which finds the "Hymn of Hate" so attractive that it would keep it up even though the whole of Europe crumbled to the singing. Dr. Robert Bridges wrote a lengthy letter to the *Times* in justification of his attitude, and in the course of his communication quoted from Shelley the lines:—

Speak! thy strong words may never pass away.

\* \* \* \* \*

Love from its awful throne of patient power  
In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour  
Of dread endurance, from the slippery, steep,  
And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs  
And folds over the world its healing wings.....  
Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance.  
These are the seals of that most firm assurance.....  
These are the spells by which to reassume  
An Empire o'er the disentangled gloom.  
To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite :  
To defy wrongs darker than death or night.....  
This, like thy glory, Titan is to be  
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free ;  
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

The twelfth line is a misquotation. One of our readers promptly wrote the following to the *Times*:—

SIR,—Whilst wholly in sympathy with the Oxford professors' appeal to their German and Austrian brethren, I am more than surprised at the Poet Laureate's misquoting Shelley in his letter appearing in to-day's *Times*. In his "Prometheus Unbound" Shelley did not write "To defy wrongs darker than death or night" was to be "good" or "great," but rather that "to forgive" was to be so.

In the breadth of their humanitarianism the Atheist poet and the great leader of the Christians were, in all essentials, akin in their ideals. But why were the feelings of the erring Christians spared by Dr. Bridges in 1914 by his setting a limit to the splendid magnanimity of the "Atheist" through misquoting him? Presumably this was an inadvertence.—Yours faithfully, R. H. B.

We print this letter here because the *Times* declined to insert it. For aught we know, the misquotation may be due to the *Times* and not to Dr. Bridges. Whatever reputation for truth the *Times* had was destroyed long since. In any case, refusal to insert a correction is simply inexcusable.

The Rev. A. Wynter, an Anglican parson, has joined the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestants will call him "the Wynter of our discontent."

The latest clerical wills include that of the Rev. S. Gladstone, son of Gladstone, £7,268. It is a small sum, but it is large enough to keep the reverend gentleman out of Paradise.

Regent's Park Chapel is to be closed. The church cannot afford to pay the increased rent, which is being raised from £65 to £950, in addition to £500 for renewal of the lease. Prayer may move mountains, but it can't move the landlords.

One of our lady friends tells us that she inquired of her doctor what was his religion. He replied that he was "a

demobilised Protestant." The description is good enough to be preserved. There are really large numbers of demobilized religionists about, the only trouble about them is that they have a lingering fear of the old uniform. If they could only outgrow that, they would be doing some useful work in helping the demobilization of others.

No one who is acquainted with the utterances of the clergy, and who understands the character of the gentlemen responsible for them, are ever inclined to take them seriously. Here, for example, is the Dean of Lincoln, who recently told a conference at Newcastle that "A modern publisher had said, 'The public want filth, and I'll see that they get it; it pays.'" We are not surprised that publishers such as Macmillan and Duckworth are laughing at the idea of any publisher having said any such thing, and defying the Dean to produce the name. That, of course, the Dean will not do. No publisher, even though he did publish "filth," would ever be jackass enough to say so. That is not the plan pursued in this Christian country. He would say that he did it in the interests of morality and religion—much as we disguise slavery in Africa under the name of indentured labour, and annex the native's land in the interests of his moral development. We do not face moral issues in the straightforward way that such a declaration would imply. We are never courageous in our immorality, with the result that the difficulty of effecting a cure is intensified.

The fact is that the Dean is only illustrating in this kind of talk the demoralizing influence of the pulpit on character. The pulpit has, so far as misstatement is concerned, enjoyed for centuries a privileged position. The larger portion of the "experiences" narrated by clergymen on the platform are quite mythical. Tract writing, with the numerous cases cited, is again an exercise in imagination. And in dealing with those who are opposed to them the manner in which the clergy circulate slanders is too plain to need emphasis. The consequence is that there is a pulpit tradition and a pulpit practice that the ordinary rules of truthfulness, such as apply even in politics, need not apply to the pulpit and in connection with religion. If it is putting it rather too strongly to say that clergymen are notoriously untruthful, in the positive sense of deliberately lying, it is no more than the truth to say that more than any other class in the community the clergy are careless as to whether their statements are true or not, so long as they serve the immediate purpose in hand.

#### PILLS TO PURGE ORTHODOXY.

It is to be feared that, to most men, the sky is but a concave mirror, showing nothing behind, and in looking into which they see only their own distorted images, like the reflection of a face in a spoon. Hence it needs not surprise that they are not very devout worshippers; it is a great wonder that they do not openly scoff.

Piety, like small-pox, comes by infection. Robinson Crusoe, however, caught it alone on his island. It is probable that he had it in his blood.

Everybody professes to know that it would be difficult to find a needle in a haystack, but very few reflect that this is because haystacks seldom contain needles.

It was never intended that men should be saints in heaven until they are dead and good for nothing else. On earth they are mostly fools.

The influence of climate upon civilization has been more exhaustively treated than studied. Otherwise, we should know how it is that some countries that have so much climate have no civilization.

The symbol of charity should be a circle. It usually ends exactly where it begins—at home.

A four-footed beast walks by lifting one foot at a time, but a four-horse team does not walk by lifting one horse at a time. And yet you cannot readily explain why this is so.—*Ambrose Bierce* ("Dod Grile").



## "Freethinker" Sustentation Fund.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Previously acknowledged, £458 6s. 1d. "Old Soldier" (second subscription), 10s.; "Anonymous," £2 2s.; R. V., 5s.; R. M., 5s.; F. Hobday, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Harden, in memory of their son, a brave young Freethinker, who lost his life in East Africa August 3, 1917, £5; E. A. Phipson, 10s.; E. L. G., £1; A. D. Guest, 2s. 6d.; K. and L. S. Dunstan, 10s.; W. L. Jones, 10s.; K. Palmer, 10s.; G. O. Warren, 10s.; F. Billington Grieg, £10; Oscar Bracht, £5; J. W. Hartgill, 2s. 6d.; G. H. Murphy, 10s.; L. W. Willis, 10s.; A. Macleod, 10s.; J. R. Williams, 2s. 6d.; J. Killick, 2s.; H. Avenell, 2s.; Miss Williams, 2s.; Mr. and Mrs. Waymark, 5s.; J. Adams, 15s.; J. Williams, 15s.; Freda Cox, 15s.; R. Terroni, £1; J. Glassbrook, 15s. 6d.; "The Clan," 12s.; R. H. Chandler, 10s.; W. Pearce, 10s.; A. Robertson, 11s. 3d.

Per Secretary Manchester Branch—D'Oyleys (per Mrs. Mapp), 10s.; J. W. English (second subscription), 5s.; John Roberts, £1.

Total, £494 5s. 4d.

PROMISED, provided the total sum raised reaches £1,000, including the amounts promised:—"Medical," £50; "In Memory of the late Sir Hiram Maxim," £50; Mr. J. B. Middleton, £20; "A Friend," £100; A. W. Coleman, £6; "Working Journalist," £3; X. Y. Z., £10; J. Morton, 10s.; R. Proctor, £1; National Secular Society, £25; F. Collins, 10s.; H. Black, £1 1s.; T. Sharpe, £1 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. S. Clowes, £1 1s.; J. Breese, £3.

Total promises, £272 3s.

Correction. F. E. Monks, £1 in last week's list, should have been £1 1s.

### To Correspondents.

LATE CHURCH OF ENGLAND CONVERT.—We have read your letter with very great interest, and are pleased to know that you find this journal so stimulating. Always glad to hear from our readers.

B. STRINGER.—You may well wonder at the people swallowing such sermons as you enclose. One can only go on pegging away at the work of making the delivery of such sermons impossible. The only way to stop them is to rob the clergy of their audiences. A good dose of the *Freethinker* would do that in most cases.

BOLTON WELL-WISHER.—We have noted the phrase, and will deal with it when the trial is over. We can speak with greater freedom then.

MEDICAL writes:—"Permit me to thank you for your 'Views and Opinions' on 'Our Early Ancestor.' Could you not reprint it, or something like it for use in pamphlet form? It is a pity that so much good matter should be left in the form in which it now stands." We are pleased to have the appreciation of "Medical," but we are doubtful about reprinting. Publishing will soon be on the level of collecting rare paintings—it will be a hobby for millionaires.

F. HOBDAY.—Thanks for photograph. The faces of friends are always an agreeable sight. We congratulate you on your "possessions."

"CAMBRIA."—Lester F. Ward was an Atheist, and, so far as we are aware, never hid the fact. For some time he ran a militant anti-Christian journal in the United States. One of these days we will reprint some of his articles in these pages.

T. RAWLINSON.—We don't see that we can do more than we have done. The position is before our readers, and each will help to the extent of his or her interest and means. And there are plenty to do all that is required without pressing too heavily on any.

W. L. JONES.—Shall be glad to see you at Pontypridd. Please make yourself known.

J. WILLIAMS.—Thanks to you and your friends. Pleased to learn that you have all found the paper an educational tonic. Naturally, the churches lay low when speech would rob them of their supporters. Luckily, many are now finding them out.

R. A. PHIPSON.—Next week. Crowded out of this issue.

M. BEESLEY.—Pleased to hear from you again. The details in your letter are unfortunately far from common in this Christian country of ours. We are sorry that the leaflet for which you inquire is now out of print.

H. IRVING.—Sorry to hear that you are unwell. Hope you will soon be all right again.

C. KAISER (N.S.W.).—P.O.O. received and handed to shop manager. We are pleased to find you so appreciative of the *Freethinker*. We have always been interested in the land question, and we are of opinion that the one in vogue in England is such that it is a scandal to a people that prides itself on being liberty-loving and progressive. Perhaps for that reason they are so slow to move. One can only struggle on and hope for better things.

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

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## Sugar Plums.

To-day (November 14) Mr. Cohen lectures in the Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester. The lecture commences at 6.30, and admission is free. There is no obstacle, therefore, to Freethinkers inducing their Christian friends to be present.

Next Sunday (November 21) Mr. Cohen lectures in the White Palace, Pontypridd. The local friends are expecting a big rally of the Freethinkers throughout the Rhondda, and we daresay there will be visitors from elsewhere. We hope to be able to report crowded meetings. It is many years since Mr. Cohen lectured in Pontypridd, although he has several times been near there of late years.

Mr. Lloyd lectures to-day (November 14) in the City Hall Saloon, Glasgow, at 12 o'clock and 6.30. We hope that the Glasgow Saints will see that the hall is crowded out on both occasions.

There was only a moderate audience at the Friars Hall on Sunday last, but no doubt the meetings will improve as the course progresses. The hall is a new one, and seems to be built at the rear of one of the large houses in the road. The name of the hall is not yet in position, and for this reason there seems to have been some difficulty in locating it. If intending visitors will remember that it is on the south side of the bridge, No. 236, the difficulty of locating it should be overcome. Last Sunday Mr. Samuels was good enough to act as a guide outside the hall, while Miss Kough officiated at the bookstall within. Mr. McLaren acted as chairman for Mr. Cohen. The lecturer to-day (November 14) is Mr. A. B. Moss. We hope that those who can will do their best to advertize the meetings, and so induce the course to be extended beyond those at present arranged. Slips advertizing the meetings can be obtained either of Miss Vance at the N. S. S. office or by applying to our shop manager.

We do not think that Mr. Adam Gowans Whyte, in his new book (*The Natural History of Evil*, Watts and Co., 6s. net), makes good his opening statement, that of establishing a new point of view in connection with his subject, for the problem of evil has been dealt with by many from the evolutionary standpoint. But he does succeed in presenting his readers with a very thoughtful and thought-provoking essay on a topic on which to say something new would be no easy task. And we cordially agree with Mr. Whyte that the existence of evil is no more mysterious than is the manifestation of any other force that we see around us. He is also right in emphasising the fact that we have to thank the influence of religion for so confusing the mind of man concerning a problem with which he is, in some form or another, always at grips. Within the brief compass of 160 pages Mr. Whyte passes in review the teachings of the various religious systems, and so clears the way for dealing with it from the only profitable point of view, that of evolution. And here the author is on undeniably sound ground in dealing with many of the manifestations of evil as a leaving over, so to speak, of the evolutionary process. Man in emerging from a lower state to a higher one could not avoid taking with him a great many of the feelings and desires, and, above all, methods of gratifying them that belonged to a lower stage of social culture. And the brute in man is not outgrown in a day.

All that Mr. Whyte has to say on this head is well said, and needed saying. And it is pleasing to see that due attention is paid to the psycho-analytic method as an aid to both the understanding and the treatment of undesirable phases of character. Where we should be inclined to offer a word of criticism is with regard to Mr. Whyte's apparently undue stressing of the biological factor in social life, and, as a consequence, a comparative belittling of the real nature of the main forces that make for social improvement. It is not, for example, even biologically justifiable to say that "if natural selection were operating with full rigour, the greater fertility of the lower types would be corrected by a higher mortality," the truth being here that in human society, or even in animal groups, natural selection never does operate with "full rigour," and, even if it did, it does not of necessity make for a "higher" type. It only makes for a type capable of survival. And, again, in his desire to enter a protest against an unscientific emphasis on the power of the environment in shaping character, Mr. Whyte tells us that "an improvement effected by environment in one generation is not transmitted to the next," and reminds us that the "factor of heredity is a stubborn one." But the point here to be stressed is surely that a great deal of the evil in society is no more than the ill direction by environmental forces of unmoral capacity in a direction that makes for evil. For the whole problem of education, scholastic or otherwise, is to so train capacity that it shall express itself in a beneficial manner. There is often no more than this right or wrong direction between a good character and a bad one. And that is really a consequence from Mr. Whyte's own principle that evil is something that arises in man's emergence from a lower to a higher social stage.

But we do not wish to leave Mr. Whyte's book on a note of adverse criticism. It is a work that will well repay an attentive reader who will settle down to it. And if it does not establish a new point of view, it will at least strengthen one that is already existing. And when Mr. Whyte, in his closing paragraph, says that if it were necessary to put into one word the secret of so working the human machine as to extract from it the greatest amount of good, he would use the word *knowledge*, we are altogether with him.

The *R.P.A. Annual* provides the usual number of readable articles in its issue for 1921 (Watts and Co., 1s.). Dr. Leonard Huxley leads off with a sketch of "The Home Life of Charles Darwin," and concludes with the curious remark that Darwin "passed from orthodoxy and a belief in revelation to a vague Theism." If Darwin was ever orthodox, it must have been when he was very young, and when he grew older he called himself an Agnostic. Why some who call themselves Freethinkers should be so

anxious to stress whatever of a shadow of religion they can find in the world's great men it is rather difficult to say. Professor Bury also remarks, in the course of an article on "Theism," that "many able Rationalists hold the hypothesis of a personal God," a remark which one would think makes their Rationalism a rather dubious quantity. Professor Gilbert Murray contributes the speech he made at the opening of the Conference of Religious Thinkers, and articles by Messrs. McCabe, Clodd, Archer, Collier, Phillpotts, Whyte, Haynes, and Cox provide a varied meal that should supply something for every taste.

Mr. W. H. Thresh lectures to-day (November 14) in the Co-operative Hall, Downing Street, Manchester, at 3 and 6.30. His subject in the afternoon is "Science and Religion," and in the evening "The Record of the Rocks." We hope to hear of good meetings on both occasions.

Another rise in the wages of compositors and of all engaged in the printing trades has been arranged. The new advance is to date from November 15. So it goes on. We no sooner get over one advance than we are faced with another. And no one can tell when it will stop. Some time ago we offered to "swop" salaries with anybody in the *Freethinker* office, but the offer was promptly declined. And there is no one we can threaten with a strike. In most offices the scale of salaries runs, editor at the top, and then downwards. In our office the rule is reversed.

A meeting will be held on Saturday evening, November 13, at eight o'clock, at 214 Lillie Road, Fulham, to make arrangements for Mr. Cohen's lecture on the 28th. We hope that all in the neighbourhood who are interested will be good enough to attend.

We are pleased to hear from Mr. Partridge that Mr. Moss had a good audience at the Bath Assembly Rooms on Sunday last. The experiment of moving round different districts in the city received its justification in the number of new faces that were present. We trust that the forthcoming meetings will be an even greater success.

## Pleasure or Happiness?

Joy is not essentially bad, but good, while grief is essentially bad.—*Spinoza*.

ENJOYMENT, according to capacity, is the universal right of every created being. For the lowly inhabitants of this world, feeling is adapted to function, and life is therefore synonymous with enjoyment. The vital facts of life, growth, and multiplication, which sum up their existence, are identified with pleasure. But in higher stages of development, this harmony often ceases to exist, and a conflict rises between feeling and function. Especially is this true of man, whose reason is pressed into service for the ends of the individual as against those of the race.

Enjoyment, as a result of the employment of capacity, is two-fold. Capacity, when satisfied, leads to pleasure. Capacity, when used, leads to happiness. Enjoyment can thus be analysed into its component parts—the lower, pleasure; the higher, happiness. Pleasure is the guide of every instinctive creature, and is, in some form or degree, the attribute of all sentient life; happiness belongs to the world of more evolved beings, where affection reigns.

The distinction between pleasure and happiness is one of degree, not of difference. Both are equally legitimate when legitimately sought. Pleasure is comparatively low, and is more perishable, transient, and narrow; it exists chiefly in self-consciousness. Happiness is pursued most successfully when most nobly—in self-forgetfulness; a larger good and more expanded enjoyment than self alone are here the aim. The pursuit of pleasure involves obedience to personal

claims, to the demands of the hour—even of the moment—heedless of the cost to others and of the demands of succeeding hours. But the pursuit of happiness means obedience to the largest and most liberal claims that life can recognise, and implies a conscious creative power, moulding life to noble ends.

The scale of pleasures, as drawn up by Lester Ward in their ascending order from lowest to highest, are placed in the following order:—1, Satisfaction of hunger; 2, sexual pleasures; 3, the pleasures of maternity; 4, benevolence and sympathy with human kind; 5, love of beauty (æsthetic delight); 6, love of truth (intellectual delight). The first three he regards as physical, and common to both human beings and animals: the last three are spiritual, and confined to the human race. The first serve function and are more intense: the last minister to feeling, and are more permanent and greater in volume. Pleasure consists in the satisfaction of the first group: happiness consists in the lasting harmonization of the *whole* nature for the purpose of use.

Happiness and pleasure having been defined, and assigned to their relative positions, it may now be stated that the happiness seekers are the world's true leaders—the poets, seers, sages, and reformers: together with the vast body of its average women. The pleasure seekers are the rank and file of mankind, and the small minority of women who are below the average of their sex.

If anyone doubt this, let him consider the nature of man as revealed in his social, civil, and religious institutions. No one can read the history of man's mental and moral evolution without realizing that, with all his reasoning power, he finds it hard to grasp the essential elements of real happiness. His religious systems always reveal him in the state of extremes:—

When pinched ascetic and red sensualist  
Alternately recurrent freeze or burn.

“I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing,” moans Paul, comparing his ideal with his actual. It needed a man, and a celibate at that, to grovel in this fashion. In the sweet-essenced body of woman, there is no “war between the members,” and every mother is a living confutation of this diseased view of life.

In the monstrous doctrine of original sin, so utterly devoid of any basis in reality, man voiced his dissatisfaction with himself, and attempted to shift the responsibility for his misdeeds. He rejected salvation by works, because that would necessitate laborious self-discipline. He chose instead salvation by grace, assuring himself a harp in heaven through vicarious merit. He could then enjoy sin and salvation each in its own season. At the same time, learned theologians gravely disputed whether woman was entitled to possess a soul!

The few men who have risen to a higher plane of motives, and have forgotten self-love in love for others, have been received with shame, torture, and death. It was not women who offered them the hemlock, lit the faggot piles, or framed the blasphemy laws.

Turning from man's religious to his social and political institutions, the same record is blazed down the past—intense love of personal aggrandizement; fiendish persecutions for the enforcement, not of truth, but of opinions; heartless oppression of the masses; admiration, applause, and emulation of successful selfishness; outrages upon the feeble and inferior, because they are such; dishonesty and shameless sacrifices of integrity, justice, and humanity for gain, position, advantage, privilege of some sort; slavery and barbarism due to love of money; dread of every reform, because he thinks he has caught and exhausted Truth in the institutions he has created and is terrified lest all beyond should be loss and ruin, since he has not proved it otherwise. Compromise and expediency have been his watch-

words, and have resulted in slow advance and halting progress.

Yet all the while, woman with the mother-soul has been a mere spectator in man's world. She has gone quietly on with her work of producing and conserving life, her instinct leading her to seek the good of her children. Consciously or unconsciously, happiness, not pleasure, has been her motive force.

By persistently seeking pleasure, man forfeits harmonious development towards complete integrity and full individuality. But the reconciliation of feeling and function lies with woman, the happiness-seeker, who harmonizes sense, intellect, and affection. The spiritual view of life and its enjoyments proceeding from the ideal, aspiring, pure, loving feminine nature are destined to replace the opposite in man. She will show him the spiritual in herself, its motives, forces, and capacities, his inalienable birthright in it, and its sufficiency to content and fill him. Realizing that his highest good and that of his species will come through the emancipation and development of woman into the fulness of her powers, he will gratefully seek his own profit and happiness in following her method.

But it is difficult at present to persuade man that his happiness is inextricably bound up with the freedom of women. He looks upon her higher spiritual activities as amiable weaknesses, and dreads her irruption into his world, because he instinctively knows her presence will work a revolution. What woman will be found to vote for war when they are permitted to take their part in the councils of the nation? How will women in public life tolerate the continued existence of a subject and outcast class of women maintained for the satisfaction of the organized passions of men?

Man instinctively feels that their aims are diametrically opposed, that while woman is facing childwards with one single purpose, he is full of schemes and activities which have a selfish end. He regards the woman and child as adjuncts to himself, and only as such have they any place in his world. Witness the humiliating position of the old unwanted woman or of the illegitimate child!

At times, man cannot fail to have an uncomfortable suspicion, while playing his fantastic tricks with portentous solemnity, that he appears somewhat ridiculous in the unfathomable eyes of the woman who deals with the issues of Life and Death. What to her, the mother of humanity, are the thrones, the fame, the riches, and the property that man holds so dear, and strives so hard to get? She has a different standard, and will bring a new transvaluation of values in terms of Life.

Man has to rise from the plane of pleasures to that of happiness. Evolved and conscious woman will supply him with the motive which will keep him in the heart of things. She will exact from him love and reverence for the integrity of her womanhood, which constitutes the central truth of her nature. In a “pure, earnest, searching love” for her, he will not only satisfy, but use all his capacities in harmonious service for her and through her, for humanity. Living in such truth, he will no more be “the shaken thing of lusts and nerves.”

Obedient to Nature, not her slave:

Her lord, if to her rigid laws he bows;

Her dust, if with his conscience he plays knave

And bids the passions on the pleasures browse.

He will find his highest happiness in collaborating with woman to employ their finest and most exalted powers for the noblest and most enduring result that the human being can produce. He will, by his co-operation, free woman to devote herself as a creative artist to maternity—to embody in her offspring a firm trust in the Ideal with the capacity for seeing and feeling abstract Truth.

This is the true reform—the only revolution that can lead to fuller and higher life. Men may plan their

democracies, or their Soviets—they may organize new societies and construct new worlds—they may even convert the masses to Freethought—and yet, unless they get life right at the source, they are but building on sand. Self-reverence in woman, and reverence of woman by man—that is the key to open the door to new generations, wise, idealistic, and far-sighted. In such hands the problems that vex this generation would solve themselves.

FRANCES PREWETT.

## Freemasonry in America.

An article under the above heading appeared in the *Freethinker* of August 13, 1916, which ended with a promise to continue the subject later. That continuation was written, but never reached the editor. Perhaps that failure is a special reason why it should appear. I fortunately had a pressé of it; and now copy it. My article was not strictly confined to Masonry. The following, however, is that portion which dealt with it.

I HAVE promised the *Freethinker* to continue my enquiries in regard to Freemasonry, and send the results. I have said that the Freemasons have dropped their frock coat and high hat uniform for a costume resembling that of an admiral. On October 13 I saw a procession of elderly well-to-do men in this uniform, all in black, with crosses embroidered on the sides of their cocked hats. But they had a peculiar stamp, so peculiar I made a point of discovering who they were, and found they were not Freemasons—but their supposed enemies, Roman Catholics: Knights of Columbus who were celebrating what they call "Columbus Day." They were all extremely self-conscious and miserable—and the clothes were very new, so I assumed that this was their first appearance as pseudo-freemasons. The world changes rapidly. Only half a century ago a Pope solemnly excommunicated the Freemasons and damned all secret associations, in especial those founded on Masonic lines. Now the most extreme Papists ape them with the manifest object of being identified with them.

In regard to the Freemasons and their admission of women. In their organ here in the State of Ohio, the Eastern Star, what is especially their "rite," is treated on exactly the same footing as the Scotch and York rites. This body has just initiated a husband and wife together. As an outsider, now it has come to that, I should prophesy a very rapid elimination of Freemasonry out of modern society—or such a transformation that its special character will be lost and forgotten. Already the poison of emasculate emotionalism is indicated even in public announcements. Further than this boyish cocked-hat and sword development there is a craze for preposterous titles. Just as the foolish young workman in England puts on a dress-suit to go to a shilling dance, and changes plain Bill Smith to Sydney Cavendish, so the American in his "lodge" is "Sir William B. Smith" or "Sir Knight Smith." I find from the *Central Ohio Mason* of July 21 (1916) that at different ceremonies there were present "The Antioch Patrol," the Palestine commanding the Blue Lodge Masons, who met in a theatre adjoining "Grace Church," in the basement of which the Grand Lodge and Grand Officers assembled for a grand parade, in which, as well as simple "Sir Knights," were the the Nobles of "the Mystic Shrine," and the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Ohio. When these awful personages entered "the temple" four brass bands "played impressively" "Onward, Christian Soldiers." The streets were cleared of vehicles, the whole block was filled with Masons whose—so this paper says—"whose full uniform, with gay white plumes and flashing swords" made "a most

imposing sight." Later, this meeting was addressed by a "grand high priest," followed by a blessing given by an "acting grand chaplain." I assume this gentleman was not an actor, but a substitute. Among the persons blessed were "the past grand commander of Knights Templar of Ohio." The present "illustrious potentate of Antioch Temple, Mystic Shrine of the town of Dayton" and a venerable "Judge Someone." I find also a "sovereign grand commander" who rules a "supreme council." It says, moreover, "*The Imperial Council*" took a trip and put up at the "*Imperial Hotel*."

It is characteristic of persons with a secret that they never dream that others can—and do—arrive at the knowledge they regard as peculiar to themselves by other and every-day means. Moreover, the conception that their knowledge is secret is merely a demonstration of their own incredible ignorance; thus, surely the names of some of the lodges here would never have been selected but for this delusion. The men have Ormus Grotto, Champagne Lodge, Mystic Lodge, Aladdin's Temple, Corinthian Lodge—names which require little astuteness to understand—but one place has Venus Lodge. The ladies, however, I suppose because their institution is new, are more dignified, and call their lodge—White Shrine of Jerusalem, Mount Olive Shrine, Hospital Circle, Purity, Carnation, Loyal, Minerva, Parthenia, Eureka, Royal, and Mizpah.

The Mystic Shrine is, I understand, a kind of appendix Order over and beyond common Masonry. A few years ago they affected a certain buffoonery—but that seems to have changed to its opposite of immense importance and power. Now, I see, they have an "imperial chief rubban," a man who poses as "high priest and prophet," and an "oriental guide."

This Order wears a red fez with, embroidered on the front, an inverted crescent, over which is a scimitar, with the edge down, threatening it. They are regarded as the most powerful and "potent" of the Masons. I do not know on what foundation; I have observed nothing to warrant this.

This wholly irresponsible State within the State, whose members are adults who parade the streets with flashing swords and singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers," number one million, seven hundred thousand, organized into fourteen thousand, one hundred, and ten bodies, forming forty-eight societies.

This is but superficial. There are innumerable societies who regard themselves as cognate to that of the Freemasons. The fact that they are openly heading to the Roman Church is most serious. All who come in contact with the Roman Church are in danger of being eaten by it; but it is not always. Now the objects of both are to oppose liberty and reason; but it remains to be seen if they will keep their forces joined long enough to do both enduring injury; or will disintegrate each other by their opposing principles. At present in this country the Roman cathedral strives to outdo the Masonic temple. These two come next to the State House and Town Hall in apparent importance. But frequently, as in Philadelphia, the Masonic temple dominates the cathedral, and is regarded as an essential of the city. It is to a great extent looked on as the cathedral was in mediæval cities, but it is in reality the exact opposite of the ancient cathedral, that was the concert-room where there was singing the whole day: an expensive choir was maintained there, with an orchestra of professional instrumentalists. It was the forum where politics were propounded under the disguise of Scriptural instruction. Lollard told the citizens no man in mortal sin could hold office, or a Dominican bawled down the length of the nave that the

whole world was given by Christ to Peter. The ceremonies included ballets, beyond which it was the theatre for moralities and for mysteries, which were, in effect, burlesques on Scriptural subjects. The devil was the buffoon, with an uncontrolled tongue for every personage and everything, and all this was free. The nobles sat in the choir, but the people walked about the church as if it were an open-air square and piazza. The boys clambered up on the mouldings of the immense pillars; and all the "vice" of the city lounged about unmolested. But the Freemasons' temples are forts sealed against the State and the individual citizen. They are the locked home of men who in regard to the life of the city are an organized brigandage of esoteric magicians.

The above describes things which existed four years ago. During the war very little was heard or seen of Freemasons or Masonry. The Government would not recognise them, and they were entirely obscured by the prominence given to the Young Men's Christian Association, the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, and a Jewish charitable organization in the interests of the army. Now they appear to be reviving. I saw a moving picture of a great procession of Masons recently. They still wear the hideous, grotesque Austrian cocked hat, trimmed on its edges with short white feathers. But some of them were wearing the neat white turban of an Indian baba. This is an innovation, and is to be taken with the fact that Hindus marched in the Sinn Féin St. Patrick's Day procession, and with the fact that the cross of the Knights of Columbus has been seen worn on the cocked hat of a Protestant Masonic Knight Templar.

The Masons appear to be trying to recover lost ground by processions of tradesmen masquerading in a kind of diplomatic or naval uniform, richly embroidered with one set pattern. I have not had time, and have been too harassed by their occult activities, to follow their overt and, so to speak, official movements, and the incidents affecting them. The Young Men's Christian Association cleared them out of the field during the war, and it is not wild to assume that soon nothing will be known of them but the remembrance of their "Imperial" titles, their double-headed eagles, and doves indistinguishable from eagles, their magnificent rapiers of splendid temper and keen edge, their tyrannical assumptions, their autocratic constitution, and jibbering slaveries, their wholly self-constituted and aggressive origin and continuity; with their defiance of all liberties and all that tends to progress. They themselves are conscious their immediate fate is to sink into the churches and become mere religious confraternities—sodalities.

Masons doubtless would repudiate such a tendency, nevertheless it exists, and its presence is known. Not long since, in New York, a Masonic lodge held a Church service at a Presbyterian church, at which nine other lodges and delegations of *Eastern Star* members (i.e., women Masons) assisted at the ceremony. A clergyman spoke and explained the relationship between the Order and Churches in general, which he described "as much closer than non-Masons realized."

GEORGE TREBELLS.

It is a fundamental mistake to call vehemence and rigidity strenght h. A man is not strong who takes convulsion fits, though six men cannot hold him then. He who can walk under the heaviest weight without staggering—he is the strong man.—*Thomas Carlyle.*

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string.—*Emerson.*

## Theme, With Variations.

The following verbatim report of a *speech* delivered by Mr. — at —, may interest a few Freethinkers. In deference to a request from the Vicar, proper names are omitted.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN (cheers),—I am an Atheist (loud boohs, howls of derision, catcalls, etc., etc.; a man with a mouth-organ played a few bars of "For he's a jolly good fellow," and was immediately ejected). I was born and brought up in the Christian faith, followed its teachings until my ignorance was enlightened and the evils of the creed became manifest.

I have taken the steep and narrow path. (Voice: "How much do you get for this?") It is easy to go through life a Christian; to take up your cross once a week and put it down after the service is over (Voice from the back of the hall: "What about Ireland?")

The speaker (*sotto voce*): The Lord has delivered them into my hands.

What about Ireland? They have their crosses there. Their little wooden crosses to mark the burial places of those who have been killed by other believers in the Church that has one foundation.

If I were a Christian I should forget Ireland. Why, only the other day one Christian refused to let another Christian land there in case a few more names should be blotted out of the book of Christian brotherhood. You'll find cold comfort there. (Voice: "There ain't no coal in Ireland.") What do they want with coal while they have houses to burn?

You talk about Bolshevik Russia. A voice: "They're all — Jews. Shoot 'em all, I says.") For the glory of a Jew who died two thousand years ago, I suppose? Really, you Christians owe everything to the Jews. ("At two hundred per cent.") Yes. You've paid at more than that. You've given everything you have and everything you hope to have for "love."

And what security have you? The word of a man who died on the gallows, for the cross was the gallows of the ancient world.

But I did not intend to become vituperative. You Christians don't know the meaning of charity. You want to take everything and give nothing, not even a hearing. (Voices from everywhere: "Shut up! Don't talk nonsense!! Put a sock in it!!!")

Jesus of Nazareth was a great thinker (thunderous applause), but he forgot what he was thinking about. (Uproar; an old lady faints, and is carried out mumbling "There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus.")

Jesus started life sensibly. He learnt a trade, but he soon passed from that and became organizer of the Fishermen's Union. (A crowd at the back of the hall enlivened the proceedings by singing "The Red Flag.")

I am an Atheist. (An old lady whispers to a friend, "And he looks such a decent man, too.") Therefore I am one of the few (cries of "Thank God") sensible people who use their reason to examine everything.

You set up a barrier between the people and their rights—the barrier of religious tyranny.

I challenge anyone present to mention a great emancipating movement that has been forwarded by the Church. (For the first time there was silence.) Have you lost your tongues? ("Wish you would lose yours.") So that is your Christian gratitude to me for telling you the truth about your Church.

You snivelling Pecksniffs, cast off your hypocrisy, and stand forth in your true helplessness. What have you left to stand on? ("Our feet, fathead.") Then why not stand on them instead of on your head.

But I am only an Atheist, while you, O wise and enlightened generation, carry forward the glorious banner of darkness and ignorance. You still live in the

Middle Ages. You have eyes, but see not; ears, but hear not. You are the decayed offshoot of better days. You are senile. ("What about the thyroid gland?") You are afraid to face facts. ("What did Gladstone say in '82?")

I have read the Bible (old woman at back of the hall, "More shame to you"), the Koran, the Upanishads, the Rig-Veda, Confucius, and I have failed to glimpse the reality of a God. ("Better go to the eye hospital!") Have you seen God? ("What about the angels of Mons?") Well, what about them? Did they end the war, or did they postpone their action till America came in? The angels had as much effect on the duration of the war as the Swastika had, but there was one difference. Somebody actually *saw* the Swastika.

In the hour of danger did you turn to Christ for aid? ("Yes! Yes!!") And how did he assist you? Did he stop the war? What sign had ye from him? Were the "Big Battalions" of Conscription the work of His hand? You turned in that day back to Paganism, to amulets and charms and fetiches.

And if you sought divine aid, did not your enemies seek the aid of the same power? And did God hear your prayers, and turn his car from the beseechings of his followers across the Rhine. (Chorus: "We've wound up the 'Watch on the Rhine.'") Was he unheeding or did he, in the good old way, lead them with a pillar of poison gas?

And so God guided you to victory. Yea, 'twas a noble *Christian* victory: the wooden crosses in France and Flanders tell us that.

Yea, Jehovah and all your little petty tribal Gods are red with gore. Your prayers have been useless. Give up your fooling. In yourselves alone lies the power to make or mar the future. Happiness awaits you, beams on you. You cannot see it, for Religion has tied a bandage about your eyes.

The great men of all ages have spoken the great message of Freedom, but you have been deaf. One after another you have sent them away with mockery and laughter and scorn. Socrates, Bacon, Galileo, Spinoza, Hume, Diderot, Schiller, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche—"What about Ella Wheeler Wilcox?" The orator is carried out, spitting blood.

H. C. MELLOR.

## THE SECULAR SOCIETY, Ltd.

*Company Limited by Guarantee.*

Registered Office: 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

Secretary: Miss E. M. VANCE.

This Society was formed in 1898 to afford legal security to the acquisition and application of funds for Secular purposes.

The Memorandum of Association sets forth that the Society's Objects are:—To promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action. To promote freedom of inquiry. To promote universal Secular Education. To promote the complete secularization of the State, etc. And to do all such lawful things as are conducive to such objects. Also to have, hold, receive, and retain any sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of the Society.

Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings, and a subsequent yearly subscription of five shillings.

The liability of members is limited to £1, in case the Society should ever be wound up.

All who join the Society participate in the control of its business and the trusteeship of its resources. It is expressly provided in the Articles of Association that no member, as such, shall derive any sort of profit from the Society, either by way of dividend, bonus, or interest.

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, one-third of whom retire (by ballot), each year, but are eligible for re-election.

Friends desiring to benefit the Society are invited to make donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favour in their wills. The now historic decision of the House of Lords in *re Bowman and Others v. the Secular Society, Limited*, in 1917, a verbatim report of which may be obtained from its publishers, the Pioneer Press, or from the Secretary, makes it quite impossible to set aside such bequests.

*A Form of Bequest.*—The following is a sufficient form of bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—

I give and bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited, the sum of £— free from Legacy Duty, and I direct that a receipt signed by two members of the Board of the said Society and the Secretary thereof shall be a good discharge to my Executors for the said Legacy.

It is advisable, but not necessary, that the Secretary should be formally notified of such bequests, as wills sometimes get lost or mislaid. A form of membership, with full particulars, will be sent on application to the Secretary, Miss E. M. VANCE, 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

## 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.

FRIARS HALL (236 Blackfriars Road): 7, Mr. A. B. Moss, "The Glory of Freethought."

FULHAM (214 Lillie Road, Fulham): Saturday evening, November 13th, at 8, To make arrangements for Mr. Cohen's Lecture.

METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Johnson's Dancing Academy, 241 Marylebone Road, near Edgware Road): 7.30, Mr. Maurice Mowbrey, "The World and Its Toys."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH, N. S. S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, off Kentish Town Road, N.W.): 7.30, Mr. O. Baker, "Is the Church Opposed to Progress?"

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Trade Union Hall, 30 Brixton Road, S.W. 9): 7, Mr. F. Shaller, "Darwinism."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C. 2): 11, John A. Hobson, M.A., "Civilization and the Backward Peoples."

WEST HAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Stratford Engineers' Institute, 167 Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7, Public Discussion, "Will the Churches Help or Hinder the Labour Movement?" Opened by Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

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PLYMOUTH BRANCH N. S. S. (Room No. 8, Plymouth Chambers, Old Town Street): Thursday, November 18, at 8, Mr. F. Hayes-James, "Eden Philpotts, Novelist." Meetings on 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month.

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