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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

Views and Opinions.

Freedom of Speech.

The late Professor Dicey, when dealing with English constitutional law, said that freedom of discussion meant little more than the right to say anything which a jury of twelve shopkeepers think it expedient should be said or written. That is, I think, a fair summary of the position, and on the whole it has worked very well. It is impossible for any law to say exactly what language is permissible and what is not; something must always depend upon attendant circumstances, and in most cases the opinion of twelve men as to what is permissible and what is not must be accepted as a rough and ready rule of guidance. But precisely for the reason that the law works much in the way described by Professor Dicey, it is above all things imperative that the public mind should have a fairly strong conviction of the extreme importance of freedom of speech and writing, for it is only when that is present that one may trust a body of men, or of men and women, with the power to permit or to forbid. A jury made up of men and women to whom freedom of opinion means no more than the toleration of opinions with which they agree, and the right to suppress an opinion which they think to be wrong, must always be a standing menace to real freedom of thought and discussion. There is always a sufficient measure of intolerance active among the general public to make all right minded citizens careful lest they should do anything to promote its expression, and, consequently, when a government passes measures which are an open encouragement to a jury or to the magistracy to suppress certain opinions, we have a combination of undeveloped or uninstructed public opinion with legislative sanction that is a serious danger to genuine progress. Bigotry is given official sanction, and under the guise of a public duty there is a manifestation of a spirit of intolerance which is active with many and present with most.

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The Tyranny of Authority.

No one who can lift himself above the region of party and who has any intelligent regard for freedom of thought can regard the present situation with anything but a sense of disquiet not unmixed with a feeling of disgust. At no time within the past century has there been so little regard paid to outrages on freedom of discussion, or has there been in existence a House of Commons which showed such a profound disregard to rights which most of us took as established beyond the possibility of question. Police supervision has increased to an extent that would certainly not have been tolerated fifty years ago, while the law regulating public gatherings is to so great an extent a matter of individual interpretation that no one can be quite sure when they are liable to fine or imprisonment or when they are not. Several instances of this have already been given in these columns. There was, for example, the case of one of our readers, Mr. W. H. Hunt, who wrote for literature on the question of Communism. The office to which the letter was sent was raided, and the next step was the discharge of Mr. Hunt from his employment. Pressure on the authorities, both by private communications and through a question asked in Parliament elicited the information that the Glasgow police saw the letter and "quite properly" sent it to the Chief Constable of Warwickshire who showed it to the man's employers, who promptly discharged him. All that Mr. Hunt had done was to write for some books on Communism as he wished to read something on the subject. And the authorities think that it was quite proper for the police to at once inform the man's employers and for them to discharge him. A more contemptible and a more infamous action could not be conceived. It is coercion in its most cowardly form. It is an offence to wish to read about a subject. And for that offence a man loses his work and his family is threatened with destitution.

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The Police as Censors.

Another case lies before me as reported in the *Daily Herald* of June 13. (I am taking the report as being correct, but as the other papers do not report the case I am unable to check it.) In this case—which is only one out of many—Peter Hannan was charged at Sheffield with making a speech likely to cause disaffection. On the evidence of the police he was accused of having made "extravagant and untrue statements." He had said that the people had been asked on huge posters to increase production to stabilize industry, and like the simple chaps they were they believed them. He had also said, "The capitalist sent you to die like flies in France, Galipoli, and Mesopotamia." Hannan was sent to prison for three months with hard labour, and fined £50, with a further three months in default of payment. In most of these cases, it will be noted, the evidence is solely that of a policeman. Something is said which that functionary regards as untrue, or dangerous, the man is summoned, and a magistrate at once convicts. In a recent case at Coventry an obliging magistrate, on the mere word of the police, without having the words on which the charge was based placed before him, remanded a man in custody until the police were ready with the language which *they* decided was indictable. In other cases the mere fact of having advocated Communism is taken as sufficient ground for a prosecution, and if the words "social revolution" are used, that is quite conclusive. In fact, I am not sure but

that suggesting that the police should not be given the powers they have, and that a policeman's evidence as to what is the right language at a public meeting must always be regarded with suspicion, would not itself afford ground for action—if the authorities felt hopeful of securing a conviction.

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The Vital Issue.

Now, I do not think that anyone who studies these cases can have any very great doubt but that there is going on in the country a deliberate attempt to strangle the free expression of opinion. That a speaker may make extravagant statements is quite possible, it is a fault from which not even members of the Cabinet are exempt. They may also be untrue statements, again a fault shared by some very eminent dignitaries, but is that to be sufficient warranty for giving a man a term of hard labour? To say that the people are fooled by the ruling classes may be untrue, it may also be untrue that the capitalists sent men to die in France and Mesopotamia, but unless people are permitted to say these things without the slightest hindrance free speech is a farce. To work for a social revolution has been the avowed aim of hundreds of writers and speakers for the past century, but this is the first government that has found the people of the country so indifferent to genuine freedom as to be permitted to make it a criminal offence. Fifty years ago, had it been openly admitted that the police had seized a man's private letter and used it so as to secure his discharge, there would have been such a storm in the House that the government would have been compelled to resign. And whether Communism is a good or a bad thing, a true or a false thing, a harmless or a dangerous thing, is beside the point. The right of any man or woman to advocate and to discuss any social theory they please is the issue that is at stake, and nothing should be allowed to obscure that. It is easy enough to stand up for the right of the opinion in which one happens to believe, the real test, the proof that one is concerned with genuine freedom, and is, in a word, a real Freethinker, is when one stands up for the right of an opinion in which one does not believe. And unless there is a change from what is at present taking place there will be no need for the Russian royalists to plot to get back to the Russia of the Czars. They will feel quite at home here.

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A Committee of Public Safety.

Some time ago I threw out the suggestion that what was needed was a committee of independent persons who would watch every case in which freedom of speech was threatened. I am glad to see that such a committee has now been formed, but something more is needed. A similar committee should be formed in every important centre in the kingdom, and it should carefully keep itself free from the advocacy of any opinion whatever. Its sole object should be to protect freedom of discussion quite irrespective of the opinion advocated or attacked. I am sure there are enough liberal minded persons belonging to all sorts of political and social and religious societies who would be willing to serve, and so to make the committee a very powerful agent in protecting the rights of the people. For this is a matter that affects everyone alike. It is the turn of one party to be oppressed to-day, but it will be the turn of another party to-morrow. There is nothing that spreads more quickly than oppression, and those that have been oppressed are apt to take easily to it when their moment of power arrives. To those in authority it offers a fatally easy way of overcoming the difficulties of the moment, and a society that has lived for long where oppression is the general rule, is apt to regard the suppression of obnoxious opinions as one of the privileges of power and a perquisite of office. The only way to permanently prevent persecution for opinion is to rear a generation or so to which it shall be something foreign and outside the run of their normal habits of thought. Only the mind to which tyranny is obnoxious can be trusted to give freedom practical recognition.

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Our Heritage of Evil.

After all, it is not the government that we have to convert, but the people. You cannot coerce a people to whom liberty is something real and something of supreme importance. It can only be done with a people who have for many generations been under the influence of a religion that has, both in practice and in theory, regarded freedom of thought and discussion as almost an undiluted evil. The centuries during which Christianity has ruled have not been without leaving their impress deeply marked in the texture of people's thinking. One of the most striking things during the war years was not that our liberties were curtailed, some sort of a case could be made out in defence of what was then done, the really striking thing was that so few people seemed to think that they had lost anything worth troubling about. They placed no great value on the freedom they had possessed, and they were not inclined to worry over its disappearance. The only way in which you can make sure of freedom of speech and thought is by making people Freethinkers. And the destruction of the influence of Christianity is an essential to that. I say the influence, advisedly, because it is not by the destruction of the mere belief in Christian doctrines that a Freethinker is made. Thanks to the generations of superstition which have prevailed, there is with the people at large a mass of amorphous superstition and a slumbering intolerance to which cupidity and rascality may always appeal with a promise of considerable success. Our work as Freethinkers has only finished its first stage with the destruction of belief in Christianity. Beyond that is the mental attitude to which Christianity has always appealed and on which tyranny has always rested. It is the existence of that frame of mind which offers the greatest danger to-day. We have, in all probability, dark days ahead; the more need for those who recognize the danger to do what they can to overcome it.

Chapman Cohen.

God and Religion.

All Dr. Horton's utterances are *ex cathedra*. He always speaks with authority. Preaching at Doddridge Chapel, Northampton, a few Sundays ago, he expressed his belief that men are not more Atheistic to-day than they were. To him, evidently, to be Atheistic means to be engaged in definite argumentation against God; and according to him men are no longer so employed. On this point he is radically mistaken. There are hundreds of men and women whose sole occupation consists in arguing against God. Periodicals, pamphlets, and books, of a decidedly anti-Theistic character, are being widely circulated in this and other countries; and an exceedingly elaborate system of Freethought propaganda, both indoor and outdoor, is in vigorous operation throughout the length and breadth of the land. Dr. Horton cannot be in ignorance of these facts; and yet he says: "People do not argue against God now; they forget him." But why do people forget God if not because they do not believe in him, or because their belief is extremely feeble? The *Christian World* for June 16 reports the reverend gentleman as saying:—

What are people thinking of or talking of to-day? In the streets, in the railway carriages,

when do you ever hear even the least suggestion that the thought of God is in their hearts all the time? They are thinking a great deal of what men say; they are vastly interested to read the newspapers and to get the opinion of their fellow-men. They want to know how the stocks and shares are going up and down; they are immensely interested, almost incredibly interested, in learning "all the winners," in knowing what happened in the great international football match. They are intensely interested, but not in God. The old saying, *Vox Dei, vox populi*, means to-day, "We are taking the voice of the people instead of the voice of God where the voice of God runs counter to the voice of the people, as it does repeatedly and constantly."

The truth, however, is that the voice of God has never been heard, and that what the preachers so call is their own voice, which they have the effrontery to attribute to a purely imaginary Being. The people do precisely the same thing that the clergy do, the only difference being that the clergy regard all who refuse to listen to and adopt their opinions as authoritative and final as fools and reprobates. The pulpit charges the public with the sin of turning a deaf ear to its deliverances which, it claims, come from above, and then comes to the following eminently characteristic conclusion:—

> The result is apparent. The hollowness, the shallowness, and paltriness of human life to-day are almost incredible. The whole of human life is going to pieces for want of God.

Granting, for argument's sake, the truth of that extract, we ask whose fault is it that "the whole of human life is going to pieces for want of God"? Has God ever done a single thing to prevent such an awful catastrophe? He is described as "the king of all the earth," as sitting as king for ever; but is it creditable to him that his kingdom is going to pieces for want of him? What sign is there that the world is ruled by such a monarch? Dr. Horton puts all the blame on the subjects, as if the king had no responsibilities whatever. Surely he must be a most inefficient governor whose people go their own ways, paying no heed to his behests. Their doing so is as much his fault as theirs, to say the very least.

Now what is religion? Professor Peake defines it as "neither cultus, creed, nor conduct, but fellowship with the Unseen." "Man's nature," he says, "bears upon it the hall-mark of heaven." Here the definition of religion is based upon a palpable delusion. Dr. Peake is as ignorant about heaven as Freethinkers are. He has never seen it, nor has he met anyone who was ever there. Heaven is certainly an "undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller has ever returned." Consequently, no one can tell what it is like, or has a right to declare that man's nature bears its hall-mark. The official stamp of the heavenly company is not known. Does it not follow, then, that fellowship with the Unseen and Unknown is an actual impossibility? What religious people commune with is not an objective reality, but a subjective creation, treated as if it were an objective reality. Experience abundantly proves that God only exists for those who believe in him. The marvel is that the theologians are obstinately blind to this fact, though it stares them in the face all the time. The late Sir Robert Anderson, deeply pious as he was, recognized it, and was greatly puzzled and perplexed by it, and yet he failed to perceive its true significance. In truth it is the one fact that matters, and the only legitimate inference to be drawn from it is that God is not an objective being, but exists alone in the imagination of believers. We conclude, therefore, that religion, as defined by Professor Peake, is an illusory experience. Nothing can be more fallacious than the popular notion that woven into the very texture of man's nature "we discover a faculty for which the material Universe does not prepare us," and which is usually called the religious faculty or instinct. Now, is it not absolutely undeniable that such a faculty or instinct is not woven into the very texture of our nature, but must be pronounced an artificial product, and quite alien to our nature? No one is born with a belief in God and an impulse to worship him. Both the belief and the impulse are mechanically instilled into the child's mind; and apart from such instillation neither ever makes its appearance. This is taken for granted, and often zealously affirmed by the advocates of religious instruction in all Government and other schools. The argument is that unless religiously educated the children will grow up Atheists. And yet how could they if the religious faculty is woven into the very texture of their nature? Their difficulty, then, would be to grow up into anything but believers in and worshippers of God.

Browning opens his *Easter Day* thus:—

> How very hard it is to be
> A Christian! Hard for you and me,
> —Not the mere task of making real
> That duty up to its ideal,
> Effecting thus, complete and whole,
> A purpose of the human soul—
> For that is always hard to do;
> But hard, I mean, for me and you
> To realise it, more or less,
> With even the moderate success,
> Which commonly repays our strife
> To carry out the aims of life.

But why should it be so very hard to be a Christian if the religious faculty is woven into the very texture of man's nature? In that case it would be extremely difficult to be anything else. What makes it so very hard to be a Christian is that it is contrary to nature. The initial difficulty—Browning describes it as "the whole, or chief of difficulties"—is belief, and belief is difficult because it is unnatural. Religious belief is of necessity blind, because supernatural. Beyond and above Nature we know of absolutely nothing. The Rev. R. H. Coats, M.A., B.D., in an article in the *Christian World* for June 16, reminds us that the supernatural is not to be identified with the abnormal, the spectral, or the magical. What, then, is the supernatural? "An allegory of the natural," says Mr. George Santayana. Mr. Coats himself observes:—

> We believe in the supernatural not because it is indubitably *there*, but because we need it, in order to provide imaginative machinery for our speculations, and to give verisimilitude to our dreams.

How many divines are there who, like Mr. Coats and his friends, believe in the supernatural without being at all sure that it is *there*, simply because it is useful to them in their profession? Now, mark, it is not the supernatural itself that is useful, for it may not be in existence, but the belief in it. In the Middle Ages this belief was employed as a whip which the priests cracked to frighten proud and haughty folks into servile submission to the Church; and to a certain extent it is so employed still. But Mr. Coats gives the case for the supernatural clean away when he naively admits that they believe in it, "not because it is indubitably *there*," but because they find it highly useful. So far as evidence is concerned the supernatural is certainly not *there*. The belief in it has never once been verified. Mr. Coats writes exceedingly well, but unconvincingly. He says:—

> The supernatural supplements the natural as its necessary obverse, and in some ways its antithesis. Who that has shared the higher experiences of the

spirit has not constantly been made aware of an "otherness" somewhere, a dayspring from on high that visits us, a creative, sustaining, and crowning excellence, which descends upon us from above and transforms us into its own likeness in a manner wholly beyond our own capacity to achieve? The result is more than a farther stage; it is a re-birth, a recovery, and a reinstatement. It is precisely this supernatural, this superhuman element in experience that is the wonder and glory of the religious life.

For Mr. Coats it is the belief in the supernatural that accounts for what he calls the religious life; and he is undoubtedly right. Believers in the supernatural do, at times, enjoy themselves immensely, and they feel as if they were being touched into shape by some superhuman agency, but the transformation of which the reverend gentleman writes so eloquently is merely an affair of the emotions and seldom becomes incarnate in character. Both God and religion, as objects of belief, are of no value whatever in daily life, and the influence they exert in the realm of the feelings is profoundly unwholesome. Consequently, the sooner the belief in them dies out the better it will be for all concerned. J. T. LLOYD.

The Marvel of Mecca.

Religion, everywhere present, as a warp running through the woof of human history.—*Herbert Spencer.*

THE Lord Chamberlain, the official whose duty it is to see that the British stage is devoted to the noble traditions of "legs and tomfoolery," has banned the title of "Mecca" for a play. According to this high official the name of the Mohammedan Holy City must not form the title of a musical comedy in England. The word "Mecca" is allowed as the name of such sacred things as boot polishes, cigarettes, tooth powders, and restaurants, but it must not be used for the name of a theatrical production. Yet "Mecca" has been running as a show in the United States for two years or more. And, so far, no one has been murdered, nor has anyone been struck by lightning by an offended Allah.

This grandmotherly action of the Lord Chamberlain is done to curry favour with the Mohammedans in the Empire. Only a mere handful of Englishmen know or care anything concerning Oriental faiths. The majority, when they read at all, prefer the recondite novels of Ethel M. Dell or Nat Gould to such light literature as the Koran or the Zend Avesta.

Yet the fact remains that Mohammedanism is Christianity's greatest religious rival, and the Koran is one of the most widely read books in existence. Moslems number some two hundred and thirty millions, who use the Koran for public worship and in schools more than Christians use their Bible. The various sects of Protestants of the world number only one hundred and fifty millions, whilst the Roman Catholics do not encourage undue familiarity with the Bible among the laity. The ecclesiastics of the Greek Church are in the happy position of catering for folk who care more for life than for literature. Moslems are as fanatical as they are pious. They really regard the Koran as the actual Word of God, revealed to their prophet, Mohammed. So profound is their reverence for the sacred volume that they may not even touch it without ceremony.

The Moslem Bible, revered by over two hundred and thirty millions, of whom eighty millions are British subjects, is a little known book in Christian countries. It is a curious volume, and if the arguments by which the divine inspiration of the Christian Bible are worth a straw, this Koran must be inspired also. There is the same apparent incompatibility of the author with the writing; a borrowed morality as impressive; the same beauty of language and wealth of Oriental imagery; the same claim to prophecy and the fulfilment of prophecy.

The outstanding divergence is that there is no claim on the part of the prophet to work miracles, although the Koran is based manifestly on Hebrew legends. The same mythical characters—Abraham, Lot, Noah, Moses, Solomon, and many others—appear again and again in its pages. Another divergence is that Mohammedanism is monotheistic. Its theology is simplicity itself compared with the maze of the Christian creeds and the tangle of the Trinity. In spite of the differences, however, there is a very familiar ring in the phrasing. Take the first Sura from theKoran:—

> Glory to God, Master of the Universe, the Merciful, the Compassionate, Lord of the Day of Judgment, we adore Thee and implore Thy aid; guide us in the right path.

Then, again, "There is no God, but God; God is most great," was a bold message for an Arabian shepherd to bring to a nation that had deities by the dozen, and sharp swords and strong arms to defend them.

The morality is impressive. Take the faith as laid down in the second Sura:—

> Piety does not consist in turning your faces to the East or the West. He is pious who believes in God, and in the prophets; who, for the love of God, gives of his own to his neighbour; to the orphans, to the poor, to the traveller, and to those who ask; who ransoms the captives, who observes prayer, who gives alms, fulfils the engagements he contracts, who is patient in adversity, in hard times, and times of violence. These are just and fear the Lord.

The Christian Churches have always been envious of Mohammedanism. The history of the eight Crusades shows some of the extent of that envy, and also shows that Christian love is but lip-service. The Papacy pitted Christianity against Mohammedanism, and staked the authenticity of each on the result. Had not the defeat of Islam resulted, a predominant part of the world might have become Moslem; or, as Edward Gibbon declared in his picturesque way, Oxford University might to-day be expounding the Koran instead of the Christian Bible.

Compared with Christianity, Islam possesses great advantages. The text of the Koran was finally settled within a few years of Mohammed's death, and, so far as his own life is concerned, friends and enemies are agreed as to the main facts of his career. The prophet's life may be traced in the stately sentences of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* in the picturesque phrases of old Thomas Carlyle, and in many other volumes. An ardent propagandist, Mohammed made only thirteen converts in three years. Think of it! To-day, a large proportion of the human race mention his name with reverence. Such forceful propaganda as Mohammed's meant the risk of death or most severe punishment. Forced to take the sword in hand, it took him ten years' hard fighting before he prevailed.

Mohammedanism is still a powerful factor in human life. Hundreds of Eastern cities shimmer with the fair architecture of mosques. From thousands of filagreed pulpits the glory of Allah and of Mohammed, the prophet, are daily proclaimed. Throughout the wide expanse of the Orient men still turn their faces to the East, and repeat the formula of the faithful. Unquestionably, the peoples who revere the Koran still possess a solidarity that is lacking in the nations of Christendom, and they may yet prove that they have a staying power as unconquerable as the sword of their prophet. MIMNERMUS.

The Relativity of Knowledge.

V.

Causation.

Causation is a principle which rules throughout the physical universe without respite or intermission. There is not a spot in space or an instant in the flow of time at which its sway is not absolute. It means that all phenomena are linked together by a relation of sequence such as that which obtains between parent and offspring. In other words, that there is no such a thing as an isolated phenomenon any more than there is a child who had no parents. And just as one has a sense of knowing a stranger if he knows his parentage, so does he feel towards an event if he can, on the testimony of his senses, connect it as the outcome of some well-known force or phenomenon. Now, in the inorganic or lifeless world we denote this offspring-like relation by the terms " cause " and " effect." As was said above, it is a relation which is vividly represented by that between parent and child; for the alternately recurrent phases of age and youth, between which the ever-advancing wave of life oscillates, is only a reduplication of that fundamental alternation that reigns eternally in the physical universe in the principle of causation.

Even primitive man, in the twilight of his self-conscious dawn, discovered this relation, though, in consequence of the diversions and aberrations of ignorance and the dimness of the light, the " images " formed on his mental retina were much blurred and grotesquely distorted.

The sense of mental repose and intellectual satisfaction which we experience on being thus able to connect any incident with its physical antecedents finds expression in such remarks as: " I now understand it," " I can explain it," or " I can account for it." The words " understand," " explain," and " account for " possess an emotional element obviously akin to that which we experience on being able to classify a strange object. At bottom the emotion accompanying the understanding and the recognizing is of the same kind. To know one's parents is to an extent a knowledge of a person; and likewise, to know the antecedent impulse and conditions of an occurrence is to understand the event.

As the term " cause " has borne more than one meaning, it would be well, before we proceed farther, to consider them. Formerly it was mainly used to denote a metaphysical entity which produced effects. It is true that this phantom was usually confounded and identified with physical causes, or substituted for them; and it is equally true that this identification was, on the whole, unconsciously made by those who did it. This was the " dragon " which Hume undertook to slay. But he did it as a metaphysical knight, and his method is unsatisfactory to many, as it created, or tended to create, a misleading impression with regard to natural causation. He should have clearly indicated the meaning of the contact and sequence of which he found " cause " always to consist. The principle of physical causation was no myth because the metaphysical phantom was one.

Using the term in its widest or universal sense, the cause of an event may be defined as the *tout ensemble* of its physical and psychic antecedents. When it refers, however, to some particular event, the term usually denotes only one component of the causal group—the one that is uppermost in the mind at the time. In this sense it is often, and more accurately, described as " the exciting cause."

The principle of causation is intrinsically bound up with the principle of energy. For the energy of the universe is in the state of everlasting redistribution, because the forces it develops perpetually oscillate from from a state of equilibrium to one of instability. As soon as a force or impulse becomes instable or unbalanced, be it psychic or physical, it produces movement, and the energy involved is re-distributed. It is to this unbalanced impulse, be it a physical impulse or a motive, that the interrogative " Why? " usually refers.

But in the organic world we are in the presence of a catastrophic change. For in the realm of living things, effects or " events " are all designed and purposive, instead of being spontaneous and purposeless as in the physical universe. In a sense an effect precedes its cause, for each is pre-determined. The factors which make up the causal cluster have to be collated and marshalled " to order " to produce the specific end fixed in advance. But a particular end demands a particular causal group—a situation that brings into the demain of causation entirely new adjuncts—the whole paraphernalia of " means to ends " for the purpose of collocating, adjusting, and co-ordinating the various substances and agents, the energies of which are necessary to secure the one particular effect required. It is to these spatial, temporal, and instrumental conditions that the particle " How? " usually refers.

The animal body, for example, is such an assemblage of " means to ends." It is a mass of physical and psychic contrivances to achieve a double purpose, *viz.*, to maintain life in the group of " means and devices " —the body—and to perpetuate the species. Thus the principle of causation is implied in every organ, gland, and secretion, and is implanted in every sense and instinct we possess.

Man, in virtue of his self-consciousness, has made the area of purposive activities virtually boundless. To him the imagined or pictured future becomes a source of a new set of impulses, to which we give the special name of "motives." These have wholly revolutionized the aim and scheme of human behaviour.

It may be mentioned in passing, that effects, like attributes, are divisible into two kinds, the wholly subjective, like the intoxicating effects of alcohol, and the mainly objective, as when alcohol burns, and melts glass or metal, in which the subjective element is merely functional and subservient.

The object of this essay, it might be pointed out, is not to trace causation to its prime elements, but to direct attention to the vastness of the extent to which causal relations enter as an essential constituent of all knowledge. We may say without fear of contradiction that civilization itself, in all its phases, is the outcome of the discoveries of causal relations as now embodied in human knowledge. Every trade, industry, art, and craft essentially consists in applying the accumulated wisdom reaped from the experience of the past to the production of desired effects. To this end every trade and craft possesses a special store of practical wisdom, which it conserves and perpetuates from age to age.

According to the present economic structure of society, the labours of the bulk of its members are causal in a double sense.

They produce or distribute various commodities for the use, comforts, conveniencies, or luxuries of the rest, or provide it with some useful or agreeable service. But, in addition to this, most vocations are causal in a personal sense, as a means of providing a livelihood for oneself and family.

Just think how this general truth is exemplified in the most ancient of human pursuits, *viz.*, that of the farmer. It consists of a series of operations of spatial adjustments with a view to providing the *tout ensemble* of conditions essential to the growth of crops. The farmer ploughs and manures and sows and harrows, operations involving the use of implements and means for transporting, collocating, and manipulating

materials with the object of fulfilling the spatial and temporal conditions necessary before their energies can co-operate with those of the rain and the sunshine. And the crops of the summer and the autumn are the results.

In like manner the operations of harvesting are again causal and purposive. The crops which were the "effect" of the tilling and sowing have now become "cause" of subsequent events. They are mowed, dried, garnered, thatched, threshed, and ground to provide man and beast with the means to live. And this avocation is typical, in respect to the purpose of toil, of the majority of human pursuits.

Of avocations which provide, instead of commodities, some necessary or desirable service, we may instance the medical profession. It is essentially based upon the assumption that it knows the causal conditions of healing and of health, and of the art of applying them.

The life of those who set out on the amassing of a fortune illustrate the truth in a manner exceptionally conspicuous. All their struggles, toils, plans, schemes, sacrifices, and thoughts stand in a causal relation to the object of their ambition. And even the fortune, if won, is intended to serve as cause—as a means to gain some social distinction for oneself or family.

Moreover, even social institutions are causal in nature and purpose. Think of education, for example. Its object is to stock the mind of the rising generation with a portion of the accumulated wisdom and experience of the race, and to drill the intellect to use it with effect. And so is every reformative movement, whether it be legislative or social. It is to remove some evil, or to secure some better condition of life to which end the reform is to be instrumental.

Thus, every period of one's life is causal to that which follows it, and, as already indicated, the entire span of our earthly existence, with all its worries, struggles, and turmoil, is in the most absolute sense only a causal period, out of which the next generation emerges as its effect. Keridon.

Pages From Voltaire.

A Dialogue between a Savage and a Bachelor of Arts.

II.

[A Governor of Cayenne, returning to France from Guiana, brought with him a savage who had a good share of natural understanding and spoke French fairly well. The following is a conversation between him and a Bachelor of Arts of Paris.]

Savage.—I find that I have been eating food that was not made for me. Although I am blessed with a strong stomach, you have made me eat after my hungry stomach was satisfied, and drink when I was no longer dry. My legs are not firm under me as they were before dinner; my head feels heavy, and my ideas are confused. I never felt this degradation of my faculties in my own country. For my part, I think that the more you put into your body here, the more you take away from your understanding. Perhaps, you can tell me what is the reason of this unpleasant disturbance.

Bachelor.—I'll tell you. In the first place, as to what passes in your legs, I know nothing; you must see the physicians about that; they'll satisfy you. But I know quite well how things are going in your head. You must know that the soul being confined to no one place, is fixed either in the pineal gland, or in the hard substance in the middle of the brain. The animal spirits that rise from the stomach fly up to the soul, which they cannot affect, they being material, and the soul immaterial. Now, as it is impossible for either to act on the other, therefore the soul takes their impression, and, being a simple principle, and therefore not subject to change, it suffers a change, and becomes heavy and dull when we eat too much; and this is the reason so many great men sleep after dinner.

Savage.—What you tell me seems very ingenious and profound; but I shall be obliged by your explaining it to me in a way I can understand.

Bachelor.—Why, I have told you everything I can on this weighty subject, but to satisfy you, I will try to be a little more explicit. Let us proceed step by step. First, are you aware that this is the best of all possible worlds?

Savage.—How! Is it impossible for an infinite Being to create anything better than what we now see?

Bachelor.—Undoubtedly, for nothing can be better than what we now see. It is true, I admit, that men rob and murder each other, but all the while they extol justice and moderation. Some years ago they murdered twelve millions of your Americans, but then it was merely to make the rest more reasonable. A famous statistician has proved that, from a certain war of Troy, of which you know nothing, to the last North American war, of which you happen to know something, there have been killed in pitched battles not less than five hundred and fifty-five million six hundred and fifty thousand men, without reckoning your children and women buried under the ruins of cities and towns which have been set on fire; but this was all for the good of the community. Four or five thousand dreadful maladies to which mankind is subject teach us the true value of health, and the crimes that cover the face of our earth greatly enhance the merit of religious men, of whom I am one. You see that everything goes along in the best manner possible, at least for me. Now, you can easily see that things could never be in a state of perfection if the soul was not placed in the pineal gland. For.....let me take you along with me, step by step, in this argument. Now, what notion have you of laws and of the rule of right and wrong; of the *to kalon*, as Plato calls it?

Savage.—But, my dear Sir, while you talk to me of going step by step, you rush in with a hundred different things at once.

Bachelor.—Everybody talks in this manner. But tell me, who made the laws in your country?

Savage.—The Public good.

Bachelor.—The words *public good* mean a great deal. We have not any more expressive; but, in what sense do you understand the phrase?

Savage.—I understand by it that those who have maize plantations have forbidden others to meddle with them; and that those who have them not are obliged to work in order to have a right to eat a part of them. Everything I have seen, either in my country or yours, teaches me that there can be no other spirit of the laws.

Bachelor.—But as to women, Mr. Savage, women?

Savage.—As to women, they please me when they are beautiful and sweet tempered. I prize them even above our cocoanut trees; they are the fruit which we would not have handled by any but ourselves. A man has no more right to take from me my wife than to take my child. Yet, I have heard said that there are people who will suffer this; certainly they have it in their wills; everyone is allowed to do what he pleases with his own property.

Bachelor.—But what about successors, legatees, heirs, and collateral kindred?

Savage.—Everyone must have a successor. I cannot any longer possess my field when I am buried in it. I leave it to my son; if I have two I divide it equally between them. I hear that among you Europeans there are several nations where the law gives the whole to the eldest child, and nothing to the younger. It must have been sordid interest that dictated such unequal and ridiculous laws. I suppose either the elder children made it themselves, or their fathers, who were willing that they should have preeminence.

Bachelor.—What body of laws appears to you the best?

Savage.—Those wherein the interests of mankind, my fellow creatures, have been consulted.

Bachelor.—And where are such laws to be found?

Savage.—In no place that I have heard of.

Bachelor.—You might tell me where the inhabitants of your country first came from? Who, in your opinion, was the earliest dweller in America?

Savage.—God—for who else could have been?

Bachelor.—That is no answer. I ask from what country your people first came?

Savage.—From the same country as our trees came from; really, you Europeans appear to me a very droll kind of people to pretend that we can have nothing without you. We have just as much right to suppose ourselves your ancestors as you have to suppose yourselves ours.

Bachelor.—You are an obstinate little savage.

Savage.—You are a babbling bachelor.

Bachelor.—But listen to me, Mr. Savage, if you please; do you think it right in Guiana to put those to death who are not of the same opinion with yourselves?

Savage.—Undoubtedly, provided you eat them afterwards.

Bachelor.—Now you are pleased to be funny. What do you think of the constitution?

Savage.—My dear Sir! I must now say good-day to you.

Englished by George Underwood.

Acid Drops.

When we wrote the paragraph in last week's *Freethinker* on the official taste displayed in using the back of the census paper for advertising purposes we did not know how much had been paid for it. We now learn, from an answer given in Parliament, that for less than one pound the advertisers secured a guaranteed delivery at each thousand houses, a certainty that everybody would read the advertisement, a certain official sanction given to the thing advertised, and nothing to pay for delivery. And this is a specimen of government by "business men." We would undertake to get better rates from pill or soap merchants in the country. There was not even the excuse of a good financial deal to apologise for an exhibition of inexcusable vulgarity.

"During the trial of the directors of Farrows Bank it was given in evidence that a substantial proportion of the money expended on advertising was devoted to religious publications. The student of psychology will find some interest in this statement. It is, or was, a maxim among publicity experts that religious publications are always 'good' for the announcements of quack medicines and such like nostrums. One makes the natural deduction that the readers of religious publications are, as a class, credulous beyond their fellows."—*Saturday Review*, June 11, 1921.

Sir Arbuthnot Lane, the eminent surgeon, declares that specialized knowledge is not an unmixed blessing, and that men who are experts in one thing often lack commonsense in other matters. He quotes the case of parsons and their attitude to the problems of life as a particular case in point. This is a palpable hit, for theology is simply stereotyped ignorance.

The Mount Everest expedition is already in Tibet, and in sight of the mountain, says the President of the Royal Geographical Society, Sir F. Younghusband. Perhaps, the explorers will meet some of the famous Mahatmas the Theosophists talk so much of. Perhaps, not!

We are amazed to find that the *Daily Mail* printing press did not revolt when called upon to reproduce a photograph of a British soldier and a member of the German force together at a Silesian outpost. The two soldiers are waiting for Korfanty's Polish rebels—drawn from the country of one of our late allies. Someone ought to protest—the clergy could lend a hand, being well versed in the Trinity. To think that "once a German always a German" is now to be "once a German now an ally" is incredible; or does it mean that since Lord Northcliffe has been publicly prayed for—his million odd supporters deserve the same treatment?

The poor in the East-end of London are considered to be the poorest in London. This is not so in the case of the East-end clergy. In their case it is often a stepping stone to higher things. The Rev. O. H. Parry, of All Hallows, Poplar, has been appointed Bishop of British Guiana. It will be remembered that the Bishop of London was, in his earlier years, associated with an East-end church.

The *Daily Express* desired that the late lamented Mr. Will Crookes should be buried in Westminster Abbey. This attitude is highly interesting. The *Daily Express* has always voiced opposite views to that of Mr. Crookes. He was, it thought, so false a reasoner, so dangerous a character, so devoted a reformer, so paradoxical a politician, that there was only one place for his remains—the Abbey. We can have, in Hamlet's phrase, "something too much of this!"

London is full of landmarks that nowadays are as interesting to the Freethinker as to the Christian. The old Moravian Chapel still stands at 32 Fetter Lane, and an oak communion table has just been installed to commemorate four members who fell in the war. The Moravians came to London from Germany in 1733, led by Count Zinzendorf, and received substantial moral support from John Wesley until the latter found that their doctrines were not quite as sound as they ought to be. John had a keen flair for false doctrine, and in those days the Bible meant what it said.

Wesley's Chapel in the City Road is itself badly in need of renovation, and an appeal for £10,000 for this purpose is the latest of the "funds urgently needed" afflictions. The condition of the evangelist's tomb and statue is declared to be "a reproach to Methodism and the English people." Since John's time there has been a steep fall from grace, and it is doubtful whether the rich Methodists to-day are as ready to fork out as their poor forbears were. The golden calf is eighteen carat, hallmarked, in the twentieth century, and the Wesleyans are just as well aware of the fact as are the Anglican bishops drawing £15,000 per annum.

At No. 14 Fetter Lane, not many yards from the Moravian Chapel, the Imperial British Israel Association proclaims the glad tidings that we are really the chosen people, from which we gather that, despite clerical complaints of our degeneracy, there is no immediate need to fear lest we fall back into godless ways. A large open Bible in the window, annotated on original lines, explains why we won the war. "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth" (Isaiah xli. 15). We are invited to see here the prophet anticipating our tanks which tempted the Germans from cover in such a businesslike fashion, and "threshed them out" so small that "the wind carried them away like chaff." If God loves us more than anybody else, would it be ungrateful to ask him to complete his job and collect the indemnity?

To the student of social evolution there is a very real, if pathetic, interest in this ardent devotion to the sacred record. At a time when Protestant Christians are coquetting with the Higher Critics, and even with spiritualists, there must be many of little faith to whom infidelity will appear to be not so very dreadful a thing after all. In some religious communities the layman is ahead of the profession, in others a long way in the rear. But the cleric and his wealthy co-adjutors, much as they despise the grotesque notions of the British Israelites or

the Peculiar People, are quite ready to patronize them to the extent of teaching the Bible to children as God's word, and labelling faith as a virtue.

Browning said "God's in His Heaven." If this be true, there are some curious happenings on the earth. At a Kensington inquest it was stated that a blind man bumped into an old man and knocked him down. His thigh was broken and he died from shock. A spark from a chimney falling on a thatched roof caused a fire which destroyed Ashton Rectory, near Exeter.

The clergy do not find everything in their favour. *The Isle of Man Examiner* says that the local war memorial has "no sign or symbol calculated to convert the monument to sectarian propaganda."

Providence is said to count the hairs of our heads, but the care does not appear to go much beyond tonsorial matters. In street accidents in London 638 people were killed in 1920. They were only Christians.

A London newspaper has made the profound discovery that the Metropolis is not bright enough, particularly on Sundays. Charles Dickens made the same discovery about eighty years ago. The *Freethinker* has emphasised the same truth for forty years.

From copies of the *Cape Times* just received we gather that the soul-saving fraternity in South Africa are feeling the pressure of Modernism somewhat acutely. The issue of April 21 reports an address by Rev. D. S. Joubert, B.A., on "The Inspiration of the Bible," in which it is claimed that the demand for the Scriptures all over the world is itself some evidence of divine inspiration. In the very next column the Most Reverend W. M. Carter, D.D., Archbishop of Cape Town, protests vehemently against "Materialism," and deplores "the drift from the Church." In the issue of April 20 is the report of an address on "Christian Fundamentals," by Rev. D. G. Malan, M.A., who said they were living in "grievous times." "There is a destructive criticism which seeks to discredit the trustworthiness of the Word of God, and which has its leading exponents within the Church. The method of Satan always has been to cast doubt on the Word of God." What do our clerical friends in England and Scotland, who find their faith strengthened by the Higher Criticism, think of their colleagues?

The issue of April 14 contains a long letter on "A Rotten Profession" by Kenneth Pritchard. In view of the appeals now being made here on behalf of "the starving clergy," the following extract from the letter is not without interest:—

> I recently received a letter from a clergyman friend of mine, resident in England; a charming fellow in every respect, whom our world would term "a damned good sort." He has prospered well, and I feel certain finds his profession anything but "rotten." He has recently been translated to a new living—a better living. He tells me, inter alia, the size of his house, the extent of his lands, and—and here is the "be-all and the end-all" of it all—"the living is worth £700 a year, with extras." He does not state, mark you, that he has the opportunity of ministering to 700 souls, or has 700 poor and needy to care for and tend, or the welfare of 700 village lads to consider. What is of chiefest importance is the fact that his fat living brings him in "700 a year, with extras."

One more item in the *Cape Times* (April 21) is full of significance as indicating the constructive nature of Christianity. The Rev. J. O. Nash states in two columns of details the attitude of the Anglican Church to marriage with a deceased husband's brother. In the adjoining column is the report of court proceedings headed, "Scandalous Neglect of Children: Parents sent to Prison."

Fashionably dressed women attended Professor Einstein's lecture at Manchester University. It is satisfactory to know that clothes are up-to-date for the reception of philosophy at a time when men unable to get work are committing suicide in a Christian country.

In the *Daily Mail* Mr. Rothay Reynolds is very cross because in his visit to Germany he saw a woman give a dog some cream off her plate. We have won the war, what more does this gentleman want? It is like challenging God's wisdom in giving us the victory.

A movement has been started to "challenge the increasing departure from evangelical doctrines and interpretations which are essential to the faithful presentation of the Gospel of Christ." It is being run by the "World's Evangelical Alliance," and there is the pathetic addition that "there is wide-spread anxiety lest many on the outer circles of our congregations, and, perhaps, more at present not in touch with any church, should come to think that there is no certain message of assured Gospel on which men can depend." Quite so. There must be a limit to this kind of thing. At present the "assured Gospel" looks like meaning anything that the people can be induced to swallow.

Dean Inge does not think that the working man is altogether bad, he has at least one good point. Speaking at the annual meeting of the British Science Guild he said that, "The British workman is not at all a bad fellow. He fought splendidly." That is certainly something. The British workman is quite good for the army and to be sent out to war. And that should be quite enough. Was it not a French writer who said that it was the duty of the working man to protect from assault the property of other people. The Dean said that the British workman is not a fool. Of course, the statement that the working man is a fool is not true of them all individually, but in any other sense we beg to differ from the Dean. If he were not a fool, for how long would he submit to the religious domination of the Dean and his kind, and believe that it is for his good?

From the *Times* we learn that Emil Straus, condemned to penal servitude for shooting a detective in Berlin, is devoting his leisure time to religious study. As the prison library contained only Catholic books, the governor has ordered that other religious works should be provided. There seems to be an error here, according to all religiously established precedents it is the *Freethinker* that Straus should have demanded. Perhaps that is really what he asked for, but the authorities did not wish to advertise this paper.

Mr. Churchill announced to the House of Commons that 30,000 horses in Mesopotamia are to be destroyed because it would not pay to bring them home. We presume that it would also be bad policy to give them away, it is better to pay to have them killed. It won't pay to bring them home! There is nothing like Imperialism and Jingoism for developing the finer side of man's nature. If we only go on long enough we may hope for the time when we may serve our soldiers in the same way, for it is a clear waste of money to pay to bring men home who are wounded or worn out, and then pay them pensions when they are home. If we go on long enough we hope to see a Royal Military establishment for the destruction of soldiers who are past the fighting stage. There might also be a similar establishment for politicians, but it does not seem as if there is a stage at which they are unfit for their work, however unfit they may be for anything else.

A missionary is to be sent to Tristan d'Acunha, Britain's loneliest possession. It is said that the islanders "have no laws, no crime, and no money." The advent of Christianity should alter all these things. Piety and profiteering are very old partners.

The way of the Cross is the way of Sorrow. So the clergy tell their congregations. The Rev. F. Hastings, of Peckham, is just back after travelling 4,000 miles through Spain and Morocco.

To Correspondents.

Those Subscribers who receive their copy of the "Freethinker" in a GREEN WRAPPER will please take it that the renewal of their subscription is due. They will also oblige, if they do not want us to continue sending the paper, by notifying us to that effect.

J. V. Davies.—Thanks for suggestion, but if any design of a personal nature were adopted, the portrait would be more fittingly that of Bradlaugh.

L. W. Palmer.—We did not say that *all* Socialists were afraid of the clergy, and careful not to offend the religious, but that this was usually the case. We were aware that the Socialist Party of Great Britain is openly Freethinking, but they do not, we think, form more than a small part of the Socialists in this country, and we think that our description is in accord with the facts. Thanks for papers.

J. Pennie.—The Prayer Chain is a very common form of religious idiocy. Perhaps the born fool is doing less harm in that way than he might in others.

R. Martle.—The only way to answer some Christians is by saying nothing. The Lord protected them against argument by the kind of mental outfit he gave them. When we meet that type we at once give in and crave their mercy.

W. T. Newman.—The Act of 1870 provides for the withdrawal of children from religious instruction, and that clause has been unaffected by subsequent legislation. It is a pity that others in the school do not withdraw their children, but we do not think that any teacher would be so foolish as to make trouble over the matter. A teacher who did would be certain to get into trouble, and the school might forfeit the government grant.

V. J. Hands.—Thanks. Shall appear as early as possible.

J. W.—We are obliged for cuttings.

A. Cuttill (Stockport).—Pleased to hear that you are doing what you can to stir up interest in Secularism in your district. If there is anything we can do to assist, please let us know.

J. Collier.—We have always advised Freethinkers to make themselves well acquainted with the case for their opponents, and the same rule applies to the other side. If one's case can't stand the worst that can be said against it there must be something wrong with it, and no one but a fool or a rogue wishes to champion a cause that is wrong.

R. A. Taylor.—You quite misunderstand us. We do not expect Socialists, as such, to defend Atheism or Freethought on their platforms. Our complaint was that, while they refrained, as a rule, from doing this, they showed a suspicious anxiety to avoid offending the clergy, and were ready to tolerate any amount of religion being preached in the name of Socialism. It is not their lack of defence of Freethought, but their readiness to bend to religion of which we complain.

R. B. Walker.—"Unsuitable *gods* exchanged" is, as you say, a delicious misprint. It is a business that should flourish.

A. Cuttell.—Specimen copy has been sent, thanks.

F. Barnard.—Delicious. Much obliged.

The "Freethinker" is supplied to the trade on sale or return. Any difficulty in securing copies should be at once reported to the office.

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

When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, giving as long notice as possible.

Lecture Notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4, by first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

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

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

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

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

The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office to any part of the world, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—

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

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

Sugar Plums.

Among the books that helped to make the modern Freethought movement Volney's *The Ruins, a Survey of the Revolutions of Empires* must take a very prominent position. And reading it again more than a hundred years after its appearance, one is surprised at its freshness and the appositeness of its teachings to present day issues. In this respect it is more remarkable than a work such as Paine's *Age of Reason*. Perhaps, this feature of Volney's work is due to the fact that it takes a more philosophic survey of the deeper aspects of human nature and its problems than did Paine's great work, and deals with questions which, however much they may change in form from age to age, are always present as problems with which humanity must grapple. Volney was really one of the great writers of the Revolutionary epoch, and would, as a writer in the *Times Literary Supplement* recently remarked, have been a noteworthy figure in any age.

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We feel, therefore, that we have, in a way, done the Freethought cause a service in re-issuing an edition of this famous work, although it should be noted that in France it has never been permitted to go out of print, and has always had a steady sale. We have done this, it should also be said, on the initiative of a friend who has been good enough to advance the capital for the issue—which in these days of high prices means a considerable sum for the production of so lengthy a work—and who will be repaid from sales. The edition is unabridged, it contains all the valuable notes, and in addition to the usual astronomical charts has a very fine portrait of Volney and a striking cover design by Mr. H. Cutner, whom we also have to thank for his work. It is printed on good paper, cloth bound, and is published at five shillings, which is, we think, as cheaply as it has ever been published. That is something in these days, and we think we can claim to be the only firm in Britain that attempts the publication of a book at a pre-war price. The edition has been carefully revised from the translation of 1795 by Mr. George Underwood, who also contributes an interesting introduction.

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For the rest, we must leave it to our readers to form their own judgment on the work after having read it. We strongly advise each of our readers to get a copy. Quite apart from other considerations, it is well that the Freethinkers of this generation should have an acquaintance with the work of their predecessors, and we hope that the sales of this work will justify our going on with the re-issue of other Freethought classics that we have in view. These will certainly appear if there is the least probability of there being sales sufficiently large to pay the cost of production.

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Mr. Latimer Voight still carries on his correspondence in the *Thanet Gazette*, but one would wish, and we are sure that he also wishes, his opponents were of tougher mettle. Still, so far as it goes, the correspondence is certain to be productive of good if only to the extent of introducing Freethinking ideas to newcomers. And it is something to find newspaper editors who are liberal enough to allow the other side of the case to be put before the public. In the respect of suppressing opinions our press can hold its own with any newspaper press in the world.

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The *Salt Lake Telegram* recently adopted the plan of handing over the paper for one day at a time to different editors. One of these editors was the Rev. Elmer L. Goshen, a Congregational minister of rather a remarkable type, at least we judge so from the specimen of his taste in editorship. His conception of the functions of a newspaper is exalted enough, and one may well believe him when he says that there is not in the whole State of Utah a paper that dare espouse the liberties of the entire people of the State. That we can well believe, and it is also true that in this respect Utah is no worse off than other parts of America or this country. What Mr. Goshen says of the papers of his acquaintance will apply to others equally as well, "The newspaper by every right ought

to be the leader of public thought, and that is just what it is not to-day, and for the reason that most of us know that the average newspaper is concerned in the mere making of money, and that to make profit it will keep still on every great question, and fill its columns with slush." That is perfectly true, but worse than this is the subsidizing of papers in order to deliberately mislead the public mind on precisely those questions on which they need the most careful and exact information.

For the rest, Mr. Goshen's day's editorship is of remarkable interest to Freethinkers, and gives evidence of unusual broad-mindedness on the part of its temporary editor as well as on the part of the proprietors. It might, in one respect, be called an Ingersoll number, since there is a lengthy excerpt given from Ingersoll on *The Liberty of Children*, and nearly four columns of the heartiest appreciation of the great American Freethinker from the pen of Mr. Goshen. He says that he has heard Ingersoll from one end of America to the other, "I have heard men who drew upon their memory for their wit, and upon their imagination for their facts, put this man alongside the devil that they had created out of their warped thinking, and comparing the two, the devil was not given the first place." Mr. Goshen's testimony is "Mr. Ingersoll was a man of unsullied personal life; a beautiful man in the home; a staunch friend; a lover of the common humanity; and with a sense of social justice that makes all true men love him forever." The article contains a number of quotations from Ingersoll's writings which well bear out all that Mr. Goshen says. We congratulate all concerned on producing a number of the *Telegram* that has with it an air of both originality and courage.

We have received a copy of two resolutions passed by the Inter-racial Rights Association. One refers to the outrages of Greek troops on Turkish subjects and asks for an international enquiry, the other protests against the constant encroachment by the government upon the liberties of British people.

As will be seen from a report in another column Mr. Whitehead's mission in South Wales is meeting with success. We are not at all surprised at this, and it bears out what we have often said of the area as a place for Freethought propaganda. Mr. Whitehead is being sent down at the cost of the Executive, which will be quite willing to make similar experiments in other parts of the country where friends are prepared for the necessary co-operation, and with as may lecturers as show themselves fitted for the work. The summer is still before us, and there should be a good deal of this work done before the season concludes.

Will those Freethinkers in Abercynon and neighbourhood who would like to take advantage of Mr. Whitehead's presence in the Rhondda Valley, to arrange for meetings, please write at once to Mr. E. Davies, 13 Clara Street, Ton Pentre Street, near Pontypridd.

Politics and Politicians.

> Sugar-coat the truth, indeed! Why, the whole problem before us is to rub the sugar-coating off the bitter pill of Falsehood. To sugar-coat the pill is to dress the Devil in the robes of God, and hope abolish evil by seating Satan on the throne of Almighty Justice.—*T. L. M'Cready.*

The deciding motive of all the official acts of politicians is a political and not an ethical one. I mean that even though a public officer should be convinced that a certain course of action would be *right*, but that if he took it his political career would be endangered, and an opposite course of action would be *wrong*, but that by taking it his political chances would be increased, he would *adjust* his conscience to the circumstances and do what was wrong. I do not mean that he would deliberately think the matter over and then violate his conscience with bold consistency, because that is not the way such things are done. He would, on the contrary, wheedle his conscience. He would make himself believe that *under the circumstances* he should do so and so. He would fool himself with the Jesuitical logic that it is right to do wrong that good may come, as if good could *ever* come out of evil.

This is what any average public official would do, from the Prime Minister down to the meanest of the "Black and Tans." This is what any average British citizen would do who wishes to gain distinction in any business or profession. And this must always be true while riches and public honours are positively barred to really good people, and great wealth and public office can be achieved only by legal stealing and trickery.

A person who gets high public office is necessarily a politician, and while a politician is theoretically one who understands the science of government, he is really one who considers a party above a principle and gains his ends by deception and trickery. Such are the men who, with very rare exceptions, hold high office in the State and in the Church. The men who tell the people the truth about society remain in obscurity and poverty. If they are too plain spoken they get mobbed, imprisoned or killed. The men who tell the people lies about society get elected to office. The men in the Church who are as honest in word and act as Jesus was are either driven out of the Church or kept down. Their words are not listened to and their example is not followed. But the men in the Church who are politicians, who trim their sails to every breeze, who pander to the rich and powerful, who are as unlike Jesus as it is possible for men to be, and are as much like the Scribes and Pharisees, whom he denounced, as it is possible to be—these are the men who become popes and bishops, deans and archdeacons and especially ecclesiastical commissioners and trustees, for these last are the offices in which money counts and which men may occupy without being parsons at all, for the Church, mind you, is both a sacred and a secular institution. It's a clever scheme, because the secular body arranges the finances and can withhold supplies from any minister who gets too honest and plain-spoken to suit them.

You may think that the politician does not get to the top in the Church as he does in the State, but a little reflection should convince you that it is so. In every such institution it will be found that the schemers, the wire pullers, the underhand workers who know how to pack Committees and spring surprises on the unwary, the dishonest and paltry, are those who win place and honour. The honest, the frank, the modest, those who can stoop to no dirty work, never get to the top except in some time of crisis that calls for the kind of character which a politician cannot have.

What I am saying is so trite as to be hardly worth saying. Everybody knows that office holders have to tell lies about what they will do when they get into office; that they have to bargain with the trustees of the party funds, and load themselves up with promises that no honest man would make. We all know that they have to practically swear that they will act in the interest of the men who engineer their election and against the interests of the general public.

Do not think that I am now referring to any particular person. I am talking about politics and politicians in general, not to make you dislike and distrust this, that, or the other person, but to arouse your hatred against politics and the devious ways of the politician. The politician is one who does not believe that the plain truth will win, and as he always wants to win, he always hides the truth and tells the people lies. Just as we induce children to take medicine by mixing it with sugar so it is with politicians and the people. They assume that truth is a nasty dose and make it their business to sugar-coat the pill. That is

what they say, but it is only a plausible plea by which to justify their devious ways. Politicians do not want the people to know the truth. They do not sugar-coat it. They conceal it. They do not say: "See, here is a truth. It will do you good, but it is bitter. We have, therefore, sugar-coated it." They say among themselves: "Yes, here is the truth, but it would never do to let the people know it, because if they knew it down would go the Land Lords and the banking monopolists; down would go the War Lords and the Lords spiritual; down would go the present State and the present Church." They do not say: "Let us sugar-coat the truth and get the people to take it." They say: "Let us conceal the truth from the people as long as we can." Politics is not a clever attempt to get the people to take the truth as quickly as possible. It is a desperate attempt to keep them from discovering the truth as long as possible.

And what a libel to say that the truth is bitter! It is the exact opposite. It is delicious! It is the elixir of life! What is the testimony of those who patiently and fearlessly seek the truth, and eat of it when they find it? Invariably, that they would not exchange it for pomp or power, or even wealth. The only reason why it seems bitter is because all who know it do not speak it. We hear one brave man speak the truth and we see the secular and ecclesiastical politicians jump on him and beat him into silence or kick him to death. And we are afraid. But we do not know how sweet was the truth to him who died.

Again, the politician is a man who thinks that good can be accomplished only bit by bit. And this is what deceives so many social reformers and turns them into common time-servers. They think they must be very careful not to offend people; that they would only drive people away from the truth by showing it to them all at once. As if truth were so horrid that people will be frightened if they see her without a mask of falsehood on her face. They say they are working for a "cause," and that cause must not be imperilled. Oh, how that word "cause" and the word "movement" have misled men, by turning them from truth-seekers into politicians. Nothing must be said or done that will hurt the "cause" or the "movement"! Was there ever a "cause" yet that did not take precedence of the truth on which it was based, sooner or later?

Now let me tell you what I think. I think it is your business and mine to speak the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, every time and all the time. We should neither conceal it, nor abate it, nor modify it, nor accommodate it to anybody or anything for any purpose whatever—certainly not to gain anything. As honest Freethinkers, it is not our business to gain things. We are out to speak the truth as we understand it and to live in exact accordance with what we say.

If we believe there is a god and that man has an immortal soul, then we should say so, in spite of all the scientists and Atheists in the world. If we believe there is no god and no soul we should say so in spite of all the supernaturalists and Theists in the world. If we know and believe nothing about either subject, then we should say that. It is not right to avoid offending people or to seek to make friends of them by failing to declare the whole truth, as we conceive it.

If we believe that all those people who worship Jesus and rob their neighbours at the same time are shameless hypocrites, we ought to say so, whether they like it or not. And if we believe that certain despised classes of people are better than these sham Christians, we should say that too.

If we believe that a man who holds land out of use, and thus extorts rent from those who want to use it, is a thief, we should say so. And if we believe that a man who uses the power of the government to prevent free competition in banking, or any other business, and thus enable him to extort monopoly prices for his labour, is also a thief, we should say that and not something else. We should always say what we mean and not be politicians. Politicians are bad and dangerous people. Their consciences are always shifty and unreliable. They are false friends and bitter foes. Their whole appeal is to the violence of the majority, as represented by the State, in order to force people into compliance with their own narrow views. Nobody knows this better than they do themselves. Have no faith in them, for they will deceive and betray you. Nor believe that any good thing can ever be gained by politics. Search for the truth. Believe the truth. Obey the truth. Speak and write the truth. And the truth will make you free. G. O. W.

Random Rational Reflections.

An eddy is produced on the surface of the sea by a casual puff of God's breath. These random reflections were raised recently by reading an article on "India" in *Current History* for May. These is, of course, much truth in the essay. No all-round rationalist will deny that British rule has been productive of much good to the Indian peoples—in some directions. But at what price to those people—especially the poorer? That's the question, "must give us pause."

The worst feature, perhaps, of British rule in India is not its "military domination," but its economic exploitation. Therefore, in proving that there is *not* "military domination," the writer of the article is guilty of the fallacy, *ignoratio elenchi*. It is literally true, I believe, that the British drain on Indian wealth (not coin) has been terrific, and disastrous in its effects. What good "finding employment" for (poor) natives as syces, punkah-wallahs, khitmutgars, mill-workers, agwallahs, etc., at wages that only enable them barely to exist at a standard of non-living, as low as it has ever been—even in that country? What benefit is there to the Indian people in developing shipping, irrigation, modern agriculture, industry, etc., if the resultant wealth goes out of the country (as well as out of the hands of the people) in return for—nowt? The unjust taxes on the Indian cotton industry, and the abominable salt tax, are only two side-lines in the economic domination, as well as exploitation, of India. The Christian missions serve a very useful purpose (for the exploiter) too, in this exploitation. There, as elsewhere, Christianism chloroforms the poor when Hinduism, or other religion, is failing to pacify— the poor.

Again, British rule has done nothing like what it ought to have done in the education of the people. Many would say that it has not desired really to educate the (poor) native. Belief in Christ, and happiness in the *next* world, are far better for him.

Socially, there is a far more rotten caste spirit or feeling among Anglo-Indians than there is amongst Hindus. "The proud man's contumely," and "the insolence of office" reek there in one's nostrils as nowhere else on earth. It *may* be worse, around the Throne of God in Heaven, but I hae ma doots. The representatives, official and unofficial, of British rule have made friends, and good friends, with the native ruler, rajah, prince, money-lord, and all that lot. They have actually inter-married! The *poor* native says, "God made the white man, and God made the dark man; but the soldier made the half-caste." The Kala Feringhi, the poorer half-caste, has an "heluvan" existence—in India. But inter-marriages by the "upper suckers" serve as a consolidation of interests.

I have always considered that the bad reputation the half-caste has, in the Far East, is due to factors of environment. This opinion is borne out by the fact that, in the "upper circles," the offspring of mixed marriages are not the degenerates that the poorer half-caste so often becomes. Is he not "fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons," and "warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer?" If you poison him does he not die? There seems to be no cause in biology that should prevent such fusions, of good stock, producing good results—given a proper environment.

The top dogs—Hindu, Parsee, and others, *pari passu* with the Christians—are allies often in the exploiting of the poor. In Britain, the Jewish master exploits his Jewish workers in the tailoring, cabinet making, or other trades, as ruthlessly as he does the Gentile worker—when he gets the chance. And, in feats of exploitation, the Christian can hold his own with the Jew, or Parsee, or Hindu. The Christian ruler and exploiter has made friends, good friends, in Britain with the Jew and with the mammon of unrighteousness. They, too, have inter-married to consolidate *their* interests, and to make "all for the best, in the best of all possible worlds" (*i.e.*, the British Empire). Dr. Pangloss is to-day a Christian missionary— when he's not a tame kept parson to the rich.

Without the poor the rich couldn't have their wealth, power and privilege—not in India, nor in Britain, nor in America. "The poor ye have always with you." In that pronouncement of the Divine Wisdom, the poor can find comfort. To the rich it is a proof that Christianism is true. "Blessed be ye poor," is inspired of God Almighty. "Woe unto you rich," is obviously a human (all too human) interpellation, inserted into Holy Writ by alien hands and uninspired heads. In any case, the woe won't come till the next world comes, so the rich can chance it. Rosebery and Rockefeller, Lloyd George and Harding, Carson, Cox, and Cowdray, all are Christians. Reading and Rothschild are Jews, which is next door to being Christians, for "Jesus Christ" was a Jew. HE is said to have said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." The position (and possessions) of the English speaking people in this world to-day prove that Christ was God—and that we are His chosen people. Adam and Eve may have talked in Yiddish or in Gaelic. No wonder they were expelled from the Garden. "Christ" never spoke—in Aramaic. If He spoke at all; it *must* have been in English—with a Scots, Welsh, or Yankee accent.

If proof is required—circumspice. Athos Zeno.

Freethought in South Wales.

(June 13—18.)

I opened my summer campaign at Swansea on June 13. I write after what has proved to be the most strenuous and successful week of outdoor propaganda in my experience. Seven meetings have been addressed—five on Swansea sands and two in outlying districts. The crowds have increased in dimension until on the Saturday evening half of the town seemed to be gathered round our platform awaiting our arrival.

Every meeting has found an excited and a usually incompetent antagonist—Bible in hand—offering himself to the platform as a chopping block, and even the Christian audiences in a town unusually pious have recognized on which side the truth is to be found. The culmination was reached at last when the gigantic audience itself absolutely howled in disgust at the Christian exponent who was digging a grave for religion in his attempt to revive the corpse. Hundreds have heard the Freethought message for the first time; scores of people, many commencing as opponents, have requested a return visit; excited groups have remained until all hours of the morning discussing the lectures; dozens have personally stopped me in the street to assure me of the modifications in their views, and the whole place has been talking about the meetings. Every night local sects have assembled with Bible texts on banners in our meetings, and their spokesmen have fervently implored God to help them "against the enemy in their midst." We have replied by distributing 2,500 leaflets and selling over six pounds worth of literature, including many *Bible Handbooks* and two dozen copies of the *Freethinker*. Hundreds of questions have been answered, and altogether an impression has been made on vast attentive crowds which will solidify later into informed Secularist opinion in scores of minds, and will, incidentally, generate respect for our cause in a district where hitherto Nonconformity has almost completely dominated.

The local movement as yet is not too well organized, but I can thank especially Messrs. Richards, Roberts, Buckle and Dupree for their kindly help, and hope that the success of the mission will encourage other Swansea Secularists to manifest the interest upon which a general forward movement depends.

I hope the Rhondda Valley will emulate the Swansea meetings, and trust to the saints in the place concerned to support the attempt to win South Wales for the Freethought cause. George Whitehead.

Correspondence.

CATHOLIC CHURCH.

To the Editor of the "Freethinker."

Sir,—Your correspondent, Mr. Boger, certainly writes a very temperate (for a Roman Catholic) criticism of Mr. Clayton Dove's articles on the Catholic Church. But he is unconvincing, for he can only be read as plainly trying to whiten a Black Article.

He advises all who would like the truth to visit "The Hut," and to ask questions, at the same time advising them to keep to the rules of debate, and not to get excited. Now, Mr. Editor, I have attended a large number of debates on religious subjects, and, if at any of these a lack of common decency has been displayed, it has usually been a Catholic who has been the offender. I have mixed with Catholics for the last thirty years, and have found them invariably educated up to an emotional pitch, from a religious point of view, which at all times defies commonsense and decency in argument. With all due respect to Mr. Boger, I think Mr. Clayton Dove's writings will, to all seeking knowledge, prove more acceptable than a night at "The Hut." W. H. W.

FREE SPEECH.

Sir,—Although a few weeks late, I trust you will allow me to draw the attention of your readers to the very glaring mis-statement of fact made by Mr. A. B. Moss in his speech at the N. S. S. Conference as reported in the *Freethinker* of May 22. In the course of his remarks Mr. Moss said: "On political, social, and economical questions a man could express his opinions freely, but in religion, opinion regarded as in any fashion hurtful to Christians or professing Christians, was liable to bring one under the charge of blasphemy."

Surely this is a most remarkable statement for a man of the standing of Mr. Moss to make, at a time, too, when so many Socialists are in prison for their "political, social, and economic opinions," not only in this country but at least in every so-called civilized country in the world.

In the *Communist* for May 28 it is stated that sixty-one arrests have been made. Thirty-two imprisonment sentences, seven hard labour, twenty-five second division. Fourteen fines from £100 down, seventeen are awaiting trial, six of these being in gaol. That is in this country alone, and these are being added to every day. Possibly Mr. Moss may be able to persuade himself of the truth of his statement, but for the sake of the advanced movement in general I trust the four hundred others who attended the Conference are not all of the same frame of mind. George Robertson.

[Mr. Moss had in mind, we take it, the fact that opinions against religion are the only ones that are made the subject of specific laws for their suppression.—Editor.]

Dr. Lyttelton's Challenge.

Sir,—Dr. Lyttelton's reply to my query opens up many avenues of discussion, the main points of which rest on the belief in God, and the belief in a future life; I will confine myself to these except to add that I share his dislike of bigotry in whatever form (although the fact that "a multitude of our fellow men are fools" doesn't require much proof), and that I am anxious only to "hold fast to that which is true," be it on a common ground or not.

Firstly, I am *not* an Atheist. To my mind the existence of a Deity does not admit of proof or disproof, I can only say I see no signs of one. When a Theist tells me there is a God I can only marvel at his powers of penetration. But when he goes on to describe God's attributes, when he says that he is a loving Heavenly Father I beg to differ. Even when he says, "Oh, yes, he was a carpenter at Nazareth, his mother was a virgin and his father the Holy Ghost, which is only another part of him, for he is three in one and one in three, and whosoever believes," etc., even then I do not question his honesty or his sanity, but I think he is mistaken and I tell him so, and I regret that an educated person should cling to such a relic of barbarism.

Dr. Lyttelton apparently thinks that one of the proofs of God's being lies in the fact that Freethinkers denounce him—as we "never denounce the non-existent." Freethinkers denounce God because he most certainly exists, but only in the imagination of his devotees. The fact that there are so many Gods is proof that they are but figments of the imagination, and as such may be said to exist. As I anticipated, Dr. Lyttelton "denounces" the "Eternal Fires" as being "non-existent!" But Calvin believed in them and so did his followers, and who shall say that these believers in the non-existent were "harmless folk?" It is because I feel that the belief in God (even though He is non-existent) is often the cause of great harm being done that I attack it.

I do not deny the *possibility* of a future life. And as Dr. Lyttelton says, "I am not genuinely convinced that there is *not* one." But if Dr. Lyttelton is genuinely convinced of its existence and will furnish me with proofs (*proofs* not Biblical texts) that he is right I am open to conversion. His reply to my question is even more evasive and obscure than I had thought likely. He surrounds several moral truths with a deal of mysticism, furnishes us with a non-Christian interpretation of salvation and damnation, hints that after all the Scriptures tell us very little about the after life and doesn't expressly say that a change of mind after death is impossible, and imagines he has outlined an answer to the question. If a Christian's "faith" is founded on such flimsy grounds as this, I'm not impressed with it, and will stick to reason and one world at a time. I'm not signing a cheque which the bank of futurity may fail to honour.

A little girl was once reproved by a clergyman for telling lies. "Do you know where you'll go when you die?" he asked. To which the wee one replied, "I dunno, nor you dunno, nor none on us knows." Dr. Lyttelton's reply to my query is scarcely more illuminating!

Vincent J. Hands.

Sir,—I must resist the temptation to bandy logic with Mr. Arch, or, indeed, with anybody, except for the purpose of finding something important on which we agree. But it takes two to do that successfully, and Mr. Arch seems determined that it shall not be. It was my fault that we have gone so far as we did. Logomachy is an amusing pastime, but I never heard of anyone who was convinced by it.

Mr. Jameson's question requires elucidation before it can be answered. Does he use "mythical" in the sense that he is sure Jesus Christ never existed at all? Or thinks he *may* never have existed? Or that he did exist but the records of him are mainly fictitious? If the last, I should further enquire the exact grounds for rejecting some of the records and not all, for they are often subjective, and any discussion would have to do down to the lowest point of divergence to be of any use. Similarly, when Mr. Jameson says he does not admire the character, I was appealing to those who do. If there are any who do not, I should ask them if they believe in love and brotherhood as Mr. Cohen says he does in the preface to his book.

E. Lyttelton.

"The Underworld."

Sir,—To avoid J. Effel from suddenly striking upon my trail and obtaining a fresh supply of matter for his future penship, may I at once state that I only claim to have ordinary common-sense, and would not attempt to defend the works of Mr. Walsh, or any other authors—authors should be able to do that themselves, when necessary.

I do not know whether J. Effel is an author or a French knitting champion; perhaps, he is a cross between the two. I would classify him as a candidate for the conductorship of a Jazz Band, if I were pressed for an answer on the point.

He certainly has reached the underworld, in fact, he has reached so low that I am somewhat concerned about his getting back up. I hope Mr. Herbert Jenkins will give him the opportunity he is asking for, otherwise, I believe his case is hopeless.

My power of observation is limited to that of an ordinary person, which may, perhaps, be the cause of my not seeing his point correctly, but if his point is for a standard of originality, he should practise what he preaches, and always remember that charity should start at home—and stay there, if it is not of a noble quality. He evidently has the same knowledge of his subject as have most egotists. This is clearly shown by his disbelief in some of the characters portrayed in the *Underworld*, which could be proved to any ordinary person, not only in the case of the miners, but of all classes.

Whether Mr. Walsh has been a miner poet or not, is a minor matter to the present day reading public. Even J. Effel admits that much, following his "story of thirty years ago," which does smell of the mould, but not of originality.

I am sorry that J. Effel did not have an opportunity of reading "the speeches that did the trick," but I can assure him that if he cares to write for a sample of such speeches to the Secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain—who, by the way, at a very early age has attained the top-most place with the miners of the whole nation, and it is not difficult for an ordinary mind to imagine that he was, therefore, considered very wise in his own native village years before he was known to the nation—he can have his wants supplied in abundance.

In conclusion, I would suggest that J. Effel should be more prudent with his £10 offer, for he has already given us four columns of grunts and growls over a matter of 2s. 6d. What the state of his mind would be like over a matter of £10 is more than I would care to imagine.

A. Langley.

A Chorister's Musings During the Sermon.

Many critics of the Bible have the impression that churchgoers are necessarily believers of all that the Bible contains, because by going to church or chapel they support an organization that is professedly based upon the statements in the Bible. But a careful enquiry would show that churchgoers are extremely hazy on matters of dogma or doctrine. They know that the ideal religious life means going about the country in picturesque rags telling other people how they ought to live and being generally uncomfortable oneself. That, they consider, is utterly impracticable in these days, so they avoid any discussion on the subject.

In point of fact they are just ordinary citizens with a little less physical energy and a little more sense of cleanliness, orderliness and harmony than some of their neighbours. Their desire is to get the most pleasure out of the day of rest. They rise betimes on that day, have a bath, and then array themselves in their best clothes. The sense of cleanliness is heightened by the sense of increased self-respect which is always engendered by the wearing of fine feathers. Full of this feeling they walk decorously to the place of worship where they know they will meet others having similar feelings and displaying similar clean linen and fine clothes.

The church is larger, and better appointed than the ordinary dwellinghouse, and is redolent of sweet-scented woods, and has softened lights and shadows which all make for the soothing of nerves tried by the week's worries. The polished brasses, the white linen of the clergy and choir, all help the feeling of cleanliness, and

the Communion table, "decently covered with a fair cloth," suggests the idea of the purest and simplest food and drink, bread and wine. Cleanliness and orderliness having done their best in the direction of pictorial harmony, vocal and instrumental music are added, and so we reach the trinity of harmonies, of scent, of sight, and of sound.

The opening sentences, the exhortation, and the prayers, are all couched in the most varied musical language; vowel sounds and consonants have by long practice been so arranged as to heighten the soothing, restful influence. To prevent the devotees from falling entirely to sleep, responses sung standing, and hymns in which there is the opportunity of strenuous physical exercise by singing at the top of one's voice, are scientifically interspersed between kneeling and organ music until the congregation is in a fit state to receive the long recitative called the sermon. This is a long string of well-worn musical phrases repeated so often that, like the rest of the ritual of the service, they do not jar upon the hearer. The city man can settle himself down comfortably to muse over the past week's doings or hatch little schemes for the conduct of his business in the near future.

These sensuous harmonies of form, of colour, of perfume and of sound excite to such an extent that one's natural feelings of affection are outpoured to one's heart's content to an impersonal being. At the psychological moment round comes the plate to enable these generous impulses to be given a material expression.

Finally, the devotee leaves the service with a sensation of spiritual upliftment—of being better than most people—that lasts him for nearly the rest of the day.

On the morrow, he forgets it all till Sunday comes again.

J. J. O.

Robert.

ROBERT ran the elevator
In the tall sky-scraper, where
Men of business shrewdly cater
To the trade they watch with care.

Spotless as to shirt and collar,
Frank and open as to face,
Heart as honest as a dollar,
Stood he ever in his place.

How each morn he used to greet me,
Manners polished as his shoes,
Then to sundry gossip treat me
As I bought the Daily News!

Well he knew the task assigned him,
Well as I, he knew my door,
Never needed to remind him
When we reached the proper floor.

But alas for blessings mortal,
Robert left us in the lurch,
Left our doors and found the portal
That he heard about in church.

Now in happiness supernal
Robert mounts from star to star
In that building, grand, eternal
Where the many mansions are.

When I go a little later
I shall feel at home to see
Robert on the elevator
Smiling stand to welcome me.

If 'tis there the proper caper,
I shall greet him as of yore,
Chat a bit and buy a paper,
As we rise to reach my floor.

HOWELL S. ENGLAND.

The charity of the Christian is not that that "thinketh no evil." He ascribes wickedness to those who differ from him in opinion. I conceive it possible for men to differ from him in religion, and yet to equal him in morality. I conceive it even possible that some of them might surpass him without a miracle.—*G. W. Foote.*

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 post card.

LONDON.

INDOOR.

METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Johnson's Dancing Academy, 241 Marylebone Road, near Edgware Road): 7.30, Debate, "The Existence of God," between the Rev. A. Graham-Barton, F.S.P., and Mr. Constable.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C. 2): 11, John A. Hobson, M.A., "The Duty of Free-thinking."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N. S. S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. E. Burke, A Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Regent's Park): 6, Mr. A. D. McLaren, "The Parting of the Ways."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Brockwell Park): 3.15 and 6.15, Mr. Shaller, Lectures.

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