

The
FREETHINKER

FOUNDED • 1881

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

Vol. L.—No. 21

SUNDAY, MAY 25, 1930

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>God on the Stage.—The Editor</i>	321
<i>Voltaire the Liberator.—W. Mann</i>	323
<i>The Tragic Comedians.—Mimnermus</i>	324
<i>The Supreme Problem in Religion.—Theodore Schroeder</i>	325
<i>Egypt and Christianity.—L. Corinna</i>	326
<i>Fables Founded on Facts.—C. S. Fraser</i>	327
<i>The Beaker Invasion of Britain.—T. F. Palmer</i>	330
<i>N.S.S. Annual Conference Agenda</i>	331
<i>The Bank of Energy.—John McCrashan</i>	332
<i>The Author of the Psalms of David in the Consulting Room.—W. W. Harvey, M.D.</i>	333
<i>Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc.</i>	

Views and Opinions.

God on the Stage.

MORE than once—or twice—it has been pointed out that blasphemy in these times is one of the most curious of offences. One never knows when one has committed it, and a great deal seems to depend upon *who* commits it. If you draw fantastically foolish pictures of God and don't believe it, that would be blasphemy; but if you draw a picture of him ten times as foolish and believe it, then it is not blasphemy. All of which appears to put the finishing touch to the exposure of the hypocritical plea that it is not the opinion that is punished by the Blasphemy Laws, but only the expression of it in an offensive manner. As a matter of fact, it always was the opinion that was attacked—while bigots were honest enough to speak the truth about their motives. It is still the opinion now that bigots are afraid and ashamed to state their motives openly. The ancient bigot might have been a fool; the modern bigot, particularly those in high places, is almost certain to be a liar.

Here is a case in point. Most of my readers will have seen some account in the papers about a play, which has already been performed in New York, called "Green Pastures" (Gollancz, 7s. 6d.) It is a negro play, and depicts the Christian Negro's idea of God and heaven. The play begins just before the creation and runs up to the Exodus. God is depicted as an elderly Negro in his office, which is fitted with a number of law books, a spittoon and various etcetras. He is smoking a cigar, and is very much disturbed over the "cussedness" of mankind. He is also attending to a list of complaints, a wing of one of the cherubs is moulting out of season, and no one knows what to do with it, God himself complains that so many angels will fly to the moon on a Saturday evening, he throws thunderbolts about, but ultimately gives it up because they fail of the

desired effect; he has a discussion with Noah as to how much drink he is to take on the ark, he has a discussion with the office cleaners and gets disheartened over the general failure of creation. Gabriel suggests to God:—

"How about cleaning up de whole mess of 'em and starting all over ag'in wid some new kind of animal?"

GOD: "An' admit I'm licked!"

GABRIEL: No, of co'se not, Lawd . . . "

GOD: Hey, dare! I think I got it."

GABRIEL: What's de news?"

GOD: "I'll tell you later . . . Was you going anywhere near de Big Pit?"

GABRIEL: "I could go."

GOD: "Lean over de brink and tell Satan he's just a plain fool if he thinks he kin beat anybody as big as Me."

GABRIEL: "Yes, suh, Lawd. Den I'll spit right in his eye."

God then begins to work out the plan of training Moses as a "Tricker," preparatory to sending him to Pharaoh, and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are sent for to discuss the matter. Says Isaac, when the three enter:—

"Sorry we so long comin' Lawd, but Pappy and Me had to take de boy (pointing to Jacob) over to git him a can of wing ointment."

GOD: "What was de matter, son?"

JACOB: "Dey was chafin' me a little. Dey fine now, thank you, Lawd."

Now this kind of thing has been done before in Freethought journals with far greater wit; but then it was done by people who had outgrown the whole thing. This is supposedly written by those who believe in Christianity, so it becomes a work of "great emotional depth and spiritual exaltation." Acted in a Negro camp meeting, of the ignorant evangelistic kind, it might be, in other circumstances its grotesqueness outweighs every other quality. The one thing certain is that if similar dialogues had been published in these columns, there would have been a shriek of blasphemy. The previous editor of this journal received twelve months imprisonment in 1883 for doing much the same kind of thing that is now done with impunity. The publishers may thank whatever God they believe in for the existence of the *Freethinker*.

* * *

Christian Origin.

Apart from this aspect of the book, its chief interest lies in its giving to those who can see it, a sample of the type of mind out of which a religion such as Christianity grew. Do away with the negro dialect, use instead an educated and archaic speech, and you have the Christian story. The absurdity of creation by God, and also of what used to be called the plan of salvation, is veiled to the believer be-

cause of the stately way in which they are told. The absurdity of God in an office, smoking ten cent cigars, and calling for reports of what is the state of affairs on earth, is the negro covering for the essential ideas on which Christianity is built. Can anyone detect the substantial difference between the bewhiskered God of "Green Pastures," saying, just before he decides on the Deluge:—

"All I gotta say dis yere mankind I have been peoplin' my earth wid sho' ain't much. I got good min' to wipe 'em off an' people de earth wid angels. No, Angels is all right, singin' and playin' an' flyin' round, but dey ain't much on workin' de crops and buildin' de levees. No, suh, mankind's just right for my earth, if he wasn't so doggone sinful, I'd rather have my earth peopled wit' a bunch of channel catfish, dan I would mankin' an' his sin. I jest cain't stan' sin."

and:—

"It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created from the face of the earth . . . for it repenteth me that I have made them."

Yet not one in a thousand who smile at the childish absurdity of the negro God will reflect that the idea is identical with the thing they have been taught to accept as unquestionable truth. The author evidently thinks he is reflecting the mentality of the American Negro. He is doing more than that. He is reflecting the mentality of the Salvation Army, of the rank and file of the Roman Catholic Church, of the West Country Methodist, of the medieval Christian, of the vast majority of the early Christians. Take the type that is portrayed in "Green Pastures," and you have the fundamental mentality embodied in those who created the Christian religion. More than that, it embodies, when the profession of belief is genuine, the mentality of *all* Christians. I say when the belief is honest, because when we come to the better educated Christian world we are dealing with men who never realize what their professed beliefs involve, because they dress their beliefs up in a mass of philosophic verbiage which disguises what are their implications. If their faith in prayer, in God, and in providence really means anything at all it means that, even if the person they believe in does not wear whiskers and smoke cigars, he is a person who feels, who listens, who plans, in a word, who does all that the Negro God does, even though he does it in a more "refained" manner. Absurdity may flourish just as well with an Oxford accent as with an East End pronunciation.

* * *

The Searchlight of the Stage.

It is said that the author has brought "Green Pastures" to England in the hope of getting it performed on the stage. This is not likely to happen, and already some of the clergy have been protesting against such a thing being permitted. The objection to "sacred" characters being placed on the stage is that it destroys their sanctity. The objection is quite sound, but it marks make-belief rather than belief. Those who are acquainted with the medieval miracle plays, which were performed under the direct patronage of the Church, know that the realism of "Green Pastures" is precisely the realism of the medieval religious drama. In the story of creation no one was shocked when God, as a bewhiskered elderly gentleman, went stumbling round the stage with a lantern, because he had not yet created the sun, nor in the Garden of Eden when the adjustment

of the fig leaf roused the interest of the audience, nor was feeling outraged when Joseph replied to Mary's request for some grapes, that she should ask the father of her child to get them—the audience evidently feeling that he had a right to some annoyance at the situation in which he found himself. No one was shocked, because everyone believed, and actuality before them corresponded to the thoughts within them. It is when the absurdity of the thing in which belief is professed is made clear by actual, visible representation, that religious feeling is "shocked"—which means that to expose religion for what it is cannot fail to make plain its fundamental absurdity. To-day there are only two conditions which can make genuine, straightforward religious belief possible. One is sheer ignorance; the other never to realize the nature of what one claims to believe.

* * *

All Religion One.

I should like to see "Green Pastures" on the stage. It would help a great many Christians to see themselves as others see them, and we have respectable authority for saying that that is a very healthy experience. At present the better-educated Christians fool themselves with phrases, and the less-educated ones have no incentive to realize the stupidity of their religion. The Lord Chamberlain will not permit representations of the deity on the stage, or even of Jesus Christ. It would make the people too familiar with them, and familiarity breeds contempt—when the object of familiarity deserves it. When it does not, familiarity endears rather than estranges. Take the greatest of the Christian saints, and he is only the American negro venting his feelings in a better, a more poetical language. It is of the culture of the American negro—the more ignorant type—that religion is bred. It has its home in the jungle, its culture smacks of the cave or the forest clearing. Jesus with his conflicts with demons, and belief in legions of angels and devils, would have been at home in an American camp meeting—that is if he ever existed to be at home anywhere. Westminster Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, St. Peter's are only architectural improvements on the medicine-man's hut. Intellectually they are identical with it. Those who want to understand the origins of Christianity will learn far more from reading "Green Pastures" than they will by studying learned discussions full of elaborated foolishness. The savage is the father of all religion. Glory be, to his name!

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Homefaring.

ACROSS the hills I stride:
A star with paling fire
Into the hush of night has died
With spent desire;
I pass my bank and brae,
Where furze and heather spread;
Fair waking roses light my way
With gleams of white and red!

Beyond the streams I go,
Across the verdant vales;
The rising sun with golden glow
Queen Nature hails;
I reach at noontide clear
A home that hides apart;
Once more I meet and greet my dear—
"Good-day to you, sweetheart!"

Nigeria.

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

Voltaire the Liberator.

(Continued from page 309.)

It would take too long to follow in detail the career of this remarkable man, whose life is crowded with more vicissitudes and triumphs than any novel. At the age of fifty-six, he went, at the pressing and repeated invitations of Frederick the Great, to live at the Court of Prussia.

Frederick, who had gained a great reputation as a military genius, also aspired to greatness in literature, and, just as he sent agents abroad to collect giants—by purchase or kidnapping—for his regiment of "Potsdam Guards," so he collected great men of literature and science to grace his Court. He had a great admiration for French culture, and he himself wrote quantities of French verse. He had obtained Maupertuis, a French mathematician and distinguished scientist; La Mettrie, another Frenchman, author of *Man a Machine*; The Marquese d'Argens, a Frenchman of letters. Algarotti, an Italian writer and art critic; and several other notables in art and science.

Every evening this distinguished company, to the number of a dozen or so, would assemble, and the King, throwing aside the cares of office, would entertain them to those charming and delightful suppers at the royal palace, Sans-Souci, which Frederick had built for himself at Potsdam. Frederick himself played the flute well, and sometimes took part in his own band of professional musicians. Before the arrival of Voltaire, Maupertuis was the most distinguished, though not the most agreeable member of that evening circle.

Voltaire was enchanted with his reception. All, but Maupertuis, hailed his coming with delight; for it was no easy matter to be brilliantly entertaining for several hours on end every night, and Voltaire was never at a loss; he had an inexhaustible flow of ideas, sparkling and flashing with his incomparable wit and humour. Ennui was impossible in the company of Voltaire. Frederick told him that to the other titles he inherited from his ancestors, he would now add, "Also possessor of Voltaire."

It was "Roses, roses all the way," and Voltaire thought he had reached the Paradise of his dreams. His letters to his friends are full of enthusiastic praise of Sans-Souci, of the Court, and of his friend the King. He at once formed a dramatic company, the actors in which were Princes, Princesses, and Courtiers and he himself was director. Three months after his arrival he writes to his niece, Madame Denis in Paris: "All my hours are delicious. I have not found here the smallest prick of a thorn among my roses." However, the thorns were bound to appear, sooner or later. No man reaches a position of such eminence without exciting the jealousy and envy of meaner spirits, if it is only those he has displaced, or those who would occupy his position.

Frederick said that of two Frenchmen in the same court, one must perish; and there were several here. As in all Courts, there was the usual tittle-tattle, scandal, and mischief-making. It was owing to the indiscretion of La Mettrie that the first cloud appeared over this earthly Paradise. La Mettrie was very friendly with Voltaire and often visited him. He confided to Voltaire that he was not happy. He had been exiled for his Atheistic book *Man a Machine*, and like most Frenchmen abroad, he was homesick. He implored Voltaire to use his influence to get the ban of his exile removed. In return, he confided to Voltaire, that while conversing with the King, a few days previously, on the favours that Voltaire en-

joyed, and the jealousy it caused; the King remarked that he had need of Voltaire for another year, when he squeezed the orange he threw away the skin. This rankled like poison in Voltaire's blood; he refers to it several times. A little more than two months later, La Mettrie died suddenly—it was said, through over eating of pheasant pasty, though this may be only another pious libel of the many uttered about him—Voltaire, writing to his Niece, says he would like to have put a question to the dying man about the orange skin; upon the point of appearing before his Maker he would have told the truth. But, he concludes, there is only too much reason to believe he spoke the truth.

Besides having the company and prestige of Voltaire at his Court, Frederick had a stronger motive in bringing him to Potsdam, namely, the polishing up of his French verses, and this work of criticism and emendation cost Voltaire no small pains. One day Voltaire, referring to a batch of the royal poetry he had received to correct, described it as the king's dirty linen sent him to wash; and doubtless that reached Frederick's ears.

Voltaire had not been in the Prussian capital much more than three months when we find him writing the famous letter of *bul*s to his niece. They are acting one of his plays, in which the Crown Prince takes a leading part, he is a good actor and very amiable; *but!*—The King's suppers are delicious; we talk reason, wit, science; liberty reigns at the table; *but!*—Operas, comedies, parades, concerts, lectures; *but!*—*but!* The city is more spacious and airy than Paris, palaces, affable queens, charming Princesses, beautiful maids of honour; *but!*—*but!* My dear child, the weather begins to grow a little cold.

But the final rupture between Voltaire and Frederick came through Maupertuis, a man of real ability, but of a very irritable and exacting disposition. He and Clairaut had undertaken an expedition to the North Pole, where, after severe hardships, they had succeeded in measuring a degree and verifying Newton's demonstration of the oblateness of the earth. He was, says Morley, "extremely courageous and extremely vain," his temper was "jealous and arbitrary," and his manner "gloomily sullen."¹⁰ Parton says, "he had acquired the habit of drinking brandy, which did not improve a disposition naturally irritable and exacting."¹¹ His importance at court was lessened by Voltaire's advent, he was totally eclipsed at the King's suppers. Added to which, Voltaire received a pension two thousand crowns greater than his, and this to a man he despised as a mere scribbler.

Maupertuis acted to König, another scientist, in a discoverer's quarrel, "in a way that struck Voltaire, and all men since, as tyrannical, unjust, and childish, all in one."¹² He also published a book of speculative essays, the offshoot of his leisure hours, containing strange theories and notions which, says Morley, "it needed more audacity to broach, than to face the frosts and snows of Lapland." Voltaire saw his chance and resolved to put his mark on Maupertuis, "and the result was the wittiest and most pitiless of all purely personal satires in the world." Voltaire, says Morley: "Knew exactly what kind of malicious gravity and feigned respect would surround this amazing performance with inextinguishable laughter, and his thousand turns and tropes cut deep into Maupertuis like sharpened swords." Voltaire entitled this satire the *Diatribes of Doctor Akakia, Physician to the Pope*. And in truth, says Macaulay in his essay on Frederick the Great,

¹⁰ Morley: *Voltaire*. p. 197.

¹¹ Parton: *Life of Voltaire*. Vol. II, p. 64.

¹² Morley: *Voltaire*. p. 198.

even to-day, it is not easy for anyone "to read the jokes on the Latin city, the Patagonians, and the hole to the centre of the earth, without laughing till he cries." Indeed, declares the same historian; "his incomparable power of covering whatever he hated with ridicule, made him an object of dread even to the leaders of armies and the rulers of nations. In truth of all the intellectual weapons which have ever been wielded by man, the most terrible was the mockery of Voltaire. Bigots and tyrants, who had never been moved by the wailing and cursing of millions turned pale at his name . . . the most august institutions, began to look mean and loathsome as soon as that withering smile was turned upon them."

Voltaire's "Doctor Akakia" is a physician who has read the book bearing the name of the famous Maupertuis, President of the Berlin Academy, and professes to believe that it is quite impossible that it can be the work of such a learned man, and if it is really the work of a President, it could only be a President of Bedlam: "Nothing is more common to-day than for young, unknown authors to publish under known names works little worthy of them. Here is one who has taken the name of the President of a very illustrious Academy in order to peddle off rubbish singular enough." Then he proceeds to dissect the work with masterly satire and wit.

W. MANN.

(To be continued.)

The Tragic Comedians.

"At last the zealot is so infatuated by the serious mockeries he imitates and repeats that he really takes his own voice for God's. Is it not wonderful that the words of eternal life should have hitherto produced only eternal litigation?"—*W. S. Landor.*

THE BISHOP OF DURHAM has upset some of his ministerial brethren by reminding them that the clergy are too busy raising money, and that before many years the State Church of England, of which he is so distinguished an ornament, will be disestablished. These brave words were embodied in his diocesan publication, but the newspaper press soon gave the matter the publicity it needed. Hence the hubbub, which has not yet died down, and is not likely to do so.

Prophecy may be the most gratuitous form of error, but some of the Anglican clergy actually agree with the Bishop of Durham that disestablishment will be included in the political programme in the not far-distant future. Maybe, the frenzied collection of money that the Bishop complains of has some bearing on this matter, for cash is a most useful article in a crisis. That such a crisis is actually expected is also clear, for Nonconformist ministers, no less than Anglican priests, have suggested means of surmounting the coming trouble with the least possible injury to the clerical caste itself, which now numbers 40,000 in this country.

The clergy of the State Church seem to imagine that disestablishment would mean merely the severance of the political relationship between the Government and the Anglican Church, and that the dismissal of the Bench of Bishops from the Upper Chamber of Parliament would be the most serious result. If so, they are basking in a fools' paradise. Disestablishment would be accompanied by disendowment, for it is ridiculous that this Anglican Church should be allowed to walk off with national property to the value of nearly two hundred millions sterling. The actual position would be that this

Church of England would have to take its place among the hundred other sects and rely upon its own supporters for the upkeep, not only of its churches, but also of its many schools. At present these schools, which are purely sectarian, are kept going by Government grants. That this money is not wisely spent at present is quite clear from the fact that these same schools are the worst equipped and the worst staffed in the whole country.

There is nothing novel nor revolutionary in the idea of the disestablishment of the Church of England. The Irish Church was disestablished in the Victorian Era, and the same fate overtook the Welsh Church in more recent times. So that there is plenty of precedent for such a step, however drastic it may appear to Churchmen. But the withdrawal of State support from the Anglican Church, and the relegation of this highly-organized religious association to the dead-level of the numerous other sectarian bodies may be but the prelude to other and vaster changes.

All the Christian Churches in this country are suffering from decay. There is a loss of membership, a deficit in Sunday School attendance, and a declining interest in religion on the part of the rising generation. The only live organization is that of the Spiritualists, which is capturing adherents from all the denominations. Spookism, however, is not Christian, although they have much in common. Astute clerics (and there are many such) have noticed these things, and plans have been made to stop the decline and fall of Christianity. Priests as far apart as the Bishop of Ripon and the Rev. W. F. Loft-house, President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, have suggested a union of the various churches as a solution. It is a clever move, even if it be a counsel of despair. "Defendants are hanging together," observed a stern judge in old times, "for fear they should hang separately."

This union of the various churches is actually in process. Next year the union between the three Wesleyan-Methodist bodies is to be completed. Last year the two divisions of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland buried the hatchet. So far, the work of union has been too easy. The crux is to bridge the gulf between opposing the bodies in Christendom, who proclaim opinions which range from the extreme limits of priestly authority to the rights of the individual worshipper. For example, the Roman Catholic Church insists on servile obedience to its priests, who lay claim to the most extraordinary power. The Quakers, on the other hand, reject a traditional ministry and the sacraments. Here is the impasse, and it is a real one. The past history of the Society of Friends is a guarantee that at least one body will never submit to priestly authority. The union between a man-eating tiger and its prey is a complete one, but the price is clearly too great.

How the religious Kaleidoscope has changed during a few generations. When the body of the heretic was taken and tortured, and then burnt alive, in order to save his soul, those who perpetrated the cruelty were, at least, straightforward in their objects. They acted as other savages had acted to them, and as, we fear, many priests would act to-day to those who have the honour to differ from them. In the light of history it is passing strange that any self-respecting Nonconformist should merge his own religious views into those of the priests who once hunted them like wild animals. The whole matter only shows how serious is the dilemma of the various Christian Churches facing the rising tide of Secularism.

Adversity makes strange bedfellows, and the spectacle of the Christian sects whimpering to each other for support brings home to everyone the growth and

change of ideas. Knowledge has widened in so many ways never dreamed of in the Oriental ignorance of the Christian Religion. New tones have grown into human sentiment. All the lights and shadows of life have shifted, and its whole surface has been dyed in different colours. Naturally, we have progressed beyond the reach of two-thousand-years'-old ideals. They voice different views which men have outgrown, and to which they can make no direct response. At their note their minds and feelings rouse to little movement except amazement. They come like "the horns of Uffland, faintly blowing," and men are beginning to realize that they were meant for other ears than ours, and are but an echo from the far-off days of bigotry and ignorance. The conscience of the race is rising above the dogmas of Priestcraft. A new impulse is at hand to make men join hands and hearts. This impulse is Secularism, which marches to certain victory under the glorious banners of Liberty and Fraternity.

MIMNERMUS.

The Supreme Problem in Religion.

FROM Pausanias of Ancient Greece, down to modern students of genetic psychology, innumerable observers have definitely asserted a connexion between religion and lust. These opinions, together with the deliberate criticism of them, as by the late Professor James, help to define the issues, and suggest the need for a more thorough study. Of course we must distinguish between a religion of personal experience and the mere acceptance of a theology. The latter implies no more than a hope for some temporal advantage, or for a comfortable life after death. In a broader sense we must also distinguish religion from the patter of those who accept theologic dogmas only on logical inferences, based upon objectives. We must also remember that the word-jugglers who make acrobatic dialectic harmonies between religion and science, are not necessarily religious.

Even before the work of Professor Starbuck and his followers, religion was regarded chiefly as a phenomenon of pubescence and adolescence. But pubescence and adolescence are also the periods of general intellectual awakening. It requires more than a mere temporal concurrence or logical construction to constitute convincing proof of a causal relation, or an identity of religion and sensualism. That there is no such direct intimate connexion between the sexual development and our interest in mechanics, chemistry and higher mathematics, we may admit. Probably these are only concurrent products of our general maturing. The vital question is whether religion is related to sexuality in any more intimate way than is mechanics or higher mathematics. Here one might just as logically argue that mathematics produced an interest in sex. Although interest in mathematics and religion develop mainly at the period of sexual maturing, and although the average person's interest in the sciences is not even suspected of being perverted sexuality, it does not follow that the interest in religion may not be sexual in origin and nature. Obviously we must go deeper into the problem.

Is religion a purely intellectual or dialectic sublimation of sexual ignorance and mystification? Or, is it an affair of the emotional life, centering around sex? May it be, as some affirm, that "religious experience," especially in the mystic's sense, is the misinterpretation and over-valuation of an unidentified sexual ecstasy? May it be a mere diffused physiological sex-activity, in which the normal sensual thought-content which normally accompanies it, has been excluded from consciousness, by a completely obsessing sexual ecstasy, and the normal

thought has been replaced by religious concepts or dialects. Evidently such contentions cannot be proven solely by showing religion to be contemporaneous with adolescence, nor disproven, by showing that interest in science is also contemporaneous with adolescence.

How is it with art and music? As with religion, the first spontaneous interest in them develop mainly during adolescence, and it is also believed by many, that persons of the artistic temperament, and those of religious temperament are both peculiarly sensitive to sensual suggestion. Assuming, for the sake of the argument, that these suspicions are true, we cannot yet draw the conclusion either that music and art are perverted sexuality, or that religion is not such.

Persons of artistic temperament are such, because of unusual sensitiveness to those emotional values which art and music inspire in emotional persons. That the nervous system is a common physical basis for sexual, artistic and religious feelings or experiences, few will deny. Considered from the point of view of the neurologist, all feelings and emotions are in some sense founded in mere nerve commotions. They are therefore, necessarily somehow connected and may present difficulties of differentiation, because they are all similar conditions of the same nervous organism, of which the sex nerve centres are an important and normally an inseparable part. To make distinctions wholly on the basis of a theory about their external causes, is not conclusive as to the existence of similar subjective distinctions. This fully explains the connexion often suspected, between sexual feeling and other feelings. In all such cases the true explanation may be purely one of some partial physiological connexion, as by some involvement of the same nervous system. And yet it may be possible that in their subjective aspects, art, music and religion have very much in common, differing mainly as to the conscious external stimulus and the resultant differing labels or theories about it. In some cases it is still possible, that an abnormally intense sexual ecstasy may be so overvalued as to induce the delusive use of super-physical or transcendental dialectics in describing it. So then, it is still a question whether "religious experience" in one's own person, is causally so related to sexual activity as to be difficult or impossible without it or even without some abnormal intensification of the sexual cravings or ecstasies? Here, again, we must examine more deeply into the psychological for essential determinants of the "religious experience," its ecstatic nature and supernatural explanation, in those persons in whom it develops apparently or possibly from conditions within the organism.

Our knowledge of neurology, and of the influence of association of ideas, leaves it possible that artistic emotions may induce sex emotions, just as the excitement of battle often induces sexual excitement. Again, it may be asked, are they not essentially the same in their subjective aspects? Likewise, it is readily conceivable that a sex ecstasy, induced by objective stimuli, may intensify an existing artistic feeling. It is also possible that in some hyperæsthetic persons, an internal excitement may expand and amplify so as to involve emotions not normally associated with the stimulus. I have known a case where sexual ecstasies induce colourful illusions and fantasies. Colour-audition and colour-olfaction are kindred experiences. So it is theoretically possible that a sexual ecstasy may develop into a "religious" experience, even though we assume them to have important differences beside the label.

THEODORE SCHROEDER.

(To be concluded.)

Egypt and Christianity.

It is an accepted, and true, fact that the Eastern peoples are, in conceptions of morality, particularly that part of it bound up with religion, poles apart from our Western attitude. Why, indeed, should it be otherwise? The mass of Egyptians are deeply religious, and their sacred book, the Koran, plays an incredibly larger role, in these days of religious decadence, than does the Bible with us.

For this reason Murray Harris in his book on *Egypt*, (Chapman and Hall) believes that "Egypt's best course is clearly to stick to the essentials of material progress, *i.e.*, irrigation, railways, etc., and for the rest develop indigenous institutions."

For, of course, it is a difficult matter for a Christian nation to govern a nation of Orientals which has its own ideas of honour and fair play, so different from those of a conquering white nation.

By far the most complex of all questions in the government of subject races is education. In Egypt the native education is almost wholly, or was, religious. The results of the British importation is at present that the private schools are still teaching, or misteaching, to a standard that would be barbarous in the Middle Ages. These schools, mostly run for profit or attached to some Mosque, or supported monetarily by the Ministry of Pious Foundations are the A.B.C. schools of Egyptians and the teaching consists of recitations from the Koran in archaic Arabic, now almost forgotten by modern Egyptians, and the thousand rules of grammar, together with calligraphy.

The British Colonial administration hold a fixed belief in non-interference in questions of religion, and so the ministry of Pious Foundations (Wakfs) is in no way under the control of the British Administration. If the Egyptian is backward and illiterate the Wakfs and the native administration are the responsible bodies. The squandering of funds for the dissemination of outworn creeds may be deplored, but the British have hitherto refused to take a stand as judges in questions of religion and until they do so, and as long as in Mohammedan countries education is indivisible from religious practice, reform is but a dream. The use of the Arabic language as a teaching medium is also an, unconsciously, great hindrance to the advance of secular, scientific thought.

Even at El Azhar, the National University, matters are not much better. Somewhere about twenty thousand students are in residence, many receiving free board as well as free tuition.

For Europeans it is mighty difficult to comprehend the fundamental divergence of views between the (religiously different) East and West. Weary days, months and even years are spent in commentating the Koran and the Traditions. Quite frequently one meets the Egyptian prototype of the religious peasant who has misapplied his youth in religious study and doesn't understand what he knows and nothing besides.

The Sacred Law (Sheri) is hoary with age. It dates from the seventh century, and as Conservatism is a useful trait in a nation's character, and from the religionist's point of view, admirable, the present state of society, governed rigidly by laws laid down by the learned men of the time of the English Ethelred the Unready, is one of constant religious conformity.

Unfortunately for the West, the East does not look upon the Mechanical Age with the same eye as does the West. That inherent superiority which in such a land as America (U.S.A., to be precise, for a tinge of the East is to be found in Latin America) is a result of machinery and mechanics, is wholly denied by the East.

Since all knowledge is, for the Orthodox, contained in the Koran and the Hawadith, it is clear that the man who has these by heart, molds the essence of this world's, and perhaps the next, whole totality. The Egyptian can despise the Westerner with an assuredness of authority, undoubted and equanimous beyond believe, even in a Catholic.

Naturally all good Egyptians, that is, Mohammedans, will leave some small legacy to the Wakfs, from where it is applied in continuing the holy and supreme education of the young miud. At the best it goes to El Azhar,

the University, where from the point of view of British Conformity it is wasted, and results in the narrowing of the mind.

It is interesting to compare the other, Christian, communities in Egypt with the Mohammedan. Every other community, Greek, Syrian and Jew has its own fine schools, with European teaching staffs, and these schools are entirely dependent upon the voluntary system, obtaining their funds from the members of the communities themselves.

In this respect it may be admitted (which is historically a truism) that Christianity is a step forward out of profound ignorance. In the case of both Islam and Christianity are school funds applied for the perpetuation of the creed of the school, but in the Egyptian school there is as yet, chiefly owing to the non-interference attitude of the white rulers, no minimum secular schedule such as is demanded in voluntary schools in England. Thus the available funds have been used almost entirely for the propagation, or at least, the retention, of Islam. Mohammedan formalism is being further crystallized against dissolution by the money derived from (to a more and more evident extent) the surplus from Western mechanized, business, "modern," activities.

It is calculated that the Mohammedans who avail themselves of the facilities for acquiring Western education, is one per cent. The Mohammedans, in proportion to the other races in Egypt, number ten to one!

The Moslem has an atavistic mistrust of Christian teaching, and he has learned to fear the proselytizing invader. This fear is perhaps a sound one, for there is no one so eager to capture by whatever means will serve, a new member, as the Christian missionary, full of political—missionary zeal.

The Moslem has insisted on having only his own schools recognized as training centres for Government work—the earthly Mecca-cum-Paradise of all Oriental students.

The language of the Koran is still the language of letters, and although the spoken tongue is hardly recognizable as the same language, and it is an inspiration (or should be) to our Christians at home that every word is held sacred, inspired, and that no re-interpretations are allowed.

By far the larger half of this problem of education is bound up in the—harem. It is a fact, that all communities are behindhand as compared with those who practise complete emancipation of their womenfolk. Here is the weakness of Islam's case against "modernity."

The rudimentary clauses of education are generally acquired nowadays by the daughter of well-to-do parents, but seclusion until marriage is generally adhered to, the chief care being the home in its narrowest and most material sense.

If the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world, what can be expected of the Oriental woman whose religion debars her from the most elementary form of mental training?

A slight repercussion of the emancipation movement in Turkey has been felt in Egypt, but the closer contact of Egypt with the West does not seem to have helped towards freedom.

In the fierce competition of the world to-day, those nations who stubbornly refuse to liberate one half of their people must necessarily go to the wall (whatever view one takes of Westernism) and until the East throws off the shackles of religion and steps out into the light of the secular sun, refusing to be enticed by the missionary shackles with which some Western nations would like to impose upon them in place of the old eastern superstitions, the East must not expect to escape from hewing and drawing water for the West. For the West is fundamentally hypocritical in its present attitude to religion and sees in religion a means of enslavement, from which it seeks to escape itself.

The modernization of the world without the intervention of Christianity might have read differently. Egypt is a land where only a non-religious, secular, humanist policy will succeed in bringing Egypt to a future that will compare with her ancient periods, spoke of in her holy books, but never to return.

L. CORINNA.

Fables Founded on Fact.

THE HAT THAT DIDN'T COME OFF.

THERE was once a very large country on the planet Mars, which was called Eporue, where they had a terrible Civil War.

Fifteen years after the War had ended, the People of this Country still used to talk about it, and they used to say to each other: "It is inconceivable how we could have been so foolish as to fight one another in the way we did. But we are not such fools now."

The reason why they were so sure that they were not such fools any longer was, because every year they held a very solemn Service of Reminder, during which everyone was supposed to think of the horrors of that long-past Civil War.

While this service was in progress everyone was expected to take off his hat (just as we do) to help him to think better. There was no law about it, but it was just a matter of custom. And being a custom, the people obeyed it far more strictly than any law (just as we do).

Well, it happened that during one of these services a man was seen to keep his hat on. So as soon as the service was over, and everybody had uttered the solemn words: "We shall never fight each other any more. Amen," the man who stood next to the one who kept his hat on, snatched the offending hat off and stamped on it. The man on the other side jabbed him in the ribs. The man behind hit him on the back of the head. And finally there was a sort of free fight, in which several persons were more or less severely hurt. For the man who wore his hat had friends who tried to protect him.

Well, when it was all over, a Government reporter came to the hospital where the hat-wearing man had been taken, and said to him: "Why were you so foolish as not to obey the custom of removing your hat during this solemn service for peace?"

And the man answered: "Can't you think of a reason?"

"Perhaps you forgot," suggested the reporter.

"Oh, no," replied the man.

"Don't say you did it deliberately!" gasped the shocked reporter.

"Certainly," said the man calmly.

"Great Scott!" gulped the reporter. "Well, you got what you deserved."

"I don't know about that," the man answered. "You see, it was a very cold day, and part of the bone of my skull was blown away in our Civil War. So I kept my hat on as a protection against the weather."

"Oh!" said the Government reporter. "I never thought of that."

"No," replied the man. "You wouldn't have done."

"Anyway," said the reporter, picking up his top-hat and monocle, "it would never do to put that in our *Gazette*, because we should all look such fools. Good morning!"

ImMoral.—If thy neighbour's hat offend thee, knock it off. For it is better to follow the crowd and save thy face, than to mind thine own business and keep the peace.

C. S. FRASER.

FATE

I SLOWLY weave the lives of men
With shades of every kind,
Each single thread I use to-day
Was in the past designed.
Some may be dark, some may be fair
But all were long arranged.
I weave my pattern patiently
And nothing can be changed.

S. SODDY.

Acid Drops.

Sir Thomas Inskip says that very shortly the Church of England may have to face a storm and such a crisis as have not been known since the Reformation. But there is an important distinction between now and then. In the sixteenth century the disputants were about on the same level. Both were equally devoted to a set of childish superstitions, although their beliefs were different. Whichever side won religion was all right, and it is an open question whether the world would not, in the long run, have been better off if Protestant Christianity had never been heard of. To-day the crisis is again between two superstitions, but there is now a large body of educated opinion which holds in expressed contempt the beliefs of both parties. And that makes a devil of a difference.

We have no doubt whatever that it is as easy to get "rice parsons" in England as it is to get rice Christians in India. But the rot from which the Churches are suffering is not merely that of quantity, but also of quality. Let anyone compare the standard of intelligence in the Church with what it was even a century ago, and they will see how it has fallen. We have no hesitation in saying that in the vast majority of instances, those holding high office in the Churches to-day would never have been looked at two or three generations ago. Money may buy service of a kind, but money cannot give the Church back the intelligence which has been taken from it by the growth of modern thought.

The latest statistics show that the Roman Catholics in Scotland provide 13 per cent of the population. On the other hand it provides 37 per cent of the prison population. That shows the valuable moral results achieved by the Christian faith, for after all, there is no Church that keeps so tight a hold on its members as does the Roman Catholic Church. There is one thing certain, that is that if there were not proper provision for Catholic exercises in prison there would be the devil of a row made by Roman Catholics.

According to Sir Herbert Samuel, the percentage of the population sent to prison has fallen by three-quarters in the last twenty years; and nearly half the jails of Great Britain have been closed for want of tenants. We suppose it would be right to credit this improvement to the Churches, seeing that four-fifths of the people are indifferent to religion outside the Churches?

Sir Herbert Samuel also declares that, "This is a seething time of thought and action. It is a great age we live in." What is curious is that times when Free-thought ideas are most widespread are usually times of "seething" thought and action. Whereas, periods of acute piety are notoriously times of intellectual stupor and reaction. Note the Renaissance and the French Revolution period.

The Rev. Dr. R. W. Hughes is very anxious that every child should be "endowed with a Christian memory." This is aptly put. For the main purpose in "catching 'em young" is to implant religious ideas before the intelligence awakes. Who ever heard of a priest stressing the importance of training the child's intelligence and reason? It is always the emotions that have to be exploited, and the memory dosed with Christian dope.

The latest British submarine was recently launched at Chatham. The fact is known unto God. For a Christian priest, arrayed in his professional chemise, invoked Christ's blessing on behalf of the vessel and its future crew. A newspaper photograph shows the spectators watching this incongruous and ludicrous sight

with perfectly straight faces. Let no one question the divine inspiration of Christian education after this. No kind of secular education possesses the miraculous power of petrifying men's sense of absurdity.

The National Sunday School Union has held its annual meetings, and a new programme of client-catching has been drawn up. Whereupon the *New Chronicle* comes out with the opinion that the whole Sunday school movement now stands on the threshold of great things. Not for many years, we are told, have the prospects appeared so rosy as at the present time. One of the reasons cited for this optimism is that:—

In spite of the apparent apathy towards organized religion, the fathers and mothers of the nation will not long remain indifferent to a movement which so obviously can be of such incalculable benefit to their children. They may be indifferent to religion themselves, but when they can be made to "think in terms of childhood" . . . they will not permit their children to miss the opportunity of moral and spiritual training which the Sunday school affords.

There's no flaw in this argument. Quite naturally parents who have so poor an opinion of religion that they ignore it will be eager to see their children dosed with it. It may be admitted, however, that where the parsons can reduce children to boredom by suppressing Sunday recreation, there will always be found parents willing to send their children to Sunday school to get them out of the way for a few hours.

"Safety Week" propaganda, we notice, takes the form of familiarizing people and children with common-sense precautions and precepts. Nothing is being said about putting one's trust in God's Providence. Thus common-sense gets a boost, and God is pushed into the background. The Archbishop of Canterbury really has grounds for deploring the secularizing of the thought of the people! Few people spare a thought about the "safety" of the parson's job, which widespread indifference to religion is endangering.

The Archbishop of Canterbury says: "None of us now would base life on *Thou shalt not*." If this is the case, it is a pity God took so much trouble to draw up his Ten Commandments.

A newspaper says that the Black fellows of Australia, the aborigines, are still in the Stone Age. Moreover, in their degrees of knowledge they represent the old Stone Age as well as the new Stone Age men. Then there is still a last hope for the Christian Churches, when all is lost in Europe.

The adolescent, declares the Rev. Dr. Richie, is religious, intensely religious, feeling his need of God, and ready to accept the Saviour. This truth, we presume, receives its greatest support from the fact that, although every child has his "intensely religious" craving encouraged in the schools of the nation, there has been an alarming decrease in the number of children attending Sunday School. And those who do attend have to be decoyed by the organization of week-day amusements and clubs.

The British and Foreign Bible Society announces that it has had a record sale of Bibles during the past year. There has also been a record number of those who disbelieve in it.

Two men have been summoned at Blackpool for obtaining money by false pretences—the false pretences being that they took money from people to cure them and did not do so. They were said to have obtained £3,000 in nine months. We wonder how much the Catholic Church took in the same period for saying prayers on behalf of the sick, or for selling candles to burn to the saints, or magic lamps, and the like? These people must be fools. If they would only enrol them-

selves into some kind of religious organization, they could go on swindling ignorant folk as much as they pleased, and if they grew large enough they might get the Prime Minister to speak at one of their meetings.

The Rev. J. C. Hardwick says that he would hate to be a genius. Some people have their desires answered before they are even expressed.

People who have no sense of sin, says a parson, have no sense of the glory of God. We agree. The idea is first of all to persuade men that they are desperately bad, that they will go straight to hell, and then convince them that God is the only one—via the parson—who can yank them out of it. We have always said that *true* is compound of fear and knavery. Teach a man that the one thing that matters is to save his own soul, persuade him that he is in imminent danger of damnation, and that only grovelling before God can save him, and you have all the materials for making a high-class Christian.

Dean Inge has been airing himself again. He thinks the State ought to allow for two kinds of religion, one in Registry Office, to be terminable, the other in a Church which is to be permanent. The suggestion is just another example of the insolence of established religion. First, there is nothing to prevent those who get married in Church being as decent in their behaviour, and as permanent in their relation to each other as those married in a Church. Second, the common sense of the situation, says that whether people are married in a Church or in a Registry Office, if they cannot get on together they are better separated. Third, whether married in a Church or in a Registry Office, the only legal marriage in this country is that performed according to rules laid down by the civil authority. Once more the essence of a marriage in Church is a civil contract, which the parties at their own desire accompany with religious formulas, just as they may agree to decorate the wedding breakfast with flowers.

Nottingham Churches are up in arms over the decision of the Public Parks Committee to allow a menagerie that is visiting the town to be open on a Sunday. We sympathize with the parsons in their dislike to these rival menageries. We suggest that the whole town should be placarded with large posters with something like this: "Why pay to go to a menagerie on Sunday, when you can go to a Church or Chapel for nothing? Performances three times daily. All trained performers." We fell quite sure that the poster would have some influence. On the other hand, the position of the menagerie-keepers is not so secure as might be. When we were last in Liverpool, we were told that Sanger's Circus had ceased to visit the city—ever since the Roman Catholic cathedral was built. It could not stand the opposition.

Two gems of the week, from our guides to heaven. The first is from Bishop Lang, brother of the Archbishop of Canterbury:—

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. But he withheld the explanation of the fact.

The other is from Father Alfred Baldwin, of Nottingham:—

We cannot be too childlike or too simple in our approach to God.

Number two illustrates number one. The more childlike you are the more certain you are to be saved. Never grow up if you wish to continue as a Christian. And the only way to believe, if you do grow up a little, in spite of going to church, is never to ask for an explanation of anything. Just believe. And even though you do not know what it is you believe, and cannot believe unless you have some understanding, go on believing just the same.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C. BAKER (Transvaal).—We have had many requests to put the articles on Russia and Religion into pamphlet form, but they would now want many additions to bring them up to date, and we fancy that those who have worked the religious persecution stunt have by this time seen that it is nearly played out. Our aim in writing was to let the bigots see that we were not to be frightened into either silence or silent acquiescence by mere sensationalism. So far the articles appear to have served the purpose for which they were written.

W. JAMIESON.—Sorry the length of your letter precludes its use.

A. B. MOSS.—Thanks for letter. We quite understand the situation.

E. BORT.—Thanks for the Douglas article. But the man is really too stupid if his stupidity is not assumed—to deal with him again at any length. We have given him space in order to illustrate the manner in which our press indulges in what a journalistic friend calls "Mug-hunting." It is just possible that Mr. Douglas agrees with us as to the mental character of those who agree with him.

T. PUZEY.—We do not recall the case. Perhaps it is intended as a picture of what might happen.

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

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

The Secular Society, Limited, office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London E.C.4.

When the services of the National Secular Society in connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, giving as long notice as possible.

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.

Lecture notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London E.C.4, by the first post on 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 made payable to "The Pioneer Press," and crossed "Midland Bank, Ltd., Clerkenwell Branch."

*The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):—
One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.*

Sugar Plums.

The Annual Conference of the National Secular Society is now the subject of immediate interest to Freethinkers, and in all parts of the country members of the Society, able to spare time, will be busy preparing for the trip to London. The Annual Conference is something more than the passing of resolutions. It represents our annual stocktaking, and overhaul of the machinery of our movement. All members present can take an active part in the proceedings, and the discussions, suggestions, and criticisms, all in the spirit of comradeship, must be experienced before the value of the annual gathering can be appreciated. There will be a reception of delegates, members and friends at the Grafton Hotel, Tottenham Court Road, on Saturday evening, June 7, at 7 o'clock, at which the President and members of the Executive will be present. We hope to see a good gathering of London friends.

To those coming from the provinces, two important items need immediate attention, Hotel Accommodation, and the Conference Luncheon. Arrangements for both must be made in advance, so will all those requiring either or both please communicate their requirements to the General Secretary, R. H. Rosetti, without delay. The cost of the luncheon will be 2s. 6d.

A word about the evening meeting, which will be held in the large Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, at 7 o'clock. There will be at least seven speakers with the President in command. As usual, admission will be free, but reserved seats at one shilling may be booked at the door, or in advance by notification to the General Secretary. Neat slips advertising the evening meeting may be had for distribution on receipt of name and address.

Some time back it may be remembered that we criticized very plainly some observations made by Mr. Justice Hill, in a case of a petition for judicial separation. Mr. Justice Hill held that as the marriage had taken place in a Moscow Registry Office it could not be recognized as valid. He also said, that in England we had what were known as Christian marriages. He added that "The union of petitioner and respondent was not a marriage. They were never husband and wife within the meaning of the law." We said at the time that this was a ridiculous assertion for a judge to make. It was bad law and arrant nonsense. Marriages in this country are contracted before a Registrar, and they can only be legally contracted in church by permission of the same authority which arranges for a Registry Office marriage. Marriage in a church, so far as the legal portion of it is concerned, is a civil marriage accompanied by a religious ceremony.

The case—we believe it is the same case—has now been brought before the Court of Appeal, and we are glad to say that what we then said about the matter is upheld. The Master of the Rolls said very definitely that the marriage in the Moscow Registry Office has all the essential ingredients of a marriage, its legality had therefore to be upheld. An order was made that the petition for judicial separation should be restored to the list for hearing. We cannot understand what was in the mind of Mr. Justice Hill, unless like so many more, he had permitted his mind to be influenced by the scare-mongering of the *Morning Post*. In that he is not alone. But we congratulate everybody concerned on the judgment. It is bad enough when parsons talk about civil marriage as being irregular, or no marriage at all; when Judges join them in such foolish talk it becomes serious. Once more we say that whether it is performed in a church or in a registry office it is the civil authority that creates the legal marriage, and lays down the conditions of its being performed. The religious ceremonies accompanying it have no legal significance whatever, save that they are permitted.

Our newspapers run true to type. Among all the notices of the death of Dr. Nansen we have seen, not one has made the discovery that he was a sound Freethinker. Those who know anything of the man, particularly those who have read his *Eskimo Life*, with its chapter on "Religious Ideas," and his scathing criticism of the influence of Christianity on the natives, know that he left no doubt as to what his opinions were. There was nothing of the stupidity of discovering a profound truth in religious ideas. He knew it for what it was—a product of ignorance fashioned by fear and cunning. So none of the newspapers had anything to say about his opinions on religion. Had he attended some gospel-shop or the other, there would have been lavish references to his simple religious faith, etc. Where religion is concerned our newspapers either tell a lie in so many words, or suggest one by their silence.

The *Observer* does go so far as to say that "The funeral service was most simple. Nansen belonged to no creed, and his will stipulated that in the ceremony of his burial no Church should participate." Perhaps we ought to feel pleased that this desire was respected. In this country, it has been too often ignored, and the Christian Church has never shown any repugnance to making capital out of a corpse.

Mr. G. Whitehead will be in the Leytonstone district on Sunday, May 25. With the co-operation of the West Ham Branch, meetings will be held at the corner of

Aylmer Road, near Leytonstone Church, at 7 p.m., on Sunday, and 7.30 p.m., from Monday till Friday. If some local help was available regular Sunday evening meetings might be arranged for that district.

We are pleased to hear Mr. Le Maine had good meetings in Finsbury Park, and Victoria Park. Good reports also reach us of Mrs. Grout's successful meeting at West Ham.

We regret that in an obituary notice which appeared in last week's issue, the name of the deceased was printed as "Frederick Milford." It should have been "Frederick Wilford." We offer our apologies to the family for the blunder.

We are pleased to see a lengthy report of the debate between Mr. J. Clayton and the Rev. J. Bretherton. The report appears to be a fair one, and Mr. Clayton presented his case with ability. The report notes that the hall was crowded, and the audience seems to have given both debaters an attentive hearing.

The two new publications mentioned last week—Mr. Cohen's *Foundations of Religion*, (paper 9d., cloth 1s. 6d.), and Upasaka's *A Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity* (price 1s.), will both be on sale by May 26. We have no hesitation in saying that they should both be in the hands of every reader of the *Freethinker*. The postage for the two will be twopence extra.

The Beaker Invasion of Britain.

THE Long Barrow Race already resident in Britain was disturbed somewhere about 2000 B.C., by the appearance of a tall, round-headed people. These proved the mysterious Beaker Race, so termed from the circumstance that beaker-formed earthenware cups were deposited with their dead. This stock is also termed the Round Barrow Race, because their grave mounds were circular in shape.

Presumably, these people arrived from the European mainland, for their funerary remains have been traced near the Scottish, Yorkshire and Kentish coast lines. It is surmised that they came to procure the gold at that period met with in Western Britain and Ireland. In Kent the buried treasures of this ancient race have frequently been brought to the light of day. Bracelets and other ornaments of gold have been discovered, associated with bronze cutting-and-cleaving implements, and other relics of the past. Some of these have been recovered quite recently from long buried and unremembered hoards.

The abundance of gold and bronze artifacts in these collections is so great, and their design is so uniform in character, that they seem to have been fabricated for foreign export rather than the personal possessions of the members of small local communities. The earth was evidently utilized as a store-chamber for articles of value and importance. The fine collection disclosed at Bexley, near Greenwich, among other treasures, contained seventeen gold bracelets, and these were recovered from the foundations of rude huts, which apparently served as temporary dwelling-places or workshops for the men who made them. And it seems significant that the several Kentish repositories of the Beaker Folk nearly all lie along or near the prehistoric pathways which have since become the Pilgrim's Way and Watling Street respectively.

In the higher areas of contemporary Greenwich, in past ages there was evidently a considerable settlement of Beaker People, for some thirty ancient burial mounds have been found on, or adjacent to the early Watling Street footway. That the newcomers lived in harmony with the native Long Barrow Race is sup-

ported by the discovery that the remains of the two peoples often repose in the sepulchres of the Round Barrow Stock. Prof. Parsons thinks the Beaker folk "were craftsmen and traders rather than invaders, and that their main object was to reach the gold and copper regions as peacefully as might be, mixing and intermarrying with the Long Barrow People whenever they were allowed. At the same time there is every reason to believe that they brought their own women with them since typical Round Barrow female skeletons are quite common though certainly not so common as those of males." (*The Earlier Inhabitants of London*, p. 53.)

It may be regarded as a fair inference that the Beaker Race never comprised a large proportion of the population. Still, some certainly settled permanently in Britain for, at least in Wales, there linger amid the mountains, remnants of a broad-headed stock, evidently descended from Beaker ancestors. Again, cranial measurements conducted by the eminent anatomist, the late Sir William Turner, on modern skulls in the Scottish Lowlands, at the very least suggest that the Beaker Folk have stamped their likeness on the present-day dwellers in that region. But these seem exceptional cases, and the ancient race has unquestionably made little impression on the mainly long-headed modern British Race.

There exists considerable evidence that the broad-headed Alpine Peoples of the European Continent are slowly but surely displacing the long-skulled Nordic Types. Even in Lombardy, an area invaded and colonized by a Nordic Race in the sixth century A.D., the original long-headed Iberian or Mediterranean Race so long resident in Northern Italy has given place to one of the shortest-headed stocks in Europe. Still, this reservation must be made, that Lombardy is situated near the very centre of the Alpine homeland in the neighbourhood of the Alps, and it is fairly probable that even in the palmy days of Roman dominion, the population of the northern regions of the Italian Peninsula was partly Alpine in character.

Nevertheless, in countries where the Nordic or Teutonic Race previously prevailed, it has surrendered its supremacy to the long despised Alpine People. For upwards of a thousand years the Alpines have apparently increased their influence in both Northern and Central Europe. In Germany itself the Alpines form the majority. "No one who served in the late war," declares Prof. Parsons, "would describe his enemies as long-headed people; while the large number of German prisoners of war in this country at that time enabled Mr. Le Gros Clark and myself to take definite measurements of soldiers coming from every province in Germany, and to show that, while the south-eastern provinces such as Bavaria and Silesia, gave us cephalic indices between 84.0 and 85.0, even Schleswig Holstein and Oldenburg, whence came so many of our long-headed Anglo-Saxon forefathers, are now inhabited by people with a cephalic index of over 80.0."

Climatic differences seemingly fail to explain the transformation of one type of skull into another whenever the two types dwell together. The distinct preponderance of the Nordic skull which prevails in Britain is, perhaps, best explained by the barrier to Alpine blending presented by the waters which divide England from the Continent. But with the inexpensive and expeditious Channel crossing available in recent generations, the influx of Alpine immigrants has been considerable, with the consequence that during the nineteenth century there was an appreciable increase in the broad-headed type among the English population. Clearly then, the prolonged isolation of Britain from the Continent enabled the long-headed

resident race to preserve its comparative purity. The ancient Beaker People were, probably, largely birds of passage who made few permanent settlements. In any case, this affords the best explanation of the fact that they exercised so small an influence on the population as a whole.

Nevertheless, their resting-places were widespread. This is amply proved by the numerous anatomical remains of the Beaker People revealed in the various round barrows in Scotland and in the English counties of Kent, Yorkshire, Dorset, and Wiltshire. The outstanding length of many of the skeletons gave currency to the view that these were the normal specimens of a very tall race. But it is now suggested that many of the bodies that repose in the round sepulchres were those of men of renown, who were celebrated in death for their achievements in life, as giant stature and strength are still regarded by primitive peoples as tokens of semi-divinity. Now, a more careful measurement of the remains of the departed discloses the verity that the average stature of the males, slightly, if at all exceeded five feet eight inches. Doubtless, they were a tall race, and considerably exceeded in stature the native Long Barrow Stock. When studying the remains of the Beaker Race, anthropologists conclude that, apart from height, these people possessed the massive frames which characterize the contemporary Alpine Race.

The little that has been ascertained concerning this ancient race favours the opinion that their penetration of our island soon became more or less peaceful. If, when they first came they were indifferently armed for fight they probably experienced a truceless opposition to their advance. But as their weapons and other implements improved, their superior culture and physical strength tended to secure their success.

Parsons and other authorities think that the Beaker folk adventured into Britain when tempted by the coloured reports current abroad relating to the richness of the country in valuable ores, including the precious metals. The circumstance that in some round barrows long-headed people repose side by side with round-headed remains indicates an ultimate fusion of the two races. Moreover, crania have been measured which point to a blending through inter-marriage. In number the Round Barrow Race was apparently never very large, but presumably their higher culture, coupled with their military advantages—as with the Romans in succeeding centuries—enabled them to assume positions of command, and thus dominate the more numerous native stock. Professors Peake and Fleure conclude from a careful survey of the evidence, that at least two separate invasions of round-skulled people occurred. But much remains obscure, and further discovery is essential before the curtain of darkness can be lifted so that the light may enter in.

During the phase of evolution embraced by the presence of the Beaker Folk, incineration slowly replaced the earth burial of the dead. This later custom of cremation deprives archæology of invaluable material, inasmuch that nearly all our knowledge of the period is dependent upon relics recovered from the graves. That these people cherished a belief in survival after death is indicated by the presence of the remains of the earlier race occasionally found in the barrows of the ruling caste. It appears a fair deduction that these ancient bones represent the remains of those sacrificed to serve their masters in the spiritual abodes. Also, beakers and banqueting vessels, special in character, were laid in the graves for use in the life to come.

T. F. PALMER.

The National Secular Society.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

GRAFTON HOTEL, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, LONDON,
WHIT-SUNDAY, JUNE 8, 1930.

AGENDA.

1. Minutes of last Conference.
2. Executive's Annual Report.
3. Financial Report.
4. Election of President.
Motion by Bethnal Green, Chester-le-Street, West London, Manchester, West Ham, South London Fulham, and North London Branches:—
"That Mr. Chapman Cohen be re-elected President of the N.S.S."
5. Election of Secretary.
Motion by the Executive:—
"That Mr. R. H. Rosetti be appointed Secretary."
6. Election of Treasurer.
Motion by the Bethnal Green, North London and West Ham Branches:—
"That Mr. C. C. Quinton be re-elected Treasurer."
7. Election of Auditor.
Motion by the Executive:—
"That Messrs. H. Theobald and Co. (Incorporated Accountants) be re-appointed Auditors."
8. Motion by the Executive:—
"That Rule No. 7, allotting the number of delegates to the Executive be amended to read "Wales 2," "Scotland 2"; the amendment to date from the present Conference, the extra members for 1930-31, to be appointed by the Executive after consultation with the Branches concerned."
9. Nominations for Executive.
SCOTLAND.—Mr. James Neate, nominated by Glasgow Branch.
WALES.—Mr. T. Gorniot, nominated by Swansea Branch.
N.E. GROUP.—Miss K. B. Kough, nominated by Newcastle and Chester-le-Street Branches.
Mr. A. B. Moss, nominated by South Shields Branch.
N.W. GROUP.—Mr. H. R. Clifton and Mrs E. Venton, nominated by Liverpool and Manchester Branches.
S.W. GROUP.—Mr. W. J. W. Easterbrook, nominated by Plymouth Branch.
MIDLAND GROUP.—Mrs. C. G. Quinton (Junr.) and Mr. J. G. Dobson, nominated by Birmingham Branch.
SOUTH LONDON.—Mr. F. P. Corrigan, nominated by South London Branch.
NORTH LONDON.—Miss E. M. Vance, nominated by North London Branch.
EAST LONDON.—Mr. H. Silvester, nominated by Bethnal Green and West Ham Branches.
WEST LONDON.—Mr. B. A. Le Maine, nominated by West London and Fulham Branches.
10. Motion by West London Branch:—
"That a bi-annual meeting be held of London and Provincial Branch Secretaries for the discussion of matters of general interest, bearing upon the work of the Society and the conduct of its business."
11. Motion by the Executive:—
"That this Conference desires to place on record its high appreciation of those members of Parliament who promoted a Bill for the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws, and congratulates them on having, for the first time, achieved the result of a Second Reading. It protests in the strongest possible manner against the action of the Government in deliberately wrecking the Bill; it regards this as an unwarrantable concession to religious bigotry, and trusts that Freethinkers all over the country will recognize that it is only by a weakening of religious influence in political life that Freethinkers can hope to receive the justice given to other sections of the community."

12. Motion by Executive :—

"That wherever the geographical situation be favourable, a speaker for local propagandist work shall be appointed by the Executive. The speaker to work under the control of the local Branch, acting on instructions from headquarters.

13. Motion by Bethnal Green and Bradford Branches :—

"That the Executive be instructed to make enquiries as to the possibilities of introducing into Parliament a private member's Bill, seeking to bring places of worship into line with other public buildings for purposes of taxation, and that the Executive draw up a leaflet or pamphlet giving an estimate of the loss to the nation arising from the present exemption of places of worship."

14. Motion by Liverpool and Merseyside Branch :—

"That Branches be given permission to issue their own membership cards, subject to the customary conditions, with alternative membership forms worded to meet the requirements of each Branch, always provided that such form shall not omit the paragraph under 'Principles and Objects' on the present form."

15. Motion by Mr. A. C. Rosetti :—

"That this Conference enters a strong protest against the Government's policy of calling together representatives of the Churches, with a view to settling the Education question on lines agreeable to their sectarian interests; sixty years of religious squabbling has resulted in permitting the nation's schools to be made a cockpit for religious fighting, and has demonstrated that the only way to permanent peace is to confine the education received in State-aided schools to purely secular subjects."

16. Motion by W. J. W. Easterbrook :—

"That this Conference regrets the determination of the Army authorities to persist in the practice of compulsory Church parades, which is objectionable to the majority of soldiers, an infringement of the equal rights of citizenship, and a denial of the principle of religious equality."

17. Motion by Bradford Branch :—

(a) "That this Conference supports the proposal for the establishment of municipal birth-control clinics to be run in connexion with the existing municipal social services."

(b) "That this Conference supports the proposal for the establishment of domestic courts for the settlement of matrimonial disputes."

18. Motion by West Ham Branch :—

"That each Branch of the Society should, wherever possible, appoint two of its members to act as publicity agents, with special attention to press correspondence, whose duty it should also be to acquaint headquarters with all local happenings bearing upon the work of the Society."

19. Motion by Fulham and Chelsea Branch :—

(a) "That this Conference regrets that nothing has yet been done towards the securing of suitable central offices for the conduct of the Society, with a hall suitable for the holding of public meetings."

(b) "That this Conference protests against the continued monopoly by the Churches of the machinery of Broadcasting, and in view of the removal of the ban on controversial matter, and of the many technical improvements, urges all members to agitate in favour of an alternative service on Sundays."

The Conference will sit in the Grafton Hotel, Tottenham Court Road: Morning Session, 10.30 to 12.30; Afternoon Session, 2.30 to 4.30. Delegates will be required to produce their credentials at the door; Members, the current card of membership. Only members of the Society are entitled to be present. A Luncheon for delegates and visitors at 1 p.m., price 2s. 6d., will be provided in the Grafton Hotel. During the Afternoon Sessions, papers will be read on items of Freethought interest, followed by discussion.

By order of the Executive,

C. COHEN, *President.*

R. H. ROSETTI, *Secretary.*

The Bank of Energy.

(Concluded from page 315.)

No wonder that a holy howl goes up from our skulking "patriots" of ex-British Abrahams everywhere, clamouring savagely for the suppression of Remarque. Here in Sydney, in mindless and soulless Australia, in the centre of a city of 1,250,000 apologies for people, only last week, a tiny bookshop was raided—descended upon, like a bomb factory, by whole-cohorts of police, and a Black Maria loaded with confiscated copies of *All Quiet*. The case is now before the local Court, and the bookseller in question—a Mr. Parks—is being prosecuted for the sale of obscene publications. With reference to *All Quiet on the Western Front*, a detective named Lawrence, urged, at the Sydney Central Court, on February 13, that there were a whole "two passages" in the volume which he "considered obscene." But he "agreed with Mr. A. R. Hall, who appeared for Parks, that critics all over the world, including Sir Ian Hamilton and the *London Times*, had praised the work." He had, however, he said, "merely acted on instructions."

In other words, the Federated Liars and Hoary Abrahams of Australia, higher up, are applying the screw. Youth, in Germany or anywhere else, no matter how much it has been murdered, and burned alive, in our own time, must not be allowed to open its mouth, and to call the Bible—that oxide of Satan—or any part of the machinery of the Musical Banks, by its rightful name. The sole duty of Isaac, in every generation, in brief, is to be a sheep. Mr. Pangbalm, next door, is quite certain about that. Mr. and Mrs. Pangbalm, who carry to Church, on Sunday, a Bible—containing ten times as much obscenity, and a very great deal less sense and Johannine Christianity than *All Quiet on the Western Front*—yes, such apologies for persons, as they read the *Sydney Morning Herald*, are quite satisfied that the works of Erich Maria Remarque ought to be suppressed; and that the "dear children"—mine, mark you, as well as theirs—ought to be taught to be nice, docile little vermin, whooping for Abraham, serving God, honouring the King, saluting the Flag.

Children would be very "dear" indeed, to themselves, if purchased at such a price. But what we have to recognize to-day, in cold fact, is that humanity does not exist. Man, as the Popes and parsons have conspired to make him, is a mere reptile—a coldly, slithering, snakish, artificial monster: a bestial Thing more diabolical, by far, than ever Nature invented. It is the pious Christian Church, itself, I mean to say, which has invented Pangbalm and his parent, Abraham; monsters most loathsome, whose poisonous suckers, through the Press and Pulpit, are wound around the living generation, and most especially around the younger members thereof; eager to burst the very veins of this Bank of Energy, and to drink its blood, in order that Abraham's nice little Paradise of a pseudo-civilization may not be disturbed.

Well, I am here to dispute the pass with Abraham. Caution against these hideous Bible-draggers—this is the elementary principle; one of the very first things, which every honourable man must teach his boy to understand. "There is the lad himself," says Butler: "Growing up with every promise of becoming a good and honourable man—but utterly without warning, concerning the iron shoe which his natural protector is providing for him. Who can say that the whole thing will not end in a life-long lie, and in vain chafing to escape?" It is of the catching of

poor, miserable youths, of course, and of forcing them into a clerical career, from which retreat is practically impossible, that Samuel Butler more particularly speaks. But what else are we than deliberate manufacturers of liars: producers of children, condemned to lie, and to despise us in the end, and to loathe us and to hate us—unless we sprag the wheels of Abraham, and tell him and his poisonous offspring, Pangbalm, that the child is sacred, and shall take his own way, shaping his own life, out of a far greater red and green Meccano, in spite of all Popes, all parasites and priests?

Yet even Butler himself is weak, when in *Erewhon* he asserts that "when man had grown to the perception that in the everlasting Is—and Is Not, the Not of nature, the world and all that it contains, including man, is at the same time both seen and unseen, he felt the need of two roles of life—one for the seen, and the other for the unseen side of things. For the laws affecting the seen world," says Butler (page 160 of *Erewhon*, 1911 edition), "he claimed the sanction of seen powers; for the unseen—of which he knows nothing save that it exists and is powerful—he appealed to the unseen power, of which, again, he knows nothing, save that it exists and is powerful, to which he gives the name of God."

What else is this, I ask, but a denial of the whole Butlerian position, which is essentially a revolt against the savage dominion of the machine? Butler himself expressly states, in the Preface to the Revised Edition of *Erewhon*, that "the first part of *Erewhon* written was an article headed, "Darwin Among the Machines," and signed Cellarius. It was written in the Upper Rangitata district of the Canterbury Province (as it then was) of New Zealand, and appeared at Christchurch in the Press Newspaper, June 13, 1863."

Yet, in the same book, on page 160, in other words, Butler asserts that man became a locomotive engine—i.e., a Machine—and felt the need of two sets of rails. His wheels of reason and unreason, in effect, had to grip the Instant and the Eternal at one and the same time—all "through the gradual evolution of a perception that, though this world looms so large when we are in it, it may seem a little thing when we have got away from it."

Then, obviously, man must have been a Chinese wheel-barrow, plodding along, very slowly and very quietly, on one wheel, before he became a bogie-coupled locomotive? Then why does Butler not say so; and then proceed to indicate, quite plainly, that the time will come when Man will develop sufficient power to lift himself clean off the Instant and the Eternal, dispense with wheels, and fly through time—ungodded and alone? Mechanically, in the shape of the aeroplane, the first blue prints of that uplifted epoch are already here. But the mental and moral analogue has yet to follow. And when Samuel Butler states—prosilily—on page 161 of *Erewhon*, that he has been "led to conclude that the Erewhonian Musical Banks, and perhaps the religious systems of all countries, are now more or less of an attempt to uphold the unfathomable and unconscious instinctive wisdom of millions of past generations, against the comparatively shallow, consciously reasoning, and ephemeral conclusions drawn from that of the last thirty or forty"—when I read that, in the pages of Mr. Butler, then I retaliate at once by referring his most estimable ghost to page number 169 of *Erewhon*.

For there it is written, please note, by Mr. Samuel Butler himself: "Thus they (the Erewhonians) hold it strictly forbidden for a man to go without common air in his lungs for more than a very few minutes. And if, by any chance, he gets into the water, the

air-god is very angry, and will not suffer it. No matter whether the man got into the water by accident, or on purpose, whether through the attempt to save a child, or through presumptuous contempt of the air-god, the air-god will kill him—unless he keeps his head high enough out of the water" or hereditary superstition (these three last words are my interpolation), "and thus gives the air-god his due."

JOHN MCCRASHAN.

Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

The Author of the Psalms of David in the Consulting Room.

THE DOCTOR questions: "Well, what is the matter with you?"

"All that hate me whisper together, an evil disease, they say, cleaveth fast unto him."

"Who are they that hate you?"

"I was a reproach among my enemies, but especially among my friends and a fear to mine acquaintance. They that did see me without fled from me."

"What is wrong?"

"My loins are filled with a loathsome disease and there is no soundness in my flesh."

"Have you a sore on you?"

"My friends stand aloof from my sore, and my kinsman afar off."

"Is the sore dry or moist?"

"My sore ran in the night."

"Do you have bone pains?"

"My bones are vexed. Neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin."

"Do you attribute this to doing something wrong?"

"My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness."

"When do you ache the most?"

"I am weary with my groanings. All the night I make my bed to swim."

"Have you lost weight lately?"

"I may tell all my bones. They look and stare at me."

"Have your eyes bothered you?"

"My eye is consumed. The light of mine eye, it is also gone from me."

"Do you feel badly?"

"My heart panteth, my strength faileth, my heart is sore pained within me."

Boston, Mass.

W. W. HARVEY, M.D.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

RUSSIA AND PERSECUTION.

SIR,—It is impossible within the limits of a short letter to enlarge on the ethics and logic of toleration. However, there are one or two considerations to which attention may be drawn here. We are all agreed that children demand protection, and Freethinkers, naturally, desire that the young should be reared without passing through the theological mill. The real question, however, is whether the parent or the State should be chiefly responsible for the child's education. The State has a right, surely, to insist on the minimum that is necessary to make a decent citizen, and to see that the parent does not withhold that minimum from his offspring. But to forbid the teaching of either Moses or Darwin to a child seems to me a presumption on the part of the State. Educate the adult and through him the child. That is the only way worthy of a proper civilization.

Suppression of any opinions is incompatible with Freethought, and, unless Freethought wins its way in the world, Democracy is not only farcical but dangerous. Adults that must be treated as babies by other adults should not have votes. Hand them over to Mussolini.

I am sorry Mr. Turney still thinks I had an *arrière pensée* in attacking Bolshevik religious intolerance. His praise of the Soviet's economic feats leaves me cold. I deem Soviet economies absurd, but they are not here in question. To say Christianity "ruined" Russia is to indulge in unhistoric rubbish. My anger is aroused by professed Freethinkers employing repressive measures, not to protect a threatened society from collapse, but to build up a new religion labelled "Communism," which it shelters from criticism as the Pope shelters his hoary dogmatic structure.

I did not say that either Science or Darwinism was dogmatic. I said that some professed Freethinkers made a dogma out of Darwinism as their forbears made a dogma out of *Genesis*. Freethinking is the antithesis of dogmatism. But hostility to the Church or theistic belief does not make a man a Freethinker.

A. D. HOWELL SMITH.

[As this discussion is becoming a mere repetition on both sides, we think it had better be closed.—EDITOR.]

A CORRECTION.

SIR,—In your "Sugar Plums" of the 11th inst., you comment on the Paisley Cinema Disaster, referring to the Lord Advocate as the Judge at the trial. I write to point out that he is the Prosecutor-Lord Advocate, being the Scottish equivalent to the Attorney-General in England.

The present Lord Advocate is Mr. Craigie Aitchinson, Labour M.P. for Kilmarnock, Ayrshire.

Your strictures therefore have been put on the wrong party.

J. MACKINNON.

STAGHUNTING.

SIR,—Your paper of 11th inst. refers to the anti-stag-hunting petition signed by 80,000 people. Are you sure all these people understood the subject? I hear of one list of signatures that was collected among the habitués of a Soho restaurant! But meanwhile the people in the west country, who are on the spot and know the subject, have held meetings and passed resolutions condemning the attempt to stop hunting. I have experience of both hunting deer and shooting them and I know that where there are woods hunting is far more humane, as shooting leads to deers escaping wounded.

(Major) J. C. DARLING.

Society News.

N.E. LANCASHIRE.

MR. CLAYTON paid a first visit on Monday to Wheatley Lane, a village with a strong religious element. The meeting at Padiham on Tuesday attracted a big crowd as usual, who gave us a good hearing.

The debate with the Rev. Bretherton, on Wednesday, drew a big audience of men, which followed the statements of both sides keenly. Crawshawbrook was visited on Friday, and the week finished with a meeting on Burnley Market on Sunday.—X.

MR. GEORGE WHITEHEAD addressed a series of seven meetings at Fulham. These meetings would have been more successful had the usual pitch been available; but this being closed for building alterations, less suitable meeting places were used. There was much competition from other societies, in addition to quack doctors, and Mr. Whitehead's task was accordingly difficult. One or two of our meetings were only sparsely attended, but several attracted a good number of attentive listeners, some of whom put interesting questions. We have to thank Mr. Mathie and several other members for their enthusiastic help.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

INDOOR.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 59 Finchley Road, N.W.8, near Marlborough Road Station): 11.15, Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker—"Machines, Men and Morals."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road): 7.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"Gandhi and the Indian Crisis."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, John A. Hobson, M.A.—"A New Trinity."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road): Saturday, 7.30—Various speakers.

FINSBURY PARK BRANCH N.S.S.—11.15, Mrs. Grout—"The Price of Silence." The *Freethinker* can be obtained from R. H. Page, 15 Blackstock Road, Finsbury Park.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6.0, Mrs. Grout—A Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.—Sunday, 11.30, Wren Road, Camberwell Green, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; 7.0, Stonehouse Street, Clapham Road, Mr. L. Ebury; Wednesday, Rushcroft Road, Brixton, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Friday, Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (outside Municipal College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. Saphin—A Lecture. On Sunday evening, at 7.0, corner of Aylmer Road, Leytonstone, near Leytonstone Church, Mr. G. Whitehead will speak, Monday until Thursday evening, at 7.30.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.30, Mr. James Hart; 3.15, Messrs. E. Betts and C. E. Wood; 6.30, Messrs. A. H. Hyatt, B. A. Le Maine and E. C. Saphin. Every Wednesday, at 7.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and J. Hart; every Thursday, at 7.30, Messrs. E. C. Saphin and Charles Tuson; every Friday, at 7.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. The *Freethinker* can be obtained after our meetings outside the Park, in Bayswater Road.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.15, Messrs. Charles Tuson and W. P. Campbell-Verden.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BARNES SQUARE, ENFIELD.—Friday, May 23, at 7.45—Mr. J. Clayton.

BLACKBURN MARKET.—Sunday, May 25, at 3.0 and 7.0.—Mr. J. Clayton.

COLNE.—Monday, May 26, at 7.30—Mr. J. Clayton.

CRAWSHAWBOOTH.—Friday, May 30, at 8.0—Mr. J. Clayton.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble from Hillfoot, 12 o'clock.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of High Park Street and Park Road): Thursday, May 29, at 7.30, Messrs. D. Robinson and J. V. Shortt. Chairman Mr. A. Jackson. Current *Freethinkers* will be on sale. Will all Branch members please note that there will be a Committee Meeting on Saturday, May 24, at 7.30, in McGhie's Cafe, Whitechapel, Liverpool.

Miscellaneous Advertisements.

WANTED.—Photo of Dr. Edward Aveling, active in N.S.S. in the eighties.—H. W. LEE, 30, Turnpike Lane, N.8.

YOUNG Atheist, dental mechanic, desires situation; six years' experience; good vulcanite worker; will go anywhere.—Write Box L.C.F., FREETHINKER, 61, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

UNWANTED CHILDREN

In a Civilized Community there should be no UNWANTED Children.

For an Illustrated Descriptive List (68 pages) of Birth Control Requisites and Books, send a 1½d. stamp to:—

J. R. HOLMES, East Hanney, Wantage, Berks.

(Established nearly Forty Years.)

'THE STORY OF RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY'

By JOSEPH McCABE.

MAN has struggled for centuries to penetrate the "veil," to solve the riddle of life. This struggle has been called—in its various "successes"—Religion. In the series of Little Blue Books comprising *The Story of Religious Controversy*, Joseph McCabe tells the story of Religion from the first tribal tabus to the present-day. For the first time the complete history of religion, based on authentic documents, has been told *truthfully*. McCabe has fearlessly written a story no one else has dared to tell!

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1007 The Revolt Against Religion.
 1008 The Origin of Religion.
 1030 The World's Great Religions.
 1059 The Myth of Immortality.
 1060 The Futility of Belief in God.
 1061 The Human Origin of Morals.
 1066 The Forgery of the Old Testament.
 1076 Religion and Morals in Ancient Babylon.
 1077 Religion and Morals in Ancient Egypt.
 1078 Life and Morals in Greece and Rome.
 1079 Phallic (Sex) Elements in Religion.
 1084 Did Jesus Ever Live?
 1095 The Sources of Christian Morality.
 1102 Pagan Christs Before Jesus.
 1107 Legends of Saints and Martyrs.
 1110 How Christianity "Triumphed."</p> | <p>1121 The Evolution of Christian Doctrine.
 1122 The Degradation of Woman.
 1127 Christianity and Slavery.
 1128 The Church and the School.
 1130 The Dark Ages.
 1132 New Light on Witchcraft.
 1134 The Horrors of the Inquisition.
 1136 Medieval Art and the Church.
 1137 The Moorish Civilization in Spain.
 1140 The Renaissance: A European Awakening.
 1141 The Reformation and Protestant Reaction.
 1142 The Truth About Galileo and Medieval Science.
 1144 The Jesuits: Religious Rogues.
 1211 The Conflict Between Science and Religion.
 297 Do We Need Religion?
 1229 The Triumph of Materialism.</p> |
|--|---|

Only 3d. each. Post free 3½d. Order by Number. Complete Set 8/- post free.

Also Cloth Bound in One Volume £1 : 1 : 0 post free.

623 pages—A Superb Gift for a Friend

FROM

THE LITTLE BLUE BOOKS, 82 Eridge Rd., Thornton Heath, Surrey.

For C. O. D. Orders Use the Form below.

SEND NO MONEY.

Although our Terms are strictly Cash with Order, for Complete Sets of the 32 Little Blue Books and for Single Copies of the Clothbound Edition, you need not remit in advance unless you wish. You can pay the postman on delivery. Use the Form at the right.

NOTE.—Postage and the Post Office Trade Charge are added to all C.O.D. Orders, so save these charges by remitting with order. We pay the postage only when remittance in full accompanies Order. No C.O.D. Orders can be sent to foreign countries.

SIGN AND POST THIS FORM.

THE LITTLE BLUE BOOKS,
 82, ERIDGE ROAD,
 THORNTON HEATH, SURREY.

Send me JOSEPH McCABE'S
 "Story of Religious Controversy"
 in 1. Booklet Form.
 or 2. The Clothbound Edition.
 Unless my remittance is enclosed herewith I will pay the postman on delivery.

Name
 (BLOCK LETTERS, PLEASE)

Address

The Bible and Prohibition.

BIBLE AND BEER

By G. W. FOOTE.

A careful examination of the Relations of the Bible and Christian leaders to the Drink Question.

Price - Twopence. Postage ½d.

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

THE OTHER SIDE OF DEATH

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

Cloth Bound THREE SHILLINGS & SIXPENCE
 Postage 2d.

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

THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

*A Lecture delivered at Manchester College, Oxford, on
Monday, April 21st, with a lengthy Appendix of
Illustrative Material.*

€ €

“The Foundations of Religion” leaves Religion without a Foundation.
— Should be in the hands of every Freethinker. —

Paper - 9d. Cloth - 1/6

Postage 1d. and 1½d. extra.

Issued by the Secular Society Limited and published by The Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon St., E.C.4

A Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity

By UPASAKA

AUTHOR OF BUDDHA THE ATHEIST.

€ €

A Popular and Scholarly Examination of the Christian Faith.

— Invaluable to Propagandists and Enquiring Christians. —

€ €

Price - - ONE SHILLING

Postage One Penny.

Issued by the Secular Society Limited and published by The Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon St., E.C.4