

LYING FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.

The FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

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

Vol. L.—No. 48

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1930

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>Lying for the Glory of God.—The Editor</i> - - -	753
<i>Renan the Rebel.—Mimnermus</i> - - -	754
<i>Pioneer Apostles of Italian Humanism.—T. F. Palmer</i> -	755
<i>Masterpieces of Freethought.—H. Cutner</i> - - -	757
<i>Another for the "Dole."—Plain Man</i> - - -	758
<i>The Sabbath.—C. R. Boyd Freeman</i> - - -	762
<i>A Lesson of History in 34,785 A.D.—F. Abel</i> - - -	763
<i>Evil Wills.—Cullwick Perrins</i> - - -	764
<i>Tinker, Tailor.—"Nechells"</i> - - -	765

*Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums,
Letters to the Editor, etc.*

Views and Opinions.

Lying for the Glory of God.

THERE is one problem connected with the history of the Christian Church, and in some degree with all Churches, Christian and non-Christian, that has not yet received adequate attention. This is the slight respect paid to truth-speaking where religious interests are concerned. The fact does not admit of question; and if we limit our attention to the Christian Church we do so for two reasons. First, it is the Christian Church with which we in this part of the world are most immediately concerned; and second, in this respect the Christian Church stands without a rival for supremacy. Other religious organizations would probably have lied their way through the world, had occasion called for it, quite as strenuously as the Christian Church did, but the fact remains that none have done so. As it is, a descriptive catalogue of the literary forgeries of Christianity would alone make a good-sized volume. A full account of the manufactured lies concerning opponents would make a small library. The bogus "experiences" which preachers place before their congregations as their own must run into millions. So would the number of death-bed stories, of wicked infidels miraculously converted, of unbelievers who have run away with other people's wives or embezzled the money of their employers. To these one may add the manufactured relics by the Catholic Church, the winking Madonnas, and the like. If life were lengthy enough I should like to arrange and classify these pious lies; in present circumstances it is impossible to enumerate them. It is like trying to count the individual members of a stellar system.

* * *

The Evolution of Lies.

The fact being so glaring, the next thing is to essay

an explanation of its existence. It is this that has failed to receive adequate attention. Why should the lying in connexion with religion be so persistent? To say that those who manufactured these tales were liars is merely to repeat the fact. Moreover, the situation becomes still more "intriguing" when one notes that few people are surprised when a parson or a Church is convicted of lying in defence of religion. It is taken for granted, and passes without comment, I do not recall a single case in which, when a man has been convicted of lying in defence of religion that he has received public condemnation from the pulpit. Lying in such circumstances is looked upon as being as much part of the general situation as is the special pleading of a lawyer, or a politician's readiness to accept a job and swear by the wise statesmanship of those who appointed him.

I suggest as a tentative hypothesis which may stand until something better is put forward, that this development of lying in connexion with religion is an inevitable consequence of the attempt to perpetuate primitive habits of thinking in a society which has to some extent outgrown them, the falsification changing form as the environment becomes more sophisticated. So long as religious ideas are in complete harmony with the environment they carry their own logic and their own evidence. In that stage the teacher is as much imposed on as is the pupil, the priest is in the same position as the worshipper. This is the case to-day with many of the more ignorant of the Roman Catholic priests, the lower order of evangelists, and a very large number of Spiritualists. But as conditions change, the religious teaching becomes sufficiently in conflict with the environment to cause a demand for a logical and scientific proof that never existed. And as the evidence is not there it is manufactured. Positively, miracles, legends, and documents are created to suit requirements. Negatively, evidence against the claims of the Church is suppressed. The primitive fear of the heretic having weakened somewhat, stories of the divine judgment against those who ignore his commands or neglect the worship of God are manufactured. And at a still later stage—our own—when the direct and robust lying is no longer profitable, there is the final stage when the historic teaching of the Christian Church is explained away, and Christian teaching is made to stand for something that it never has meant and never could have meant. But from the unsophisticated method of the earlier generation which gave us the forged documents, manufactured relics, and deliberately concocted lies concerning opponents, down to the modern apologists who present Christianity so that it may fit in with modern knowledge the principle is one and the same. The falsification is more subtle, but it is falsification nevertheless.

'Ware the Boycott.

To those acquainted with the history of Christianity what has been said will be nothing but the re-saying of a very familiar truth. I have run over the old story as a consequence of reading *Forgery in Christianity*, by Joseph Wheless (Alfred Knopf. 16s.) Dr. Wheless is an American Judge, an authority on American law, and he brings to his task the uncompromising lucidity of a lawyer carrying forward a prosecution when he has a strong personal conviction of the guilt of the accused. Here, at any rate, is a volume of over 400 closely printed pages, which is concerned with a bare statement of the forgeries and falsifications for which the Christian Church is responsible, and even then he has not exhausted the field he covers. There still remain many spheres of Christianity lying quite untouched. A mere glance at the volume should be enough to give the uninitiated a lively conception of what Dr. Wheless calls the Forgery-Mill of the Christian Church. I am afraid, too, that Dr. Wheless's outspokenness is very likely to prevent his work receiving adequate notice in the British press. If he had confined his indictment to the Roman Church publicity would have been given him in the Protestant press. Had he indicted the Protestant Church—which has fewer documentary lies to its credit, but quite as many lies of other kinds—the Catholic press might have praised his work. But to indict all sorts of Christian Churches is too much for the British press to stomach. Dr. Wheless will not be helped by the fact that his writing is singularly free from that ponderous pedanticism which is the bane of so many important works dealing with advanced opinions in religion. The orthodox method would have been, on the religious side, to refer to religious lying as due to the "spiritual enthusiasm" of religious leaders; and on the more liberal side deal with it in such a way that the average reader would not have been very clear as to what it was all about, and by the time he had finished digesting the opinion of Professor this and Doctor that, and had recovered from the soporific effect of hundreds of footnotes, would have probably concluded that the whole subject required far more scholarship than he could ever hope to possess.

* * *

A Ghastly Record.

The indictment drawn up by Dr. Wheless lacks nothing in comprehensiveness. He commences with the conditions of deception existent even among primitive peoples where religion is concerned, proceeds to the growth of imposture and deception in the pagan religions, thence to the Old Bible and the Jewish religion, and finally shows us the "lie-factory" working at full pressure under Christianity. In fairness to the Christian Church, it should be said that the greater volume of lying, and the more elaborate nature of the falsification here is not due so much to the Christian Church being more inherently given to lying than other Churches, so much as that with the increase of general knowledge the need for more elaborate lying became greater. In the same position other Churches might have lied as lustily as did the Christian Church, but the conditions did not call for so elaborate an exhibition.

Dr. Wheless's work does not lend itself to quotation in a review, unless one could give another volume to it, but it will suffice to say that no other book with which we are acquainted contains reference to so many religious forgeries and impostures. In his *Foreword*, Dr. Wheless says, among other charges:—

That the Christian Church from its inception in the first Jewish-Christian religious societies until it reached the apex of its temporal glory and moral degradation, was a vast and tireless Forgery-mill.

That the Church was founded upon, and through the Dark Ages has battered on monumental and petty forgeries and pious frauds, possible only because of its own shameless mendacity, and through the crass ignorance and superstition of the sodden mass of its deluded votaries, purposely kept in that base condition for purposes of ecclesiastical graft and aggrandisement through conscious and most unconscionable imposture. . . . That the clerical mind which "reasons in chains" is, from its vicious and vacuous education, and the special selfish interests of the priestly class, incapable either of the perception or the utterance of truth, in matters where the interests of priestcraft are concerned.

That accusation is sweeping enough, and Dr. Wheless adds that it is "not limited in purpose, scope or effect to any one Church or sect, but is aimed alike at all of the discordant factions of ancient Jewish and more modern Christian faith." We should like to see this work of Dr. Wheless very widely circulated.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Renan the Rebel.

"So far as a man thinks, he is free."—Emerson.

"Instead of being made, make yourself."—Spencer.

"John P. Robinson, he
Sez they didn't know everything down in Judee."
Biglow Papers.

At that magnificent collection of French wit, which was shown some years ago at the Franco-British Exhibition, there was one portrait which left an ineffable impression upon the memories of the onlookers. It was Bonnat's portrait of Ernest Renan, a masterpiece which presented the man with sincerity and fidelity. It was a veritable triumph of genius, for the great French scholar lived upon the artists' canvas. Renan was seated, clad in the broadcloth of the scholar, unrelieved save for the red button of distinction, and the long, unkempt, grey hair. The heavy face, the pendulous cheeks, the glassy eyes of the dreamer, the long fingernails, all formed a perfect portrait of the solitary scholar who shook the theological world in the "sixties" of the last century.

Ernest Renan never cared for the applause of the world, but he would have smiled his kindly smile if he had known that he was the subject of a great artist's finest masterpiece. And it is pleasant to think that we have a perfect presentation of the most accomplished author and scholar of his generation.

Renan's influence was continuous from the publication of his famous *Vie de Jesus*, in which he attempted to write a connected biography of the figure portrayed in the four Gospels of the Christian Religion. What a tempest the book provoked! For years it rained pamphlets. Fifteen hundred replies were published within a few months of its appearance. Whether men applauded or criticized, none could deny its power. Priests might rail and the pious might sigh, but they both have had to reckon with it. Not even the most reactionary of the commentators on the Gospel legends have written as they would have written had Renan's book never been published.

It was a famous victory for Freethought, for Renan's velvet-gloved method is as fatal to religion as Strauss' analytical and critical thoroughness. Airily and daintily the scholarly Frenchman explained away the wonder and glamour of the Christian fables. The result was as deadly as the direct attack of the German scholar, although Renan does with a smile what Strauss does grimly. The result was decisive, for it sapped the faith of tens of thousands.

The man who could alter the faith of multitudes was

well equipped for his great task, for he was a great writer as well as a complete scholar. In many hundreds of pages Renan showed the sarcastic power of the French language in hands that can evoke its subtleties and wield its trenchant blade. In his hands it was as effective and deadly a weapon as that handled by Edward Gibbon, although many tracts in the thousand years of history seem as if they had been made to suit the greatest of all historians, who wrote amid the quiet acacias of Lausanne.

With his scientific bent on the one side, and his clerical training on the other, Renan was still at heart a Voltairean. Recal, for example, his description of the transformation of David, "the man after God's own heart":—

We shall see the brigand of Adullam and Ziklag assume gradually the airs of a saint. He will be the author of the Psalms; the sacred choregus, the type of the future saviour. Jesus must be the Son of David! The evangelical biography will be falsified in a multitude of points by the idea that the life of the Messiah should reproduce the traits of David's. Pious souls, while enjoying the sentiments, full of resignation and tender melancholy, of the finest of liturgical books, will fancy themselves in communion with this bandit. Humanity will believe in a final justice on the testimony of David, who never thought of it, and of the Sibyl, who never existed. O the divine comedy!

Renan's own pilgrimage from Rome to Reason is told in his own incomparable language in *Fragments, Intimes et Romanesques*. In it he tells the story of the sufferings he endured as he shook off the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church. The series of letters addressed to his friend, the Abbé Liart, show, step by step, how he lost hold of his faith. In the final struggle he is drawn to the Bible and to Pascal. In Pascal he finds that "the greatest brain that ever existed hardly dared to affirm anything." Then there were the domestic troubles, for there were foes in his own household. How Renan's heartstrings were tugged, for his loved mother was looking forward to his ordination in happy security. As he tells us in the *Souvenirs*, this was the most difficult knot to unravel. "I exerted all my ingenuity," he says pathetically, "in inventing ways of proving to her that I was still the good boy as in the past. Little by little the wound healed. When she saw me still good and kind to her, as I had always been, she owned that there were several ways of being a priest, and that nothing was altered in me but my dress, which was indeed the truth."

The way from Rome to Reason was smoothed by Renan's brave sister, Henriette, and the touching dedication of the *Vie de Jesus* expresses in a few sentences what he owed to her. The story of his mental emancipation he afterwards retold in *Souvenirs*, but that is the memory of a man looking back upon the past, with the fragrance and sadness of the days that are no more. One thing emerges from all his numerous writings, and that is his complete honesty. Truthful in his own despite, it was this uncommon quality that laid the foundation of his maturer influence and universal understanding. The real importance of such a man as Ernest Renan will be found almost as much in the processes of his quest as in what he discovered.

In all the little ironies of literature there are few things more interesting than that Renan's favourite subjects are chosen from a race of men, as he himself remarks, as different as possible from himself. But where his theme is one of the heroes of philosophy, Marcus Aurelius or Spinoza, his eyes kindle, and his smile is graver. For Renan had all the imperturbability of the true scholar. Through all the charla-

tanisms and hypocrisies of superstition he went his quiet, studious way, humming softly to himself. Far off, the murmur of the busy and noisy world sounded but dimly, but the scholar wrote his books and brought his dreams of the liberation of humanity within the realm of reality. He was well content, for he knew that he worked for a brighter future.

MIMNERMUS.

Pioneer Apostles of Italian Humanism.

DESPITE its superb achievements and bright promise of later humanistic development, the Renaissance has been termed a period of transition. Now, as every epoch in the world's history has proved transitory, there seems nothing very remarkable in the circumstance that the Renaissance arose, played its part, and passed away.

This brilliant era bridges the old world and the new. The age was not only distinguished by the revival of letters, but was markedly pronounced by its wide departure from the sacerdotal and metaphysical ascendancy which characterized the Middle Ages. Moreover, the Renaissance must not be confounded with the Reformation, although the causes which led to the former exercised an important influence on the latter.

Even in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, a new civilization was slowly emerging from the ruins of Pagan culture. Social progress and industrial activity were displayed in the growth of towns, and the expansion of trade. In the West slavery and serfdom were ameliorated or abolished. In the cities, municipal government increased in power and authority. As a whole, the communes of the period were opposed to clerical pretensions, and the science and letters of the time were largely secular in spirit.

Towards the close of the Middle Ages the city communities of northern and central Italy were deprived of the greater part of their civic institutions and political liberty. But the material prosperity of the earlier period was maintained, and the merchant princes and other magnates who governed in Tuscany, Venice and other centres were rarely incommoded by popular resentment. For, the constant struggles with competitive communities, and the occasional carnage and misery which are inseparable from civic strife within the walls of cities themselves, had culminated in the establishment of virtual dictatorship. The newly-risen princes exercised absolute authority, and the doctrine was widely enunciated that citizens who abuse their democratic privileges are unfit to possess them. Even so, the despotic rulers made their names imperishable as the opulent patrons of a distinguished group of scribes, artists, and scholars.

As Addington Symonds has truly observed, the Renaissance flowered at different seasons in the several European States. "England," he notes, "was still feudal and medieval when Italy had entered mentally and socially on the modern stadium. A brother of the Black Prince banqueted with Petrarch in the Palace of Galeazzo Visconti, that is to say, the founder of Italian humanism, the representative of Italian despotic statecraft and the companion of Froissart's heroes met together at a marriage feast. The memories which these names evoke prove how impossible it is to fix boundaries in time for the movement which in 1368 had reached nearly the same point in Italy as it afterwards attained at the close

of the sixteenth century in England. The process began in Italy and slowly extended to the utmost bounds of Europe, producing similar results and establishing a common civilization."

Dante was the last great exemplar of humaner medieval thought; while the middle fourteenth century dates the birth of Petrarch, that splendid apostle of enlightenment, whose literary achievements were destined so powerfully to mould succeeding letters and art.

In Tuscany, Florence became the leading city, and most of the other Tuscan towns bowed to her authority. For a time, Florence evolved along democratic lines, but a powerful reaction set in. The original republican forms were retained, but the administration itself became completely autocratic. So, after a protracted struggle for supremacy between the various trade guilds, a revolution in 1382 placed in power a political caucus composed of burghers and their satellites. This obligarchy reigned for fifty years, governed firmly, and pursued a brilliant foreign policy, until, in 1435, the Florentine banker, the famous Cosimo de' Medici accomplished its overthrow. Cosimo appealed to the hearts of the people and was acclaimed as their redeemer. An acute statesman, he was careful to preserve the venerated democratic machinery of government, while strictly reserving all real power to the head of the State. He and his grandson Lorenzo proved excellent rulers and conferred many benefits on the Florentine State. Moreover the Medicis were men of culture and enlightenment, and steadily encouraged contemporary humanism with unstinted generosity.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries France led Europe in the production of vernacular writing, and was the earliest pioneer in Gothic architectural design. At a later time, the revival of science, art, and letters in Italy practically obliterated the earlier efforts of France. The use of the mariner's compass, the invention of clocks, magnifying glasses, and the mental revolution accomplished by the new printing press were all material factors in the intellectual upheaval that distinguished the Renaissance. The human mind was likewise enlarged by the discovery of America, and the utilization of the new sea route to India and the far distant East. These developments occurred in lands remote from Italy, but the then stagnation and decay of science and invention in several European States, accentuated by the superior social and economic life prevalent in contemporary Italy gave to that country immense advantages in cultural progress. Again, the upper classes in Italy were in the main more scholarly and refined than those of north-Western Europe. Men from far distant lands flocked to the cities of the sunny south, and Italy stood supreme as the Minerva of nations.

Dante never entered the Church. Petrarch, although at one time near ordination, remained a layman to the last. Nevertheless, he was accused of the then venial sin of pluralism, and the censorious charged him with sexual intemperance. The warm poetic passion of Petrarch's youth expressed itself in his love songs to Laura. Dante's masterpiece was composed in the Italian tongue. Petrarch's later writings were in Latin, and manuscripts in the Roman language he industriously transcribed. His example found many imitators, and his Latin letters were highly praised by his contemporaries. The study of the classics became the fashion. In thought the ancient world was reborn, and the gracious and hospitable spirit of humanism leavened the dark dogmas and nebulous scholasticism so dear to the heart of the Church.

Petrarch regarded the writings of Cicero and Virgil as supreme, and he strove to reproduce their style. Petrarch's reputation for scholarship and genius was so great that the most despotic princes assiduously welcomed and retained him as an ornament to their courts. The Venetian Senate presented him with a palace when he promised to bequeath his library to the Queen of the Adriatic. Repentant Florence offered the restoration of the confiscated property of his family, if he consented to return to the city. But it is as a poet that Petrarch's fame has survived for six hundred years. Yet, when he lived, the services he rendered to humanistic culture made his name precious to all true lovers of their kind.

Grammars and other linguistic works were produced, and the beginnings of a philological science were made. The critical spirit became the vogue. Literary societies sprang into being, and the amenities of authors were displayed in lively discussions. It was the Golden Age of learned clerks. Dictatorial Princes, Pontiffs, and Republics appointed sceptical scribes to secretarial posts and employed them as orators. Proud pride was shown in the use of the purest Latin divorced from medieval solecisms and barbarisms. The later and more ornate Latin of the Imperial period became the best approved model. But all these efforts to revive the earlier glories of a dead language were doomed to failure, and the humanists live in fame for their Freethought and independent judgment.

The Greek tongue was also studied. Scholars pilgrimaged to Constantinople to master the language, when in the fifteenth century Greek teachers lectured in Italy. Thus knowledge grew, and the ancient Athenian glory again illumined the minds of men. Influenced by Pagan ideals, educationists arose who earnestly proclaimed the advantages of physical culture, and the inestimable value of good manners and morals. These acquisitions were requisite to supplement intellectual culture.

Our deep indebtedness to Italian humanism is universally admitted. Still, one of its enduring influences proved detrimental to the progress of modern languages. The classic tongues were deified in schools and universities for several centuries, and some knowledge of Latin and Greek is still considered the hall mark of culture and refinement in ultra-conservative circles. Now, when economic necessity has stressed the importance of an acquaintance with living languages the worship of the classics is on the wane.

If Dante was the herald of the dawn, and Petrarch the first to hail the risen sun, the great Boccaccio acclaimed the splendour of the noontide light. The author of the Decameron justly ranks as one of the supreme masters of creative literature. Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio were all enslaved by the eternal feminine. Under the name of Fiametta, Boccaccio made his ideal woman as famous as the Laura of Petrarch, or the Beatrice of Dante.

Boccaccio was greatly interested in Greek and lent material help to Petrarch's studies. Under his influence the Florentines established a Greek professorship in their university. Boccaccio rendered his name immortal with his hundred tales. During the plague of 1348 three men and seven women fled from Florence and sought safety in a country villa. There they amuse themselves for ten days in story telling. Each member of the party in turn is called upon for a tale amid the trees and flowers of the garden. The central theme is love which makes the world go round. The Decameron is certainly one of the glories of letters. The stories are not recommended to Puritans, who might consider some of

them as immoral as Fielding's *Tom Jones*, or Smollett's *Roderick Random*.

Boccaccio's influence on later writers was immense. Chaucer owed much to the brilliant Italian. The age was one of the novella or short story, the idyll, and the sonnet. The romantic epic found favour in the eyes of the Italians, but their poets' attempts to produce great plays were unsuccessful. Still, they provided the plots, which in the hands of Shakespeare were transmuted into several of the on Dryden, the more modern immortals, Swinburne,

To Boccaccio, Marston and Fletcher were deeply indebted; and in addition to the influence he exerted on Dryden, the more modern immortals, Swinburne, Keats, George Eliot, and Tennyson were all at times inspired by the deathless pages of the superb Italian humanist and philosopher.

T. F. PALMER.

Masterpieces of Freethought.

IX.—THE TRIAL OF THEISM.

By GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

(Concluded from page 741.)

II.

THE first edition of Holyoake's famous work appeared complete in 1858, though it had been issued in penny numbers, published twice each month before that date. Moreover, one of the chapters, "The Logic of Death," had appeared in pamphlet form long before and at the time of the publication of the *Trial of Theism*, over 40,000 copies had been sold. The second edition came out twenty years later, with certain alterations, and in the preface Holyoake tells us that he had "endeavoured to purge it of sentences which might seem pretentious, or expressions which sounded turgid—natural faults of my early writing and due, I hope, more to the immaturity of youth than to conceit." But though a perusal of the work will convince anyone that, as far as any defence by its orthodox advocates goes, Theism comes out of Holyoake's remorseless logic a sorry old mess. He again apologizes for his Atheism. "My chief fear," he says, "is that the book seems to make too much of Atheism, which really appears to me a little thing compared to the mightier knowledge and secular uses of the universe." It never seemed to occur to Holyoake that in this dear old world of ours, no one can make too much of Atheism if he wishes to advance "the mightier knowledge and secular uses of the universe." No one has done this as much as the Atheist, and whatever Holyoake feared, it is good to put on record that his own book helped as much as anything else to carry out the good work.

In 1856, the famous chartist, and poet, the author of *The Purgatory of Suicides*, Thomas Cooper, who had been converted from a state of semi-Freethought to Christianity was stumping the country with religious lectures, and Chapter II of *The Trial of Theism* deals more or less gently with him. "If your enemy does you an injury, it is not worth while being angry about it," said Holyoake, and he refused to be angry with Cooper, "who was not an enemy of the truth." On the other hand, Cooper got very angry with everybody else with whom he disagreed. He had, for example, a debate about this time with Joseph Barker—whose own speciality, by the way, was to disagree with anybody and everybody with whom he once agreed—and if the reader can procure a copy of the verbatim report, he will see how the

sparks flew and how hard it was to prevent Thomas Cooper from almost bursting with rage and anger. Barker knew how to cause this beautifully, and for this reason, the debate he held with Brewin Grant is also a masterpiece of humour—by which I mean, the reader will be constantly chuckling to himself at the way these doughty champions of truth, Christianity, etc., could so unenviably throw mud at each other.

Cooper was a Paleyian, a believer in the design argument, and he held it was absolutely unanswerable. Thus, he said, the world undoubtedly exhibits marks of design, the design must have had a Designer, the Designer must be a person and the Person must be God. Cooper stuck to this kind of argument almost all his life, and nothing would make him see that if the universe bears the imprint of a Designer, the Designer must have been equally designed, and therefore the design argument only proves "an infinite series of Gods," as Holyoake has no difficulty in showing. Again:—

Why does design imply a Designer? Paley answers, "Experience tells you so." Why does a Designer imply a Person? Paley answers "Experience tells you so?" Why does a Person imply organization? Nature give the same reply—"Experience tells you so." "We never knew a Person unassociated with organization."

This question of "organization" worried Cooper, but as Holyoake insisted, if you say that *experience* tells you that a Designer must be a Person, *experience* must also tell you that a Person must have organization, and the Theists, Cooper and the rest boggled at that. Says Holyoake:—

If a man may not exist without design, neither may Deity—a being of far more wonderful powers than man—exist without design. But if Deity may exist without the action of a Pre-purposer, the world may exist without the action of a Pre-purposer. All the wonders of the universe, human, animal, and inorganic, may exist without a pre-purposer; for all taken together are a less miracle than the existence of God—*i.e.*, a Being who began to be before there was time for anything to be; who was omnipresent—*i.e.*, everywhere, before there was anywhere to occupy.

It is, of course, the old question, which never has been and never can be logically answered by Theists, "If God made the Universe because it is so wonderful, then, who made God who is so much more wonderful?" Holyoake's reasoning on Paleyism is excellent right through the chapter, but he frankly admits, "We must do Theists the justice to own that to refute the argument from Design is not to refute Theism; it is merely to disprove their most popular method of supporting it." Gillespie, who preferred the *a priori* method of proving the existence of God, and who had a written debate with Bradlaugh which was quite famous in its day, gave up Paley quite cheerfully. He preferred getting an opponent mixed up in a tangle of words, and imagined he had beaten Bradlaugh, who loved nothing better than close reasoning on metaphysics. Holyoake quoted him and many other Theists, to show that Paleyism was quietly put on one side, for at its best it could prove nothing but an infinite succession of Gods making each other, and that kind of Theism was very distasteful to orthodox champions. The chapters dealing with the Pearson Prize Essay on *Infidelity* shows Holyoake in a very humorous mood. It was obvious that a prize of £100 would not tempt a really great writer on the subject whatever he felt about "infidels," but the Rev. Thomas Pearson certainly deserved his success. Though published at first at 10s. 6d., cheap editions at the expense of genuine believers soon ap-

peared, and Holyoake wrote most laudatory notices of the work. "Mr. Pearson," says Holyoake, "makes so comprehensive a sketch of Freethinking opinions, that his work is no less instructive to Atheists than to Theists. We had long desired a brief, readable and reliable summary of Freethought principles—an intelligent classification of the various schools of Freethinkers which might be put into the hands of a new inquirer to inform him and direct him. The thoughtful Evangelical Alliance offered a prize to have this done for us, and Mr. Pearson has very creditably accomplished the task."

The work was most highly praised by Christians till they noticed that Holyoake did his best to promote its circulation for the reasons stated above, when it was withdrawn from circulation. The truth was that Pearson did not think all the wicked or demented were on the "infidel" side, but apart from this, his arguments against "infidelity" were lamentably weak and Holyoake pulverized them.

On the "Difficulties of Theism" Holyoake dwells at length. "The real difficulty of comprehending 'God,' of reducing that conception to an intelligible formula—the dislike of thinking men to affect to account for the existence of phenomena by a term instead of by a fact, and the repugnance of honest men to use a word which they could not explain—has lain at the foundation of Atheism in all time." It is true and Holyoake's examination of this and other difficulties are pregnant with thought and careful logic. It can be urged almost with certainty that a careful reading of *The Trial of Theism* would never have led so many of our great scientists to write balderdash about the "creator," or "Architect" of the universe. And I quote this fine passage, as true now as when it was first written:—

God cannot be a First Cause—all Cause is bifold. God cannot be a power—that is an attribute of matter, and never impersonal. It cannot be a spirit—that is the negation of matter, the negation of all we know. It cannot be Light—light is subject to law. It cannot be Intelligence—that grows and has conditions of development. It cannot be Consciousness—that is human. It cannot be Love—that is a personal attribute called forth by external and relative objects. It cannot be a principle—that is neither a material force nor a logical rule. God is the eternal unanswered *why?* to which no man has replied. It presses upon us as the universal question to which there is no answer in life. It met the first man—it seems likely to perplex the last. It is the infinite enigma which no Sphinx has solved; the solemn and sublime mystery which we die to find out.

The reader should procure *The Trial of Theism* for himself and see how the author deals with Theists and Theism of all denominations. Here my space has run out, but I hope I have said enough to draw attention once again of those who know it, to a fine work they may easily forget, and to those who have never read it, urge them to do so forthwith. Of the many fine things George Jacob Holyoake did, this is the best, and Freethinkers should ever be on the alert never to forget to what and to whom we owe so much of our freedom to-day.

II. CUTNER.

He is a strong man who can hold down his opinion. A man cannot utter two or three sentences without disclosing to intelligent ears precisely where he stands in life and thought, namely, whether in the kingdom of senses and the understanding, or in that of ideas and imagination, in the realm of intuitions and duty.

Emerson.

Another for the "Dole?"

THE religious man has got his god, but he isn't satisfied with the deity. Throughout the ages, every generation has arrogated certain duties and attributes to the "Supreme Spirit," and the next succeeding generation has taken a delight in pilfering some of the duties of the god and taking them unto itself. And this goes on, even at the present time, when man is supposed to be sufficiently educated as to know just what his god can do and cannot do.

For all time it has been the custom to pray for the intervention of some god when rain has been needed, but now the material scientist has set his mind to work in order to achieve this result without the help of a divine power. This is but one instance of man's essaying to relieve the gods of the physical jobs which custom has assigned to the heavenly residents. Less and less is left to divine caprice and more and more is put upon the shoulders to material reason. All the industries have shifted their central offices from heaven to earth.

Whilst accepting, grudgingly, the modern "miracles," the satellites of the deities—the priests—have still reserved for their gods one realm into which human invention could penetrate—the human mind—the centre of the "soul"—but even that citadel is now assailed. Up to the present it has been the custom to consider that a god alone is the only one capable of seeing into that mind, capable of knowing whether it is true or false, honest or criminal, a power for good or evil. But now that custom must die.

Plans have recently been made for the installation of a "Lie-detector" machine in the University of Chicago, to deal with students who cheat in examinations. What a monstrosity of an invention from a religious point of view! Fancy to yourself the state of affairs should the use of such a machine become general! Man at large knowing what should be reserved for the information of his god alone! The witness, in the box, having "sworn" before such a god to tell the truth will be known to all mankind as a perjurer, and will suffer the earthly punishment of "some months hard" instead of waiting until after death to be arraigned for his misdeeds. If this comes to pass, will the after-death sentence be mitigated in view of one punishment already inflicted and one sentence served?

My religious friends tell me that all these inventions are the products of minds inspired by a deity for the alleviation of the lot of man upon earth. They tell me that without intervention of their own particular god, the inventors would not have dreamt of the wonderful machines which we now see and the use of which we enjoy. If that is so, that god must take blame as well as credit. He must be equally responsible for the unthinking brain as for the thinking one, for the lunatic as much as for the sanest of beings, with the dolt as with the genius.

But one other point arises. With all these wonderful things—rain-making, lie-detecting and the like—the deity is lessening his own job, and presently he'll have nothing to do at all. He will be back in the same position as he was before he "created" this world and all the awful people in it. How much more pleasant for him! How much nicer that having to wander round (as he does in *Green Pastures*) worrying himself almost to death (if that were possible) by the evidence of the separate and disinterested existences of mankind. With all his jobs delegated to humans he will be quite unemployed. The future writer of a future *Green Pastures* will have to show a god asking a Noah to introduce him to the local rain-maker before another deluge can be accomplished, and including a wireless set on that plan, so that Noah can send out an S.O.S. should he bump into Ararat too hard!

The gods will be out of a job and, as their earthly representatives the priests, have taken to themselves all the cash that has been paid for the benefit of the divinities, the gods will find, like so many earthly inhabitants, that "their cards haven't been stamped," and they will be ineligible for "unemployment relief." The relieving officers will be *their* last resort.

A PLAIN MAN.

Acid Drops.

We never cease to marvel at the almost unbelievable wisdom of the world's "statesmen." At the disarmament Conference at Geneva, the French delegate "sprang a surprise" by calling attention to the fact that German commercial airplanes might be used for bombing in times of war. That is really surprising—especially as anyone out of an asylum ought to have known all the time that nothing in the world would prevent merchant vessels and merchant planes being turned into warships and warplanes any more than you can prevent civilians being turned into soldiers. Perhaps this delegate had been reading Mr. Cohen's *War, Civilization and the Churches*, in which this possibility is pointed out, and so was able to surprise his fellow delegates. It is when one notes the almost incredible childishness of these European statesmen that one ceases to wonder at wars occurring. They have learned nothing from even the years 1914-1930. They are still treading the same old paths and singing the same old hymns.

The world may not know it, but a crusade has been launched to bring the youth of the country back to religion. Apparently the youth of the country has not yet heard of it. At any rate they are paying no attention to it, for a *Daily Express* man published the following results of his visits to some of the Churches where the crusade sermons were being preached. At St. James', Piccadilly, the youngest man in the Church was over fifty. At St. George's, Hanover Square, the youthful congregation totalled three. At St. Mark's, North Audley Street, youth was missing. At Dr. Orchard's Church, King's Weigh House, there were less than half a dozen present. At another Mayfair Church there was one youth present. Still that need not prevent those responsible for the Crusade reporting the glorious outpouring of the spirit and the great re-awakening of religion that has not taken place. A preacher who cannot do this is not worth his salt. If they do not know the technique of the matter they should ask the advice of the Bishop of London who gave so many fancy reports of the immense wave of religion that he saw sweeping over the British troops in France.

During the Victorian era, most people believed with Queen Victoria, that the Holy Bible was the real source of Britain's material prosperity. This appears to have been overlooked by a certain weekly journal. It says:—

We are consistently paying millions off our debts every year. We are on a gold basis. We are rationalizing our industries. And there is hardly any doubt that as soon as the present world trade depression ceases we shall leave our rivals far behind so far as material prosperity is concerned.

So it would seem that prosperity has little or nothing to do with Bible reading and Bible worship. And to-day, we are told, "there is hardly any doubt" of our becoming materially prosperous once again—despite the fact that most of the people never read the Bible nor believe in it! Queen Victoria must have been misinformed.

Is religious narrow-mindedness inevitable? The Rev. John Bevan asks the question in a religious weekly. He goes on to say:—

It is a strange thing that the very tenacity with which we hold to our conception of any given truth seems to induce within us intolerance towards those who hold to a different concept. Often it seems to be those who have little in the way of convictions at all are the most tolerant. And we know that some of the bloodiest of wars and the most relentless of persecutions have been brought to pass by men who have been professed followers of Jesus Christ.

Well, since religious wars and religious persecutions as the outcome of Christian intolerance have been in evidence ever since Christianity gained a hold on the mind of man, the inescapable conclusion is that intolerance is an inevitable concomitant of the Christian religion. Nor is there anything strange about that. While each sect believes that God inspired its particular interpretation,

and that every other sect's interpretation is "wicked" and damnable error, there is bound to be intolerance, hatred, and persecution.

A reader of the *Christian World* thinks that to go on talking airily of "reunion" without searching into fundamental questions is a waste of time. He therefore suggests the calling of a Commission of theological experts of all the Churches, to consider in all their bearings such questions as the Christian priesthood, propitiation, the ordination of ministers, and the sacraments. We think a better and quicker way of achieving "reunion" would be that of asking God to take the Bible out of the world altogether and to send a new one whose message every Christian could interpret in only one way. For the old one has done nothing else but prevent Christians from being brothers one to another. We appreciate, of course, that this is too sensible a solution to appeal to religion-soaked minds.

The editorial of a paper conducted by Mr. Arthur Mee says:—

Life is never easy. God has not made it so. He put us into a world where by trial and suffering we should work out our own salvation . . . Let us thank God that life is not a bed of roses. Let us be thankful that its highest prizes are for him who scorns delights and lives laborious days.

This should inspire our two million unemployed, who have discovered without a revelation from on high the fact of suffering, to draw in their belts a little tighter and to thank God from whom all trial and suffering flow.

There can be no doubt concerning God's love for man, says a well-known preacher. We are not so sure about that. For God gave man the Bible, which caused each nation to split up into intolerant and warring sections, banishing, burning and butchering one another. Assuming God to be All-wise, he must have known what the result of presenting the Bible to the world would be. If that reveals divine love, we are glad human love isn't like it.

A medical man asks what can be done with the influenza germ. We suggest it should be returned to the Maker to be destroyed. Any parson will be able to supply the Maker's address.

A pious journal says that there is a general consensus of opinion that the "sense of sin" is not so acute to-day as formerly. This sounds rather terrible. But it really only records the fact that the Churches are now unable to manufacture among their adherents the morbid conscience which was a pest to a former generation.

The *Christian World* says that:—

Daily journalism seems hopelessly involved in a vicious circle—the necessity for "keeping in" with advertisers and the consequent necessity for huge nett sales and for popular "stunts."

The human race has the faults of children, says a scientist, and must outgrow them. Comparing the human race as it is to-day with what it once was, we submit that it has already made a few moves towards adulthood. There is less cruelty and more thought for others. Wider views are commoner and there is less intolerance. More interest is shown in the rational and less in the miraculous. The sceptical mood is gaining ground and credulity is less manifest. Imagination is more under the curb of reason. The pastime of praying to and worshipping an imaginary deity is declining. And priests are ceasing to be regarded as divinely appointed guides to mankind. One may surely conclude, then, that the human race is outgrowing its childish faults.

A Manchester parson, the Rev. George Evans, seems to have got infected with the modern itch for novelty. The Free Churches, he complains, are unchanged and unchanging. They function in one ancient form—four hymns, a Scripture lesson, prayers, and a sermon—a form of service which has "no appeal to multitudes."

One of Mr. Evans' bright ideas is a shorter service; and another is a service without a sermon. These are good as far as they go, but they ought to be carried further. By shortening and eliminating until there is no service at all there should be no difficulty in pleasing multitudes. And it has the further advantage of relieving the pressure on the Heavenly receiving station, besides allowing the parson and the people extra time to take an interest in the things of this world.

A Methodist writer, the Rev. Leslie Weatherhead, must have some kind of a Hell for frightening the timid into the arms of Jesus:—

We have, fortunately, got away now from the terrible teaching about Hell which characterized the preaching of our grandfathers. I can see the danger clearly, however, of our running in the other direction. We have done well to break with the thought of an eternal fire; but because our grandfathers have taken literally a figure of speech, we must not wash out that truth of which the word "fire" is a figure. There is a reality behind the figure, and because our grandfathers ran the figure to excess their grandsons have, for the most part, conveniently left out all reference to the reality . . . It was he [Jesus] who spoke of age-long fire . . . and we could not have got so much out of his words, even of exaggeration, unless there were a lot in them.

Veiled threats concerning something very awful although not a fire don't seem very much improvement on the older belief of everlasting roasting. The great thing, of course, is that Methodists must be made to realize they have been "saved" from something awful, or else they will never appreciate the love of dear Jesus. Methodism cannot yet dispense with some kind of Heavenly torture chamber.

The Rev. Dr. J. D. Jones, of Bournemouth, says that he is prepared to argue from the beauty he sees at Bournemouth that God meant this world not to be a barracks, but a lovely home. But Nature, he added, can be cruel. "It is pretty hard after a devastating earthquake to believe in the love of God. Nor does science help us very much by suggesting there may be a creator with a mathematical mind. We are challenged, too, by all the pain and suffering in life, and cannot always feel that all things work together for good." It is as well to remind Mr. Jones that his problem of cruelty in Nature and of human suffering is a problem to the Christian, because he posits a Saving Heavenly Father. There is no such problem for the Freethinker.

Mr. H. T. Silcock, a Quaker missionary, says that there are five great revolutions taking place in China—political, social, economic, intellectual, and religious. As regards the intellectual revolution, he says that respect for tradition is giving place to what is almost a worship of science. Book-shops in the big cities are crowded, and there is great eagerness to secure the newest books. There is also a widespread campaign against illiteracy. Then, too, there is a great religious revolution. Though signs of this are harder to come across, yet it is the most fundamental of all. We presume it is this revolution which pleases the missionaries. They imagine that because the Chinese are dissatisfied with home-grown religions, they may be eager to grab at an imported one. But wishes don't always come true. And the fact of there being also an intellectual revolution may rather dash the missionaries' hopes.

In this age of scepticism and enquiry, and of straight questions and plain answers, even the parsons are tempted to be candid. Thus the Rev. Dr. Maltby blurts out that confusion and contradiction often have a longer sufferance in religion than elsewhere:—

One reason is that in religion we have an all-too-handly defence against the demand for lucidity and intelligibility—we can plead *mystery*. When men ask us to reconcile our own statements, we may plead the greatness of the subject and the inadequacy of words; when they ask us to say plainly what we mean, we may excuse ourselves on the plea that you cannot "define" the greatest things. This sounds so profound that most questioners pursue us no further.

We gather that as this ecclesiastical "all-too-handly" trick of defence has been seen through, and will no longer work, our theological jugglers have decided that it had better be discarded. Another bit of "progressive revelation!"

The vicissitudes of the Church of England make it necessary to look around for allies. The Archbishop of York has his eye on the Free Churches as likely customers; scripture, creed, and sacraments, he stated, could be used as the basis of negotiations. And also, we might add, the head of King Charles.

Mr. George Bernard Shaw neatly trusses up Dean Inge on the Russian question. The Dean fears that the five year plan of Russia may finish up with a Napoleonic dictatorship and thus be a menace to the peace of Europe. Mr. Shaw therefore deduces the fact that friends of peace must strain every nerve to make the five year plan a success. The Dean, if he agrees with Mr. Shaw, would then have to keep in order men like Lord Brentford, and newspapers such as the *Daily Mail* and the *Morning Post*. He would be very busy as a consequence, but something useful would have been accomplished if lies and exaggerations were choked at their source.

Dean Inge is gradually catching up with modern thought, and in time he will arrive. This extract from his article in the *Evening Standard*, November 12, 1930, would have made good reading in 1914 if it had been allowed to see the light of print:—

The old ideas, that war is a glorious thing, that foreign conquests strengthen a nation, and that diplomats ought to behave like shady solicitors, trying to overreach each other and threatening a law-suit if their claims are rejected, are dead.

If you like the language of symbolism, here is an example of a representative of the church using the lily at the wrong time.

The news that Mr. Evelyn Waugh has been converted to Rome will cause not a little excitement in Heaven if Fleet Street is any indication. This young man, famous at the age of twenty-six, has an article in the *Daily Express* (with photograph) and it gets a fine show. The sheer humility of it reduces the reader to pulp; the egoism of it, in having picked a winner in some seven hundred and twenty-five different kinds (including the flat-earthers) is a joy for ever.

The Temple built facing Sydney Harbour, where believers might gather to welcome Jesus Christ on his Second Coming has been turned into a miniature golf course. The building cost £30,000 and seats were sold for £100 each. What a come-down! And fancy Jesus, when he does arrive at Sydney to have to hunt round a miniature golf course to find someone to give him a welcome! There is a decided slump in the god-business just now, and there seems little chance of a revival.

Viscount Wolmer says that to succeed a parish priest must be "saintly, human, tactful, energetic, sympathetic, cheerful, genial, firm, brave, well-read and wise." We should say that parish priests must score a full 100 per cent failure. Even James Douglas would not fill the bill.

How thankful we ought to be for our glorious press. So far as the newspapers are concerned Ireland has been a non-existent country for some time. For all the attention paid it by the papers it might as well have been in at the north pole. But it has a huge sweepstake, and several persons have won a fortune each. So in all the papers Ireland once more appears and several individuals, whose sole claim to notice is that they have won money are pictured, and interviewed, and we should not be surprised if they were listed as among the great men of the country. We are not surprised; a country that acclaims men of the mental calibre of a Northcliff or a Beaverbrook, merely because they have the cunning and energy enough to make plenty of money deserves all that comes of it.

A CHALLENGING BOOK.

Ready December 13th.

OPINIONS, Random Reflections &
Wayside Sayings

By CHAPMAN COHEN

WITH NEW PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR.

Cloth Gilt 3s. 6d. Superior Edition bound in
Full Calf suitable for presentation 5s.All orders received before date of publication will be
sent post free.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

DR. R. K. NOYES.—We are glad to get your pamphlet. Although written forty years ago, your case still stands.

J. WRIGHT.—There is a one volume edition of the *Golden Bough* published at 18s. Why not make a suggestion to your local library that a copy be purchased? Thanks for offer, which is receiving attention.

J. BURGIN.—We agree with you that debates are interesting reading, but a necessary condition is that there should be a good man on either side. For many years the only two men we have met whose statement of their own case was worth reading were Dr. Lyttleton and Canon Storr. The trouble is that men of ability simply will not defend Christianity in either a written or a verbal debate when the opponent is one who is qualified to speak on Freethought.

J. GLOSSOP.—There is no such society. We advise you to be very careful of anything emanating from that quarter.

CINE CERE.—Glad to have your friend's appreciation of our writings, also to note that you are still dropping seed in likely places.

H. MARTIN.—All we can say is that we will give a ten pound note to any medium or thought reader in the country who is able to read its number through a sealed envelope.

A. J. MATHIE.—Sorry we were unable to find space for your report in last issue.

A. S. MILWARD.—Thanks, but rather too lengthy for use.

B. BURGESS.—Mr. Belloc is like most other religious apologists. Where the interests of their creed are concerned the division between truth and falsehood is easily crossed.

J. F. HAMPSON.—Thanks. But genuinely able Christians will not to-day come upon the debating platform. They realize that their's is not a case for public discussion.

CAUTIOUS.—You are quite mistaken. It is not essential that one should take the oath on joining the Army or Navy. Affirmation applies to all cases where an oath is usually necessary. And a recruit can insist on his description of himself as "Atheist" being so entered.

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

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

When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, 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.

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."

Sugar Plums.

To-day (November 30) Mr. Cohen will visit Bradford and will speak in the Queen's Hall, Morley Street, at 7.0, on "The Passing of the Gods." There will be a limited number of reserved seats at a shilling and sixpence each. On Sunday next (December 7) Mr. Cohen will lecture at Leicester.

In our hurried notes on the Bolton debate, we omitted to note that the chairman of the debate was Mr. Sissons, the local N.S.S. Secretary. The Vicar of Bolton paid Mr. Sissons an evidently deserved compliment on the courtesy, fairness, and consideration he had shown during the whole of the negotiations, and Mr. Sisson's conduct in the chair was all that could be desired by the disputants and the audience.

Those who have a liking for detective stories will read with interest and amusement *Hercules, Esq.*, by a one-time writer in these columns, Gwyn Evans (Shaylor, 7s. 6d.) The book has the distinctive quality of providing a crook story without anything in the way of crime. Mr. Gwyn Evans gets his principle character into a number of interesting situations, out of which he gets him again with simplicity and naturalness. At this time of the year one may count on passing a few hours in amusing company. Mr. Evans has lost none of the ingenious humour he displayed when writing in these pages.

Mr. R. H. Rosetti will lecture for the Liverpool (Merseyside) Branch of the N.S.S. in the Transport Buildings, 41 Islington, to-day (Sunday) at 7.0 p.m., on "Do We Need Religion." The subject is one which might easily induce Christian friends to attend, and no doubt the local saints will note that point.

Professor Okey, in his autobiography *A Basketful of Memories* (Dent, 6s. net) recalls the time in 1887 when he was spat upon by the troops on *Bloody Sunday*. He attended the meeting, not as a socialist, but as a secularist. The following confession, brief, yet comprehensive, contains no trace of the supernatural assistance, that with the ordinary Christian is essential:—

The value of early discipline in renunciation, of service, and, most important and fundamental of all, the value of integrity of character, sincerity of purpose and straight dealing in the conduct of life.

There seems to be quite enough in such resolutions to enable one to get through life as a man without requiring a scapegoat for sins.

Sir Arthur Keith, was duly elected Rector of Aberdeen University by a substantial majority. Sir Hall Caine's prehistoric appeal has therefore fallen on deaf ears—the best kind of ears for that which historically and consistently has been the enemy of Freethought.

The Society for the Preservation of the Sabbath have apparently overlooked the activities of the Bank of England. £403,880 bar gold was withdrawn from the bank and sent to France; gold refiners were working all day on Saturday and part of Sunday November 9, in connection with the transfer of an article, the superstition about which is wearing a trifle thin with men in Manchester who want boots, and men in Leicester who could do with shirts. The Society above should protest against this Sunday labour and get Monday's newspapers to publish a report.

The Rev. Robertson Ballard (London Mission—East) is to be congratulated on his sermon in the *News-Chronicle* "Saturday Pulpit." He protests against noise—it is a loud speaker age—quiet thinking is rare; very well, let a start be made by cutting out all loud speakers yahooping the good slice of the Sunday programme taken up by religion. Then let us silence all the church bells, boy scouts, and Salvation Army bands. More power to the Rev. Ballard's elbow and a sock in my neighbour's loud speaker proclaiming the glad things of hell-fire slightly cooled for popular consumption.

Messrs. Watts have added two more interesting volumes to their "World of Youth Series." No. 4 is an adaptation of Darwin's *Voyage of H.M.S. Beagle*, by Mrs. Amabel Williams-Ellis, and forms a splendid introduction to that classic—which, it is hoped, will afterwards be read in its entirety. There are some excellent illustrations and a chapter on "What Happened to Darwin Before and After the Voyage of the *Beagle*," quite a delightful account of one of the greatest naturalists that ever lived. It was a happy thought to include this volume in the series.

No. 5 is by Mr. A. Gowans Whyte, entitled *Our World and Us*. The author of the *World's Wonder Stories* has discovered the secret (known only to a few) of serving up science in an intensely fascinating way. As an introduction to our world, to atoms, electrons, "matter," planets and stars, and many other like mysteries, few books for children will hold a youthful reader more than this one. The older one gets, the more extraordinary, the more mysterious becomes the Universe, but as far as science has arrived at this moment with an explanation of the "stuff" we are made of, Mr. Whyte has managed to give a précis quite as interesting for adults as for children. Both volumes are 1s. 6d. each net.

The Sabbath.

I THINK that practically all references in the *Freethinker* to the Christian, or rather the distinctively English Sunday are derogatory and sarcastic. Directly or by implication it is referred to as a nuisance that ought to be stopped. With this view of it I strongly disagree. I consider that the Sabbath as an institution ought to be adopted and adapted by Rationalists—not discarded.

"The world is too much with us." To get release from it one day in seven is wisdom. In the old hard times one day's rest after six days hard work was a very wise thing to practice. Few now work more than five and a half days per week, and an increasing number only five. Half of Saturday—and with many the whole of it—is given up to "pleasure," and it seems to be the idea of most contributors to the *Freethinker*, that Sunday should be just another Saturday, given over to games and entertainments, etc. Frankly the idea does not appeal to me, either on personal or general grounds. Let me have a quiet Sunday for preference. For the big majority of people one day's rest in seven will pay them individually, physically, mentally and economically. I also think it would pay nationally to keep a Sabbath on modified traditional times.

Variety is the spice of life. It is more than spice. It is a great help and means to welfare. One day a week different from the others would be good merely because of the difference, though the character of the day is also important. Let us consider some of the good points of the conventional Sunday.

For a long period the English (and Scotch) people were accustomed to go to church or chapel twice a Sunday, and of course many of them do so yet. Would they have kept up the practice if it had been merely an irksome duty? Would the custom have continued if it had not had some strong survival qualities? I think it is true to say that the majority of those who have gone to the services have found a good deal of pleasure in them. And, although they have probably not fully realized the fact, religion has only provided a part of the pleasure.

Man is a gregarious animal. Going to church is, to a great extent, a manifestation of the gregarious instinct. Nonconformist chapels (especially) have provided for this instinct in an almost ideal way, not just in the Sunday services, but in the total of their activi-

ties. The people, men, women and children, connected with such a chapel are a self-contained democratic community, all friends and generally much inter-related. The two Sunday services act as communal meetings, providing the genuine pleasure of weekly re-union (it is a genuine pleasure). During the week the community is more or less scattered, though various activities and sub societies keep the people from being altogether out of touch. But the Sabbath gathering is the chief and is looked forward to with anticipation. Continued year after year, it helps to bind and consolidate friendship. If that little community dissolves, and its units go their several ways on Sundays—to football or "the pictures," to music-halls, and art galleries, or gallivanting up and down the country, will those units make a better exchange even as regards "pleasure"?

I doubt it. And as regards friendships and acquaintances, they will lose considerably both in quantity and quality. But we are yet only at the beginning of the subject.

The Sunday services draw the attention of the people to higher and more serious matters than sport and "pleasure." They emphasize the serious side of life. They put morality on a pedestal. They inculcate a conception of duty. They give training in character. In the sermons they cater for the intellect often with, incidentally, fine displays of oratory. Where else, or how else, could there be such intensive experience of all these? Could the people get anything like the equivalent at the pictures or the theatre, or at games, or by stopping at home and reading the piffle of the Sunday newspapers, or by excursions—these being the things which the majority would turn to, and which seemingly, the *Freethinker* wants them to turn to. They could not and would not.

The claim that the English Sunday or Sabbath has had a good and ennobling effect on the nation is well founded. Assertions that the Sabbath has been irksome and a time of misery for the majority are ill-founded. To say that a minority has not got the intended pleasure and profit from it is only to say that the English Sabbath, like all other human institutions is neither perfect in itself nor has been worked perfectly.

The idea of those who, in the columns of the *Freethinker*, as so sarcastic about the Sabbath is, I take it, that by breaking up the Sabbath, not only will an irksome institution be done away with, and the pleasure and happiness of the people be increased, but that whilst Religion will diminish, Freethought or Rationalism will benefit. I roundly declare my opinion that the idea is about as fatuous as can be imagined.

If you got the big majority of the people playing games (more likely watching) going to the pictures and all the rest of it—does anyone in his senses think that the people will become genuine Freethinkers or Rationalists and will join either the Secular Society or the R.P.A., and all subscribe for either the *Freethinker*, are so sarcastic about the Sabbath is, I a matter of fact that the majority has got to that stage. Is it queuing up to join the best of all causes? You know it is not, and is showing no symptoms of doing. That portion of it which is not merely in for a round of futile and unsatisfying "pleasure" is, in its contemptible ignorance, drifting into Spiritualism, Christian Science, Catholicism and the other endless varieties of superstition.

. . . my own experience is that it is almost impossible to get these ignorant pagans to take any interest in intellectual subjects. It is far easier to make converts from the seriously-minded people of the Protestant churches and chapels.

If the Freethought Movement could take a census of its adherents, I think it would find the source of origin of most would be homes where a serious Sabbath had been the rule. What I may call the *Freethinker* advice and policy about the sabbath is, in my opinion, advice and policy whose result would be to turn people into the raw material for all the quacks and quackery of superstition.

C. R. BOYD FREEMAN.

(To be concluded.)

A Lesson of History in 34,785 A.D.

THE lecture-hall of the East Central Mars University was crowded with students as Mr. Ernest VII 492106 ascended the ice-block and began to speak:—

"I hope I will not be accused of displaying an undue amount of local-patriotism if I repeat what I have already endeavoured to impress during my earlier lectures on the history of the Earth: that as early as in those early and dark periods from Thotmes I to President Hoover, there were already some beginnings of civilization on that planet. Crude as these feeble attempts at culture, organization and development of imaginative powers were, we foreigners from the Earth trust that we have no reason to be ashamed of our ancestors, and though our indefatigable researches have hitherto only been able to disclose very little of that historically obscure era, we have penetrated far enough into the matter to ascertain that it was an epoch full of experiment, clashes of superstitious and senseless classifications of the human race. There were occasional festivals held in honour of childish games and conjuring tricks, like the parting of the Red Sea and the building of the Suez Canal, a few years later; or the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti, following the equally famous trials of Dreyfus and Jesus of Nazareth or the Australian Cricket Test Match, the burning of Rome, that lasted, according to the legend, from Nero to Mussolini; but the meaning and exact purpose of these gatherings and sportive meetings we cannot state precisely. One of the rare documents of this period is a scientific handbook called *Peg's Paper*, and it shows us clearly how miserable and insecure the lives of early humans were; there was a huge amount of certain difficulties to pair, to keep important savage fetishes and legendary objects of primitive cult safely and secretly hidden, like keys, and rugs, metal discs, metal boxes or paper rags with figures and threats written all over them. It is a characteristic of the age that the very book that must have been the best-seller consists largely, as far as we could decipher a few scattered pages, of violent threats for people who would make idols or paint papers with figures and threats on them without permission. What our ancestors did with these various objects, remains a mystery; yet it seems that many people managed to make such fetishes secretly for themselves, and hid them jealously from others, in spite of all threats.

"The historian's task is a grave one, as he is confronted with a material too confused for systematic research. We have come to the conclusion that it would be the safest way to view the story of those four or five thousand years from Thotmes I to President Hoover through collecting the stray legends and creeds of the period into groups, and I am glad to say that the results obtained by this method are quite satisfactory.

"One of the outstanding motives of early human literature seems to be a white bird, probably a goose. There are many historians on my home planet who hold the belief that at the time when the legend of the white bird or Holy Ghost originated, humans actually used to eat the flesh of animals. This is, of course, absurd. At the time of your recent visit to the earth you have seen pictures of extinct species like the dinosaur or the cow, and you may judge for yourselves whether it is probable that any low savage would use plants for decoration, and at the same time prefer to destroy live beings and eat their flesh, as it is hardly imaginable that he could have eaten the flesh without stopping the animal's life.

Some of my distinguished colleagues are convinced that it belonged to some religious rite of these early earthly beings to eat flesh, at least flesh of birds; and they go further in asserting that primitive humans became "goosed" by eating a goose; whereby the use of antique English determined the word "ghost" as a substitute for "goosed." I confess that this is the only explanation for the word "ghost" that otherwise could not have any sense at all. Disinclined as I am to believe such monstrosity, there are further arguments proving the flesh-eating theory, to which I shall return later on.

"According to ancient earthly mythology, humans used to breed by pairing before the Holy Trinity decided to discontinue the practice. We find three consecutive denominations for the three factors of Trinity, viz., Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva; Father, Son, Holy Ghost; and Shaw, Mussolini and Lenin. It was Father Shaw's (or Brahma's) express wish to bring forth humans parthenogenetically in an egg, he approached Leda in the shape of a white bird as the Holy Ghost, and the result was two eggs: Mussolini and Lenin in one of them, and Madame Dubarry in the other. This was probably the same Madame Dubarry who eloped from King Menelous XV to Troy, a Russian town, with Prince Oviparis, in a sled. Hence the name for sleds: "troyka." Lenin worked for some time in a carpenter's shop in Palestine, and published an account of the surplus-value his employer gained by his work. This roused the public opinion; he had an exceptionally bad press, and he was tried in Massachusetts. Pilate Thayer passed the death-sentence, and Lenin was electrocuted on a cross on an island called St. Helena.

"There is another legend, found in a few different forms among the remains of this early civilization, in connexion with Oviparis, whom we have mentioned before. Oviparis seems to have given a banana to one of these goddesses: Venus, Barbara Fritchie and Dolores del Rio. He probably was said to have given the banana to the latter (another proof that animal flesh was shunned as far as eating goes) and this fruit occurs later on in other shapes: as a melon, or a cocoa-nut, or an apple. An often-occurring figure with an arch is said to have shot that apple from the head of his own son. The fact that it was his "own" son seems to have been emphasized as if anybody ever could have dared to experiment with other people's children. Whether the archer's real name was Robin Tell or William Hood, we cannot decide; but I feel confident that further research will justify my hypothesis propounded in a monograph entitled, *The Apple-Banana-Egg Myth: Tell or Robespierre, a Controversy*, in which I suggest it was neither Tell nor Hood who shot the apple, but someone called Cromwell or Robespierre and didn't aim well, and the child's head fell off instead. This was not, however, considered as a very sad event, because at that primitive age humanity did not find out yet how children were born; in consequence the earth was terribly overcrowded and as several philosophers believed that children came into the world through a disagreeable noise, caused by bad digestion and overfeeding, called laughter—it was almost generally advocated to put an end to overpopulation by Mirth Control. Anyhow, the game of shooting fruit from each other's heads became very fashionable, and fruit was getting scarce for such purposes. This led to a sort of general upheaval to which historians refer as The Boy Scouts Jamboree or French Revolution, when people used to march through the streets singing 'Yes, we have no Bananas.'

"A great event of the Rubber Age was what they called the Sermon on the Mount. It was certainly nothing else than a scientific experiment of wireless telegraphy, whether the human voice could be carried more easily from a mountain-top. We have still fairly good cinematographic records of the event. Why the actual text has had to be so carefully conserved, we cannot say; it has been more than sufficiently and not very sensibly commented on during the latter half of the Rubber Age; and it has been sometimes altered in insignificant details according to the needs of fashion. The text that we possess seems to be one of the oldest versions, if not the original: it appears on a gramophone record with what they termed "musical accompaniment": and it begins with the words "Keep Your Sunny Side Up," the

meaning of which has not hitherto been revealed. To objections raised against the probability of gramophone records in existence at that particular period we can reply that as telephones *did* exist long before—as a book entitled *Numbers*, that was obviously a directory, clearly shows—we fail to see why just gramophones should not have been invented yet.

“These primitive and yet so sensitive beings had an easy way of classifying phenomena and altering laws and general rules of behaviour. The human race was “classed” into two groups in those days, and the names of the two groups varied. Once it was the Guelfs and Ghibellins, another time “those of the White and those of the Red Rose,” then Tories and Whigs, Reds and Blacks. Rich and Poor, Wells and Wrongs. The exact meaning of these denominations cannot be revealed. One of the ancient books mentions a literary work of one of the “Wells”: *Outline of the Broadway Melody*. Broadway is another name for the Promised Land, and it is in this form that it is recalled in the Psalms of the later Rubber Age. The belief that a part of humanity could be forced to wear a “uniform,” some sort of a preposterous fancy-dress, seems to have been prevalent in those years; but contemporary historians fail to explain how the obvious resistance of these humiliated, “uniformed” beings has been successfully subdued. There are several references to them having been trained to move and act simultaneously, by the hundreds and thousands; but this seems unlikely as very soon after the discovery of Europe by the Americans, a sage called attention to the fact that there is really no such stupid thing as simultaneousness. He is supposed to have been the founder of the theory of relativity: his name was Einstein, and some contemporary writer states that he was a Jew. What a Jew exactly must have been we do not know; but as there is no doubt that Jews were circumcized at their birth as far as they were males, in order to comply with the silly classifying mania of early humanity, we can safely conclude that men wore only waistcoats or short jackets in these years, or else the writer could not have told us that so-and-so was a Jew and so-and-so was not.

“I have already alluded to other traceable proofs of flesh-eating in the Rubber Age. It seems that the uniformed beings were forced into a big Olympic game, called the World War, after several centuries of careful rehearsals. It seemed quite obvious that some would have to perish in those senseless and dangerous games and therefore we are bound to conclude that this was the very reason why the games were started at all when sporadic experiments of Mirth Control naturally failed and the population threateningly increased. After the World War, several people seem to have complained as to the waste of so much meat on the dead bodies, that they could not feed on, and the result was that they immediately started another World War, which was almost satisfactory. I must confess that I strongly doubt the veracity of contemporary writers, as one of them goes as far as to say that it is better to feed on meat and plants, and that he himself prefers the former; whereas medical science has established the rule beyond doubt that, should anybody turn insane and try to eat the flesh of earthly animals, he would die at once. I shall resume my subject at the following lecture, entitled ‘The End of the Rubber Age.’”

F. ABEL.

The worship of the virgin and the child, which we find in all Romish countries, was nothing more than a renant of the worship of Isis and the God Horus—the Virgin of the celestial sphere, to whom the epithet virgin, though a mother, was without absurdity applied.

Anaclypsis—Godfrey Higgins.

Everything that happens to us leaves some trace behind; everything contributes imperceptibly to make us what we are.—*Goethe.*

A liar is always lavish of oaths.—*Corneille.*

As many men, so many opinions.—*Terence.*

Evil Wills.

THE 307 Bishops who attended the Lambeth Conference have made the wonderful discovery that what they have to contend with is not imperfect thinking but—Evil Wills.

It is of first importance for believers in orthodox Christianity to establish the theory of man as being a free-willing agent. If his actions are in any manner determined by externals, he is to that extent not responsible for his actions.

The man Jesus was faced with this difficulty. Being human he desired to live. The course of events however had precipitated his approaching end. His feelings rose up against the fate these circumstances were about to thrust upon him. It is common human experience. He is reported to have cried out—“If it be possible let this cup pass from me.” If we assume he had freely willed the circumstances which brought about his fate, we are free to assume he could have willed to escape them. But he is presented as one deprived entirely of all power to will one way or another. From the first he was doomed to die. That was his mission. He hadn’t to will for or against it. He is deprived of the manly powers to shape his career, by a heavenly father who sends him as “a lamb to the slaughter.” It is not to be imagined that he could have willed against the will of the father. That would have upset the whole scheme of redemption. But we find he resents matters somewhat—he adds to his outcry “nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.” His fate has been willed for him.

Paul, too, finds himself up against this mystery of the Will. Says he, “What I would not, that I do; and what I would, that I do not.” Now, every living organism is the centre of a field of action, and this field is constantly changing. The change is what is called the flux of matter. This flux determines every event that takes place in the life of the organism which is thus centred in the field of action. But an organism thus centred is affected by the fields of action of other organisms, and owing to the flux of matter, these fields are for ever changing. In fact the flux of matter which is thus constantly thrusting itself into the field is the life of the organism. An attempt is often made to prove free-will by positing a vital entity in man. This, it is assumed, destroys the mechanistic theory, but the very fact that this assumed vital entity *derives all its potentiality from the matter of the body of the organism*, shows the theory of “Vitalism” to be no proof of free-will. In fact the manifestations of this assumed entelechy are found to be absolutely dependent upon the physiological structures of the body. Even Hans Driesche, who is a Vitalist, and therefore strongly disposed to argue in favour of free-will, writes—“If I am asked to give a decision on the question of free-will based on knowledge, then I freely confess that I cannot give a genuine decision with any confidence” (*Man and the Universe*, p. 151.)

What is evil willing? If an animal wills to live, and in so doing acts towards that which enables it to live as being desirable, the act must be good. Any action whose purpose is that of sustaining life is good—good for the animal striving to live that is. It so happens that this striving to live means the destruction of other living organisms. Thus life is sustained by death. Without death there can be no life. Absolute freedom would mean devoid of change. A free person would have no fixed character whatever, whereas we are faced with the fact that every individual is the centre of constant flux in universal matter and in no sense free as long as he exists. Existence from birth to death is maintained by this flux in the matter of the universe. *To posit volition as free is an illusion.* If I want water, there is a cause for my willing to obtain it. If the matter of my body has so ripened as to evolve in me instinct of sex, a cause has arisen for me to will to seek a mate. The flux of matter in what we call Nature, has fixed the cause and the conditions for willing and acting. If individuals are endowed with free will, why do they for ever will their own misery? Answer the bishops—“Because they are sinful and will evil.” But

it is the flux of matter which provides the matrix for the ideas, wishes, and actions of man, and the conditions for fulfilment. The will which is most free is that which most fully responds to the flux of universal matter. Whatever evil or good may be attributed to willing, it is originated by matter. The man Jesus was fully aware of man's predicament in the matter of willing.

Willing is not the mysterious potentiality of some spiritual entity having a temporary abode in man. Evil wills and good wills are not scattered about in a void to be snatched up and thrown aside as required to secure the desires of individuals. They are modes of matter in the bodies of the individuals where they manifest. Owing to the general flux of matter in the universe they are continually changing. A strong will is not a definitely fixed and unchanging will. How could it be, seeing that it arises in matter which is in a perpetual flux? And what assurance of progress would offer in a world where good wills and evil wills were fixed? *To mould, modify and change the will, man must focus his attention upon the physical universe, and there exercise his intelligence and knowledge.*

Because man's willing does not harmonize with the orthodoxy of Christianity according to the bishop's interpretation of it, man is a sinful animal with an evil will. Because men and women are now paying attention to their bodies and the things of this world, and are no longer satisfied with the promise of a reward in a future heaven, the bishops are beginning to find themselves mere superfluous nonentities in a practical go-ahead world. Hence all the pother. We can do very well without them—better in fact—and they know it. But they will persist in an effort to persuade weak-minded men and women that without religion (their religion—mark you) all hope of salvation is lost. But what do they offer? Is it better economic conditions, world peace, a fair and impartial division of Nature's abundance? These are the things that matter, not a halo in some far away abode when we have left this vale of tears behind us for ever.

CULLWICK PERRINS.

Tinker, Tailor

It was Voltaire's Dr. Pangloss who declared that all is for the best in the best of possible worlds, but presumably Dr. Pangloss was an ass.

Some few years ago a man, down and out, accepted a wager to travel round the world earning his living as he went. The journey was to take five years.

The man performed the journey and has now written the story of the venture veiling his name under the pen name "Greenhorn."

The book is published by John Laue, the Bodley Head at 8s. 6d., under the title of *Tinker, Tailor* —.

How the author worked as a lumberjack in the States, as a Mounted Policeman in Canada, as a seaman across the Pacific, and so on right across the world is told in breezy and thrilling style.

In the South Sea Islands, Greenhorn had a temporary job as cattle overseer, and put in three and a half months at the task.

"Our chief sources of trouble with the boys were of religious origin; the greedy ones having become Roman Catholic converts, overate themselves at the mission oyster-beds and overdrank themselves on the wine sent out from France for the faithful, whenever they could to the detriment of work. The lazy ones chose the simple course of becoming Seventh Day Adventists and claiming two Sundays a week."

Is this the ennobling influence of Christianity upon the uncivilized savage?

Another, but more amusing, effect of missionary work is revealed in the passage:—

"One night, when I was lying in this state, I got the shock of my life; the girls suddenly broke into an English hymn.

"They had been mission girls, and had been painstakingly taught hymns word for word, though they evidently did not in the least understand what they were

singing. The final bomb they burst at my feet was a more or less recognisable rendering of "God Save the King."

All this to accompany barbarous savage dancing! What a surprise for sedate hymn-singing Christians at home, picturing the pious native convert solemnly singing, "Wash me whiter than the snow," to find that hymns are used in such a fashion as Greenhorn describes.

"NEHELLS."

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

WHY NOT NIETZCHE?

SIR,—I should be grateful if you will allow me to express through the columns of your paper my inability to understand the neglect meted out to Nietzsche in England.

Only a few weeks ago, a contributor to the *Freethinker* saw fit to make contemptuous reference to his philosophy; I felt no surprise—such an attitude towards the most profound thinker of last century is only too common. And yet Nietzsche alone amongst philosophers has a message which can be of use to post-war Europe. He saw the rationalistic purgation of all supernatural elements from Christianity achieved in the nineteenth century, and, seeing the residue—a dreary code of ethics baptized as Socialism and given to the world as something new, he foresaw the chaos of anarchy and nihilism towards which we are rapidly drifting. He foresaw and produced the remedy, for, although the greatest of iconoclasts, he is also supreme in constructive energy. It was not enough to sweep away a morality of two thousand years' standing unless he gave the world something in its place; and so he evaluated the Will to Power and the Gospel of Superman—beacons standing high above the grey sluggish waters of democracy which have washed over Europe for so long. His central doctrine, "What is good? All that increases the feeling of power, will to power, power itself in man.. What is bad? All that proceeds from weakness," is a negation of all fixed unchanging moral standards, but, however revolutionary it appears at first, when read and considered as a part of his entire philosophy it will be seen as a truth which it is essential that the present age should grasp if it is to escape its impending fate.

Nietzsche's intensely aristocratic spirit, his piercing wit, his uncanny psychological insight, and his ruthless attack on all hypocrisy necessarily prevent him from becoming popular, but it is high time that careful attention was paid to his work and due recognition given to his genius

JOHN L. BEEVERS.

Queen's College, Cambridge.

BIRTH CONTROL AND PUBLIC OPINION.

SIR,—In his letter under this heading in your current issue, Mr. R. B. Kerr says: "The other form of birth control, however—by abortion—is more severely punished," etc. May I protest against the false and mischievous mis-statement implied therein, that abortion is in any way to be connected with birth control? It is fundamentally and organically different, birth control being the *prevention of conception* so that no embryo is formed, which is perfectly legal and physiologically wholesome: abortion is *the murder of the embryo* after it has been formed, and in this country is rightly a criminal offence. It is true that at the Sex Reform Congress last year various people unintelligently demanded "legalization of abortion," thereby revealing their ignorance of legal diction and the present law. Abortion is, and always will be a crime, for it is the ignorant, hole-in-corner murder of an embryo, and interference with natural, physiological processes by untrained persons for improper reasons. *Our present law permits the evacuation of the uterus by competent medical practitioners for adequate reasons, so that the fancied grievance that sex reformers were shouting about exists purely in their own imaginations. The confusion created by such mischie-*

vous muddles being so serious, I trust you will assist me in my effort to get some clear thinking on this very important subject.

MARIE C. STOPES.

[Letters from D.P.S. and "Late Warrant Officer," and others are held over till next weew.]

Society News.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S.

MR. C. TUSON was in fine form last Sunday in his reply to the Rev. B. Simpson's query as to whether "A Thoughtful Man Could be a Christian."

The parson did not take advantage of the opportunity offered to him, personally to defend his case; if he had done so, we expect he would have added something to his knowledge. This Sunday (November 30) the speaker will be Mr. J. H. Van Biene, and his subject will be "What Do We Know."—A.J.M.

AFTER some weeks of unavoidable delay, owing to various causes, propagandist work was resumed in Newcastle on Sunday last, when Mr. J. T. Brighton, of Chester-le-Street addressed a large and orderly meeting in the Bigg Market. Mr. Brighton was in excellent form after his recent indisposition, and smote the faith of the fathers hip and thigh amidst the great babble of tongues from the various meetings, some with placards of "Flee from the wrath to come," and "The wicked shall be turned into hell." The Romanists with a little Jesus standing aloft like an enlarged "monkey up the stick," and the clamour of Communists, Mormons, politicians, and other frothy ranters added to the sanity of the scene. Mr. Brighton's meeting was said to be the largest and most attentive, and a fair amount of literature was sold and distributed. It is intended to continue the meetings while the weather permits, and the Branch needs the support of all local Freethinkers.

Mr. J. C. Keast, an active worker in the movement forty years ago, will be the speaker on the 30th. There is a need for something more than fireside Freethinkers here.—J.G.B.

Miscellaneous Advertisements.

A LONDON BUSINESSMAN of considerable experience will be leaving about the middle of January for Gibraltar and Morocco. He would be pleased to undertake one or two commissions for first class British Firms, appoint agents or settle any outstanding matters. All negotiations would be treated in the strictest confidence.—Write "Y.P.," c/o FREETHINKER, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

WANTED urgently a Copy of G. W. Foote's three-hour speech before the Jury—Trial for Blasphemy, state price to Mr. A. E. ASPINALL, 11 Juliet Street, Stanley Road, Liverpool.

Rationalist Press Association (Glasgow District)

Grand Hall, Central Halls, 25 Bath Street,

Sunday, December 16th, at 3 p.m.

Professor C. J. PATTEN, M.A., M.D., Sc.D.
(Sheffield University)

"Memory—The Mainspring of Evolution."
(with Lantern Illustration)

'Cellist GASPARINI.

Questions and Discussion.

Silver Collection.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road, opposite Walham Green Church): Every Saturday at 7.30.—Various speakers.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Mr. B. A. Le Maine; 3.30, Messrs. A. D. McLaren and B. A. Le Maine; Every Wednesday at 7.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and C. Tuson; every Friday at 7.30, Messrs. A. D. McLaren and B. A. Le Maine. Current *Freethinkers* can be obtained opposite the Park Gates, on the corner of Edgware Road, during and after the meetings.

INDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (London Co-operative Society's Hall, 249 Dawes Road, Fulham). 7.30, Mr. J. H. Van Biene—"What Do We Know?" No. 11 bus passes the door.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 59 Finchley Road, N.W.8, near Marlborough Road Station): Miss Virginia Coit, B.A.—"Russia's Productive System."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"The Passing of the Gentleman."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Public Hall, Clapham Road): 7.15, Mr. H. J. Adams, B.A.—"Roman Catholicism and Protestantism."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road): 7.0, Mrs. Seaton Tiedeman—"Dean Inge's Married Pariahs."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (City of London Hotel, 107 York Road, Camden Road, N.7, facing Cattle Market): 7.30, Mr. Hesketh Pearson—"Brasimus Darwin."

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 7.30, Mr. E. C. Saphin—"The B.V.M."

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Queen's Hall, Morley Street, Bradford): 7.0, Mr. Chapman Cohen—"The Passing of the Gods." Admission free. Reserved seats 1s. and 6d. each.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Bristol Street Council Schools): 7.0, Miss Stella Browne—"The Lambeth Resolutions and Human Realities."

BURNLEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Labour Rooms, Grey Street): Tuesday, December 2, at 7.30, lecture by Mr. J. Clayton—"The Soul in the Making."

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S. (Club Rooms, Front Street): 7.0, Mr. W. Raine will lecture. Chairman, Mr. T. Brown.

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley): 2.30, Mr. Jack Clayton—"Atheism and Some Substitutes." Questions and Discussion. All welcome.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY.—City (Albion Street) Hall, 6.30, Mr. T. J. Kerr, lantern lecture—"Art Throughout the Ages."

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, 41 Islington, Liverpool—entrance Christian Street): Sunday, November 30, at 7.0, Mr. R. H. Rosetti (General Secretary, N.S.S.)—"Do We Need Religion?" Doors open 6.30. Reserved seats one shilling. Current *Freethinkers* will be on sale.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Mr. Bonar Thompson—"The Tragi-Comedy of Life."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S. (Socialist Club, Arcade, Pilgrim Street): 3.0, Members Meeting. At 7.30, Mr. J. C. Keast will lecture in the Bigg Market (weather permitting).

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Engineers' Hall, 120 Rusholme Road, Manchester): 3.0, Mr. F. C. Moore (Wallasey)—"The Religion of the Workers." 6.30, "Religion and Soviet Russia."

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.)

What Is the Truth About the Catholic Church?

Twenty centuries of amazing history are covered by the story of the Roman Catholic Church. It is a story which all should know in clear and convincing detail. To know this story is to have, at last, a vivid and accurate comprehension of the social, political and intellectual events that have made our western world. This story is told completely by Joseph McCabe in *The True Story of the Roman Catholic Church*.

This work immediately takes its place as a masterpiece of historical writing. It offers, in the first place, a full and careful view of an immense subject. It sets forth a strong and impressive array of facts—facts which are more tremendous than all the arguments, all the interpretations, all the partial or fanciful impressions in the world. And McCabe has written this vastly important history in a swift, thrilling, gripping style of narrative. Popes and kings and peoples, inquisitors and heretics, monks and crusaders, saints and martyrs and fanatics, diplomats and schemers for power, thinkers and fighters—this exciting throng of the past marches with the very vigor and compulsion of life through the pages of *The True Story of The Roman Catholic Church*.

The following are the titles of the twelve books (two in a volume): 1. How the Roman Catholic Church Really Began. 2. How the Roman Catholic Church Became Wealthy and Corrupt. 3. How the Pope's Power Was Made and Enforced. 4. How Rome Made and Ruled the Dark Ages. 5. How the People Were Made to Submit to Papal Power. 6. The True Relation of Rome to the Revival of Art, Letters and Learning. 7. The Height of the Papal Regime of Vice and Crime. 8. How Rome Fought Attempts to Reform Morals. 9. The Truth About the "Reform" of Rome. 10. The Last Alliance of Church and State. 11. Roman Catholic Intrigues of the Nineteenth Century. 12. The Roman Catholic Church As It Is To-day.

SIX DOUBLE VOLUMES 10/6 (Post Free) Inland Postage only

Imperial and Foreign Customers must add Extra Postage.

ORDER NOW ON THIS FORM.

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

Enclosed is 10/6d. for which send me, post free, the six double volumes of "The True Story of the Roman Catholic Church," by Joseph McCabe.

Name (BLOCK LETTERS, PLEASE.)

Address

The Secular Society, Ltd.

CHAIRMAN—CHAPMAN COHEN.

Company Limited by Guarantee.

Registered Office: 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Secretary: MR. R. H. ROSETTI.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Friends desiring to benefit the Society are invited to make donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favour in their wills. The now historic decision of the House of Lords in *re Bowman and Others v. the Secular Society, Limited*, in 1927, a verbatim report of which may be obtained from its publishers, the Pioneer Press, or from the Secretary, makes it quite impossible to set aside such bequests.

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

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

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

Christianity & Civilization

A Chapter from "The History of the Intellectual Development of Europe."

By Prof. J. W. DRAPER.

Price - TWOPENCE. Postage ½d.

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

THE SECULAR EDUCATION LEAGUE

Invites the attendance of all who favour
State Neutrality in regard to Religious
Teaching in State-Aided Schools at a

PUBLIC MEETING

TO BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

CAXTON HALL,
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1

ON

Wednesday, December 3rd, 1930 at 7.30 p.m.

SPEAKERS:

Mr. Chapman Cohen
Editor of the "Freethinker"

Mr. H. Snell, C.B.E., M.P.

Mr. Ernest Thurtle, M.P.

The Rev. Walter Walsh, D.D.

AND OTHERS

Chairman: **Dr. V. H. Rutherford, M.A.**

ADMISSION FREE

THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

3 3

Paper - 9d. Cloth - 1/6
Postage 1d. and 1½d. extra.

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

TABOO AND GENETICS

A Study of the Biological, Sociological, and
Psychological Foundation of the Family; a
Treatise showing the previous Unscientific
Treatment of the Sex Problem in Social
Relationships.

By **M. M. KNIGHT, Ph.D.**; **PHYLLIS BLANCHARD, Ph.D.**
and **IVA LOWTHER PETERS, Ph.D.**

Part I.—The New Biology and the Sex Problem in
Society.

Part II.—The Institutionalized Sex Taboo.

Part III.—The Sex Problem in the Light of Modern
Psychology.

Published at 10s. 6d. net.
(Postage 5½d.)

Price 4s.

WAR, CIVILIZATION AND THE CHURCHES

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN.

A study of the issues raised by the "Great War."
The part played by the Churches during the War.
The influence of War on Civilization.

A Book that None should Miss.

160 PAGES.

Price - Paper 2/-; Cloth 3/-

Postage—Paper 2d., Cloth 3d.

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

Five Leaflets by Chapman Cohen.

WHAT IS SECULARISM?

6d. per 100.

DO YOU WANT THE TRUTH?

1/- per 100 (4 pages).

THE BELIEFS OF UNBELIEVERS.

1/- per 100 (4 pages).

DOES MAN DESIRE GOD?

1/- per 100 (4 pages).

ARE CHRISTIANS INFERIOR TO FREETHINKERS?

1/- per 100 (4 pages).

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

MATERIALISM: HAS IT BEEN EXPLODED?

Verbatim Report of Debate between

Chapman Cohen and C. E. M. Joad.

One Shilling Net. 3 3 Postage ½d

Revised by both Disputants.

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