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Views and Opinions.

Religion and Politics.

A deserved rap on the knuckles is given to Mr. Lloyd George by the *Japan Chronicle* in connection with his recent address to the Wesleyan Methodists. And, perhaps, the stricture loses none of its force because it comes from a journal published so far away as Japan, and one which holds a very prominent position among English papers published in a foreign country. The writer of the leading article calls Mr. George's address a bid to the Nonconformists, and accuses him of talking nonsense. Both counts, I think, hold good, but there are others of a more serious nature. There is nothing new in politicians making bids for power by appealing to the passions or prejudices of parties, or even by making appeals to the narrower feelings where the case properly demands appeals to wider ones. And it is nothing new to find politicians talking nonsense. They would hardly occupy prominent positions in the political world did they not. For in politics, where votes are the main consideration, the appeal has to be made to the crowd, and it matters little whether the crowd be made up of the so-called educated classes or of admittedly uneducated persons. It is still a crowd, it is still prejudices that must be flattered and passions that must be gratified if votes are to be obtained. That is perhaps why so few men of first-rate ability take up with politics, or if they do why so few of them are very successful. So that, on the whole I do not think that Mr. Lloyd George is open to special censure because he makes a bid for the support of a party or talks nonsense. They all do it.

* * *

Methodism and Reform.

The *Japan Chronicle* is on firmer ground when it calls attention to the fact that the Wesleyan movement in England really involved retrogression in political affairs, and this although the Nonconformists are ostensibly on the side of reform. In my little book on *Christianity and Slavery* I have myself pointed out that many of the gravest evils of our industrial system were developed side by side with a rapid growth of

evangelical Christianity. Side by side with the development of the great Wesleyan movement went on the development of the English factory system which murdered children wholesale for the sake of making huge profits from their labour in factories, the employment of women below ground in mines, and all the reactionary legislation which succeeded in driving men from the fields into the towns, where they were met by transportation and long terms of imprisonment did they make the slightest effort to combine in order to effect a change for the better in the conditions under which they were employed. And it is surely not without significance that while the worst of these evils grew during the time that such forms of Dissent were rapidly growing among the people, the modifications of these evils have been going on side by side with an unmistakable decline of belief in either the truthfulness or the utility of the Christian religion. As the *Chronicle* remarks, the teaching here was that men should walk humbly in the path to which God had called them, and behave themselves reverently towards their betters. The reactionary character of English nonconformity was also helped by the peculiarly gloomy form it assumed which made pleasure anathema, and in other directions encouraged a frame of mind that was peculiarly suitable to those who were aiming at the exploitation of the people.

* * *

An Abuse of Power.

My own complaint against the Prime Minister's address to the Wesleyan Methodists is that it is a grave abuse of his position. Mr. Lloyd George, as an individual, is entitled to hold whatever religion he chooses, to attend whatever gatherings he pleases, and to sing whatever hymns suit his fancy. But Mr. Lloyd George as Prime Minister of England is in an entirely different position. He is not Prime Minister—he is not even in Parliament—as representative of the Nonconformists, or of any other religious sect. He is representing the whole of the people of this country, and he has not the slightest justification for using his position to advertise the assumed value of this or that religious sect. Let me take an example from another direction. Let us assume that Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, during his Parliamentary career, had by some accident become a member of the Cabinet, or even Prime Minister. Assume further that he paid frequent visits to a gathering of Freethinkers, with all the arranged paraphernalia of reporters and publicity, and had used these visits to advertise the value of Freethought. What would have been the result? We should have had an outcry from one end of the country to the other that Mr. Bradlaugh was using his position as the political chief of the State to advertise and advance the cause of Atheism. He would have been told, and properly told, that Mr. Bradlaugh the Atheist and Mr. Bradlaugh the Prime Minister were properly two distinct persons, and if he could not separate the two he was unfit to hold the position he did hold. Surely, the same principle holds good when the Prime Minister happens to be a Christian? The greatest

need of to-day, if we are ever to achieve genuine liberty of thought, is to get Christians to realize that in the modern State they are no more than a sect, and it is as great an impertinence for Christians to intrude their sectarian principles and appeals into the political arena as it would be for a company of Mormons to adopt the same policy.

* * *

Clericalism the Enemy.

There is no greater danger to social life than is indicated by the intrusion of the priest into politics. Protestants have always been ready enough to denounce the action of the Roman Catholic priest in this direction, and have pointed, with justice, to the backward conditions of those countries where the Roman priest exercises a political influence. But it is not well to restrict the meaning of the word "priest" too much. Properly it covers the whole of the "Black Army," from Nonconformist preacher to the priest of the Roman Church. Each one of them exerts the same evil influence on social life to the exact extent of his opportunities. Each of them treats national and humanitarian questions from the point of view of the interests of his own sect, and to each of them national welfare means, on the whole, sectarian advancement. The state of Ireland is here a striking case in point. The one constant cause of irritation in Ireland, the one factor that serves to keep the Irish people at loggerheads is their sectarian animosities. The question at issue is not so much the political opinions of each as it is the religious convictions of each. And, as one of our Irish readers recently pointed out, we are dealing here with a people who have been trained for generations under the dominating influence of either Catholic priest or Protestant minister. Those who think that Christian influences make for either sanity or humanity in politics would do well to bear this fact in mind. It is much the same, in principle, in this country. The Sunday question, the education question, the sex question, may be all used to illustrate the evil effects of the intrusion of religion into political life. In every case it is sectarian influence, or the prevalence of sectarian opinions that is being sought. And the more rapidly the disintegration of religious beliefs goes on, the more certainly we find the priest being driven to the political field in the endeavour to secure by other methods what he cannot hope to retain through intellectual conviction. It is a game that has been often enough played in this country, but it is one that would not be played with success if people were properly alive to its meaning. Unfortunately, with many so-called reformers the immediate gains of the moment, as represented by the ballot box, overshadow the importance of working steadily for the establishment of well-conceived principles. The churches are numerous, they are strong, they are well organized, and instead of seeing in this a danger to be fought against with all one's power, it is treated as something to be won over. But you cannot win over the Churches to genuine social reform. They are not in business to that end. Every Church in the world is unconsciously pledged to keep things as they are so long as is possible. Religion comes to us from the past, it is rooted in past frames of mind, in modes of thinking that belong to the history of uncivilized mankind. In this respect the Ethiopian does not change his skin, the leopard does not lose its spots. You cannot rationalize religion, you cannot reform the Churches. All you can do is to keep them out of the political arena until such time as religion is seen to be a subject, not for the practical politician, but for the anthropologist and for those curious in the study of the less civilized modes of thought.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

John Keats.

II.

HIS POETRY.

ACCORDING to Haydon Keats was addicted to rhyming from earliest childhood. He informs us that an old lady, who knew the Keats' family, "told George—when, in reply to her question what John was doing, he told her he had determined to become a poet—that this was very odd, because when he could just speak, instead of answering questions put to him, he would always make a rhyme to the last word people said, and then laugh." Haydon's anecdote may be true, but its truth is not confirmed by a single other anecdote of the kind. There is no evidence whatever that Keats evinced the least innate "propensity to the jingle of rhyme" during his school days at Enfield, although towards the end of that period he began to display profound devotion to literature in general and to poetry in particular. He was an ardent admirer of Spenser, and wrote much in imitation of him. Before the close of 1809 he had Englished the whole of Virgil's *Aeneid*; but his poetic career cannot be said to have commenced till the year 1816, just four years before his death. With this fact in mind, in conjunction with the other distressing fact that, during the whole of this time, he was suffering from the ravages of the terrible disease that killed him, the abiding marvel is that he succeeded in writing so much and so well. In September, 1817, while on a visit to Oxford, he had his first recorded illness, from which he never fully recovered; and about this time Coleridge met him, walking with Leigh Hunt in a Highgate lane, "a loose, slack, not well-dressed youth," and after shaking hands with him he said to Hunt, "There is death in that hand." And yet, despite the shortness of the productive period and the awful suffering that almost unbrokenly harrowed up his dwarfish body, the Oxford edition of his poetry is a volume of five hundred closely printed pages.

Originally, of course, the poems appeared in a great number of small volumes. The first volume, published in 1817, contained but few pieces of permanent value. Some of them are utterly worthless, merely childish rubbish and would have been dead long ago had it not been for the author's later productions. About the only exception is the sonnet entitled, *On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer*, which is full of promise. The longest of all Keats' poems is *Endymion*, which appeared in 1818, and which the *Quarterly Review* ruthlessly condemned *unread*. Having painfully waded his way through the first book, the reviewer said:—

We are no better acquainted with the meaning of the book through which we have so painfully toiled than we are with that of the three which we have not looked into.

Certainly no criticism could have been more contemptible and odious, or more openly unjust. Fortunately there were a few, even from the first, who realized Keats' unrivalled greatness at his age. Among these was Shelley, and their number grew until, as Swinburne says, "Keats, on high and recent authority, has been promoted to a place beside Shakespeare." The same critic declares that the *Ode to a Nightingale* is "one of the finest masterpieces of human work in all time for all ages." The poet tells the nightingale of his desire to "leave the world unseen,

And with thee fade away into the forest dim,"

and then continues thus:—

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget

What thou among the leaves hast never known,

The weariness, the fever, and the fret

Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,

Where youth grows pale, and spectre thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Swinburne pronounces *Lamia* "one of the most faultless as surely as one of the most glorious jewels in the crown of English poetry." *Lamia* was a beautiful maiden passionately loved by Lycius; but in reality she was a serpent in human guise and ultimately resumed her serpent form, whereupon her lover broke his heart and died.

He look'd and look'd again a level—No!
"A serpent!" echoed he; no sooner said,
Than with a frightful scream she vanished;
And Lycius' arms were empty of delight,
As were his limbs of life, from that same night.
On the high couch he lay!—his friends came round—
Supported him—no pulse, or breath they found,
And, in his marriage robe, the heavy body wound.

The Eve of St. Agnes is another acknowledged masterpiece, described as being "*par excellence* the poem of 'glamour,'" or, according to Swinburne, as standing out "among all other famous poems as a perfect and unsurpassable study in pure colour and clear melody." Take the first stanza as a fair sample of its beauty:—

St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold!
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold;
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seemed taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

The Eve of St. Mark is equally sweet and precious:—

The city streets were clean and fair
From wholesome drench of April rains;
And, on the western window panes,
The chilly sunset faintly told
Of unmat'ur'd green vallies cold,
Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,
Of rivers new, with spring-tide sedge,
Of primroses by shelter'd rills,
And daisies on the aguish hills.

Hyperion is an unfinished poem of exquisite beauty, representing the poet at his highest and best, but it is not a quotable masterpiece except in its entirety. His sonnets and odes are different, being largely lyrical. For example, the *Ode on a Grecian Urn* lends itself to useful quotations. Take the following lines:—

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone.
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair.

In the last stanza he sounds a purely Freethought note:—

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou silent form dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity; Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe,
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

That was all Keats himself knew and countless myriads do not know even that, but more is not knowable, simply because there is no more. Objects of belief, to which the Churches so tenaciously cling, do not count, whatever baseless consolation they may minister to those who hold them. Those who build their theory of life upon them are building upon the

sand, and nothing but calamity awaits them. Keats did not recognize them in any shape or form. Haydon, to whom he was introduced in November, 1816, says:

He had a tending to religion when I first knew him, but Leigh Hunt soon forced it from his mind. Never shall I forget Keats once rising from his chair and approaching my last picture, *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem*. He went before the portrait of Voltaire, placed his hand on his heart, and, bowing low,

In reverence done, as to the power
That dwelt within, whose presence had infused
Into the plant sciantial sap derived
From nectar, drink of Gods,

(as Milton says of Eve after she had eaten the apple), "That's the being to whom I bend," said he, alluding to the bending of the other figures in the picture, and contrasting Voltaire with our Saviour, and his own adoration with that of the crowd.

If it is true that Leigh Hunt converted Keats to Freethought he must have accomplished the task in a few weeks' time, for on Christmas Eve, 1816, the poet composed the following sonnet, prefacing it with the sentence: "Written in disgust of vulgar superstition":—

The church-bells toll a melancholy round,
Calling the people to some other prayers,
Some other gloominess, more dreadful cares,
More hearkening to the sermon's horrid sound.
Surely the mind of man is closely bound
In some black spell; seeing that each one tears
Himself from fireside joys, and Lydian airs,
And converse high of those with glory crown'd.
Still, still they toll, and I should feel a damp,
A chill as from a tomb, did I not know
That they are dying like an outburnt lamp;
That 'tis their sighing, wailing, ere they go
Into oblivion;—that fresh flowers will grow,
And many glories of immortal stamp.

Yes, like Shelley, Keats had no supernatural beliefs, but unlike Shelley, he never formally attacked supernaturalism except in the sonnet just cited. Unlike Shelley, he was a poet, pure and simple, with neither social nor economic interests to serve. As Stopford Brooke observes, "the present was entirely without interest to him; not so great (as Shelley), but possessing perhaps greater possibilities of greatness; not so ideal, but for that very reason more naturally at home with Nature." We are in complete agreement with Dr. Compton-Rickett also when he says that "Wordsworth's naturalism is blended here with an extraordinary delicacy of observation, which gives his scenic pictures a unique charm." J. T. LLOYD.

A Pioneer Pamphleteer.

The only true Orthodoxy is loyalty to Reason.

—Thomas Scott.

It is not a basketful of law papers, nor the hoofs and pistol butts of a regiment of horse than can change one tittle of a ploughman's thoughts. —R. L. Stevenson.

At a time when a handful of determined Secularists had started their modest task of converting the millions of the English-speaking world to Freethought, a kindly, handsome Englishman conceived the idea of devoting his life to broadening the minds of what has been called the "lupper suckles" of society, generally admitted to be the most prejudiced section of the nation. The leader of this most forlorn of forlorn hopes was Thomas Scott, of Mount Pleasant, Ramsgate. He had charm, he had that chivalry for principle which represents the highest manhood, and he did his work joyously. His memory is kept green for what he was; his memory is treasured for what he did; and the record of his life's work lifts the mind like the sound of martial music.

A great traveller, Thomas Scott had led a most adventurous career. Born in 1808, he was, in his

youth, one of the royal pages to King Charles X of France. In manhood he journeyed in all parts of the earth. Well educated, he knew the world of books, and he also knew the book of the world. In the later years of his life he devoted his leisure, money, and abilities to the furtherance of Freethought, and proved himself a prince among propagandists. During the years 1862 to 1877 he issued from his pleasant seaside home a very large number of pamphlets, printed and distributed at his own expense, the total collection making twenty stout volumes. The writers he gathered about him were men and women of outstanding ability, and among them were Moncure Conway, John Addington Symonds, Sir R. D. Hanson, Judge Strange, Dr. Zerffi, Bishop Hinds, and Sir George W. Cox. Young Mrs. Annie Besant wrote an *Essay on the Deity of Jesus of Nazareth*, "by the wife of a beneficed clergyman." This particular pamphlet had far-reaching results. It led to the Rev. Mr. Besant insisting on his wife taking the communion, or leaving. Brave woman that she was, she chose the better course. Afterwards she wrote more tracts for Mr. Scott, since incorporated in *My Path to Atheism*, a book of historic value.

It is difficult to imagine now the flutter caused in sheltered homes and country vicarages by Thomas Scott's paper pellets. In the "stormy seventies" of the last century, Freethought views had an air of novelty, and the clergy had not then realized that discretion was the better part of valour in their particular case. For Scott levelled his guns at the clergy, and bombarded them through the post with pamphlets and tracts. One of them was entitled *Two Hundred and Thirteen Questions*, to which answers were very respectfully asked, and each query was quietly calculated to turn a clergyman's hair white, and curl it afterwards.

The most ambitious work Scott issued was the *English Life of Jesus*, which was designed to do for British readers what Renan had done for France, and Strauss for Germany. It was, indeed, a thunderous weapon of revolt, and was written in conjunction with Sir George Cox, who brought much scholarship to the task. Cox, being a Bishop of the Established Church, was debarred from putting his name to the volume.

In laying down his life-work, Thomas Scott said finely: "The only true Orthodoxy is loyalty to Reason." He died at Norwood in 1878, and he deserves a niche in the Freethought Pantheon because in his day he did valiant work for human emancipation.

MIMNERMUS.

Early English Freethought.

III.

(Continued from page 518.)

THE Oxford Reformers, who at the close of the fifteenth century imported the New Learning into England, were the first who made scholarly free inquiry possible. Erasmus, the incarnation of Humanism, the apostle of common sense, and the most cultivated scholar in his age, wrote his *Praise of Folly* in England, and by his teaching at Cambridge, and his communion with such men as John Colet, the founder of St. Paul's Schools, and Sir Thomas More, did much to break down mediæval Christianity. The young King Henry VIII was little disposed to favour ecclesiastical pretensions. In 1513 benefit of clergy was taken away—a prelude to the subsequent claim of the king to be supreme Head of the Church, and to the dissolution of the monasteries. More, in his youthful *Utopia*, had the boldness to leave the ascetic ideals of old, and outline an ideal common-

wealth where every child should be properly educated, and where "it should be lawful for every man to favour and follow what religion he would." Alas! he departed from this ideal when he saw the results of the Reformation in the Peasants' War and the vagaries of the Anabaptists.

William Tyndale, whom Sir Thomas More calls "a blasphemous fool," did much by the publication of his translation of the Bible to fan the smouldering embers of Lollardry into a flame. Although his theology was of the darkest Augustinian character, his view of the sacramental dogmas was essentially broad English Puritan. "As good," he wrote, "is the prayer of a cobbler as of a cardinal, and of a butcher as of a bishop; and the blessing of a baker that knoweth the truth is as good as the blessing of our most holy father the pope."

The same spirit, yet more vigorous and broadly humanitarian, appears in *Supplicacyon for the Beggars*, by Simon Fish. The clergy, he complains, possess half the realm, and do nothing for the commonwealth but advance profligacy of all kinds. "Tye these holy idell theues [thieves] to the cartes to be whipped naked about every market towne til they will fall to labour." Fish prudently kept abroad till assured of the king's protection. Less fortunate was James Bainham, a barrister, who drew suspicion on himself by marrying the widow of Fish, who died in 1530. Soon after his marriage he was challenged to give an account of his faith. He was charged with denying transubstantiation, and with questioning the value of the confessional and "the power of the keys." It was further asserted that he had said he would as lief pray to Joan, his wife, as to our lady, and that he affirmed and believed that Christ was but a man. This he denied. He, however, admitted holding the horrible heresy that "if a Turk, a Jew, or a Saracen do but trust in God and keep his law, he is a good Christian man." He was imprisoned and racked in the Tower by order of Sir Thomas More. Enfeebled by suffering, he abjured, but, recovering courage, took up his cross and was burnt as a relapsed heretic in 1552.

That with the spread of the Reformation appeared a spirit of Rationalism is evident from the speech of a member of Parliament in 1550 (given in the appendix to T. W. Rhys Davids' Hibbert Lecture). Thomas Cromwell, a statesman who did services for England second only to those of his mighty namesake Oliver, was a latitudinarian of the broadest kind.

The dissolution of those haunts of idleness and vice, the monasteries, the dispersal of the ill-gotten opulence of the clergy,¹ and the reduction of the spiritual aristocracy to that subordinate position in the Legislature with which they have ever since had to be content, marked the overthrow of mediæval Christianity, with but little extension of the principles of toleration. By the Act 25 Henry VIII (1534) execution of ecclesiastical sentences for heresy could not take place without the king's warrant being first obtained. Availing themselves of the supposed liberty, a number of the ferociously persecuted Anabaptists of Holland sought refuge in England. The primitive Christianity, however, was of an anti-trinitarian and communistic cast. Stow informs us that on November 24, 1538, four Anabaptists—three men and one woman—all bare faggots at St. Paul's Cross; and that on the 29th a man and a woman, Dutch Anabaptists, were "brent" in Smithfield. Three more were burnt near Newington in the following year. No fewer than twenty-six Anabaptists were burnt during this reign; but whether

¹ The great mistake was in permitting the funds of the monasteries to pass into the hands of the nobles instead of retaining them for schools. Wolsey, who with all his faults was a lover of culture, had begun to appropriate the endowments of some of the smaller houses to the encouragement of learning.

for denying infant baptism, for impugning the Trinity, or simply on account of the odium arising from the affair at Munster, is uncertain. Be this as it may, their opinions were deemed so obnoxious that they were excepted from an Act of grace passed in the year 1538.

Henry maintained the laws against heresy with equal vigour both before and after his quarrel with God's vicar. After the Six Articles—the whip with six strings, as it was called—were promulgated, there might be seen the spectacle of Lutheran deniers of the king's supremacy dragged together for execution, with the nice distinction that Protestants were to be burnt and Catholics hung. For Henry remained a Catholic. As a writer of the period expressed it, the king "had cast the devil out of this realm, yet both he and we sup of the broth in which the devil was sodden."

The English Reformers, to a large extent, lost sight of the New Learning. They replaced the pope with the Bible. The change from Catholicism to Protestantism was but the shifting from one rigid scholastic creed to others equally rigid. Persecution had by no means made the persecuted tolerant. The notion that all the nation must be of one creed long prevailed. After the publication of the Act of Uniformity (1549) an incredible number of Anabaptists suffered death under Cranmer's Commission. In the previous year John Assheton, a priest, had been forced to recant for denying the Trinity and the Divinity and Atonement of Christ. John Champneys, another priest, also recanted similar offences joined to Antinomianism. Amongst the martyrs of this period must be noted Joan Boacher, who denies that Christ took flesh from his mother. When sentence is pronounced she tells her judges: "It is not long since you burned Anne Askew for a piece of bread, and now, forsooth, you will burn me for a piece of flesh." Young King Edward signs her death warrant with tears in his eyes, placing the responsibility on Cranmer. George van Parris, a Dutch surgeon and member of the Stranger Church, denies that Christ is God, and, refusing to recant, is burnt to death April 7, 1551.

The reaction and persecution under Mary only served to enlighten Englishmen to the true nature of Catholic rule. Cardinal Pole expressed its spirit in the declaration, "There is no kind of men so pernicious to the commonwealth as these heretics be; there are no thieves, no murderers, no adulterers, nor no kind of treason to be compared to them, who, as it were, undermining the chief foundations of all commonwealths, which is religion, maketh an entry to all kinds of vices in the most heinous manner." One of the first measures introduced was the banishment of all foreigners, in consequence of which such inquiring spirits as Bernard Ochinus and John a Lasco had to quit the country. No doubt amongst the two hundred and seventy-seven put to death in Mary's short reign some exhibited advanced forms of heresy. We know, for instance, that Patrick Patingham was burnt at Uxbridge on a charge of Arianism. Amongst heretics who escaped may be mentioned Christopher Viret, an antitrinitarian.

How devoted the clergy of the time were to their livings may be judged by the fact that at the accession of Elizabeth only one hundred and seventy-seven resigned out of a total of nearly ten thousand. Soon after that event Henry Niclas, of Amsterdam, came to England. Niclas, who believed himself to have a mission from God, was founder of a sect called the Family of Love. The Familists sprang from the Anabaptists, and shared in many of their views. They, however, had no sacraments. Their only baptism and communion was a baptism and communion of the spirit. Their doctrines were so spiritualized that it is supposed they denied the historical statements of the New Testament. They admitted no Trinity. The

crucifixion of Christ was crucifying "the old man"; the resurrection, our rising to newness of life. Angels and devils were good and bad men with their virtues and vices. The seven devils which possessed Mary Magdalene were the seven deadly sins. Heaven and hell are in this world. The Familists are interesting by their abandonment of the religion of the letter, and as the progenitors of the Quakers, Seekers, and Mystics. The works of Niclas were translated from Dutch into English, but were burned by the common hangman, and are very scarce.

At this time poor crazy Robert Browne, the father of the Congregationalists, was preaching against the appointment of ministers by bishops. He boasted that "he had been committed to thirty-two prisons, and in some of them he could not see his hand at noonday." Browne denied that it belonged to magistrates "to compell religion, to plant churches by power, and to force submission to ecclesiasticall government by lawes and penalties." His protest was taken up by Barrowe, Penry, Copping, Thacker, Greenwood, and Dennis, all of whom were executed for heresy under Elizabeth, as well as various Anabaptists.

(The late) J. M. WHEELER.

(To be Concluded.)

A Visit to the Manse.

METICULOUS readers of the *Freethinker*, with a memory, will recognize this as a sequel to a recent note from Scotland, and only the rabid Freethinker will find fault with me for finding the parson, as humans go, all but faultless, a broad-minded, well informed, agreeable companion and perfect host; one who was good enough to compliment the *Freethinker* on the excellence of its get up, the skill of its editor, and the cleverness of its contributors, which, even as hospitable dissimulation, was a credit to my reverend and quite delightful host, and on the question of which sincerity I freely gave him the benefit of the doubt; for he had said in his note of invitation—"surely we can disagree without being disagreeable." There was no suspicion whatever of "the cultured tyranny of the black coat," no superior "spiritual" contempt for secular things. Here was this son of Welsh, working-class parents, who by almost providential ways and means had been enabled to get himself a college training; who as a boy had been fuller than the average of sport and mischief, yet whose example had its effect in restraining the "language," etc., of his chums in the college teams; who in his teens was suddenly inspired with a zeal for the foreign mission field, which, owing to health reasons, was reluctantly relinquished for home work, which led him ultimately into the Church of Scotland where he remains at present. One could easily and sympathetically imagine how that youthful burning zeal of his would survive the years of reason and experience, how the boy would dominate the man. Nor yet is human nature, and the "spiritual" urge, the simple thing so many good folk imagine it to be. My host, I had noticed, long before I knew him intimately, with his pale, delicate, but strong face, had "ecclesiastic" written in every feature, while a kind of sad and modest superiority seemed to mark him out from the more frivolous and perfunctory parson. The closer view on the night of my visit showed the same sad sweet strength of purpose, while faint lines about the lips, like the permanent traces of care or grief—he had but lately lost a dear and clever wife—further endeared to me my gentle host. He was a very busy man, with innumerable calls upon his time and energy, writing on an average about forty letters a week, and yet giving up a whole evening to his visitor. We

differed, but there was no dubiety between us, no misunderstanding; he knew, that I knew, that he knew, etc., and we shook hands heartily across the psychological gulf, and even met at times on either side. "I trust Mr. R.," I said to begin with, "you do not think I am *insisting* upon an interview?" "Not at all," he said instantly. "Not at all, I have been interested in you, in print, for a long time, and felt sure, I would meet you some day." "You are," he said—oh, the cunning and charming flatterer!—"above all things a poet; you have a really wonderful gift of expression." This was so pleasing and so evident, *to me*, that I could not but accept it at its face value, and we were soon deeper still in confidences, sympathies, and compliments. Underneath the uniform of parson or policeman, of any, or of no disguise, there always you will find the man, and how often the surprisingly admirable man. And yet I was not deceived, as neither was my friend; we seemed to understand each other thoroughly and wholesomely. A gentle lady brought in the tea, and my friend plied me with cup and cake and ingredients all with the most deferential and assiduous attention. He told me the interesting story of how he acquired the fine set of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* in a case at his elbow; we even hunted up in it some fugitive words; one "parlotage" used in my last article, eluded us—parlotage, whatever it may be, that "always degrades"—in Parliament, I suppose. Anticipating some of my questions, he told me he believed the Church of Scotland taught the broadest doctrine of any, and I agreed with him. He did not believe in the "pure" soul leaving the corrupt body at death. As the tree falls, he said, so it must lie—or arise, and I thought that was very fine. He was not so much opposed to Sunday music, as to bad music on any day. "You know," he said, "I am Welsh, and know music when I hear it." As to "free books" in the schools—any necessitous child could have books free at any time, application being made to the proper quarter. As it was, the community was burdened with rates for supplying books to children and parents well able to pay for them. He was most certainly not averse to every child having access to every means of education—his lip curling with fine scorn at the suggestion that people might think he was against the spread of education. But after all, I was not there to sit in judgment on my magnanimous host, and our talk was mostly about literature, philosophy, and life. His manse, or mansion, sits in a wooded space in the centre of the town. A broad drive leads from the street gate, over an ornamental railway bridge, to the substantial building, the walls of which are three feet thick, and were built in 1740. There is a fine old staircase, and the study is a large oval, well lit, and well stocked with books, the well-thumbed ones apparently of an ultra-devotional type, of no sense or interest to me, but doubtless yielding their possessor all the spiritual guidance or consolation his nature and his calling require. "No, no," he said to me in a letter, "I shall remain in my present sphere, and spend and be spent, also in the Cause of Humanity." At the door my host reminded me that I had promised him a copy of the *Freethinker*, a promise which I immediately made good, and considered this last touch the greatest of all! I came away so pleased with myself and him, I could have leapt over the moon—only it was not visible—only a few stars in the wintry sky above the writhing trees, the rustle of the herbage under them, where the snowdrops will presently appear, followed by all the procession of the flowers. Were the Christian Manse a Pagan temple, or a Buddhist shrine, those flowers of human faith and hope would bloom as fair, and the fellowship of human hearts, and the goodness thereof, would have their happy impulse still!

A. MILLAR.

The Muses' Wreath.

"PIS-ALLER."

"Man is blind because of sin,
Revelation makes him sure;
Without that, who looks within,
Looks in vain, for all's obscure."
Nay, look closer into man!
Tell me, can you find indeed
Nothing sure, no moral plan
Clear prescribed, without your creed?

"No, I nothing can perceive!
Without that, all's dark for men.
That, or nothing, I believe."—
For God's sake, believe it, then!
—Matthew Arnold.

MIMNERMUS IN CHURCH.

You promise heavens free from strife,
Pure truth, and perfect change of will;
But sweet, sweet is this human life,
So sweet I fain would breathe it still;
Your chilly stars I can forgo,
This warm kind world is all I know.

You say there is no substance here,
One great reality above;
Back from that void I shrink in fear,
And child-like hide myself in love;
Show me what angels feel. 'Till then,
I cling, a mere weak man, to men.

You bid me lift my mean desires
From faltering lips and fitful veins
To sexless souls, ideal quires,
Unwearied voices, wordless strains;
My mind with fonder welcome owns
One dear, dear friend's remembered tones.

Forsooth the present we must give
To that which cannot pass away;
All beauteous things by which we live
By laws of time and space decay.
But oh, the very reason why
I clasp them, is because they die.
—William Cory.

TWO LOVERS.

Poor human hearts, that yearn beyond the tomb,
Wherein you all must moulder into dust!
What has the blank immitigable gloom
Of light or fervour to reward your trust?

Live out your whole free life while yet on earth;
Seize the quick Present, prize your one sure boon;
Though brief, each day a golden sun has birth;
Though dim, the night is gemmed with stars and moon.

Love out your cordial love, hate out your hate;
Be strong to grasp a foe, to clasp a friend;
Your wants true laws are; thirst and hunger sate;
Feel you have been yourselves when comes the end.

Let the great gods, if they indeed exist,
Fight out their fight themselves; for they are strong;
How can we puny mortals e'er assist?
How judge the supra-mortal right or wrong?

But if we made these gods, with all their strife,
And not they us; what frenzy equals this;
To starve, maim, poison, strangle our poor life,
For empty shadows of death's dark abyss?

—James Thomson.

Prayers for Various Occasions.

Compiled with due regard to the candour which should be observed in addressing One to whom all hearts are known.

A PRAYER FOR OUR LATE ENEMIES.

ALMIGHTY God, our Heavenly Father, we approach Thy throne with thanksgiving and enter Thy courts with praise. When our enemies beset us sore, Thou didst support our arms and lead us to victory. We confess with shame and contrition that we did not wholly put our trust in Thee. When we were afraid of the Zeppelin that flieth by night; when the U-boat that hideth in deep waters made our hearts to melt within us; when the poison-bombs of the enemy made us aghast—no pun is intended, O Lord—then we sought out many inventions and put our trust in the vain devices of men. Yet Thy mercy endureth unto the end, and we have the utmost confidence that it will be equally potent on the next occasion, especially as we intend to have bigger and better poison bombs, and so forth, than any competitor.

We confess, O Lord, that the cup of Thy loving-kindness runneth over with blessings beyond our deserts. Thou knowest that we sought no territory, yet Thou hast added unto us great and expensive possessions beyond the seas. Thou knowest that we fought with no selfish motive, but only in defence of our weaker neighbours, yet hast Thou given us much riches. Thou hast established the pound sterling on the up-grade, while the mark of our enemies is in the dust.

And that's just the point.

O Almighty Father, don't You think You're carrying it a bit too far? After all, we did a nice trade with the Germans before the war, and they always paid on the nail, we'll say that for them. But with marks at ten a penny, the trade situation looks black. It does indeed, O Lord, to say nothing of reparations.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, save the mark! Thou dost not always chide, and Thine anger endureth not forever, even against the Huns. Thou Who hast taught us to forgive our enemies even unto seventy times seven wilt, we feel confident, see the expediency of stabilising the mark at 490 or thereabouts. Are not four sparrows sold for a farthing, and yet not one of them falleth to the ground without Thee. Let the mark, we beseech Thee, be of more value than many sparrows. (For convenience of calculation we may mention that four to the farthing is 3.840 to the pound.) Tho Who numberest the very hairs of our heads, number also those marks, and don't let them fall to the ground either with Thee or without Thee. With Thee, Lord, all things are possible—at least it says so in the Book. Anyhow, it's quite beyond us. We've got to the end of our tether, and that's a fact. Presumably Thou, if Thou wouldst, couldst save the krone and the rouble; but really when we consider the point we confess our faith is weak. Lord, strengthen Thou our faith! Give us something to go on. Save the mark, O Lord, before it gets to such a desperate pass! And to Thee we will ascribe all the honour and glory, and subscribe some of the sponduliks to the Poor Clergy Sustentation Fund.—AMEN.

P.S.—Wouldst Thou incline Thine ear more readily if we made all church and chapel subscriptions payable in marks?

F. N.

I reverence thee! Wherefore?
Hast lightened the woes
Of the heavily laden?
Hast thou dried the tears
Of the troubled in spirit?
Who fashioned me man?
Was it not almighty Time—
And Fate eternal,
Thy lords and mine?
Here I sit and shape
Man in my image;
A race like myself,
That will suffer and weep,
Will rejoice and enjoy,
And scorn thee,
As I!

Goethe, "Prometheus" (fragment).

Acid Drops.

The religious Press continues to devote considerable space to the question of Sunday games. The *Guardian* (August 11) reproduces from a parish magazine a long letter of the Bishop of Chelmsford, which is worth reading as a faithful expression of the sacerdotal mind. He pleads for Sunday as a "holy" day. It is no answer to this plea to say that men employed on Sunday will be granted another day instead. Sunday must be observed collectively, that men may have an opportunity of worshipping together. The religious organs, with scarcely an exception, declare that there was no general public demand for Sunday games. Read in conjunction with the widespread clerical denunciations of the well-to-do Sabbath-breakers, who have their own golf links and tennis courts, this "argument" is a real gem. The "lower" classes are made of different clay, they have no right to desire the same amusements and recreations either on Sunday or any other day.

The *Church Times* frankly admits that, as far as Sunday labour is concerned, in London the church services are the chief cause of it. If it is wrong to use a 'bus or a car to go to a playground on Sunday, it is wrong to use one to go to a place of worship. There is a widespread suspicion that there may be some truth in this contention.

The late Mr. Nicholas Jackson, of Southport, who left £105,000, bequeathed his residuary estate, valued at £60,000, to the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool and his successors. These legacies are not a convincing proof of the truth of Christianity, but they indicate clearly enough the eagerness of some men to save their souls. Whether such souls are worth saving is another matter. Certainly the Church thinks they are.

Six American clergymen, including a bishop, flew to Paris from Croydon to attend the International Ecclesiastical Congress. Probably they were all "D.D.'s." None of them disappeared in a cloud, like the founder of their religion. But he was not a "D.D."

Floods are reported from various parts of China. In the typhoon which swept Swatow, on the South China Sea, ten thousand lives were lost. "My kindness shall not depart from thee." This evidently does not apply to the Chinese. To whom does it apply?

Mr. Paget Wilkes, B.A., of the Japan Evangelistic Band, speaking at a recent meeting, "laid emphasis upon the terrible impoverishment which comes through unbelief." The "impoverishment," we presume, is spiritual. For a long time this vein supplied the apologist with a theme for the enrichment of the flock's mental and moral equipment; but we thought it had been worked out. More than once the world has had fairly concrete evidence of the rich spiritual harvest that crowns the years of faith. Perhaps Mr. Paget Wilkes, B.A., thinks this was a long time ago. But we commend to his notice the following estimate of "the civilized world to-day," by Mr. George Lansbury: "It is as if Lucifer himself had once more been let loose on the earth to bring disaster and ruin to all God's people." (*Daily Herald*, August 10.) It is not easy to say who God's people are nowadays. It never was. Lucifer always usurped a large part of God's functions, and that has made him a productive asset to the deity's mundane representatives.

The *Record* (August 10) is highly indignant with Dean Inge for declaring that the war showed that all the nations of Europe were mad together. He should have excepted England. We were on God's side, Germany was

on Satan's. This was not true of the Germany that conquered Austria and France. It is interesting to turn back to English eulogies of the God-fearing Germany of those days. The Right Hon. H. A. Bruce, speaking in the House of Commons (July 10, 1867) on the second reading of the Education of the Poor Bill, said:—

Nothing has struck me more forcibly, in reading the accounts of the late war between Prussia and Austria, than the statements showing the deep religious convictions with which the Prussian soldiers were animated..... I wish to God that I could believe that the English people were, on the average, as religious and as moral as the population of Prussia.

With this should be compared Carlyle's pæan of appreciation of the same Prussia's moral and religious elevation in the world of 1871. In our journey to "God's side" we English have a "lovely carriage all to ourselves."

We see it reported in the newspapers that Mr. G. K. Chesterton has joined the Roman Catholic Church. We are not surprised. His has always struck us as the type of intellect with enough strength to see the utter weakness of current religion, but not enough strength to face the logical issue, which is Atheism.

A boy at Chester, climbing into a stonemason's yard, was crushed beneath a cross that fell over. We are very sorry for the boy and glad to learn that the crushed leg is progressing satisfactorily. But he is not the only one who has been crushed beneath the weight of the cross. Millions have been crushed beneath its weight for centuries.

The Rev. A. Millar, of the U. F. Manse, Buckie, who died on April 2, left behind him a personal estate valued at £66,229 12s. 3d. Of this over £13,000 was invested in war loan.

The Vice-Convenor of the United Free Church of Scotland complains that the contributions of the faithful are not large enough. He says that if people wish to cut down expenses they should cut down what they spend on pleasures and amusements, and not diminish their givings to the Church. We note that the Vice-Convenor does not include what the Church has to give the people under the head of either amusement or pleasure. He must be a realization of the Scottish minister who thanked God that there had never been a pleasant Sunday afternoon in his church.

At Guckyer, a village about three miles from Winebah, Gold Coast, lightning recently destroyed the just completed Wesleyan Church. The natives now will be asking the value of a God who cannot protect his own churches from his own lightning. Presently these same natives will learn that Christians place far more reliance upon lightning conductors than upon the providential action of deity.

The *Paris Matin* has for the last six months a standing offer of £1,000 pounds for any Spiritualistic medium who could furnish proof of levitation. Up to the present the prize has not been won. The same offer has also been made for real evidence of the phenomena of ectoplasm—an efflorescence from the human body. That also remains unclaimed. It is surprising how shy these mediums are where the conditions are such as tend to ensure the absence of either fraud or illusion.

Christianity was well on top in the old Austrian Empire, as it was in pre-war Germany. In Austria all the Catholic children in the schools said the appointed prayers, and while the Jewish and Protestant children were not compelled to say them they were forced to stand up and listen. The pupils were also obliged to attend church service and confession. This practice is now to be abolished, although the clericals and the Christian

Socialists are protesting very vigorously against the change. The new rules stipulate that the attendance shall now be voluntary.

But this does not mean that there is to be complete religious freedom, or even the measure of religious freedom which we have in this country. There is still retained the compulsory element. Thus, every parent is compelled to see that his children receive instruction in the Church to which he belongs. And in the case of avowed Freethinkers their children are compelled to attend instruction in the religion of the father before his "conversion." That is as near as the governing powers can be brought to the principle of religious equality. The position illustrates the difficulty there is in naturalizing the principle of liberty in religious soil, and that compulsion finds its most attractive home in religious circles.

What daredevils there are in the world! An American paper just to hand contains reports of interviews with a number of preachers as to their beliefs about the Bible. Some of these do not believe there ever was a whale that swallowed Jonah, and another does not believe in the literal truth of the story of the Garden of Eden. We have similar daring thinkers in this country. We have had Canon Barnes who rejected the Adam and Eve story, and others who did not accept the bodily resurrection of Jesus or the story of the Virgin Birth. All these things help to redeem the character of the Christian Church for intellectual activity, and to prove that when it comes to daring speculations the Christian clergy are second to none.

Quite seriously though, these interviews contain a very serious reflection upon the character of our culture or our intelligence. One wonders what would be the reflections of an educated visitor from another planet if he were asked to express an opinion on the matter. The fact that people can discuss these matters as seriously as though they were arguing the rival merits of two scientific theories is in itself enough. It is like children discussing together whether there is a two-headed bogey or a good fairy in an upstairs cupboard. And it is a proof of how little we have yet done to kill the savage in mankind. The savage is still enthroned in every church and chapel in Christendom, for it is only when it is clearly seen that however refined the language and elaborate the ceremonial there is no substantial difference between the medicine man in the primitive forest and the preacher in the modern pulpit, it is only then that we regard ourselves as really freed from the control of superstition. The perpetuation of these stupid tales as probable historic facts, and the solemn manner in which they are discussed is enough to make one despair of the sanity of mankind.

We Freethinkers like to see what Christians regard as a capital joke at our expense. As we hope never to be protected by any form of blasphemy laws, we reproduce, without conscious loss of self-possession, the following paragraph from the *Lancaster Guardian*:—

In a Lancashire village, the village Freethinker had died, to his last breath proclaiming his invincible disbelief in the immortality of the soul. "When I die," he had stubbornly said, "I'm finished. There ain't no Heaven an' there ain't no other place. I know." Still, the man was not unpopular, and the wreaths were numerous and costly. An old friend came to see Bill in his coffin, arrayed in a costly shroud and surrounded by heaps of beautiful and fragrant flowers. "There he lies," said the friend. "There he lies, poor old Bill! All dressed up an' nowhere to go!"

We gather from the reported interviews that those that "pass out" are usually draped in some sort of garb. This should be a warning, not only to sceptics but to believers. If some of the other-siders ever appear in the vestments in which they took their last leave, their surviving friends will probably regard the "other side" as a more dismal place than even this "vale of tears." The temptation to stay here will be stronger than ever.

To Correspondents.

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

H. IRVING.—Sorry to hear of Mr. Addy's death. The newspaper notice is the first intimation we have had. Sorry for the omission you point out. One of the older ones might have recollected it. The historical side of our movement needs attention.

T. F. MOSLEY.—Thanks for reference. But we do not care to publish our late editor's opinion of the person in question unless it is specially called for. It would look too much like a gratuitous attack. But G. W. Foote had a fine and telling way of summing up men.

C. BAKER.—We should welcome a series of articles expository of the new psychology and its application to everyday life. But we have too many things on hand at the moment to do it ourselves, although we have for long had the notion to write a general introduction to the subject. When we have time we may attempt it, but the quantity of work increases and time cannot be stretched.

J. STAUNTON.—Thanks. We had not seen the paragraph. Will attend to it fully in next issue.

NEW READER (Liverpool).—Thanks for cuttings. They are always acceptable.

F. E. BOYCE.—We are not aware that the Freethinker has been interfered with in Dublin except so far as the boycott is in operation. But if there is any trouble in your getting the paper we shall be pleased to send it you by post on hearing from you.

INDEPENDENT.—We received the pamphlet *The Harmony of the Four Gospels*, but saw nothing in it which called for special comment.

J. MACPHERSON.—We are sending on posters to your news-agent for display. Thanks for what you have done. We are not in the least disheartened. It is folly to expect to convert the world in a day, and those who take up with Freethought work must be prepared for an uphill fight.

G. W. MEARNS.—The address of the secretary of the North London Branch N.S.S. is Miss A. M. Robertson, 24, Parliament Hill, N.W.3. That is the nearest branch to you.

H. O. BOGER.—We do not deny to Christians either mother wit or common sense. Nor do we question that the interpretation given by many Christians departs very considerably from what Christianity originally meant. But these things do not alter the fact that Christianity as a religion is founded upon the absurdities which we have described. Your repudiation of them strikes us as only evidence of the influence that better informed thought has had upon primitive superstitions.

E. A. PHIPSON.—Next week.

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

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

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

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

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

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

All Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to "The Pioneer Press" and crossed "London, City and Midland Bank, Clerkenwell Branch."

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Cohen had two good meetings at Failsworth on Sunday last. There were many friends present from Manchester and other neighbouring localities, and the Failsworth friends were evidently pleased with the day's work. The choir and the band played their usual acceptable parts in the day's proceedings, and we learned that the society is about extending the size of its building. Prior to the evening lecture Mr. Cohen "named" the infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hayes. An interesting feature of this ceremony was the fact that the little creature represented the fourth generation of Freethinkers, her great-grandfather being one of the original promoters of the school. We trust that she will continue the line.

Readers in the neighbourhood of Upper Tooting Road will please note that the *Freethinker* with all the other publications of the Pioneer Press may be obtained from Messrs. H. & W. Irwin, Upper Tooting Road. We hope that the fact will be noted, and although we dislike anything in the nature of a boycott it is as well that Freethinkers should do what they can to encourage those who make it a point of stocking our publications.

We venture to once again ask for the help of our friends in making this paper as widely known as is possible during the holiday season. Moving about the country gives everyone a chance of leaving a copy here and there, and of introducing the paper in other ways. Unfortunately we lack the means for advertising in any other way than this, but personal aid is very effective if only those interested will put their backs into it. To those who care to undertake the distribution of specimen copies parcels will gladly be sent if they will be good enough to write us.

Mr. George Whitehead had two good meetings in Finsbury Park last Sunday. On Thursday and Friday (August 17 and 18), at 7.30, he will speak in the Broadway, Hammersmith; on Sunday, August 20, he will be at Peckham Rye at 11.15 and 7, when Mr. A. B. Moss will take the chair. On Monday, August 21, he will be at the Triangle, Rye Lane, Peckham, at 7.45, and will continue the meetings here till Friday, August 25, inclusive.

The meetings on Sundays in Regent's Park will begin at 6 p.m. instead of 6.30 for the rest of the summer, owing to the earlier hours at which the park is closed to the public. North London Freethinkers and inquiring Christians are asked to note this alteration.

The Newcastle Branch propose to continue their Sunday evening lectures on the Town Moor while the fine weather lasts, but to-day (August 20) they are having an outing at Milkwell Burn near Chopwell. Members bring their own refreshments and tea will be arranged for at a nominal charge. They meet at 1.50 p.m. at the Central Station whence the return fare will be 1s. 9d. Mr. Atkinson of Greenside will speak again on the Moor next Sunday at 6.45 p.m.

A meeting of the members of the Plymouth Branch of the N.S.S. will be held on Tuesday, August 22, at 7.30 in the Plymouth Chambers. It is hoped that all will make an effort to be present.

Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss'd
Of the Two Worlds so wisely—they are thrust
Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn
Are scatter'd, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument

About it and about : but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

—Omar Khayyám (Fitzgerald's).

The Souls of Animals.

That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man has no pre-eminence above a beast. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

—Ecclesiastes iii, 19-20.

ALTHOUGH Christians and Spiritualists alike claim that man possesses an immortal element within him which will endure when the body has ceased to function and has become dust, and mingled with its kindred elements, very few of them believe that animals are endowed with a similar element and will live again after their bodies have decayed. And yet many animals possess brains and intelligence to a remarkable degree, and if the soul is associated with the brain, these manifestations afford as much ground for argument in favour of immortality of animals as for man. Anthropoid apes are remarkably intelligent, such, for example, as the Chimpanzee, the Ourang Outang and the Gorilla; yet I have never heard either a Christian or a Spiritualist claim that such creatures will live again in some heavenly abode specially prepared for them. But I have known some Christians who have thought it highly probable that domesticated dogs and cats will live again, though they have denied that the chimpanzee which is, in many respects, more intelligent than either dogs or cats, can possibly possess an immortal element that will entitle it to be provided and catered for in a heavenly abode of bliss after its brief sojourn on this earth. And yet the difference between the intelligence of the highest ape and the lowest man is only one of degree. On this question Darwin has something to say that is worthy of serious attention. He says in his *Descent of Man* (p. 147):—

A difference of degree, however great, does not justify us in placing man in a different kingdom, as will be best illustrated by comparing the mental powers of two insects, namely a coccus and an ant, which undoubtedly belong to the same class. The difference is here greater than, though of a somewhat different kind from, that between man and the highest mammal. The female coccus, whilst young attaches itself by its proboscis to a plant and sucks the sap, but never moves again, is fertilized and lays eggs, and this is its whole history. On the other hand to describe the habits and mental powers of the worker ant would require a whole volume. I may, however, specify a few points. Ants certainly communicate information to each other, and several unite for the same work or games of play. They recognize their fellow ants after months of absence and feel sympathy for each other. They build great edifices, keep them clean, close the doors in the evening and post sentries. They make roads as well as tunnels under rivers, and temporary bridges over them by clinging together. They collect food for the community, and when an object too large for entrance is brought to the nest they enlarge the door and afterwards build it up again. They store up seeds, of which they prevent the germination, and which, if damp, are brought up to the surface to dry. They keep aphides and other insects as milch cows, etc.

But let us consider further the question of the difference of degree in the intelligence of the highest of man compared with the lowest and the highest of the lower animals. There is, as I have shown in a previous article, a considerable falling off in brain-weight and intellectual power as we descend the scale from the civilized to the barbarous, and from the barbarous to the idiotic. And it is a fact worth pondering that there is more difference between the highest and the lowest man, in the size, weight and quality of the brain and in the manifestations of its power, than between the lowest man and the highest ape. For while the brain-weight of the highest man is 1,900

cubic centimetres and that of the lowest man 1,200 cubic centimetres, the difference between the lowest man and the highest ape is only 600 cubic centimetres, a difference that is worthy of serious consideration. (See Bastian, *Brain as the Organ of the Mind*, p. 353.)

It is claimed that man is the only animal that reasons; the so-called lower animals are said to act solely by instinct. But this is obviously a mistake. What is reason? It is a combination of all the intellectual qualities. Among other things it implies the powers of perception, attention, memory, imagination, and judgment, the latter of which means the forming of deductions from remembered perceptions. Very little thought and observation will convince us that animals reason as well as man. They may not reason so well; they may not carry on so complex a series of thoughts, but they nevertheless perceive, remember and judge between two or more perceptions, in a rough sort of fashion, as well as man. We have all observed from time to time how well our domestic animals reason. Take dogs for instance. A dog knows in a moment whether its master is going to take it out for a run or not. It can read its master's countenance like a book. Dogs also can be taught to perform all sorts of tricks. To do that implies memory and judgment. Dogs have often jumped into the river and rescued drowning persons; such an act implies heroism, imagination and judgment. And then a word about cats. Cats are not so intelligent as dogs, but they are intelligent nevertheless, and possess wonderful memory. My daughter took our cat to a friend the Christmas before last, because we did not like to leave the poor creature at home alone with no one to look after it and provide it with food. The friend's house was a considerable distance from ours and the cat was carried through a succession of streets, over the tram lines into a very populous neighbourhood. The cat stayed at this house only one day, although our dog was there also, and the dog and cat were very good friends; but the cat escaped over the railway lines, and was missing for over four months, when one morning we heard a mewling outside the door, and let a cat in, and found upon examination that it was our dear old cat returned to the old home after four months' wandering no one knows whither. What wonderful memory, what accurate reasoning, even though Christians call it by the name of instinct. But nobody ever expects to welcome cats in the heavenly abode up above. No. Selfish men and women are to be there alone. However well cats and dogs reason they can never reach the astral plane. And if ever they did reach heaven I have never heard of dogs or cats who could act as mediums at feline spiritualistic seances and communicate with their brethren up above. Psychic phenomena do not appear to act upon their untrained minds. In the Zoological Gardens I have often watched the monkeys—the poor little Gibbons—in their exceedingly interesting performances. Many years ago I remember I gave a young monkey some bread and meat, the meat having a thin covering of mustard. The animal took the morsel and tore it to fragments, then smelt a piece several times and at last put it into its mouth. For a few seconds the mustard did not take effect; but presently the monkey spat the whole of it out, and rubbed his tongue furiously. Several hours later in the day I presented some bread and meat to the same animal and he graciously refused to accept it. Was this reason or instinct? I consider that it was reason. Is it from instinct that dogs go to butchers' shops and steal meat when the shopman is not looking, or that foxes rob the roost when the farmer is engaged elsewhere? Is it from instinct that elephants and bears open their mouths for stray missiles of food, and that splendidly trained horses belonging to a circus go through their performances with as much apparent enjoyment as the men and

women who ride them? If animals are not intelligent and do not reason, how is it they are capable of being taught anything? How is it a monkey can be taught to beat a drum or fire off a rifle? How is it that dogs can be taught to go through all sorts of acrobatic performances, jump through hoops, or ride on the backs of horses if they are not intelligent and do not reason? If you try to catch the young of the partridge, the old bird will fly by your side and almost throw itself into your clutches in order to induce you to pursue it instead of the young ones. Is this instinct or reason? I contend that it is reason, and I maintain that the same arguments which lead the Christian or the Spiritualist to claim that man will live again because he is a reasoning animal and possesses a soul, are quite as valid, if they are valid at all, in the case of the lower animals who possess the same kind of qualities though differing in degree from those of man.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

Islam and Freethought.

THE Muhammadan religion, known as Islam, is at one with Freethought inasmuch as it is opposed to Christian dogma. Apart from this, however, Islam has little or nothing in common with Freethought, since it preaches and teaches a blind, grovelling faith and belief in an imaginary personal deity imbued with human and other attributes.

At a recent meeting of Muslims at Woking, held in celebration of the Feast which marks the conclusion of the Month of Fasting, the Imam of the Mosque, Khwaja Kamal-ud-din, delivered a lecture on Islam, which appears in the current number of the *Islamic Review*. In his lecture he suavely suggests that Freethinkers and Agnostics will agree with him that behind Nature there is some "Great, Unseen, Mysterious Power," which made and controls the laws of Nature.

Having postulated this (let us call it for short) G.U.M.P., he is not content to leave it at that, but proceeds to clothe it with a robe of personality, and to give it a name, Allah, and gratuitously imbues this personality with humane and other attributes, such as mercy, and justice. Then, pleased and proud at the result of his handiwork, he falls down and worships and prays to this wonderful personal idol he has made out of his presumed G.U.M.P., and invites all mankind to do the same.

If, in order to account for the wonderful laws and forces of Nature, we presume a G.U.M.P. as their origin and cause, it does not help us one whit; it only brings us up against another query—what was the origin and cause of the G.U.M.P.? Some still greater, more unseen, and more mysterious power, I suppose? We might go on like that *ad infinitum*, like recurring decimals, and still be no nearer to a solution of the problem as to the origin and cause of the universe.

To postulate this G.U.M.P., and then to formulate it into a Personal Identity or Deity, imbued with all kinds of attributes, human and otherwise, and to fall down and worship and pray to this personification, is sheer superstition and idolatry. To see human beings grovelling on a carpet or on the ground as Muslims do in worship of such a fetish idol as this personified G.U.M.P. is a pitiable and degrading sight; even the so-called lower animals are not guilty of such superstition and degradation.

The Imam tells us "we know very little of that great power which is at work behind the screen, and what little we know of it comes from our knowledge of the laws of Nature, and if we tried to clothe this Unseen Power with this or that attribute, it would be

through the knowledge of those same laws." Well, why should we try to *clothe* the *unseen*? If this power behind Nature is unseen, mysterious, and practically unknowable, why trouble ourselves about it at all? Why make an idol of it, and give it imaginary attributes? Knowing so little of it, why fall downward and worship it? Surely it is quite capable of looking after itself without any gratuitous assistance or interference from man. Knowing so little about it, it is impudent presumption on man's part to clothe it and imbue it with attributes of any kind.

From our knowledge of the laws of Nature we do not find in them such attributes as mercy and justice. Nature bestows her bounties, the rain falls, and the sun shines, on good and bad alike, without any idea of justice. The laws of Nature know no mercy, they are inexorable. A rock, a cliff, a tree, or a chimney-pot, will fall in obedience to the laws of Nature, and its fall will crush or kill any man, woman, child, or babe that happens to be in its way, without any idea of mercy or justice. No amount of praying, worshipping, or supplication will or can alter the laws of Nature. Our knowledge of the laws of Nature gives us no grounds whatever for imbuing with attributes any presumed G.U.M.P. behind Nature.

However, the Imam again asserts that "the attributes of God are revealed by Nature; and science, in discovering new secrets of Nature, is but revealing God," and that "the laws of Nature so discovered, illustrate, one after the other, the attributes of God precisely as those attributes were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad 1,300 years ago."

If Allah and his attributes began to be revealed only so short a time ago as 1,300 years, how on earth did man get along without this revelation during all the thousands or millions of years before Muhammad? Such revelation evidently was not very important or necessary to man, or it would not have been so long delayed! What was Allah doing all that time? Was he asleep? If Allah considered that any revelation of himself was necessary to man, surely it should and would have been made to Adam, or to whosoever was the first man, and not kept back so late as a paltry 1,300 years ago.

The Imam's attempt to explain what he terms the Great Unseen Mysterious Power behind Nature, is a failure, and he may as well divest his mind of any hope of making converts, from the ranks of Freethinkers and Agnostics, to his worship of the Personified Idol he has made out of his presumed G.U.M.P.

A. W. MALCOLMSON.

Heat Transference.

I.—CONDUCTION.

HEAT may be transferred in one of three ways: (1) by *conduction*, (2) by *convection*, (3) by *radiation*. The physicist supposes that the molecules of a solid substance are oscillating to and fro, the motion becoming more vigorous as the temperature rises. Owing to collisions the molecules at the hot end of the body (say a poker in the fire), share their energy¹ with the slower-moving neighbours. These absorb a certain amount of the energy, and pass on the heat to those adjacent, and so on. In this way the heat is conducted right along the body. After some time a state is reached when each layer of the body attains a stationary state and ceases to absorb any more heat. The

¹ As I have pointed out in previous articles heat is a form of energy. The more heat energy that is put into a body, the greater the rapidity with which its molecules vibrate or oscillate.

passage of heat along the bar then depends on the conductivity of the material. *The Thermal Conductivity is defined as the quantity of heat that flows in one second through one square centimetre of a plate of one centimetre thickness, when there is one degree Centigrade difference of temperature between its faces.* It can be determined experimentally.

Metals, generally speaking, are good conductors of heat; bone, felt, brick, ivory, wood, powders, liquids and gases, are poor conductors.

A good many of the facts of conduction can be shown by quite simple experiments. For example, wrap a piece of thin paper tightly round a piece of metal, and hold it in a flame for a few seconds. It will not be scorched. But replace the metal by wood, which is a poor conductor, and the paper is easily scorched. In the first case the heat is conducted away from the paper so rapidly that it cannot become scorched. Or a sphere of solder can be melted in a small paper bag. The explanation is the same as before. Or a small piece of ice can be fixed at the bottom of a test tube with a piece of gauze, and the tube filled up with water, and boiled, above the ice, without melting the ice. If the heat be applied below the ice, however, convection currents carry heat to the ice and it is quickly melted.

One can hold a lighted match between one's fingers without being burnt because of the low conductivity of the wood. Similarly, the bottom of a candle is unaffected when the wick at the top is lighted, because the fat is a bad conductor of heat. Woollen clothing is warmer than cotton clothing largely because the air it entangles is a bad conductor. The feathers of birds, and down quilts, owe their efficacy to like causes. The conductivity of air is only about one-thousandth that of copper!

When a few drops of water fall on a clean sheet of red-hot metal, they do not boil away furiously, as one might expect—they run to and fro like beads of quick-silver on clean glass. At first contact with the hot metal, a cushion of vapour is formed which prevents heat reaching the liquid except by conduction through it, or by radiation. And vapours (i.e., gases), being poor conductors, very little heat gets through to the liquid. But as the plate is allowed to cool, the cushion of vapour becomes unable to support the liquid any longer; contact with the plate follows, and the liquid rapidly boils away. This is known as the Leidenfrost phenomenon, and may be seen when a few drops of water fall by accident on the bars of a grate in which a good fire is burning. It is owing to the bad conduction of vapour that it is possible to lift a piece of red-hot coal with the fingers, without being burnt, provided the hand is first thoroughly wetted.

The high conductivity of metal is made use of in the Davy Lamp, used by miners. The flame is entirely surrounded by a mantle of copper gauze. Owing to conduction the temperature outside the lamp never becomes high enough to ignite any explosive mixture of gases present in the mine, except in very abnormal circumstances, for any gas must be heated up to its *ignition point* before it will burn.

II.—CONVECTION.

When heat is transferred by convection, the heated particles do not merely pass on some of their energy to their neighbours by increased violence of vibration; they actually "wander" through the substance, carrying the heat with them, and by frequent collisions, diffuse the heat energy throughout the substance, until it is at a uniform temperature.

Convection is therefore only possible in liquids and gases. The draught up a chimney is an example of convection currents. The air immediately over the fire becomes heated, expands, and so becomes less dense, and accordingly rises. Colder, heavier air

rushes in to take its place, and the operation is repeated continuously, thus setting up a current of hot air flowing up the chimney.

The heating of buildings by hot water pipes is a good example of convection in a liquid. The water in the boiler in the basement is heated and expands and becomes less dense. Therefore it rises through the outflow pipe to the cistern at the top of the building, giving up much of its heat to the building as it rises, and being now cooled and heavy again, sinks down through the return pipe to the boiler. Thus a current is set up in the system.

Convection currents play a great part in the economy of Nature. Many ocean currents are surface currents due to the action of the prevailing winds. But some are due to convection. Thus the arctic cold causes water to contract, become more dense, and sink. It flows towards the equator as a deep current, while the surface water at the equator flows back to replace it.

Land and sea breezes are due to convection. On a hot summer's day the land near the sea is at a higher temperature than the sea, since the latter reflects much of its heat incident upon it, and also requires a larger absorption of heat to produce the same rise of temperature as land. Accordingly the air of the land is warmer than that over the sea and tends to flow upwards, while cooler air from the sea flows inwards to take its place. Thus a *sea-breeze* is created. But in the evening the land loses its heat by radiation more rapidly than the sea does and falls to a lower temperature. Conditions exactly opposite to those prevailing during the day are set up, and a *land-breeze* results.

A large scale example of convection is provided by the *Trade Winds*. The surface of the earth in the tropics becomes very hot, communicates some of its heat to the air in contact with it, which ascends into the higher regions of the atmosphere. Currents of colder air set in to take its place from polar and temperate regions, and tend to produce north winds in the Northern Hemisphere and south winds in the Southern Hemisphere. But the earth is rotating from west to east, at such a speed that a point on the earth near the equator has a velocity from west to east of more than 1,000 miles per hour. This velocity decreases as we approach the poles, where it is zero. Hence, if a mass of air start from a place having a velocity from west to east of 800 miles per hour and flows towards the equator, its velocity relative to the surface of the earth will gradually tend towards the west, until in reaching the equator it will have a relative velocity of more than 200 miles an hour east to west. As a result the currents of air flowing from north and south towards the equator become N.E. and S.E. winds respectively. These are the trade winds, so called because in the days when marine navigation was dependent on winds, these regular winds were of enormous value to sailors.

Corresponding to these lower currents there are upper ones, known as the *Return Trades*, blowing in the northern hemisphere from south-west, and in the southern hemisphere from north-west. The direction of the upper currents has been demonstrated by the direction in which volcanic dust has been carried from the tropics.

W. H. MORRIS.

(To be Concluded.)

If one be asked to specify the defects in New Testament morality, the difficulty of reply is caused by the too great abundance of material. The defects are not partial, but total. They pervade the entire moral system, and are the greater in each part, the greater its importance. Fully to enumerate the defects, would be equivalent to writing a complete moral treatise.—Francis William Newman.

Grave and Gay.

Almsgiving is not always—not even frequently—a virtue. It is more often an easy way of escaping importunity, a cheap method of salving an uneasy conscience, an inexpensive method of securing an advertisement.

If other people possessed only half the virtues we credit ourselves with the world would be full of good men and women.

Heine said that God permitted the Jews to be persecuted because he could not forgive them reminding him in their prayers that he was only the god of a small tribe. We do not believe it. We are convinced that the Jews brought their punishment on themselves by giving the Christians their god. That was asking for reprisals. It was not in human nature to forgive so deadly an outrage.

When we are told that the universe is full of mysteries, what we should mean is that it is full of problems. Science knows nothing of mysteries, although a scientist may use the term as a figure of speech. What the world presents us with is a series of problems culminating in the final problem of all—that of existence. Something is, but why there should be something is a question that no other knowledge will ever be able to solve, since there is no larger category in which it can be merged.

A religion that prepares men for the next world is obviously of no earthly use.

If opinions were subject to an intellectual vagrancy, religious beliefs would all be locked up for having no visible means of support.

One is assured of a ready response if one can only give men a chance of gratifying their lower feelings under pretence of responding to the promptings of higher ones. It enables people to gratify passions of which they are ashamed under the pretence of devotion to duty.

Most people have minds like putty—they retain the impress of the last hand that grasped them.

It is wrong to say that nature is full of imperfections. It is equally wrong to say that it is full of perfections. Nature simply is. It exists and admits of no comparison with anything else by which it can be declared either perfect or imperfect, good or bad.

It has always seemed to me a waste of time to pray to God. If God is what it is claimed he is, he already knows what we want and what it is good for us to have. Our prayers should be directed towards the Devil. He is the one we should try to influence in our favour, and the only object of prayer that would make supplication of the slightest reasonable value.

The last things that man will civilize are his gods. They are always the least civilized members of a civilized society.

Whenever we read Christian stories of the utter corruption of Greek and Roman society we feel inclined to take the writer by the scruff of the neck and march him through the galleries of ancient monuments in some of our museums. He should then be compelled to explain how it came about that a people so plunged in vice could even depict the types of womankind graven by ancient sculptors. A great art cannot come out of utter corruption.

PETER SIMPLE.

Conduct of Life.

In part the ethical is the beautiful in the way of conduct. It is the harmonious blending of man's every act, movement, gesture and word with his social environment. Like other things of beauty it finds its justification in the fact that it contributes to human pleasure and happiness. For its perfection it requires the development of the æsthetic sense and complete self-control. The æsthetic, or good taste, I submit, is one of the foundations of the ethical.

The true in the way of ideas is the expedient in the way of belief. (See James, "Pragmatism.") Analogously the right in the way of conduct is the expedient in the way of action. To a certain extent a man must have food, shelter and the like, and many of his acts are prompted by these needs. These acts originate and find their justification in expediency and necessity. Necessity, I submit, is also a basis of the ethical.

Reflection will show that the above mentioned foundations of the ethical are empirical and that they are universal in that they embrace all possible ethical problems.

If man were perfectly adapted to his social environment he would find that the line of action indicated by the æsthetic principle would always be the same as that indicated by expediency and necessity. Man, however, is not so adapted and at times finds the line of action pointed out by the æsthetic to be something different from that revealed by the principle of expediency. In such cases a mean, resembling the Aristotelian mean, may be adopted.

This being the case what need is there for the religious sanctions of the ethical embodied in the punishment of wrong and the reward of right by a God? I would submit there is none and still less for the Christ and a belief in the Christian Epic. "The need of a personal God, feared but reassuring is a youth's need." (Wells.) The need of a theory of conduct drawn from experience is a man's need. In the time of the world's moral childhood mysterious and awe-inspiring religious sanctions were perhaps useful, but that time is drawing to a close. Many men and women are awakening to the beauty and utility of the ethical life and seeking a new and rational basis for their ethical concepts. Is not such a basis to be found in the mean between the empirically beautiful and the empirically expedient and necessary?

O. J. BOULTON.

Victoria, B.C.

Sacred and Profane in Music.

THE dividing line between sacred and profane in music is very difficult to determine. I know a church organist who often plays music of a decidedly profane character as a voluntary; such pieces as "Alexander's Ragtime Band," and "I Wouldn't Leave My Little Wooden Hut for You," being among the compositions he has used in this way.

Of course, an alteration in the *tempo* is necessary to adapt the music to church use, but the congregation little suspect that they are being entertained by music-hall ditties as they leave the sacred building.

Many tunes of purely secular origin have been adapted to religious purposes, particularly by the more advanced religious organizations such as the Adult School and Brotherhood movements. Look through the Fellowship Hymn Book used by these bodies and you will find many instances of sacred words written to secular melodies.

I think most unbiassed musicians would agree that, almost without exception, the secular tunes in this publication are far ahead, from a musical standpoint, of the truly religious ones. Take, for instance, the hymn "Still with Thee," for which Mendelssohn's "Song Without Words," Op. 30, No 3, has been adapted, but not improved; or again, "Come Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy"

(I suppose, by the way, that to be poor and needy is one of the greatest of sins in the eyes of the Church), for which the air "Rousseau's Dream" has been pressed into service.

Where music has been written to sacred verses it is often very poor stuff, showing that the "Divine" inspiration one would have a right to expect, if the tales told by gospel sellers were true, is conspicuous by its absence. Evidently the more astute among the Godites have realized that it is of no use to go to God for musical inspiration, for they have drawn upon nearly every secular source for their musical fare; Folk Songs, Classical Compositions, and Operatic Works have all been prostituted to the purpose of bolstering up the superstition which we call religion.

Some years ago I gave a talk on the subject at the head of this article, and to illustrate my point that it is almost impossible to draw the line between the sacred and the profane in music, I played two pieces, one a sacred air, by Handel, and the other from an Opera by Mascagni; I then asked my audience (which was not a musically educated one) to say which they thought was the sacred piece.

Nine tenths of them said the Operatic piece.

FRED HOBDAV.

In Memoriam.—R. H. Side.

I feel constrained to break the silence of years in order to record my appreciation of the character of my old friend Robert Henry Side. More than forty-six years ago he honoured me by giving me the opportunity of service in the Freethought movement by proposing the formation of a Secular Society in York Street, Walworth, of which I became the first secretary. The "Walworth Freethought Institute," founded in May 1876, was a stupendous success, made possible as I know of certain knowledge mainly by the labours and sacrifices of Mr. Side and his sons who were kindled with the infectious enthusiasm which ever burnt in their father's heart. The opening lecture was given by Charles Bradlaugh, and in the course of a few months Charles Watts, Annie Besant, G. W. Foote, Mrs. Law, J. H. Levy (the author of the celebrated "D" articles in the *National Reformer*), Moncure D. Conway, M. C. O'Byrne, Dr. Bickers, Miles McSweeney and others, attracted crowded houses to the hall which Mr. Side's generous assistance enabled us to erect and hold for Freethought. In those early days it was good to be alive. The Christian Evidence Society took alarm and vomited at us its most truculent and tricky orators from Dr. Sexton down to Turpin and Tarry (well known to London Freethinkers of forty years ago), but the Gates of Hell did not prevail against us.

The "Walworth Freethought Institute" continued the organized work of the old South London Secular Society which formerly met in a room opposite the "Blackfriars Theatre." There, in the mid 'seventies, I met Stewart Ross ("Saladin"), Edward Law, Victor Rogers, Dr. Bickers, and others who later became known to a larger Freethought public. The activities of Mr. R. H. Side and his family at Walworth attracted many of the old South London habitués to the hall in York Street, and there I found my friend Arthur B. Moss. The present South London Branch of the N.S.S. continues in another form the work begun by Mr. Side and his coadjutors in 1876, and notably the present activities of Mr. Wood (of the Secular Society Limited) whom I met at the old Blackfriars Hall long before I knew Mr. Side, help one to bridge the gulf of nearly fifty years of organized Freethought.

For his shining example of devoted service and loyalty to Freethought I shall ever honour the memory of my dear old friend Robert Henry Side. WM. HEAFORD.

Obituary.

We regret to record the death of Mr. Luther Holmes, of Castleford. Mr. Holmes was only a young man, twenty-five years of age, but he was a very sincere Freethinker, and lost no opportunity of advancing the Cause. His death robs Freethought of a very promising recruit.

The *Barnsley Chronicle* of July 29, a copy of which has only just reached us, contains an account of the death of Mr. Arthur Addy, whose name will be better known to the last than to the present generation of Freethinkers. Mr. Addy was secretary of the Barnsley Branch during the most active period of its existence, and while he was secretary a very energetic indoor and outdoor campaign was organized. During later years he has been closely associated with local social work, and was chairman of the Burdwell Hospital Committee at the time of his death. We understand that at no time did Mr. Addy make any secret of his pronounced Atheism. The funeral was attended by representatives of many organizations. The *Chronicle*, we observe, did not mention Mr. Addy's Freethinking opinions. On the other hand it spared us the cant about his being a "truly religious" character.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday and be marked "Lecture Notice" if not sent on post-card.

LONDON:
INDOOR.

THE "LAURIE" DISCUSSION CIRCLE: Every Thursday at the Laurie Arms Hotel, Crawford Place, W. Social reunion at 7.30 p.m. Chair taken at 8 p.m.

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 6.15, Mr. Saphin; A Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park): 6, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, A Lecture.

PECKHAM RYE.—11.15 and 7, Mr. G. Whitehead; Chairman, Mr. A. B. Moss.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C.2): Ramble to Loughton, etc. Conducted by Mr. F. A. Richards. Train from Liverpool Street 10.30. Cheap return to Loughton, 1s. 6d.

THE TRIANGLE (Rye Lane, Peckham): Every evening, Monday, August 21 to Friday August 25. Mr. G. Whitehead, 7.45.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Corner Technical Institute, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7, Mr. Shaller, A Lecture.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

MANCHESTER BRITISH N.S.S.: Discussion Class, 6.30; meet at Oxford Grove, Whitworth Park, Manchester.

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