

FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

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

Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper

VOL. XLII.—No. 40

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1922

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page.
Arrested Reformers.—The Editor - - - -	625
Lord Byron.—J. T. Lloyd - - - -	626
The Faith of Freethought.—Mimnermus - - -	628
Pagan and Christian Civilization.—W. Mann - -	628
At the House of Diana.—F. J. Gould - - -	629
The Case of J. W. Gott.—Chapman Cohen - - -	633
Thoughts at a Graveside.—A Millar - - - -	634
Pater the Epicurean.—G. E. Fussell - - - -	635
The National Secular Society and Its Trust Deed -	637
The Unchartered Sea.—Percy Allott - - - -	637
The Celestial Shopkeeper.—Amos - - - -	637
Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letter to the Editor, etc.	

Views and Opinions.

Arrested Reformers.

It is not unusual to find many who are revolutionists in their youth conservatives in their old age. This is not because as one gets older one sees the folly of what was once fought for, it may be often because one's own efforts have helped to push things along so rapidly that the reforms accomplished become relatively old-fashioned, and the one-time reformer is left in the rear. Thought is never still; it either advances or recedes, and there are few who, as age creeps on, are able to keep up with an advance they have themselves helped to create. In other cases it may be that the advance was never of a very drastic order, and having got rid of the most uncomfortable ideas or conditions, there is lacking that strength of character or thought which prompts to further action. There are, for instance, thousands of people who discover at some time of their lives that their religious beliefs are in conflict with truth. A minority of these make a clean sweep of their beliefs and so have done with it. Others, the majority, simply ease themselves of the obtrusively objectionable features of their early beliefs, while still retaining a fundamental irrationality, and are so elated over what is rejected that they never notice the foolishness of what is retained. These belong to the class of folk who talk about a "pure" religion, although in what way a thing that is fundamentally false can be purer than another thing that is also fundamentally false is more than I have ever been able to discover. There may be a greater crudeness in the one case than there is in the other, but they are alike at bottom.

* * *

The Natural and the Supernatural.

Let me begin with the fact of religion in general. The fundamental quality of religion, the one thing that is characteristic of all religions in all stages of history, is the belief in supernatural powers and beings. In the most primitive stages the supernatural, as such, has no existence because thought is not yet definite enough to create the division that arises subsequently. But as man develops, and as he divides things into those which can be known, understood, and more or less controlled, and those which lie beyond this region and are the expression of beings similar in kind, but yet very much greater than himself, we get that great and lasting division of the supernatural and the natural

which marks a fundamental distinction of outlook. It is this which provides the battle-ground of the conflict between religion and physical science, and indeed of the fight between religion and reform in many other directions. But it is inevitable that with the advance of culture the older ideas of things should become irksome to many and impossible to some. The latter reject them, and have done with them. But to completely break with old associations is not for most a possible task, nor is it easy even with the strongest. It is not that, as is so often said, there is pain in parting with old ideas. That is not the case. Once the weakness or the falsity of an idea is seen it is its retention that is painful, not its rejection. The pain involved in openly rejecting an idea is totally due to the fact that it is held by one's friends and even the members of one's family, and as the world goes giving it up involves a break with them. It is the snapping of the social bond that is painful, and because of that the cause of the break—the newer idea—arouses a certain amount of antagonism with many who cannot but accept its veracity.

* * *

Playing With Truth.

The next stage of this process is, naturally, the search for a compromise, and this is found in the statement of what is called a "purer" form of religion. But if the essence of religion is as I have said, how can there be a purer form of it? There can be a less offensive form of it, but that is not purer, there simply is less of it. The symbolical cannibalism of the Christian Mass is not purer than the primitive cannibalism from which it is descended, it is merely a less objectionable form of the same idea. The savage believed that he was acquiring some of the qualities of the sacramentally killed man when he ate part of the body. The Christian believes that he becomes one with Christ when he eats, sacramentally, the sacred wafer. One form of the ceremony is as absurd as the other, and the believer in the so-called purer form is simply illustrating the truth that as the development of civilization made the earlier form impossible, a substitute was found in the Mass and the Sacrament. Or if it be said that the religion becomes purer because the teachings of the religious organizations become better, the reply is that religion only becomes better in this sense because Churches leave a lot of religion on one side and begin to teach things that are not religious at all. To teach men to be honest is not religious, but to teach them that some alleged supernatural being commands them to do this or that, and will punish them if they do not, is. It is the presence of the latter factor that makes a teaching or a doctrine religious. To leave that on one side is only to illustrate the truth that religion becomes better only by ceasing to be religion at all. It is the religious version of the old saying that the only good Indian is a dead one. The only good God is a dead one; the only bearable religion is the one that has ceased to function.

* * *

The Beginning of God.

If we take the belief in God we see the same prin-

ceptile illustrated. Writers and speakers talk of a lofty and a low conception of God, as though there were involved a difference of kind, that the so-called higher conception of deity owes its existence to an entirely different set of conditions from those which gave the "lower" conception birth. But this is decidedly not the case. As a mere matter of historical sequence there is not the least room for questioning the statement that the most recent form of the god-idea can be traced right back to the crudest and earliest one. More than that, it can be said with equal confidence that the later form owes its existence to the earlier one. There is no more evidence for the existence of a God to-day with the civilized man than there was with the savage. We believe in a God because he did, not because we have discovered fresh evidence or better proofs. The savage believed in God because he read himself into his physical environment, or misunderstood the nature of his own mental states. That belief became established as one of the fixed institutions of primitive social life, and it has descended to us in unbroken sequence. All that has happened is that as our knowledge became greater and our intelligence keener, the evidence upon which the belief in God was based was seen to be impossible, and a number of more or less ingenious excuses for the retention of the God-idea were invented. But there is not here a question of a higher or a lower view of God, it is solely one of retaining a view that is in origin and essence unscientific. No amount of apologetic can ever make the belief in God more than a product of the ignorance of early man with its unscientific nature disguised by the dropping of the more ethically repulsive features, and the accrediting to deity of a number of qualities that are a product of man's own better developed nature. To arrive at a "true" conception of God by refining the savage belief in deity is equal to extracting truth from a lie, or getting a significant number by multiplying noughts.

* * *

The Difficulties

If man were a severely logical animal this process of disguising the nature of certain ideas in order to justify their retention would not obtain. But he is not a logical animal. On the one side, it is true, there are the demands of the pure intellect, but on the other there are the ties which custom forges, and which social pressure maintains. And in the contest of the two there is set up what the psycho-analysts call a "rationalizing" process, which means that excuses are manufactured to permit things which if done would consciously stand self-condemned. If the educated man or woman would look fairly and squarely at religion he or she would see that every rational justification for religious beliefs has gone. But to give them up would involve a break with many social relationships, or if not an actual break, a strain that not so many have the courage to face. Conformity is the path of ease. Where all foxes have tails, it is something to have at least the caudal remnant to prove that one belongs to the same species. And if not even a remnant of tail is showing, then an attachment which may be taken for one will serve. Thus it happens that so many who have the strength of mind to see the weakness of religious ideas fail in carrying their perception to its logical issue. They placate the intellectual side of their natures by surrendering some of the formal doctrines that go to the make-up of the current creed. They placate the "respectabilities" by retaining the essential features of the doctrines they have discarded. They mistake a stage in a pilgrimage for the conclusion of the journey, and wonder why it is that they are soon left behind by those with clearer perceptions and greater moral courage.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Lord Byron.

IV.

BYRON'S poetry does not contain a consistently held and clearly expressed conception of human life. He was a man of many quickly changing moods, and his outlook upon life underwent corresponding variations. His character had its outstanding defects as well as its brilliant excellences. His intellectual powers as well as his emotions were subject to ever-varying impulses, fully reflected in his works. We cannot but deeply deplore the destruction of his autobiography by Thomas Moore, his official biographer. Nietzsche, in his *Genealogy of Morals* (p. 179), characterizes that act as atrociously wicked, saying: "Lord Byron composed a most personal autobiography, but Thomas Moore was 'too good' for it; he burnt his friend's papers." In reality, however, the poet's best biography can be read in his works, prose and verse. As his contemporary, Hazlitt, says, "The *Giaour*, the *Corsair*, *Childe Harold*, are all the same person, and they are apparently all himself." Hazlitt's *Lectures on English Poets* were delivered and published in the year 1818, before Byron's greatest poems were composed. *Sardanapalus*, the most autobiographical of all his plays did not make its appearance till 1821, and though a tragedy, it is the least gloomy and depressing of all his productions, reflecting himself in one of his happiest moods. *Sardanapalus*, the last king of Assyria, was a man of deep culture, high intelligence, and far-reaching benevolence. When he mounted the throne the empire was at its culminating point of magnitude and dazzling splendour, and he became the "grand monarch," the patron of literature and the arts. Under him Nineveh was one of the finest cities in the world, with its unrivalled public buildings in size and grandeur, its glittering royal palaces, and its library, which was incomparably the richest in the world. And yet this ardent lover and promoter of learning and culture, as first seen at a hall in the royal palace at Nineveh, "is effeminately dressed, his head crowned with flowers, and his robe negligently flowing, attended by a train of women and young slaves," and his first words are these, addressed to an attendant:—

Let the pavilion over the Euphrates
Be garlanded, and lit, and furnished forth
For an especial banquet; at the hour
Of midnight we will sup there; see naught wanting,
And bid the galley be prepared. There is
A cooling breeze which crisps the broad clear river.
We will embark anon. Fair nymphs who deign
To share the soft hours of Sardanapalus,
We'll meet again in that sweetest hour,
Where we shall gather like the stars above us,
And you will find a heaven as bright as theirs.

Sardanapalus is destitute of imperial ambitions. A lover of peace, he condemns all warlike measures. A spirit of rebellion darkens the political sky, and the king is urged to take action against it. His brother-in-law pleads with him to bestir himself before it is too late; but he replies:—

I understand thee—thou would'st have me go
Forth as a conqueror. By all the stars
Which the Chaldeans read—the restless slaves
Deserve that I should curse them with their wishes,
And lead them forth to glory.

Salemenes, his brother-in-law and General-in-Chief of the Army, reminds his majesty that he is only echoing the voice of empires, "which he who long neglects not long will govern"; but the king answers:—

The ungrateful and ungracious slaves! they murmur
Because I have not shed their blood, nor led them
To dry into the desert's dust by myriads,
Or whiten with their bones the banks of Ganges;
Nor decimated them with savage laws,
Nor sweated them to build up pyramids,
Or Babylonian walls.

Sardanapalus taunts his brother-in-law thus :—

Oh, thou would'st have me doubtless set up edicts,
 "Obey the king—contribute to his treasure—
 Recruit his phalanx—spill your blood at bidding—
 Fall down and worship, or get up and toil."
 Or thus—"Sardanapalus on this spot
 Slew fifty thousand of his enemies.
 These are their sepulchres, and this his trophy."
 I leave such things to conquerors; enough
 For me, if I can make my subjects feel
 The weight of human misery less, and glide
 Ungroaning to the tomb. I take no license
 Which I deny to them. We all are men.

Salemenes, wholly incapable of refuting that argument, falls back upon the empty fable that "thy sires have been revered as gods," to which the king makes this scathing retort :—

In dust
 And death, where they are neither gods nor men.
 Talk not of such to me! the worms are gods!
 At least they banqueted upon your gods,
 And died for lack of further nutriment.
 Those gods were merely men.

Myrrha, the Greek slave, who loves him with her whole heart, is supremely anxious to deliver him from the defects of his character, saying :—

A king of feasts, and flowers, and wine, and revel,
 And love, and mirth, was never king of glory.

In the end, noble-hearted Myrrha wins a glorious victory, not by saving the king, but by teaching him to save himself. Under her gracious influence he becomes a heroic fighter against deceitful traitors, who by their unblushing hypocrisy had secured his forgiveness. Salemenes, knowing them for the rogues they are, pleads with the king not to sheath his sword, saying :—

'Tis the sole sceptre left you now for safety.

The king answers :—

A heavy one; the hilt, too, hurts my hand.

Later, realizing his mistake, he unsheaths his sword with a vengeance; but, alas, it is too late. With the utmost bravery the last king of Nineveh and the slave Myrrha die together. *Sardanapalus* is indeed a terrible tragedy; but in writing it Byron was, consciously or unconsciously, narrating the tragedy of his own life and character.

From a purely poetical point of view Lord Byron's masterpiece, undoubtedly, is *Don Juan*, which, as he himself characterized it in a letter to Mr. Murray, is "a *Satire on Abuses of the present states of society, and not an eulogy of vice.*" Take the following description of Lady Adeline, in Canto the Sixteenth, stanza cii. :—

Some prais'd her beauty; others her great grace;
 The warmth of her politeness, whose sincerity
 Was obvious in each feature of her face,
 Whose traits were radiant with the rays of verity.
 Yes: *She was truly worthy her high place!*
 No one could envy her deserved prosperity;
 And then her dress—what beautiful simplicity
 Draperied her form with curious felicity!

In the next two or three stanzas the satire is discerned. But let us take a glance at *Childe Harold*, Canto the Third, to see how "the crowning carnage, Waterloo," impressed him. The famous battle was fought on June 18, 1815. Byron visited the tragic spot in less than a year afterwards, and in matchless lines reflected upon the meaning and result of our victory :—

Stop! for thy tread is on an Empire's dust!
 An earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
 Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?
 Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
 None: but the moral's truth tells simpler so.
 As the ground was before, thus let it be,—
 How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
 And is this all the world has gained by thee,
 Thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory?

And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,
 The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!
 How in an hour the power which gave annuls
 Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too;
 In "pride of place" here last the eagle flew,
 Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
 Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through;
 Ambition's life and labours all were vain;
 He wears the shatter'd links of the world's broken chain.

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
 And foam in fetters; but is Earth more free?
 Did nations combat to make *One* submit,
 Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty?
 What! shall reviving Thralldom again be
 The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days?
 Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we
 Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly gaze
 And servile knees to thrones? No, *prove* before ye praise.

It would be easy to multiply quotations, but a sufficient number has been given to show that Byron was at once a lover and promoter of freedom, or that, in Mr. Binyon's words, "there was no mistaking the sincerity and generosity of his sympathy with the oppressed, his hatred of the mean arts of governments, his passionate assertion of human dignity." And at heart he was really a beautifully humble man, self-depreciative to a degree. For example, the two first stanzas relating to Waterloo beginning "Stop, for thy tread is on an Empire's dust," were written at Brussels after the visit to the battlefield, and transcribed next morning in his hostess's album. The lady's husband told the following anecdote :—

A few weeks after he had written them, the well-known artist, R. R. Reinagle, a friend of mine, arrived in Brussels, when I invited him to dine with me, and showed him the lines, requesting him to embellish them with an appropriate vignette to the passage beginning—

Here his last flight the haughty eagle flew,
 Then tore with bloody beak, the fatal plain.

Mr. Reinagle sketched with a pencil a spirited chained eagle, grasping the earth with his talons. I had occasion to write to his Lordship, and mentioned having got the clever artist to draw a vignette to his beautiful lines, and the liberty he had taken by altering the action of the eagle. In reply to this he wrote to me: "Reinagle is a better poet and a better ornithologist than I am; eagles and all birds of prey attack with their talons, and not with their beaks, and I have altered the line thus :—

Then tore with bloody talon, the rent plain."

We have thus seen that the three distinguished poets, Keats, Shelley, and Byron, were thorough-going Freethinkers and fully acknowledged the fact in their works. Keats completely ignored the supernatural. Shelley was an avowed Atheist, whilst Byron revelled in pure Hellenism, and could not have been anything more than a vague and loose Deist. Which of them was the greatest poet is an extremely difficult question, because each was great in a way peculiar to himself. Shelley was a consummate musician, who supplied words with magic wings. Shelley knew the art of soaring even better than Keats, and was possibly his equal in his own line. Keats' forte was love of beauty. Lord Byron was inferior to both in the mastery of rhythm and the gift of imagination, but by far their superior in intellectual power and as the pioneer of the modern style of poetry. He belonged at once to two ages, the age of satire, and that of Romanticism. Sir Walter Raleigh said recently that "whether Byron is liked or not—and his enemies feel this intensely—does not matter. You cannot get rid of him, and that is the character of Byron." And it looks as if at last he is coming to his own in the affection and appreciation of lovers of poetry generally.

J. T. LLOYD.

The Faith of Freethought.

Souls tempered with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good,
Helpers and friends of mankind.

—Matthew Arnold.

THE Archbishop of York, with the characteristic courtesy of his profession towards opponents, referred contemptuously to militant Freethinkers as "camp followers" in the course of a sermon he preached at the conclusion of the recent British Association meetings. If this were an isolated example of discourtesy, Freethinkers would take little notice of it, but quite a number of people profess to regard the work of the Secularists as "crude" and "coarse." A still larger number of persons also appear to be quite innocent of the objects of the Freethought Party, and this want of knowledge is by no means confined to the clergy, or even to religious circles. Some prominent Socialists, probably influenced by the chance of gaining Liberal (and Nonconformist) assistance, do not hesitate to gibe at Freethinkers. As if any reform was ever instituted, or abuse swept away, without wounding the susceptibilities of some ignorant or bigoted persons. In these matters charity of thought is very necessary. It is better to let every soldier of progress do what he can. It is idle to quarrel with another for being different.

Fortunately, all Socialists do not adopt this irritating pose. Mr. Belfort Bax, for example, has stated quite opposite views, and what he has written is well worth recalling. Here is what Mr. Bax has to say of the later aspects of popular Freethought:—

It was not till the early 'eighties and the prosecution of Foote for blasphemy that the better educated middle classes began to have sense and justice enough to see the movement from below for freedom of thought, commonly known as Secularism, for what it was, namely, the plucky effort of men of the small middle and working classes to emancipate themselves, up to their lights, from the thralldom of an encumbering and galling superstition, fatal to all independent intellectual effort.

This testimonial from a prominent Socialist who has often criticised us is welcome. For the task of Freethought is not a light one. The ideals of the National Secular Society are by no means narrow. It seeks to dispel superstition, to spread education, to disestablish religion, to rationalize morality, to promote peace, to dignify labour, to extend material well-being, and to popularise humanitarian ideas.

This is a lengthy and ambitious programme for any single organisation, even if supported by large resources, which the National Secular Society does not possess. Freethought is a poor, struggling cause, its members are comparatively few and scattered, and it has no wealthy endowments to defray the cost of a national propaganda. Still, the Society has kept the flag flying bravely for over half a century, and during that period it has also managed to relieve its necessitous members. The Benevolent Fund has, during its existence, been well supported, and, unlike Christian organisations, it has been administered without a single farthing of expense.

Two presidents of the National Secular Society have died from the overwork and anxiety inseparable from such an onerous office. Despite the undeniable fact that the Freethinkers have compelled the clergy to refrain from thrusting their more repulsive dogmas on the public, the fight between Freethought and Superstition is by no means over. There are still 50,000 clergy entrenched in our national life. They still wield enormous power in our national councils, and also in our schools. There are even signs that Church and Chapel may yet combine their efforts against

Freethought, and a recrudescence of superstition may yet cause us need for greater vigilance and activity in the near future.

Freethought does not bribe its followers. It is actuated by pure love of truth. It does not seek to gain adherents by means of coals and blankets, soup kitchens, children's nurseries, Sunday-school excursions, Pleasant Sunday Afternoons, and other attractions. Its ranks include the very flower of the working-classes.

Freethinkers do their own thinking in religious matters, they also do it in everything else. Spiritual and temporal authority are brought under the same rules, and they must justify themselves. Freethinkers are thus social reformers, and they are almost to a man on the side of justice, freedom, and progress. To make a new world, no audacity contributes that is not in the first place intellectual. The nation's great need is boldly honest minds. That is the task the Freethought Party has set itself.

MIMNERMUS.

Pagan and Christian Civilization.

II.

(Continued from p. 619.)

We hear enough of the luxurious feasting of the Roman capital, how it would almost have taxed the resources of a modern pastry-cook; of the cruelty of gladiatorial shows, how they were nearly as bad as *auto-da-fé*, except that a man had a fair chance, and was not tortured for torture's sake.....Of all this we are told a great deal; but we are not told of the many thousands of honourable men who carried civilization to the ends of the known world, and administered a mighty empire so that it was loved and worshipped to the farthest corner of it.—Prof. W. H. Clifford, "Lectures and Essays," 1886, pp. 307-308.

THAT some of the Roman Emperors were bad or mad is true, but that does not prove that the Roman people in the mass were all mad or bad, and in the fancy portraits of the worst emperors we can often discern the hand of the Christian calumniator. Christians themselves have in many instances first manufactured the crimes which they so virtuously condemn. Few historians to-day would subscribe to the belief that the Emperor Nero purposely set fire to Rome and accompanied it on a musical instrument, or that he threw the blame on the Christians and made living torches of them in the Arena. And if Nero stands to Christians as the symbol of the cruelty of Paganism, the Emperor Heliogabalus, or as it should be written Elagabalus, stands for the symbol of unbridled lust and sexual immortality. A study of how this emperor came to acquire this unenviable pre-eminence in vice will throw a good deal of light upon the subject.

In 1911 Mr. J. Stuart Hay, of St. John's College, Oxford, published, under the title of *The Amazing Emperor Heliogabalus*, a most searching and scholarly inquiry into the origin and source of the charges made against this emperor, to which Prof. J. B. Bury contributed an introduction. We cannot do better than give the results of Mr. Hay's investigation.

The main source of our information about Elagabalus is his life by Aelius Lampridius, who is one of the six writers who have come down to us in a collection known as the *Scriptores Historiæ Augustæ*, consisting of some thirty-five biographies. Of the six authors of these biographies scarcely anything is known, and around their works, says Prof. Bury—

a forest of critical literature has grown up in recent times. The outcome of all the criticism is generally to the discredit of these authors, and Mr. Hay has

the merit of having strictly applied this unfavourable result to the Life of Elagabalus.¹

Mr. Hay in summing up the results of the modern critical investigation of the *Scriptores Historiæ Augustæ*, says :—

In all probability this series of lives was never intended to be more than a succession of scandal-loving biographies, designed to take the place of the improper little novels which used to be imported from Greece, but whose supply was falling short with the decadence of Greek literature. In the result, the biographies of the *Augustæ Historiæ Scriptores* are for the most part an inartistic farrago of unordered trivialities, which modern criticism has shown to be late in date, and with little or no individual significance. Their whole value depends on their source or sources, and these have been proved, at least biographically speaking to have been only too often untrustworthy.²

But to begin at the beginning. After the murder of the Emperor Caracalla and the suicide of his mother, the Empress Julia Domma, her sister Julia Maesa was exiled from court and retired to the City of Emesa with her two daughters, Soemias and Mamaea, both widows with each an only son: Alexander the son of Mamaea, and Bassianus—the future Emperor Elagabalus—the son of Soemias.

When we first make acquaintance with the future emperor, we find him consecrated as priest-king of the City of Emesa and officiating in that office in the famous and renowned Temple of the Sun in that city. Herodian, says Mr. Hay, paints vividly “the sensuous beauty of the worship, the vestments, the music, the dances, the sacrifices, and the mysteries.” Into all this power and sensuous beauty the boy Bassianus—he was only fourteen when he became emperor—stepped proudly, glorying in his own beauty. On his head was a diadem set with precious stones, whose iridescence sparkled like a luminous aureole. His tunic was of clinging purple silk diapered with gold. The Roman soldiers came in scores to watch and worship, and beheld in him the child of destiny. The soldiery were discontented; the boy's mother Soemias fomented the discontent and bribed them lavishly with the temple gold; they revolted and proclaimed the boy priest-king Emperor of Rome, under the revered title of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

One writer has remarked that the boy emperor had as many names as the hydra has heads. In the early part of his life he is known as Varius and Bassianus, occasionally as Avitus, and by one historian as Lupus. His official title as emperor was Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, or Antonine for short, which had already been borne by one of the greatest of Roman Emperors.

Heliogabalus, however, is the sole title by which he is known to the world at large, and this was a nickname conferred upon him in memory of his having held the office of high-priest to the sun-god Heliogabalus in the Temple of Emesa. The proper translation, says Mr. Hay, should be Elagabalus, and he adds :—

I have allowed the name [Heliogabalus] to stand on the title page, chiefly in order that Mrs. Grundy's prurient mind may know, before she buys or borrows this volume, that it is the record of a life at which she may expect to be shocked, though she will in all probability find herself yawning before the middle of the introductory chapter.

In explanation of this it should be stated that Lampridius' biography of Heliogabalus is written in Latin, it has never been translated into English, and Mr. Hay declares that he has no intention of undertaking the task as he has no desire to land himself, with the

printers and publishers, in the dock at the Old Bailey. Even an attempt to expurgate the work, he adds, “would leave one with the numerals as headings and the word ‘Finis’ half-way down a sheet of note-paper.” Lampridius in fact very much overdid it, says Mr. Hay :—

His very vehemence is fortunate, since it has left the way open for psychology and science to proclaim the abuse; what we now know it to be, both malicious and untruthful (p. 21).

Mr. Hay says that he started the study of the life of this boy-emperor with the conviction that his biographers have given a substantially accurate account of the absence of mind, will, policy and authority which he was supposed to have betrayed.

The first reason to doubt this estimate came from the continually recurring mention of a perpetual struggle between the Emperor and his female relatives, a fight in which the boy was always worsting able and resolute women, carrying his point with consummate tact and ability, while allowing the women a certain show of dignity and position, where it in no way diminished the imperial authority or his own prerogative.

This circumstance alone was scarcely consonant with Lampridius' account of a mere youthful debauchee, who had neither inclination nor will for anything, save a low desire to wallow in vice and unspeakable horrors as the be-all and end-all of his existence.³

Another glaring contradiction appeared in the statement that all good men were exterminated in the general lust for destruction of such worthies. Whereas, as a matter of fact :—

The known good men were mentioned as peaceably holding office, not only during the reign in question, but in that of Elagabalus' successor; either they had been resurrected or had never been exterminated (p. vii.).

But, it will be asked, what was the object of directing this stream of invective against the unfortunate boy-emperor? Mr. Hay gives a satisfactory answer to this question, which we will deal with in our next.

(To be Continued.) W. MANN.

At the House of Diana.

It being my business once to visit a certain small town, I was offered entertainment for a day and a half by an amiable and elderly spinster. The house was approached by the gates of a lodge which gave due notice to the wayfarer that wealth and gentility dwelt in this enclosure. Firs and beeches handsomely lined the road through the park, leading to the many-chambered mansion, where Diana (if I may so call her) lived the simple life, assisted by three maid-servants, a coachman, and several gardeners. The gardens were extensive, and a door in a garden wall led to a copse (also belonging to Diana) where tall trees gave shade, and glades wandered in and out towards the still waters of a pond; and the place was exceeding quiet.

The house was substantially furnished, and oil-paintings, silver ornaments, expensive wardrobes, and the rest, told a comfortable story of rents, dividends and legacies. From some of the windows, one looked across meadows—very green—where cattle browsed, towards the smoke that curled black over the mills and the dull ways of the town.

From many corners of the rooms little crowds of books peeped—hymn-books, books of devotion, missionary books, lives of chapel worthies, books designed

¹ Introduction to *The Amazing Emperor Heliogabalus*, p. xxvi.

² J. S. Hay, *The Amazing Emperor Heliogabalus*, p. 17.

³ *The Amazing Emperor Heliogabalus*, p. vi.

to awaken sinners, books designed to promote holiness, books calculated to assuage grief amid sickness and poverty, religious novels (one being a highly descriptive tale of Joshua and the walls of Jericho), and a variety of Bibles. Bibles seemed to lie in wait in nooks and niches. A Bible reposed on a cushion in the bedroom allotted to my slumbers; and, over the head of my bed hung a picture of Queen Victoria, girt in a vast crinoline skirt, presenting a Bible to a feathered African chief, who bowed low, while Prince Albert and a group of courtiers stood by in rapture. This portrayed the famous occasion when the Queen proved her extraordinary insight into sociology by saying, "The Bible is the secret of England's greatness."¹ Under the guardianship of this picture I slept well, and the more so, since Diana, as dusk gathered on the plain, had melodized hymns to me on an American organ; and, after retiring to rest, I had read two or three of Paul's epistles. I had observed, in the course of this reading, how Paul built up an enormous theological plan based on a very little knowledge of the facts of the life of Jesus Christ; and anybody who studies the *Galatians*, and *Ephesians*, and *Philippians*, etc., can judge this proposition for himself. And so I slept in the company of the African chief, who, I trust, spent many an evening hour on the banks of the Congo in pondering the Pauline doctrines of Predestination and Atonement, and making these points clear to the members of his Cabinet. Perhaps I slept all the better for having obeyed the commandment on a card which I found interleaved in the New Testament, and which, on behalf of a Bible Reading Society, begged all members to con a portion of the Bible every day.

Next morning, after breakfast, Diana fetched a Bible, laid it on the table, and rang a bell; whereupon the three maid-servants—short, taller, tallest—filed in without smiles, and sat in a row. I could not help regretting that, in the interests of piety, our group was not joined by the coachman and the gardeners. For who that reflects seriously on such problems can deny that a coachman or a gardener has a right to know as much as the African chief knew? So then, while I meditated on the absence of the coachman, Diana read to us, in a clear and curate-like voice, the narrative of Christ before Pilate, and prayed for grace, humility and patience; and lastly the four women recited the Lord's Prayer.

As I came away from Diana's well-stored house, I pursued two lines of reflection. First, I thought upon the value of the Bible cult to the social class of which Diana was a self-satisfied member; secondly, I thought upon the attitude of the poorer classes, represented by the three maid-servants, humbly attending morning prayer. And I may here remark that the maid-servants did, in effect, also represent the coachman and the gardeners. For it is certain that the coachman and the gardeners will seek wives among the maid-servant class; and it is, on the whole, likely that the coachman and the gardeners will preserve at least an outward respect towards the Bible cult so long as their wives support the *Évangél* of the Cross and Paradise. Men may fidget, but women hold the keys.

I do not believe that the wealthier classes deliberately conspire to keep the lower classes in order and submission by using the church, the chapel, the synagogue, and the religion of Yahweh and Christ Jesus. Such a conspiracy, dealing with a large section of the civilized world, would call for enormous labour and concerted effort. But I think the wealthier classes are very well aware that the religion of Yahweh and

Christ Jesus, as expressed through an irrational awe of the Bible text, is a valuable aid in fostering working-class contentment with inferior housing and high prices. In their origins, indeed, I consider that both the Old and the New Testaments contained elements of radicalism and revolt. Terrible is the irony which changed this literature of radicalism and revolt into a hard lump of infallible text, defended against question or the doubting voice of time. And now, as the keen and powerful eye of Nietzsche saw, this Bible text is an agent of sleep, of inaction, of meek obedience to profiteers. The worship of the Bible text induces the habit of leaving social issues to God, and expecting, in Paradise, compensation for earthly diseases and lack-penny slums. The kneeling down just when the joyful sun calls man to work and action; the bending over a rigid text, the everlasting sense of lowness in the presence of an Almighty Autocrat—all this attitude co-operates with Purse and Privilege, and quells the natural desire for a larger health and education. And though the story of Queen Victoria's remark to the African chief is a mere legend, it aptly symbolizes the smug approval which Purse and Privilege bestow upon the old-fashioned grovelling before the so-called Divine Volume.

On the other hand, a considerable proportion of the working-classes continue their voluntary subscriptions of money and service to a Bible cult which positively hinders their economic and mental betterment. Thanks to the beneficent devotion of Voltaire, Paine, Bradlaugh, Foote, Comte, Renan, Strauss, Ingersoll, and others of like temper (I speak not of the living workers), no small liberation has already been realized. That liberation will never be annulled. Even if it rained rabbis, bishops and vicars, the mind of Europe would never be borne back to the faith of Luther, Loyola, Wesley, or Theodor Herzl. But in the people's council-schools, in the people's newspapers, and even in the people's Labour Movements, a mass of ideas still remains, unmelted by the beams of modern science, and rigidly barring the free expansion of the democracy. Women of the working-class still protect the ancient altars of Abraham and Peter, and their lovers and husbands acquiesce. And the worship of the Bible, whether in the Torah text, or the text of the Gospels and Epistles, is a strong auxiliary of the old system of poverty and servitude.

F. J. GOULD.

A BETTER BIBLE.

While the principles of Epictetus and Antoninus are essentially the same, the tone of the one so far differs from that of the other that the two seem, as it were, to have changed characters, or at least situations: the Slave is insistent and imperious, the Emperor gentle and resigned. The former, addressing pupils, presses them with the most searching questions, and unrelentingly submits them to the most vigorous and rigorous practical discipline; the latter, jotting down private notes, often gives way to musing, and shows more of ideality, his thoughts floating in reverie over vast aeons, till the present and the whole lifetime become but as vanishing points. But the two are equally noble, brave, sincere, and magnanimous; each an honour to the human race. High as are the names in Bohn's Classical Series, were my choice thereof limited to two volumes, I think I would take these rugged notes of the Emperor and of the oral teaching of the ex-Slave. With these for moral philosophy, and Plutarch for biography, all who want sacred writings without dreams and fictions of the supernatural have a sufficient Bible, an adequate manual of heroic and generous culture. In them may be read what Shelley had in his thought when he wrote:—

So taught the kings of old philosophy,
Who reigned before religion made men blind.

—James Thomson ("B.V.")

¹ It may, or may not, be well known that Charles Darwin, who contributed to this greatness, and is buried in Westminster Abbey, drew his system of evolution from the Old and New Testaments.

Acid Drops.

As there is no very pronounced expression of feeling on the part of the general public in connection with the mess that has been made of affairs with the Turks, the clergy are sitting on the fence waiting to see whether it will be the wiser policy to denounce the Government or beat the war-drum. In the circumstances the Archbishop of Canterbury took the step of ordering prayers to be offered that wisdom may be given to our political leaders, etc., etc. This is quite safe, since whatever happens one cannot prove that the prayers were not answered and the Government was not given wisdom, or at least as much wisdom as their brains are capable of appreciating. But one may contrast the action of the clergy in face of another war, with their previous beating of the war-drum and the daily song of hate, which has been responsible for the ruin of Europe since the armistice of 1918.

Meanwhile, one must not overlook the religious factor in the situation. Ever since the war started there has been a very influential section of the Church party in this country that has been clamouring for the return of the Mosque of Constantinople to the Christians because it was a Christian Church many centuries ago. To achieve this every possible step has been taken to inflame feeling against the Turk, and constant references made to the disgrace of permitting this one-time Christian Church to remain in the hands of the Mohammedans. And as the driving of the Turk from Constantinople is essential to this end, the clamour has been kept up. And it must not be forgotten that the party who are working for this end are able to exert plenty of political power. There is more of Christian feeling behind the cry to drive the Turk out of Europe than the man in the street is aware of.

The stories of massacres also need to be viewed in their proper perspective. We are not saying that these do not occur. They do, and they seem to be the policy of both parties. It is well known that the massacres of Mohammedans by our protégés the Greeks in the earlier period of the campaign were carefully suppressed in the British Press, although in the French and American papers, as well as papers published in Ceylon and India, accounts appeared. Unfortunately, there appears only too good ground for believing—with caution—that massacres have taken place on both sides. And in the *Times* of Saturday, September 23, Lord Lamington cites a private letter from a "trustworthy officer at Smyrna," who says, "The Greeks behaved pretty disgracefully on their flight down to Smyrna, burning villages, looting, killing, and causing many of their own subjects to be homeless refugees." If one cannot take the stories of massacre as unfounded, it is stupid to accept the anti-Mohammedan tales at their face value.

The testimony of Lord Lamington's witness is enforced by a report from one of Renter's correspondents which appeared in the *Observer* for September 24. He says:—

I was at Ushak, which is fifty miles from Afium Karahissar, when Kemal launched his offensive. There I saw with my own eyes tins of benzine and incendiary bombs being distributed throughout the town, and I was personally warned by Greek officers that the town would be burnt. As I was leaving the town I saw three villages which had already been set on fire. Two hours after I had left Ushak itself was set on fire, and from eye-witnesses I afterwards learnt that practically the whole town was burnt, and that a good many of the Turkish inhabitants had been massacred by the Greek soldiers, and also that pillaging and looting had been the order of the day.

This sort of thing continued throughout the whole retreat and, to give an idea of the devastation wrought, I will cite simply the town burned with the population of each. They are, Ushak (25,000), Alachier (15,000), Salihli (5,000), Cassaba (5,000), Magnesia (40,000), Menemen (2,600). As to events on the Aidin Railway line, the information when I left was rather vague, but towns like Sokia (50,000), Thyra (10,000), and Oldemish (10,000), as

well as nearly every village on the Greek line of retreat had been burned. The demoralization of the Greek troops was complete, and the behaviour of most of the Greek officers disgusting. Many Greek officers personally led the looting and pillaging.

This is detailed enough, and yet those papers which have been dwelling upon the horrors of massacres by the Mohammedans have been curiously silent as to the massacres on the other side. Even Mr. Lloyd George does not appear to have heard of them—at least not to the extent of giving them publicity. But he, too, has his Christian public to consider. We are not, of course, justifying these acts, whether they be called reprisals or not; but it is well to get both sides of the case.

The curious thing is that on the point of view of character there is a fairly general testimony that the Turk stands higher than the Greek. And if one is told that experience shows that the Turk cannot be trusted to rule a Christian population, it is also true that the Greek Christian cannot be trusted to rule a Mohammedan one. In either case we are brought face to face with the customary fact that whatever other factors there are at work, the one that certainly makes for decivilization and the greater inhumanity of man is religion. And whether the greater blame is to be attached to the religion of the Turk or to the religion of the Greek, the fact remains that the religion of both is an intolerable nuisance and prolific cause of enmity and bloodshed. The man who could cause both to forget their religion would be conferring a benefit to real civilization. Religion and decivilization are always and everywhere convertible terms.

Finally, it looks as though the League of Nations might as well disband and be done with it. A League of Nations without power to enforce a single one of its decisions, which remains practically helpless in the face of a threatened war which can only be regarded as the outcome of the bad faith of the Allies to each other, of treaties that ought never to have existed, and of promises that have never been kept, only makes itself an absurdity and stands in the way of something genuine being attempted. We pointed out a week or so ago that a League of Nations that is made up of the old diplomatic gang that has brought Europe to the verge of ruin, either of them or their nominees, is ridiculous. The only way to form a real League of Nations would be for it to contain a representative of every nation, to take care that none of the old gang are there, and for them to make as strong protests as possible on every necessary occasion where required, and without the slightest reference to the convenience of this or that governing group. If it was still ineffective, it would be ineffective with dignity. To-day it is getting dangerously near covering itself with derision. A League of Nations composed of unquestionably honest and impartial men would command the respect of all, and that might lead to its being possessed in time of sufficient power to enforce its decisions. Thomas Paine might well weep were he alive to-day and saw what a poor weak thing his League of States is a century after his death.

And if ever a League of Nations is to prove effective it must be based upon the conception of the equality of nations, and not as at present dominated by the ideas of superiority and inferiority, or worse still, by that of conquerors and conquered. Nations are different, and it is to the health of the world that they should be so. But difference does not of necessity imply better and worse, it may mean simply difference. And that seems one of the hardest of lessons to drive into the head of the average European. Because the Hindoo, the Chinese, the Japanese are different from us therefore they are worse than us. That way ill-treatment, injustice, and resentment inevitably come. A real League of Nations would have to get rid of these ridiculous ideas, to recognize that there are local cultures and customs which it is impossible to replace by importations from a people whose history and traditions are of a quite different kind. And it must also get rid of the ridiculous notion that because one can command a large army it is possible to sit down and decide to what a people shall or shall not sub-

mit. In believing that the Allies, because they defeated the German armies, can do this, we are proving that we have not yet got rid of the war-mind. We are paying the price of our victory in the increased confidence we give to military strength. We laughed at Wilson's idea of Peace without Victory. And we are paying for our laughter the price of Victory without Peace.

We usually get out of the world about what we put into it. And if there is any truth in this, then the way in which a certain class of Christian sees uncleanness in many things is very significant of the type of mind which is attracted to Christianity. We note that Archdeacon Lambert is very much concerned at teachers being invited to study psycho-analysis in connection with the education of children. Like many others he can see little or nothing in psycho-analysis except a study of sexual tendencies. So he writes to the *Times* protesting against teachers being required "to saturate their minds with pornographic detail set forth with a particularity greater than that required for a medical student." The language is significant of the Christian mind of the Archdeacon. So long as the subject named has anything to do with sex to the pious mind of this priest it is "pornographic." We wonder what medical students will think of their being accused of soaking their minds in pornography because their studies involve acquaintance with anatomical and physiological details that are characteristic of sexual differences. The pornography is not in the subject but in the mind of the Archdeacon. Such men cannot hear the word "sex" unless it suggests something unclean or pornographic. If they only knew how they expose themselves to a physiologist when they write in this style they would probably remain silent.

It may surprise the Archdeacon to be told that although an application of psycho-analysis to education may involve a consideration of sex, as indeed it does in any system of education that is concerned with boys or girls, yet the larger part of the application may proceed in the absence of such considerations. Besides, it is, after all, a question of fact. If the teachings of psycho-analysis be true then we must apply it—consciously or unconsciously—if we wish our education to be of value. To object to it is like objecting to children being taught to speak because they may learn to swear. The probability is that it is the question of sex that chiefly attracted the Archdeacon in connection with psycho-analysis, and his Christian training may well be responsible for this.

Cardinals Tacci and Rauuzzi have been for a joy-ride. They went in an aeroplane, and are the first high dignitaries of Mother Church who have had this experience. The founder of Christianity, however, without the encumbrance of an aeroplane, ascended to a much greater height than the cardinals aforesaid. And he must have travelled at an infinitely greater speed. The twin stars recently discovered by Professor Plaskett are considered to be about 10,000 light-years distant from the earth, and light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles per second. If heaven is beyond these stars, at what rate did Jesus travel there? There is, however, one important difference between his joy-ride and that of the cardinals. The latter came back; the former still enjoys the freedom of the sky.

The Rev. S. Chadwick, President of the National Free Church Council, strongly deprecates the use of church vestries for whist drives, card-playing, or dances. "To try to capture men with billiards and buns was an insult to manhood." The bare fact that such a warning should be necessary indicates very clearly what has become of the "stern stuff" of which the old-time Puritan was made. His modern descendants are too far down the incline that leads to the reconciliation of reason and authority to appreciate very keenly "an insult to manhood."

We quite sympathize with the evident desire of the present editor of *John Bull* to be quite above suspicion,

but we question whether assuming an attitude of shocked virtue, and making an appeal to the more bigoted and the more religiously ignorant section of the community, is the best way of achieving this end. For example, a few weeks ago we called attention to his demand that the authorities should suppress the sale of Bishop Brown's *Communism and Christianity*, which is on sale at the *Freethinker* office. Presumably the present editor has not the same government patronage that was enjoyed by its late editor, for we have heard nothing of the matter, and the book is still on sale. Now we see in a recent issue it is demanding the suppression of another book by a Miss Edith Mason, a book which it says is full of the most "blatant blasphemy." We have not seen the book, we have no special desire to see it, and we know nothing of Miss Mason. But we suggest that the cry for suppression may be overdone, and this extreme care for the safety of the Christian religion may awaken a little suspicion here and there. There is such a thing as being overfastidious, and we question whether any book that could be written against religion could be nearly so poisonous to the health of the community as the atmosphere of half-revealed scandals and immoralities with which papers of the *John Bull* type surround their readers.

Says the outraged *John Bull* :—

After all, England is a Christian country. The King is head of the Church of England as by law established, which baptizes, marries, and buries us, and the people as a nation worship the founder of Christianity and honour his Mother.

This is very piteous, and one can imagine tears of indignation filling the eyes of the writer—unless one of them happens to be closed in a wink. But if it is meant seriously, then we would like to gently suggest—if we shall not be suppressed for suggesting—that the Church of England neither baptizes, marries, nor buries all of us, that the religion of the King is settled for him, not by him, and it is unfair to saddle him with its faults, and that the extent of our Christianity is really a doubtful quantity. Finally, we would suggest that the editor of *John Bull* should awaken to the fact that the war is over, the mania for suppression is not nearly so strong, and the cry not so profitable, while, finally, it used to be our boast that England was a free country where the censor was not welcome and people could write pretty much what they pleased. On the whole liberality may help circulation as much now as illiberality, and it is certain to do more good. We may also suggest to the editor of *John Bull*—the thought does not appear to have occurred to him—that if really vicious books appeal to a public it is because of the public already having a vicious taste. And from that we draw two conclusions. First, the fact says little for the influence of our religion "as by law established" with a real live King at its head, secondly, the only way to make vicious books innocuous is to educate the public above them. On second thoughts, that might injure the circulation of more than one of our daily and weekly papers.

Take another aspect of this same question of modesty. If we get down to bed-rock, what is a very large part of Christian literature and of Christian preaching but a loud shouting of the superiority of Christians over the rest of the world? And, again, cant is requisitioned to cloak the egotism. The Christian does not say "I am the foremost man in the world." That would be shocking. He simply says that other Christians are better than all non-Christians—and he leaves them to say the same thing of himself. And when one comes to look at the sense of the superiority of Christians, it is not only confined to Christians, but is a product of Christian self-advertisement. Ever since Christians have existed they have been writing themselves elaborate testimonials as to their own value and their own virtues. We admit that this is the surest manner of getting the testimonial that one desires, but its source renders it suspect. And it would be really impressive if these testimonials came from non-Christians. We should like to see how many testimonials can be produced from the members of other religions, and from those of no religion as to the degree of modesty, kindness, and generosity manifested by Christians. It would be much more impressive—if it could be obtained.

C. Cohen's Lecture Engagements.

October 1, Swansea; October 8, Manchester; October 15, Glasgow; October 22, Preston; October 29, Stratford Town Hall; November 12, Birmingham; November 19, Plymouth; November 26, Pembroke Chapel, Liverpool; December 3, Stockport; December 10, Leicester; December 17, Watford.

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.

SEARCHLIGHT (S. A.).—Certainly you are eligible to become a member of the N.S.S. We shall have much pleasure in endorsing your application so soon as it is received. The fact of one living abroad is no bar to membership. We have many members out of England. Glad to see your letter to the "Friend."

C. PHILIP (Ceylon).—Thanks for cutting. See "Acid Drops."

D. DUNCAN.—Your notice of Branch meeting did not reach us till Wednesday morning. Lecture notices must reach us by the first post on Tuesday, otherwise they cannot be inserted for that week's issue.

J. BREESE.—We have some recollection of the cuttings and of dealing with them. Glad you liked Mr. Cutner's articles on Birth Control. Now that the movement is growing there is a tendency to forget the part played by Freethinkers in it in earlier days. There is nothing unusual in this. Most of the reform movements are nursed by Freethinkers. Others come along when it is safe. The matter you mention is an example of what may be done by one man who sticks to the work and is determined not to be beaten. We have an unbeatable case. All we want is unbeatable men.

H. G. (Glasgow).—There was no need whatever for you to hesitate in writing. We are always pleased to hear from those interested in the paper. The publisher of Mr. Podmore's *New Spiritualism* is T. Fisher Unwin, London. We fancy the price is 10s. 6d. It is not, we think, out of print. Pleased you found the *Other Side of Death* so useful to an understanding of Spiritualism. It is one thing to dismiss a belief as false, but it is another and a more important thing to understand it.

D. P. S.—Thanks, shall appear. We are not aware of having a "harassed face," although we admit that we have enough to furnish an excuse for it if we had.

B. MCKAY.—Sorry we are unable to use the verses sent. Not quite up to standard.

T. T. EDWARDS.—Our points of view are so different that we appear to be almost speaking in different tongues. But we suggest to you that the fact of God punishing the persecutors does not undo the fact of the persecution. And if God can so manipulate things as to punish those who persecute, he would have surely have done better to have interfered in time to prevent the persecution taking place. We are putting the ethical against the police court point of view.

H. BARBER.—Thanks, shall appear. Hope you will soon recover your usual health. Subject is already fixed for the Preston lecture.

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 Pioncer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and not to the Editor.

All Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to "The Pioncer 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.

The Case of J. W. Gott.

WHEN Mr. J. W. Gott was liberated from prison, after serving nine months' imprisonment for committing what the late Lord Chief Justice stupidly called the "dangerous crime" of blasphemy, I mentioned that his complaint—diabetes—had made rapid headway during the time he had been in prison, and that he would be unable to resume any sort of occupation for some time. Since then I have had enquiries as to what was being done for him, and have several small sums sent on for whatever fund it was found advisable to raise. As I also said, there was no need to hurry about the latter, as we were taking steps to see that all immediate needs were met, and it was advisable to have the full facts before us.

The facts are briefly these: Mr. Gott's health is completely broken. Those who knew him would have been shocked, as I was, could they have seen him directly after his release. He has seen several doctors, including one specialist, and all agree that a period of complete rest is essential. Whether he will ever regain his health is a matter of doubt, but such measure of it as may be his will depend upon the care he is able to take now.

In the circumstances I thought it best to advise that he went away at once, and on bringing the matter before the last meeting of the National Secular Society's Executive, the meeting warmly approved what had been done and promised support in any steps I found necessary.

Mr. Gott is at present at Blackpool, where I hope he will remain for the next three or four months. But that cannot be done without someone meeting the necessary expense, and to meet that is the purpose of my writing here. Mr. Gott's personal needs are not of the extravagant order, but I do not see how one can live on the most economical scale, particularly with the extra expenses that illness always involves, for three or four months without facing an expenditure of at least some £60. Mr. Gott himself is without any personal resources whatever, and it is therefore left for others to provide what is necessary.

However much we may disagree with some of the methods of propaganda adopted by Mr. Gott I do not think there can be any question of his sincerity, his honesty, or his courage. He is a victim of one of the most infamous laws on our statute books, and so long as any man or woman suffers as a consequence of its operations we must do what we can to protect them in whatever direction is possible. That possibility is now before us all, and I do not think there is any need to stress the matter. Nor should there be any difficulty in raising the small sum required. A hundred of our readers should be able to do it between them without special effort. And the whole matter should be disposed of in a week or so.

Contributions should be sent direct to me addressed to the Freethinker Office, 61, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

It is to our laity, and to that part especially which has little ostensible religious character, that every successive victory over bigoted intolerance is due. Hence it is to the negative, not to the positive side of Protestantism, that we must ascribe our mental energy and intelligence.—Francis William Newman.

Sugar Plums.

At the request of the Executive, following a resolution passed at the last Annual Conference, we print in this week's issue an outline of the new Trust Deed of the National Secular Society. We consider this an important move forward, since it gives complete security to the funds of the Society, and places that side of the organization on exactly the same level as the dissenting churches. For the future those who wish to benefit the National Secular Society by either gift or bequest may do so with a feeling of absolute security both as to receipt and administration. We know of two wills that have been drawn in favour of the N.S.S., and of another that is in contemplation. We commend this Trust Deed to the consideration of all our friends.

Mr. Cohen lectures to-day (October 1) at Swansea. The meeting place is in the Elysium, and the subject "Some Delusions About a Future Life." There will only be one meeting, in the evening at 7, and we hope to be able to report that the hall was well filled. Next Sunday Mr. Cohen will lecture at Manchester.

The Birmingham Branch has been experiencing the usual trouble in finding a suitable meeting place, but has now secured for this season the Brassworkers' Hall at 70 Lionel Street. Lionel Street is only a few minutes' walk from the Town Hall, so that it is quite central, and we hope will prove quite successful. Mr. Lloyd gives the opening lecture there to-day (October 1), his subject "The Great Ghost Illusion." The meeting commences at 7, and we hope that all Birmingham will see that the new venture has a good send off.

This question of halls is one that the party will have to face seriously one day. When prices become normal again it may be advisable to see what can be done in owning halls. Hall companies have been formed before, and properly managed there is no reason why they should not be made commercially successful. At present our propaganda is seriously crippled owing to the difficulty in securing halls. And this trouble grows more, not less, acute. Nothing can be done at the moment that we can see; we mention the matter now so that some of our friends may put on their considering caps.

This afternoon (October 1) Mr. A. D. McLaren will break new ground at Croydon. He will speak at 5.30 in Katherine Street on "The Old Faith and the New." There is scope for extensive freethought work in Croydon, and local friends of our cause should see that this district receives regular attention.

The South London Branch of the N.S.S. announces the opening of its autumn session with a social at Trade Union Hall, 30 Brixton Road, S.W.9, this evening (October 1) at 7 o'clock. Any members of other branches, with their friends, will be welcome, and we hope to hear of a large attendance.

Mr. F. P. Corrigan had a busy day last Sunday. In Brockwell Park at midday he debated the subject, "There is a personal God," with Mr. Hand, of the Guild of Ransom, a Roman Catholic organization. There was a good attendance, including many strangers, and at the conclusion there were several applications for N.S.S. membership forms. Mr. Corrigan also had good audiences in the same park at 3 o'clock, and at West Ham in the evening. At each place there was a good sale of literature, which is a tribute to the interest aroused by the speaker.

The Glasgow Branch of the N.S.S. will hold its next and last ramble of the season to-day (October 1). The destination this time will be the Whangie, near Milngavie, and members and friends who intend to be present will meet at the corner of Glassford Street and Trongate at 10.30 a.m. prompt.

Thoughts at a Graveside.

DEATH is the great leveller and reconciler. It is the one sure thing that befalls all that live—though certain muddled egotists believe, against all reason and experience, that "millions will never die." God had no need to send his children "strong delusions," born, cradled, reared and buried in such as the most have been. Christianity's great boast is that it takes the sting from death, a claim expressed in the most striking and beautiful of poetical metaphors:—

Oh, Grave, where is thy victory!
Oh, Death, where is thy sting!

But it is not true. The Christian grieves over a loved one quite as much as does the Freethinker. Both are ultimately identical in their mental and physical organization, only differing in degrees and poignancies of the one human emotion. As the one dieth, so dieth the other, verily they have all one breath; in, at least, this last scene of all man hath no pre-eminence over the beast. The Freethinker's consolation is that there is no consolation; yet, in his knowledge of the inevitability and universality of death, in his rational, habituated philosophy, there grows up in him a kind of gentle, soothing, not insensitive stoicism, which, if it does not console, helps him to endure.

In those solemn hours of sad decorum, often of sincere and desolating grief, in what has been called "this empire of reason and religion," when the great, yet strangely simple change has overtaken some beloved and familiar friend or relative, who now lies mute and still, insensible of all that used to stir the mobile feature, the willing limb, the smile and sigh, the tear and laughter, fled from, or frozen, at last in that silent cold responseless *rigor mortis*; when, called together again by a fellow feeling of homage, convention or respect, friends gather, as in family reunion, in the house of death, and one by one with softest tread, as though they "feared the slumberer might stir!" go ben the room for a reverent look at those still and heedless features pillowed in their last repose:—

How beautiful is death,
Death and his brother sleep!

And yet, already, how kindred to the clay!

Some such thoughts were suggested to, or re-awakened in, the mind of the writer lately at the funeral of his wife's aunt in Glasgow. The deceased had been a woman of strong rational-religious mind, with no illusions in life, perhaps not even religious ones, a woman of practical reflection and resolution in national, social, financial and domestic affairs, widowed for many years, yet keeping her family together with wise and firm and loving guidance, till the war came, and robbed her of her two elder sons, which event, while it failed to shake her "cast iron faith," yet left an abiding anguish in the secret recesses of the maternal breast, and which sometimes betrayed itself in the exclamation: "Oh, my poor boys!" The writer was her occasional guest when London speakers came to Glasgow, and the greatest unkindness he ever did his hostess was to prevail upon her to come and hear Mr. Cohen. She had briskly and readily consented, and sat through the lecture, which was one of the speaker's mildest deliverances, but had evidently cut deep, for at the close she said, "Oh, never again! I could never listen to that kind of preaching"—making a joke of it even in her displeasure. In this iconoclasm of our time, age, temperament and training have to be reckoned with. Reason is not enough. There is always the individual and social atmosphere of tradition, habit, sentiment,

etc., surrounding the person, the prejudices and illusions necessary, as it may seem to comfortable and conformable existence. Some few discard those familiar psychological garments without a pang of regret, and take to the wider ocean of pure reason as complacently and naturally as ducklings to a pond. In others the new idea threatens to "shatter all their bulk," and if at last reluctantly, inevitably accepted, the whole mental and moral equipment to suit the nobler, larger thought, must of necessity be rebuilt almost from the base. To others, again, only the incidence of some great emotional crisis will point the way either to reason or religion—either conclusion reached by "rational" processes. With still others, throughout their whole lives all change is resented and repelled; as they were born and bred, they die the same.

In the case of the dear, dead lady of these notes, so wrapped in snowy linen in her ebon casket and straightened for the tomb, she had not changed her way of life and thought, and in the great change of death had found the solution, if there is solution beyond the grave—a doubt that becomes certainty as one gazes on the still lineaments of human clay.

A big, homely, matter of fact clergyman quite perfunctorily officiated at the house—quite rational, also, in all things but this—a decent, sensible, educated gentleman, a strange paradox, yet fitting in harmoniously with the nature of the ceremony. The funeral was by motor, twelve miles to the beautiful valley of Strathblane, by a lovely winding, undulating, sylvan road—a road being presently and magnificently widened and tram-railed for the teeming generations yet to come! In the midst of life we are in death, yet the reverse is as true. The living must still be our immediate concern, if the dead, mutely but eloquently, claim our profound, if passing, respect and sympathy as they pass to the oblivion of kindly kindred earth. Another clergyman stood waiting for us in his country churchyard, a fine looking old gentleman—whom the writer, many years before, had heard preach a merely subjective heaven, not one beyond those glittering stars, but one within us, as in his "Master's" words, or Milton's: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." With hands clasped in front of him, head slightly bent, and features seriously composed, this good man—Mr. Moyes, who had preached, before kings, seeming a necessary and inseparable part of the old world rural scene—stood there humbly and respectfully awaiting the coming of our unillustrious dead. Few and short were the prayers he uttered when we lowered "our sister" into the rich mould of that country churchyard. "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," he said, as he scattered on the coffin a handful of earth, and, when the ceremony was over, withdrew with the same unaffected grace and dignity of his office and arrival. One could not but feel grateful for such kindly unassuming attention from so good a man.

Two surviving sons and a tearful daughter, the separation now complete, left their mother sleeping there. Had that mother but gone upon a journey how fain had been those filial hearts to accompany her, to whatever bourne. But here was the parting of the ways. The mother must go her silent way alone and tarry till they also come. The parting place was beautiful enough, in that lovely spot under the Campsie Hills, amid the scenes of her early married life—those scenes the dead would see, and love, and remember no more! But from this rich and sacred soil, even from that "tongueless silence of the dreamless dust," would spring the flowers of hope and love and memory, and in the refining processes even of sorrow and separation, making ever more fair and sweet the garden of the mind.

A. MILLAR.

Pater the Epicurean.

EACH of us has felt on some spring day that life holds more than we can ever hope to realize. On that day there has been present in us an expectancy, a hopefulness, a sort of wondering readiness to accept from the hands of a more fertile life, a larger and more overflowing measure of happiness. The very tang in the air, the very freshness of the new year birth colours, the quiet placidity of the atmosphere, all hold the promise of something more, something greater and more beneficent, which is about to fall to our lot.

Even in the grey days of autumn, when the death of the year is at hand, a similar wondering expectancy will sometimes flit through the brain. A rift in the clouds, showing the pellucid blue edged with white through which perchance a watery ray of sunshine glows, will stimulate the half definite thought of some inexpressible, unattainable bliss, which might be obtained if only it were possible to pursue it successfully.

The creation of this mental exaltation is a natural consequent of reading Pater, and it is a consequent of the existence of that exaltation in his mind. Always it is felt that, when reading his stories of life, and that is in the main the character of his work, critical, appreciative and fictional, on turning the next page some unimagined splendour will be displayed, some inevitable humanity, loving humanity, will fall, gemlike, from the heaven wherein the wizard dwells.

He is completely concerned with this attitude of expectation of delight, of seeking in life always more than can be found. None of his select band of heroes but has it, and none of them but he tries to make more definitely the promise which they, in common with him, found so delicate, yet perennial, a flower in their lives. It is a hopeless task. The things sensed, but beyond the grasp, felt yet unsymbolized and impossible to reproduce for transmission, cannot be fully developed and realized by imperfect humanity. But in a less perfectly knowledgeable condition of understanding what precisely they are about, that is the object which all artists, great and small, set before themselves.

Thus it is with Pater, as he says of that wholly expectant "Child in the House," "a constant substitution of the typical for the actual took place in his thoughts," but the typical human being, of whom he thought much, and of whom he drew so many charming pictures, was he who, more than the generality of his brothers, was sensitive to impressions, and who, being so sensitive, was also so placed as to be fortunately impressed with the particular pleasure of beauty, the iridescent, which belongs so intimately to the state of expectancy, for that it always is suggestive of what might be known, what might be felt, were it not for the limitations of the human perceptions.

But it is for the artist of whatever sort to seize, hold and symbolize those suggestions, to make them definite so that they can be laid before the minds of his fellow men to arouse in them the emotion which the artist only or he who has the power of appreciation sans performance that is symbolism to feel. The making of infinite suggestion definite is not an easy task, but it is one that Pater ever and again essayed. Bringing his deep historical knowledge, his penetrating insight into the moods and desires of his particular type of man, his magnificent sense of beauty into play, he did, just as the Hellenic masters, endeavour to weave into definite form all of the indefinite charm and exaltation, which he felt to be present in those phases of life, which made a particular appeal to him. It is as if he were trying to do in his own way precisely what he attributes to Euripides in the Bacchanals. He says:—

Such concrete character Greek poet or sculptor, from time to time, impressed on the vague world of popular belief and usage around him; and in the

Bacchanals of Euripides we have an example of the figurative and imaginative power of poetry, selecting and combining at will from that mixed and floating mass, weaving the many coloured threads together, blending the various phases of legend—all the light and shade of the subject—into a shape, substantial and firmly set, through which a mere fluctuating tradition might retain a permanent place in men's imaginations. Here, in what Euripides really says, in what we actually see on the stage, we are dealing with a single real object, not with uncertain effects of half-fancied objects.

Never in the course of his work does Walter Pater forget the effect, human, consoling, inspiring, that is present in beauty, and even where he deals with the most concrete example, he does not fail to mark the suggestion, the indeterminate fancies, which are bound in imaginative minds given to æsthetic contemplation, to flit round and embellish the object of beauty. Always he is ready to emphasize that function of art. Ready as he is to give honour and praise to the concrete results of creative labour, he is invariably more concerned with its infinite and indefinable suggestion. To his mind it is this indefinite, unrealizable, unstable and almost insensible flicker of fancy round the object that has given to the human soul more than ever the actual definite good of the intrinsic quality of the object—if there is such an intrinsic quality. It is just that insubstantial but very present reality of indetermination, of infinite possibility surrounding an object which gives the sweet savour, humanly speaking, to religion and magic, the both of which are so closely akin.

It is for that reason that Pater is so devoted to the Greeks, to the poetry of Homer, whose charm holds so much of magic, withal a magic that seems to the modern, prosaic, scientific mind, a little childlike, but is none the less charming for that. Of the magical properties of the Homeric Greek equipment he says:—

If the golden images move like living creatures, and the armour of Achilles, so wonderfully made, lifts him like wings, this again is because the imagination of Homer is really under the stimulus of delightful artistic objects actually seen. Only those to whom such artistic objects manifest themselves through real and powerful impressions of their wonderful qualities, can invest them with properties magical or miraculous.

These two main sides to Pater's mind are always apparent in his work. His appreciation of the concrete beauty of an æsthetic object is shown both by his critical work, and by his own constructive labours. Indeed he has gone so far as to proclaim that it is with an idea of definition, of making concrete, that he has written some of his work. In one of the introductory paragraphs to the essay dealing with "Demeter and Persephone" he says:—

The present essay is an attempt to select and weave together for those who are now approaching the deeper study of Greek thought, whatever details in the development of the myth, arranged with a view rather to a total impression than to the debate of particular points, may seem likely to add to their stock of poetical expressions, and to add to this some criticisms on the expression, which it has left of itself in extant art and poetry.

In his desire to add to the stock of poetical impressions, he immediately emphasizes his unflinching and continued wish to attract the generality of men towards the exaltation which he himself knows so well, and which he always experiences as a result of the indefinite suggestion of a fragmentary story. He thus comes to deal with such differing characters in place and time as "Apollo in Picardy," "Denis of Auxerre," "Duke Carl of Rosenmold," "Sebastian van Storck," and those creatures purely of his imagina-

tion, Marius and Gaston. All these are deeply imbued with that spirit of expectation, that continuous, delirious, half fearful anticipation of new and overwhelming pleasures to come, and it is in his endeavour to make concrete, explicable, the quality of these people, inherently similar as it is, that Pater devotes the attention of his readers to the same sort of prescience or prevision of the possible delight and charm of simple things.

But his appreciation of æsthetic objects, and his view of the power of external beauty for the training of appreciation, of judgment, it is impossible to show better than in his own words:—

A very intimate sense of the expressiveness of outward things, which ponders, listens, penetrates, where the earlier, less developed consciousness passed lightly by, is an important element in the temper of our modern poetry.

It is no less important as a guide to the stimulus, which was the cause of so much of the inspired beauty of Pater's writings; it is what attracts him to Hellenic art, and it is what in his sketches of human character he is constantly trying to portray in as definite a manner as the subject by its nature will allow. And it is little wonder that he so loves this beauty of outward things, when it is found that he proclaims that—

to follow that way is an initiation, by which they [the modern poets] will become able to distinguish in art, speech, feeling, manners, in men and life generally, what is genuine, animated, expressive, from what is only conventional and derivative, and therefore inexpressive.

These perhaps slight indications of the feeling which animates Pater's work are sufficient to dispose of the general and preconceived idea that he was devoted rather to the production of preciousness in words than to anything of a human character. It is barely credible that he should have been so misjudged. It is true that he loved the intellectual and sensual satisfaction of beauty, that he loved them deeply, and that he felt that the world would be a better place for man if he would only permit himself to develop these satisfactions as completely as possible. That is not an original idea. To reach those whom Pater undoubtedly desired to reach the idea had to be freshly and pointedly stated. Was it not therefore better to touch the fundamental feelings that he desired to stimulate by touching them in their most susceptible part by the beauty of his language?

Nor is it possible to read very much of the manword of Pater without even more striking indications of his love for humanity than those already touched upon. It was not only the precious æsthetic things that he loved. He was equally open to the stimulus of the simple and beautiful. It was indeed only through his ever-readiness to accept, his ever-watchfulness to intercept the evanescent pin point of beauty as it flickered before him, much like the unattainable will-o-the-wisp, that he was so readily and completely able to depict the fluctuations, the experiences of the acutely sensitive appreciative mind.

He, no less than Ruskin or Morris, desired beauty to be a characteristic of all things, but his peculiar temperament carried him further through the mists of time, and caused him more or less to neglect the period by which they were peculiarly attracted. Of course he did not actually neglect the beauties of Gothic and the Mediæval. He has dealt profoundly and pointedly with those beauties, but it seems to be clear that a deeper impression was made upon his mind by Greek art, and its consequent, the Renaissance, than by that of the intervening ages.

Twice indeed in the brief pages devoted to the "Heroic Age in Greek Art" he has made statements very similar to what both Morris and Ruskin have said

of the Mediæval times. "We have here," he says, "and in no mere fragments, the spectacle of a universal application to the instruments of daily life, of fitness and beauty, in a temper still unsophisticated, as also unelevated by the divination of the spirit of man." And again, "Use and beauty are still undivided; all that men's hands are set to make has still a fascination alike for workmen and spectator."

G. E. FUSSELL.

(To be Concluded.)

The National Secular Society and Its Trust Deed.

FOR very many years Freethought Propaganda suffered in this country from the fact that bequests to a Society existing for the purposes for which the Society existed had been declared by the Courts to be illegal. Many legacies had fallen due to the Society, but had been set aside on an order from the Courts. This gross injustice was finally wiped out, at the cost of lengthy and expensive litigation, by a decision of the House of Lords in the case of *Bowman v. the Secular Society Limited*. Since then several legacies have been duly paid over to both the Secular Society Limited and the National Secular Society, in one case by the Public Trustee. That chapter of our history may therefore be regarded as closed.

In view of this new position the Annual Conference of the National Secular Society decided that its funds should be governed by Trust Deed, thus placing the financial side of its operations on the same basis as that of the Free Churches.

The Trust Deed is dated August, 1921, and provides that the Trustees shall be not less than five, three of whom shall be the President, Secretary, and Treasurer, in virtue of their offices. Other trustees may be appointed by the Executive, or by the Executive acting under the instructions of the Annual Conference.

The functions of the trustees shall be to receive, hold, and invest all legacies or gifts, to hold its funds generally, and to expend the same in carrying out the objects for which the Trust exists. These objects are the "Principles and Objects of the N.S.S." as at present existing, or as amended at any future annual conference.

The trustees are elected for five years, the two elected ones at present being Mr. T. Robertson, of Glasgow, and Mr. J. H. McClusky, of Plymouth—both old and respected members of the National Secular Society. The usual provisions are made for the office of a trustee being considered vacant, with the additional one that any trustee who declines to carry out a properly passed resolution of the Executive shall be deemed to have resigned his office.

In addition to the general funds and properties of the Society the Trustees have the power to accept trusts for particular purposes so long as these purposes come within the scope of the Society's Principles and Objects.

The Trust Deed arranges for proper keeping and auditing of accounts, and provides the customary safeguards for the holding and investing of the Society's funds.

In the case of a dissolution or winding up of the Society, any funds remaining after the discharge of all liabilities shall be paid over to a society or to societies having the same or similar objects to those of the National Secular Society.

It will be seen that the Trust Deed provides all the security required for the receiving and holding of funds or property of any kind or description. It also leaves the actual management of the Society's affairs in the hands of the Executive acting under the Annual Conference. Those who wish to benefit the N.S.S. may therefore do so without fear as to the receipt or proper use of the funds received. Financially, it may be said that the Trust Deed places the National Secular Society upon exactly the same level as the Dissenting Churches, and had an instrument such as this been possible fifty or sixty years ago many thousands of pounds would have been saved to the movement. It may safely be said that the Trust Deed marks one more step on the road to complete religious equality.

The Unchartered Sea.

Disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of fate, to worship at the shrine that his own hands have builded; undismayed by the empire of chance, to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life; proudly conscious of the irresistible forces that tolerate for a moment, his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power.

—"Mysticism and Logic," Bertrand Russell.

Who then shall know and who shall understand?
Shall God in his ethereal abode
Incline his ear, stretch forth his mighty hand
To succour this frail speck of living dust
Cast scornfully in an unchartered sea?

There dwelt an Universe within my brain,
Where truth's far beacon gleamed, though fitfully;
And faith upheld by love went by my side,
On life's unchartered sea.

But love before the tempest quailed and fled;
And faith was drowned in time's engulfing wave;
Then truth no more her holy radiance shed
To pilot me.

Yet, undismayed, this speck of living dust
Bereft of love, desire, faith, and hope,
Shall never bow to fate's proud tyranny,
But still to truth's receding haven grope,
Until the quest is ended and I sleep
In sweet tranquillity.

And none shall know and none shall understand;
Nor any God, nor any human hand
Stretch forth to waken me;
A tiny speck of dust, no more storm-tossed
On an unchartered sea.

PERCY ALLOTT.

The Celestial Shopkeeper.

ONE hesitates to fall foul of a good-natured broad churchman and ripe scholar such as "Artifex" of the *Manchester Guardian*; but in an article, lately, on the churches and peace he commits himself and his religion to our tender mercies, and gives us a classic example of the theological *reductio ad absurdum* in the following words:—

God stands, if I may be allowed the comparison, like a shopkeeper behind his counter, ready to supply what we want provided we are ready to pay the price. We can have just whatever we choose. If we want revenge, and race supremacy, and individual and national gain, we can have them, but at a cost at which I shudder to think. On the other hand we can have peace at the usual price of peace.

This is no doubt a guileless utterance, and a faithful saying, excellent also as a moral and political metaphor; religiously, I fear, it is all too naively anthropomorphic to please the modern mystifiers. In their mildest sense the words reduce God to the level of a Lord Northcliffe, from his shop or journal, "giving the people what they want." In their wider implication God is a mere purveyor, not a power; man is sovereign and not God; which lands the good "Artifex" of the *Manchester Guardian* among the unredeemed of the *Freethinker*. There is indeed, in this age of reason, science, logic, and common-sense enlightenment, only one way of escape for the idea of God, and that is contained in the prayer of another great churchman:—

Hold Thou my feet, I do not ask to see
The distant scene, one step enough for me.

We Freethinkers can but hope it is not a crime to walk forward with our eyes open.

AMOS.

There is no literary crime greater than that of exciting a social, and especially a theological odium against ideas that are purely scientific, none against which the disapproval of every educated man ought to be more strongly expressed. The republic of letters owes it to its own dignity to tolerate no longer offences of that kind.—John William Draper, "Intellectual Development of Europe."

Correspondence.

EVOLUTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I think if Mr. Mann will re-read his original article, he will see that the close connection of Mr. Bernard Shaw's name with those of Mr. Chesterton and Mr. Belloc, makes it appear that he considered Mr. Shaw as an opponent of evolution. The sentence following on the names is as follows: "Our Press suffers them gladly and gives prominence to their tirades against Darwinism." This again makes it appear so. Anyhow, he has now said definitely that he did not intend to make out that Mr. Shaw was opposed to evolution, so I have no grumble on that point.

It is also pleasant to know that Mr. Mann does not call evolution Darwinism. What, then, does he mean by Darwinism? The article could have been headed "Evolution in the Light of To-day," and still have been correct. My own interpretation of Darwinism is evolution by the method of natural selection (more appropriately unnatural selection). Mr. Shaw calls this Neo-Darwinism, but in any case I think it is the method most generally accepted. If it is the accepted scientific method of evolution, then here is one example of Mr. Shaw's opposition to the scientists.

Natural selection banished mind from the universe; but many think that the mind which produces such useful journals as the *Freethinker* had also a share in evolution.

I will quote Mr. Shaw's position as to evolution from *Back to Methuselah*, p. 16:—

The impulse that produces evolution is creative. The will to do anything can and does, at a certain pitch of intensity set up by conviction of its necessity, create and organize new tissue to do it with. If the weight lifter, under the trivial stimulus of an athletic competition, can 'put up a muscle,' it seems reasonable to believe that an equally earnest and convinced philosopher could 'put up a brain.' Both are directions of vitality to a certain end. Evolution shows us this direction of vitality doing all sorts of things.

Here follow examples. That sums up Mr. Shaw's attitude, and it would be interesting if Mr. Mann will sum up the attitude of Darwinism for comparison.

Freethinkers propound that now we know that there is no God to solve our problems for us, man himself has to solve his own problems. Mr. Shaw enlarges this and points out that Life itself, by evolution, has solved its own problems so far, and will have to solve them in the future by the same means.

To oppose religion is, as Freethinkers well know, a necessity which the public in general does not appreciate, but to oppose current science at the same time is sufficient to arouse a complete boycott against anyone but such a man as Mr. Shaw. He once wrote that the change from compulsory baptism to compulsory vaccination was accepted without a murmur. This illustrates his attitude very nicely.

HERBERT LORD.

Halifax.

Obituary.

In the presence of many relatives and friends the remains of Daisy Florence High, aged 10 years, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. C. High, were interred in West Ham Cemetery on Saturday, September 23. Mr. High is an active and respected member of the West Ham Branch of the N.S.S. which was well represented at the graveside. A Secular Service was conducted by Mr. R. H. Rosetti, the President of the Branch. The sympathy of all who know them will be extended to Mr. and Mrs. High in their bereavement.



LATEST N.S.S. BADGE.—A single Pansy flower, size as shown; artistic and neat design in enamel and silver; permanent in colour; has been the silent means of introducing many kindred spirits. Brooch or Stud Fastening, 1s. post free. Special terms to Branches.—From

THE GENERAL SECRETARY, N.S.S., 62 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.4.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.

INDOOR.

LABOUR CHURCH (27 Upper Marsh, North Lambeth): 7.30, Mr. F. P. Corrigan, "The Spirit of the Age."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Trade Union Hall, 30 Brixton Road, S.W.9, three minutes from Kennington Oval Tube Station and Kennington Gate): 7, A Social—Instrumental and Vocal Music, Recitals.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C.2): 11, S. K. Ratcliffe, "India—Transition or Catastrophe?"

OUTDOOR.

CROYDON (Katherine Street): 5.30, Mr. A. D. McLaren, "The Old Faith and the New."

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

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Brassworkers' Hall, 70 Lionel Street): 7, Mr. J. T. Lloyd, "The Great Ghost Illusion."

LEEDS BRANCH N.S.S. (2 Central Road, Duncan Shop Assistants' Rooms): 7, Councillor Joe Thornton, "Kipling." Questions and discussion invited. New members wanted.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Mr. Edgar C. Eagle, "J. M. Synge."

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (The Newcastle Socialist Society's premises, 23 Royal Arcade): Discussion Circle. The subject for next Tuesday's discussion (October 3) at 7.30 will be "The Decline of the Gods," to be opened by Mr. T. Haxton.

SWANSEA AND DISTRICT BRANCH N.S.S. (Elysium Hall, High Street): 7, Mr. Chapman Cohen, "Some Delusions About a Future Life."

FREETHINKER (47) seeks employment; thirty years' business experience, chiefly in Wholesale Paper Trade. Indoor or outdoor.—J. COOPER, c/o *Freethinker* Office, 61 Farringdon Street, E.C.4.

PROPAGANDIST LEAFLETS. 2. *Bible and Teetotalism*, J. M. Wheeler; 3. *Principles of Secularism*, C. Watts; 4. *Where Are Your Hospitals?* R. Ingersoll; 5. *Because the Bible Tells Me So*, W. P. Ball; 6. *Why Be Good?* G. W. Foote; 7. *Advice to Parents*, Ingersoll; *The Parson's Creed*. Often the means of arresting attention and making new members. Price 1s. per hundred, post free 1s. 2d.

THREE NEW LEAFLETS.

1. *Do You Want the Truth?* C. Cohen; 7. *Does God Care?* W. Mann; 9. *Religion and Science*, A. D. McLaren. Each four pages. Price 1s. 6d. per hundred, postage 3d. Samples on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—N.S.S. SECRETARY, 62 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.4.

The "FREETHINKER" for 1921

Strongly bound in Cloth, Gilt Lettered, with full Index and Title-page.

Price 18s.; postage 1s.

Only a very limited number of copies are to be had, and orders should be placed at once.

Cloth Cases, with Index and Title-page, for binding own copies, may be had for 3s. 6d., postage 4d.

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

A FIGHT FOR RIGHT

A Verbatim Report of the Decision in the House of Lords *in re*

Bowman and Others v. The Secular Society, Limited.

With Introduction by CHAPMAN COHEN.

Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.

Price One Shilling. Postage 1½d.

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

Modern Materialism

A Candid Examination

By **WALTER MANN**

(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited)

CONTENTS:

Chapter I.—Modern Materialism. Chapter II.—Darwinian Evolution. Chapter III.—Auguste Comte and Positivism. Chapter IV.—Herbert Spencer and the Synthetic Philosophy. Chapter V.—The Contribution of Kant. Chapter VI.—Huxley, Tyndall, and Clifford open the Campaign. Chapter VII.—Buechner's "Force and Matter." Chapter VIII.—Atoms and the Ether. Chapter IX.—The Origin of Life. Chapter X.—Atheism and Agnosticism. Chapter XI.—The French Revolution and the Great War. Chapter XII.—The Advance of Materialism.

A careful and exhaustive examination of the meaning of Materialism and its present standing, together with its bearing on various aspects of life. A much needed work.

176 pages. Price **2s.** in neat Paper Cover, or strongly bound in Cloth **3s. 6d.** (postage 2d.).

Every reader of the *Freethinker* should send for a copy, or it can be ordered through any newsagent in the country.

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

GOD-EATING

A Study in Christianity and Cannibalism

By **J. T. LLOYD**

(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited)

A Valuable Study of the Central Doctrine of Christianity. Should be read by both Christians and Freethinkers.

In Coloured Wrapper. Price **6d.** Postage **1½d.**

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

SPIRITUALISM AND A FUTURE LIFE

The Other Side of Death

A Critical Examination of the Belief in a Future Life, with a Study of Spiritualism, from the Standpoint of the New Psychology

By **CHAPMAN COHEN**

This is an attempt to re-interpret the fact of death with its associated feelings in terms of a scientific sociology and psychology. It studies Spiritualism from the point of view of the latest psychology, and offers a scientific and naturalistic explanation of its fundamental phenomena.

Paper Cover, **2s.**, postage 2d.; Cloth Bound, **3s. 6d.**, postage 3d.

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

A Remarkable Book by a Remarkable Man

Communism and Christianity

BY

Bishop **W. MONTGOMERY BROWN, D.D.**

A book that is quite outspoken in its attack on Christianity and on fundamental religious ideas. It is an unsparing criticism of Christianity from the point of view of Darwinism, and of Sociology from the point of view of Marxism. 204 pp.

Price **1s.**, postage 2d.

Special terms for quantities.

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

FOR THE FREETHINKER'S BOOKSHELF

PAGAN CHRISTS, by JOHN M. ROBERTSON. Price 5s., postage 1s.

A SHORT HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY, by JOHN M. ROBERTSON. Price 3s. 6d., postage 6d.

CHRISTIANITY AND MYTHOLOGY, by JOHN M. ROBERTSON. Price 5s., postage 1s.

THE CHRISTIAN HELL, From the First to the Twentieth Century, by HYPATIA BRADLAUGH BONNER. Price 1s., postage 4d. In Paper Covers, 6d., postage 2d.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH ON MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE, by JOSEPH McCABE. Price 3s. 6d., postage 6d.

SAVAGE SURVIVALS, by J. HOWARD MOORE. Price 2s. 6d., postage 6d.

SHELLEY P. B. Selected Prose Works. (Contains *The Necessity of Atheism* and *The Refutation of Deism*.) Price 2s. 6d., postage 3d. In Paper Covers, 1s., postage 3d.

DOUBTS IN DIALOGUE, by CHARLES BRADLAUGH. Price 2s., postage 4d.

A PLEA FOR ATHEISM, by CHARLES BRADLAUGH. Price 6d., postage 1d.

LECTURES AND ESSAYS, by COLONEL INGERSOLL. First, second, and third series. Each series price 1s., postage 2½d., or the three series in Cloth, 5s., postage 9d.

THE AGE OF REASON, by THOMAS PAINÉ. Price 1s., postage 2½d.

THE A. B. C. OF EVOLUTION, by JOSEPH McCABE. Price 3s., postage 5d.

THE RIGHTS OF MAN, by THOMAS PAINÉ. Price 1s., postage 3d.

THE EVOLUTION OF STATES: An Introduction to English Politics, by JOHN M. ROBERTSON. Price 5s., postage 1s. In Paper Covers, 3s. 6d., postage 9d.

THE MEDIÆVAL INQUISITION, by C. T. GORHAM. Price 2s. 6d., postage 3d.

THE RIDDLE OF THE UNIVERSE, by ERNST HÆCKEL. Price 2s. 6d., postage 4d. In Paper Covers, 1s. 6d., postage 3d.

THE JESUS PROBLEM. A Restatement of the Myth Problem, by JOHN M. ROBERTSON. Price 3s. 6d., postage 6d. In Paper Covers, 2s. 6d., postage 6d.

THE OLD TESTAMENT, by CHILPERIC EDWARDS. Price 1s. 6d., postage 3d.

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

BLASPHEMY

A PLEA FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

BY **CHAPMAN COHEN**

Price **Threepence.** Postage **One Penny.**

Contains a statement of Statute and Common Law on the subject, with an exposure of the fallacies by which they are defended, and a survey of the arguments in favour of their abolition. Orders for six or more copies will be sent post free. Special terms for larger quantities.

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

A BOOK WITH A BITE.

BIBLE ROMANCES

(FOURTH EDITION)

By **G. W. FOOTE**

A Drastic Criticism of the Old and New Testament Narratives, full of Wit, Wisdom, and Learning.
Contains some of the best and wittiest of the work of G. W. Foote.

In Cloth, 224 pp. Price **2s. 6d.**, postage 3½d.

Should sell by the thousand.

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

Three Great Freethinkers.

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE

BY
JOSEPH McCABE

The Life and Work of one of the Pioneers of the Secular and Co-operative movements in Great Britain. With four plates.

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

BY
C. T. GORHAM

A Biographical Sketch of America's greatest Freethought Advocate. With Four Plates.

CHARLES BRADLAUGH

BY
The Right Hon. J. M. ROBERTSON

An Authoritative Life of one of the greatest Reformers of the Nineteenth Century, and the only one now obtainable. With Four Portraits.

In Paper Covers, **2s.** (postage 2d.). Cloth Bound, **3s. 6d.** (postage 2½d.) each Volume.

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

A Bargain for Book-Buyers.

LIFE AND EVOLUTION

By **F. W. HEADLEY**

Large 8vo., 272 pp., with about 100 illustrations.
An Outline of the theory of evolution, with discussions of the later theories of Mendel, De Vries, etc., etc.

Price **4s. 6d.**, postage 8d.

Only a very limited number available.

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

Works by Sir WALTER STRICKLAND, B.A.

SLAYONIC FAIRY TALES. A Collection of Folk-stories, translated by SIR WALTER STRICKLAND, with Preface, Explanatory Essays, etc. Pp. 500. Cloth Bound. Reduced price 4s. 6d.

EPICUREAN STUDIES. Thirty Studies in Prose and Verse. Satire, Science and Philosophy. Cloth, 2s.

SACRIFICE. A Play, set in an early Polar civilization, exhibiting the cruelty of Sacrificial Religion. Price 1s.

SEVEN POEMS. Satirical Verse. Price 9d.

THE SMUGGLER'S DOG. Splendid Animal Study, and a pathetic story of life on the Italo-Swiss Frontier. Price 6d.

DRAMATIC PIECES. Orpheus and Eurydice, Dido and Æneas, The Glorified Thief, Aphrodite, etc. Pp. 380. Reduced price, 3s. 6d.

THE BLACK SPOT IN THE EAST. A scathing criticism on British methods in India. Originally written in reply to Lady Arthur Somerset. Pp. 100. Price 1s.

SEGNIVS IRRITANT. Eight Primitive Folk-lore stories, with two Supplementary Essays. Cloth. Reduced price, 2s.

VITESLAV HALEK'S STORIES. Translated by SIR WALTER STRICKLAND. Under the Hollow Tree—Our Grandfather—Poldik the Scavenger. The set of three, 1s. 6d., post free.

From the Publishers, by post only,
19 Richmond Gardens, London, W.12.

By **A. MILLAR.**

THE ROBES OF PAN. Published at 1s. Reduced to 6d. Postage 1½d.

REVERIES IN RHYME. Published at 1s. 6d. Reduced to 6d. Postage 1½d.

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