

The FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

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

Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper

VOL. XLIII.—No. 26

SUNDAY, JULY 1, 1923

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>In Memoriam.—The Editor</i> - - - - -	401
<i>"The Blessed Sacrament."—J. T. Lloyd</i> - - - - -	402
<i>The Exploitation of Death.—Mimnermus</i> - - - - -	403
<i>Luther in the Light of To-day.—W. Mann</i> - - - - -	404
<i>The Unaggressive Jew.—Charles Thomas Hallinan</i> - - - - -	406
<i>The City of Dreadful Night.—James Thomson</i> - - - - -	406
<i>Freethought in Nottingham.—Vincent J. Hands</i> - - - - -	407
<i>Immortality.—C. Clayton Dove</i> - - - - -	410
<i>A Modern Tyranny.—Fred Hobday</i> - - - - -	411
<i>"Shakespeare"; Was it Oxford, Bacon, or Derby?—J. Thomas Looney</i> - - - - -	412
<i>Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc.</i>	

Views and Opinions.

In Memoriam.

While I write these lines there hangs above my table a picture of a room in which a bed takes up nearly the whole of the foreground. In the bed lies a young man with a face that bears a calm and resigned expression and indicates an intelligence above the average. Below the picture is a few lines written in pencil, and no message was ever written under sadder conditions. The portrait is that of Frederic W. Walsh whose death I briefly announced last week, but whose memory deserves more than I was then, or am now, able to say. Those who knew him, or who knew about him, will have quite understood what I meant by the remark that it seemed selfish to express regret at his death. To lie day after day, month after month, for twenty-seven long years, incapable of speech or movement, dependent upon others for the satisfaction of the simplest needs, strikes one in possession of his normal faculties as an existence that would be unbearable. We should, we think, long for death to come, and he would come not as the Christians have with their mixture of folly and fear called him, the King of Terrors, but as a welcome nurse administering an eternal opiate, giving a sure deliverance from the pain-laden hours. And yet the twenty-seven years of Frederic Walsh's martyrdom were borne with a quiet heroism that not many display under the trifling vexations of ordinary life. It was in the solitude of the sick room that he worked out unaided his own intellectual salvation and reached convinced Atheism which, to use his own words, widened his interests and deepened his sympathies with all noble endeavour.

Through the Fire. * * *

Frederic Walsh in 1896 met with an accident which was to keep him for the rest of his life within the four walls of a sick room. Working in a machine room in Birmingham, he was caught up in some defective machinery which resulted in a permanent injury to his spine. Paralysis resulted, and he lost the use of every limb, and also of speech. Sight and hearing alone were left. His only mode of communicating with others was by a movement of the head or of the eyelid. Even at that the Aristophanes of the skies, as Heine called the fabled Christian God, had not done

with him. He was subject to attacks of excruciating pain, and was practically unable to get normal sleep. He was drugged continuously to induce unconsciousness. The only ray of light that came to him was by a mere chance. A bit of pencil was left near him on the bed, and by turning his head he got it between his lips. Idly he made a few marks on some paper. Then he began to form letters. Finally, after the lapse of months he learned to write in that manner, and has written constantly ever since. He has written very, very many letters on all sorts of subjects, as well as papers to be read at various societies. One of these was read at the Nottingham meeting of the National Secular Society's Conference last year, and was afterwards published in these columns. His writing was small, but beautifully clear, and the thought expressed was as clear as the characters. That discovery of how to write was one of the best things that happened to him in his affliction. The best was the devotion of a lady, a professional nurse, who supervised the arrangements for his comfort (free of payment it should be said) and acted as secretary for the fund that was collected annually for his maintenance. Too much praise cannot be given this lady for her attention. And with her nature I believe she will rank what she has done for Frederic Walsh as among the most profitable of her acts, for it is always what we *give* to others that brings us the largest returns.

* * *

The Story of a Pilgrimage.

When Frederic Walsh met with his accident he was a Christian, and according to Christians of the type of the Bishop of London he should have then found his comfort in reflecting upon the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the reading of the Bible, and the thought of a life beyond the grave. The facts do not fit this theory. True, he read the Bible. He also read other books—the best of the theologians, the great humanists, the leading scientists, and the principal historians. His room contained a good selection of the finest works, and they all bore silent testimony to the varied interests of the central figure therein. Frederic Walsh did not find God as the result of his accident, instead he found his way through the fogs of Christian superstition to the clarity of reasoned Atheism. He became a devoted admirer of the *Freethinker*, and a strong supporter of the Cause it represents. Whenever there was a call for financial help he would insist upon sending his mite, always with a letter breathing cheerfulness and exhorting to courage and renewed endeavour. Between his attacks of nerve-racking pain he sent me many letters of this kind. From him as he was to me with my health and strength! I value those letters of his more than anything I have ever received. Nor were his interests restricted to the critical aspects of Freethought. He was interested in politics, in literature, in all that had a bearing on human welfare. From his bed of pain he looked out on the world, sharing its triumphs, sorrowing at its failures, full of the enthusiasm born in him through the widening of interests which he said had come to him with his liberation from the nightmare of the old theology.

Christian Tactics.

Whenever I read some of our silly bishops, or catchpenny journalists writing of the pessimism and hopelessness of Atheism I think of Frederic Walsh. He knew what these men know nothing of—the pleasures of intellectual independence, the sense of freedom and manliness that comes to one when he or she has risen above the low level of orthodox theology. It must be confessed that we Freethinkers are but poor advertisers. At that game the Christians beat us hollow. We do not when a Freethinker does a good action put it down to the special influence of our party, but are content to let it stand to the credit of humanity in general. The Christian is beyond us here. Like a quack advertising a remedy that will cure all ills from corns to headache, he has the one remedy for all the "spiritual" ailments that exist. If a Christian is resigned in the face of misfortune or patient under disease, it is all due to the healing and soothing power of Jesus. This advertising department of the Christian Church has been very carefully developed, so carefully and so persistently that the majority quite fail to recognize it for what it is. Were we to behave as Christians behave, we should have published the case of F. W. Walsh far and wide in leaflets, in lectures, and with Christian accuracy have embellished it with so many details that in the end the truth would have been quite buried beneath a mountain of pious "decorations." If we had done so it would have been showing horrible taste. It would have been sacrilege in a sick-room, but it would have been quite Christian in spirit and in execution. And now that it is over, I invite Christians to think whether they quite understand what Atheism is and what it implies. May not Samuel Taylor Coleridge be right that there is not one in a thousand who has either strength of mind or nobility of character to be an Atheist?

* * *

The Lesson of a Life.

I am not writing even these ragged sentences for the mere purpose of glorifying Freethought. I should be less proud of my Freethought than I am did I think it needed so sad a case as that of Frederic Walsh to commend it to earnest minded men and women. Primarily I am writing to pay tribute to one of the bravest characters I have known. The world hears much (too much) of the bravery of the soldier, of deeds performed under the exciting stimulus of the moment, and which, often enough, the agent would not perform at all in calmer mood. But it hears too little of the heroisms of everyday life, and thinks too little of them when it does. With Frederic Walsh's calamity upon us how many of us would have had the native strength to face life as he faced it? I would not dare answer for myself. What manner of man was it that in these circumstances, in the solitude of his own small room, grappled with problem after problem, and in the midst of his own afflictions developed a lively and intelligent interest in the affairs of that world in which he could never more play an active part? I say that this alone bespeaks a character of unusual strength, an intelligence of unusual calibre. Writing to me only a year ago—he sent it down to me at one of my Birmingham lectures—he said: "My interest in all that makes for the progress of humanity is unabated, and so long as that remains for me life will always be well worth while." That was the secret of his strength. He had come to know the pleasure of a clean, healthy, unselfish feeling in the progress of humanity, of the joy that comes from such a fight even though the victory be far off. I think, he said on another occasion, we can all do something. And that is the real lesson of his life. We can all do something, and I think that all of us who knew him will, whenever we think of that small room with its quiet and pathetic figure,

think also of the Cause he loved, of the principles and ideals which did indeed bring him comfort and strength, and so perhaps bring us encouragement when the road is hardest and the fight holds out the smallest promise of victory.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

"The Blessed Sacrament."

By "the blessed Sacrament" is meant, of course, the Lord's Supper, or the Holy Communion, an ordinance regarded as possessing great importance by all Christian communions, and by Catholics, Anglican as well as Roman, as the supreme of all the sacraments. This is the teaching put before us in a powerful sermon by the Rev. C. E. Read, M.A., and published in the *Church Times* of June 8. Mr. Read's name was unknown to us till we saw it as that of the author of this able discourse. It is to be borne in mind that the Blessed Sacrament is an institution which we owe not to Jesus but to Paul. There was no such sacrament in the Jerusalem Church, and Paul's claim was that it had come to him as a special revelation from the Lord Jesus. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul described it as a magical rite, saying, among other things:—

Whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body. For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep (1 Cor. xi, 27-30).

According to Paul's own account (1 Cor. x, 20-22) there was already in full practice at Corinth a rite alarmingly similar to the Lord's Table; and all he could say in detestation of it was that it was devilish in its origin and character, and it was on that ground alone that he warned his converts against having anything to do with it. This Pagan Eucharist can be traced back until it was a very crude and materialistic god-eating ceremony.

Now, although the Christian Sacrament may be and actually has been traced back to a most primitive and cannibalistic sacrament of man-eating and god-eating, Mr. Read evades all reference to so humiliating a fact and simply says that he is going "to speak on the Blessed Sacrament, the joy of our life, our almost daily delight, without which our warmest worship is cold and our spirits flag." Very properly the preacher seeks to show that the sacramental system is true to Scripture, and that it "assumes knowledge and acceptance of the truth about God revealed in and by our Lord." This is admittedly true. Sacramentarianism has undoubtedly its roots in the Bible, and the Bible does pretend to contain the truth about God made known by Jesus Christ, which renders its use possible and intelligible; but the truth of such statements does by no means establish either the truth or utility of sacramentarianism. The fact behind all facts, in this connection, is that it has never yet been proven that the Bible either is or contains the slightest knowledge of God, or that a God exists to be revealed. Intimate acquaintance with the facts of history entitles its possessors to declare emphatically not only that the Bible is fundamentally untrue, but also that all religious rites and ceremonies nominally founded upon it are morally and spiritually worthless if not ingenuous.

Now, if the Bible's claim to present the world with a complete revelation of a God of justice and love falls to the ground, and if the facts of history fail to bring us into direct and active contact with such a God, how do we account for and explain the happy experiences of such people as the Catholics? Mr. Read, for example, stands between the Roman Catholic and the

Protestant. He regards the Protestant as comparatively low down in the scale of genuine Christianity, though he speaks of him with deep respect. The Roman Catholic makes what are to Mr. Read overstatements, just as the Protestant indulges in understatements as to the presence of Jesus in the Sacrament; but the point of vital importance is that the experience of each of the three types of a Christian is determined by its belief. Take the Protestant:—

What is the Blessed Sacrament to the Protestant? It is the means whereby an act of communion is made as a result of faith, as an act of spiritual importance, of solemn recollection, an act betokening intimacy with the Redeemer and thankfulness for Redemption, an act often dependent on the feelings, the Sacrament having no objective value in itself, the Presence of the Lord who is sought depending on the faith of the receiver, and not on the fact of ministerial consecration of the elements. The Liturgy which enshrines the act is not their normal Divine service.

The Protestant's faith is too limited and consequently his experience is altogether too restricted. The Anglo-Catholic, with whom alone we are concerned here, has a much larger faith and a correspondingly more extensive experience. Mr. Read puts it as follows:—

The Blessed Sacrament is, before we partake of it, the means whereby we share in the once offered but ever-availing sacrifice of Jesus, whereby we join in the perpetual pleading of the unceasing, efficacious self-oblation made on Calvary. It is the means whereby we offer as a body an acceptable, a sacrificial worship, and identify ourselves with him.....His presence is the result of the Holy Spirit working through the priesthood of the Body of Christ.....I affirm the Presence to be a Presence connected with the Sacrament, and not dependent on our spiritual state. I affirm that in it I know I shall find Jesus even if all my senses defy my faith: Yes, and even if my faith is lacking he is there.

The case is now fairly before us. Allusion has been made to the "fact of ministerial consecration of the element." The result of the consecration is that on the Table "is present really, under the form of bread and wine, the natural body and blood of Jesus Christ, and there remains no substance of bread and wine, nor any other but the substance of Christ."

Such is the Presence on the Eucharistic Table, and the preacher adds: "It is perceived by the faithful, it is not discerned by the unfaithful." Mark, it is a presence connected with the Sacrament, in which Mr. Read is convinced that he will see Jesus, even if all his faculties defy his faith; more, he knows Jesus is there even if he has no faith to see him. As a matter of fact he does not know it, he merely believes it. The truth is that in the region of religious experience everything depends upon the kind and amount of faith in operation. The moment faith dies experience ceases. They are both present or absent together. Of so-called supernatural realities we have absolutely no knowledge. When a man declares with the utmost assurance, "I know that God exists and rules the world," he simply tells a lie, and the sooner he realizes this the better for all concerned. Another cries, "The Eternal Christ lives and reigns for ever," but his only warrant for such an exclamation is the warmth and strength of his own belief. His common-sense shouts in his ears that there is no truth whatever in it. The Eternal Christ is simply one of the many products of the Church, and apart from the Church he neither acts nor exists at all.

As everybody is aware the people for whom religion is a tremendous and joyous reality are the dupes of their emotions. Have you never noticed that when a clergyman addresses communicants at a communion service his heart often kindles and sends out flashes of

ardent feeling, and that in consequence his utterances strike himself and his hearers as really and beautifully true? And so they are subjectively for the time being. On such occasions the intellect slumbers, or is completely dominated by the heart. There are preachers among us to-day who in the quietude of their libraries are intellectually complete unbelievers, but who by playing upon their feelings can work themselves up to such an extent as to feel that what they know to be false is yet most true. It is a cowardly and degrading accomplishment, though some very good people have been guilty of it. Ere long, however, monarch Reason is bound to awake, mount his throne, and bring all the faculties into loving subjection to itself. Then the Blessed Sacrament, like the Incarnation and the Atonement, will take its place among the dead superstitions of the world. Such a happy time is slowly but surely coming. Among the Catholics in the Anglican Church are several exceptionally able and enthusiastic men, but they are not setting the world on fire. They are not making a deep and lasting impression upon their day and generation. Despite the zealous manner in which they shoulder their work the trend of the age is away from the supernaturalism in which they glory; and sermons like the present one by Mr. Read are not likely to make numerous converts among lovers of knowledge and scientific truths. J. T. LLOYD.

The Exploitation of Death.

Though few,
We hold a promise for the race
That was not at our rising.

—George Meredith.

The fear o'hell's a hangman's whip
To hand the wretch in order. —Burns.

SINCE the dawn of the Christian religion the fear of death has been exploited by the clergy, and reached extraordinary dimensions among the populations of great cities. Dwellers in large towns necessarily acquire their knowledge of Nature from books, or from fleeting and superficial observation. For five months in every year Nature is represented in the towns by fog, rain, and snow, and the necessity for fires and artificial means of lighting. Dwellers in mean streets have no chance of meditating on the rigid processes of natural law, as have the inhabitants of wilder regions.

This abject fear of death was never common in the ancient world. Living far more largely in the open, the Ancients realized more fully that death and life are ever entwined in a struggle for mastery; that the victorious soldier of to-day is the corpse of the morrow. In the ancient world death was often regarded as no less benign than birth, and the shadowy figure with the scythe was not feared as an enemy. Turn to the Classics, and notice how the grand old Pagans look death in the face, not only without flinching, but with perfect equanimity. Epictetus says proudly: "Why should we fear death? For where death is, there are we not; and where we are, there death is not." No less emphatic is Marcus Aurelius, who bids us regard death not as an enemy but as a friend:—

What is it to die? If we view it by itself, and stripped of those imaginary terrors in which our fears have dressed it, we shall find it to be nothing more than the mere work of Nature; but it is childish folly to be afraid of what is natural. Nay, it is not only the work of Nature, but is conducive to the good of the universe, which subsists by change.

The Christian clergy teach exactly the opposite. Death is, according to these pastors and masters, the "king of terrors." They heighten the effect by appealing strongly to the fears of their hearers, and use

the Devil and all the horrors of damnation and Hell as formidable levers. The terror such stories inspire is largely owing to gross ignorance which surrounds the subject of death. Men fear it, like children do the dark, through not knowing what it is. The fear of the night can be dissipated by a little light. Death would be no bugbear if it were understood better. And nobody is there to tell people, except a small number of devoted Freethinkers, who are anathema to all the Churches of Christendom. The sermons from the clergy, archaic in thought and inflated with nonsense, deal in generalities and exaggerations. "The wages of sin is death" is their idea of wisdom. To be "launched into eternity" is another gem from the same dark mine. The clergy are hopelessly out of touch with modern man and common-sense. Hence the Churches are emptying of men. The "cure of souls" even is fast passing into the physician's hands with the cure of the body. For it is now admitted that a healthy body and a healthy mind go together.

Modern science shows that the Pagan philosophers are more right than all the clergy of Christendom. The priestly oracles, the world over, are contradictory even for believers. Taught by his priests, the poor Indian dreams of his happy hunting grounds; the Mohammedan pictures his Paradise peopled with houris; the more prosaic Christian looks for the jewelled streets of the New Jerusalem. That is the pleasant side of religion, the sugar that coats the pill. Couched in plausible and sometimes semi-scientific language, presented with all the resources of men trained for the purpose, these fancy pictures are but an appeal to emotionalism. The poet Heine hit the right nail on the head when he suggested, smilingly, that the idea of personal immortality may have suggested itself to a lover in the arms of his mistress, or to some worthy citizen taking his leisure on a summer evening. It is, in the last analysis, but a desire for personal continuance, to be for ever as we are.

For thousands of years priests have chanted the old sad refrain of death as an enemy, but the Freethinker listens to far other strains. Death is the universal law of Nature, which befalls all living beings, though the majority encounter it sooner than man. Fortunately the modern world is beginning to rub its eyes, and the priests are beginning to be found out. The hope that an ignorant and superstitious minority can always bend the intellectuals to its will is sheer illusion. The terror of death is passing away, because the Christian religion is decaying.

After all is said, death is not so much our concern as life. The secular solution is best. All sprang from Nature, and have their day, and all return for sleep. Fear should have no place. As George Meredith finely puts it: "Into the breast that gives the rose, shall we with shuddering fall?"

MIMNERMUS.

The Puppet Show and Its Meaning.

THE world's a theatre; age after age,
Souls masked and muffled in this fleshy gear
Before the supreme audience appear,
As Nature, God's own art, appoints the stage.
Each plays the part that is his heritage;
From choir to choir they pass, from sphere to sphere,
And deck themselves with joy or sorry cheer,
As fate the comic playwright fills the page.
None do or suffer, be they cursed or blest,
Aught otherwise than the great Wisdom wrote
To gladden each and all who gave Him mirth,
When we at last to sea or air or earth
Yielding these masks that weal or woe denote,
In God shall see who spoke and acted best.

TOMMASO CAMPANELLA (1568-1639).

(Translated by John Addington Symonds, 1877.)

Luther in the Light of To-day.

X.

(Concluded from page 389.)

The Protestants clamoured against persecution, not because it was persecution, but because truth was persecuted by falsehood; and, however furiously the hostile factions exclaimed each that the truth was with them and the falsehood with their enemies, neither the one nor the other disputed the obligation of the ruling powers to support the truth in itself.—J. A. Froude, "History of England," Vol. II, p. 480.

The whole history of Rationalism is as much opposed to Lutheranism as to Catholicism.....Not from the doctrines of Lutheranism, but from the want of unity among theologians, has intellect again won for itself unlimited freedom. To the Protestant, who asserts that all our nineteenth century culture is the outcome of Luther and his followers, the Rationalist must reply: "Yes, but not to their teaching, only to their squabbling, which rendered them impotent to suppress."—Prof. Karl Pearson, "Ethics of Freethought," p. 195.

LUTHER'S political ideas and his views as to the relation of the Christian to the ruling powers, were founded upon the Bible. In his sermons on Genesis, delivered 1524, and printed in 1527, Luther cites the verse in Genesis (xx, 14) where Abimelech bestows "sheep and oxen, men-servants and maid-servants" on Abraham, and then goes on to say of the people made over:—

"They, too, were all personal property like other cattle, so that their owners might sell them as they liked, and it would verily be almost best that this stage of things should be revived, for nobody can control or tame the populace in any other way." Abraham did not set free the men-servants and maid-servants given him, and yet he was accounted amongst the "pious and holy," and was "a just ruler." He proceeds: "They [the patriarchs] might easily have abolished it so far as they were concerned, but that would not have been a good thing, for the serfs would have become too proud had they been given so many rights, and would have thought themselves equal to the patriarchs or to their children. Each one must be kept in his place, as God has ordained, sons and daughters, maids, husbands, wives, etc.....If compulsion and the law of the strong arm still ruled (in the case of servants and retainers) as in the past, so that if a man dared to grumble he got a box on the ear, things would fare better; otherwise it is all of no use. If they take wives, these are impertinent people, wild and dissolute, whom no one can use or have anything to do with."¹

Although the Jewish dispensation, and the Law of Moses, were abrogated by Christianity, yet there was nothing inconsistent with serfdom in the new Gospel. Luther declared:—

"Serfdom is not contrary to Christianity, and whoever says it is tells a lie!"—"Christ does not wish to abolish serfdom. What cares He how the lords and princes rule [in secular matters]?"²

We know that in the English rebellion in the fourteenth century, a popular rhyme ran:—

When Adam delved and Eve span
Who was then the gentleman?

The German peasants seem to have used a similar argument, to which Luther replied:—

It will not help the peasants if they assert that, in accordance with Genesis i and ii, all things had been created free, and should be held in common, and that we all are equal owing to our baptism. In the New Testament Moses is of no importance, for there stands our Master Jesus Christ, and He places us with our bodies and our worldly goods under the Emperor and under the law of the world, for He says: "Render

¹ Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. VI, p. 74.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, p. 74.

unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's." Similarly St. Paul says in Romans xiii to all baptized Christians: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," and St. Peter says, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man" [1 Peter, ii, 11]. It is our duty to live according to Christ's teachings.....The Gospel does not free body and worldly goods, but frees the soul.³

Luther goes further still, he says:—

Even though they [the rulers] do what is wrong, still they should be obeyed without subterfuge or danger. They must not be resisted even though they do what is unjust.⁴

As for rebels, says Luther:—

A rebel does not deserve a reasonable answer, for he will not accept it; the only way to answer such foul-mouthed rascals is with the fist, till their noses dribble. The peasants would not listen to him or let him speak, their ears must be opened by musket bullets so that their heads fly into the air.....I will not listen to any talk of mercy, but will give heed to what God's Word demands.⁵

Mr. Ellis Barker, in his book *The Foundations of Germany* (p. 316) declares that:—

Luther's influence upon the German character was most far-reaching. He was responsible for the creation of an all-powerful autocratic government which has found its fullest expression in Prussia-Germany. He is therefore largely, and probably chiefly, responsible for the absolutism of the Prussian government on the one hand, and for the submissiveness of the people on the other hand. Besides, the great reformer is probably also responsible for the brutality and ruthlessness which the Germans have displayed in their warfare and their treatment of the conquered peoples.

There was only one cause in which it would be lawful to resist the authority of the Government, that was, said Luther:—

If the Emperor or the authorities purpose to make war on God [i.e., Luther's Evangel], then no one must obey them.⁶

Every power must yield to the Evangel, whether willingly or unwillingly.

Again he says:—

Let justice prevail even though the whole world should be reduced to ruin. For I say throw peace into the nethermost hell if it is to be purchased at the price of harm to the Evangel and to the Faith.⁷

The poor peasants must not raise a finger to redress their grievous wrongs, but rather than the Evangel should suffer he was willing the whole world should perish.

In later years, says Mr. Barker, as may be seen from the fifty-ninth volume of the Erlanger edition of his works:—

Luther boasted that he had been the principal executioner of the German peasantry, for he stated:

"The preachers are the greatest destroyers of men, for they admonish the authorities to fill their office and to punish the wicked. I, Martin Luther, have in the peasant revolt slain all the peasants that were killed, for I have caused them to be killed. The blood of all the slain peasants is on my head. But the responsibility for it is with the Lord my God, who has ordered me to speak as I have done."⁸

Again, in 1525, writing to those in power, Luther says:—

Who opposed the peasants more vigorously by word and writing than I?.....And if it comes to boasting,

I do not know who else was the first to vanquish the peasants, or to do so most effectually. But now those who did the least claim all the honour and the glory of it.⁹

One would think there was not much honour and glory in the massacre of—according to the best evidence—120,000 practically unarmed men, the vast majority of whom were executed out of revenge and to terrorize the others.

Although Luther was of peasant origin himself, he could not have displayed more contempt for the masses if he had been born in the purple. He speaks of the peasants as "hogs" and "boors." He says:—

I believe that the Devil does not mind the peasants; he despises them as he does leaden pennies; he thinks he can easily manage to secure them for himself, as they will assuredly be claimed by no one. A peasant who is a Christian is like a wooden poker.¹⁰

The Catholics laid the whole blame for the peasant rising at Luther's door. He himself admits, "They went out from us; but they are not of us." The peasants themselves hailed Luther as the great liberator. As Hausrath, the Protestant biographer of Luther, rightly observes:—

If all that was rotten in the Church was to fall, why should so much that was rotten in the Empire remain? If all the demands of the Papacy were to be rejected, why should those of squiredom be held sacred? If Luther might treat Duke George of Saxony and King Henry VIII of England as fools and scoundrels, why should more regard be shown to the smaller fry, the petty counts and lords? If the peasant, by virtue of the common priesthood of all Christians was capable of reforming the Church, why should he not have his say in the question of hunting-rights and the rights of pasture.....How could such words of Luther fail to be seized on with avidity by the oppressed, down-trodden, and shamelessly victimized peasantry?¹¹

In this the peasants were quite mistaken. Luther had no idea of ameliorating the condition of the poor in this world. All he was concerned with was the saving of the soul. The world, he declared, was delivered over to the Devil, who was its sole king and ruler; we are strangers and pilgrims here, our real home is in heaven. Therefore we must bear patiently with the afflictions, injustice, and hardships, inseparable from that station of life to which God has appointed us, and we shall receive our reward after we are dead. And it will be found that this has been the distinctive teaching of all the great leaders of Christianity, from its founder who declared, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John xviii, 36), down to Luther and Wesley. It is for this reason it has always been, and is to-day, patronized by those in power as one of the most efficient engines for keeping the masses in subjection.

In conclusion, far from Luther being the founder of modern freedom and progress, he was their most determined opponent. His ideas on demoniacal possession delayed the rational treatment of insanity. His teaching as to witchcraft led to the torture and execution of many thousands of innocent people for an imaginary crime. Reason he nicknamed a "Frau Hulda," and denounced the use of it in religion. In his *Lectures on Romans* he declares the study of philosophy to be "vain and perverse." Of commerce he says: "I cannot see that much good has ever come to a country through commerce." He made the Bible the procrustean bed to which every scientific discovery must adjust itself. When the new discovery

³ Ellis Barker, *Foundations of Germany*, p. 307.

⁴ Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. III, p. 23, note.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 208.

⁶ Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. III, p. 43.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 76-45.

⁸ J. Ellis Barker, *The Foundations of Germany* (1918), p.

⁹ Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. VI, pp. 72-73.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 218.

¹¹ Hausrath, *Luther's Leben*, Vol. II, p. 29. Cited by Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. II, p. 211.

by Copernicus of the movement of the earth was being discussed, Luther settled it by pointing out that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still and not the earth, and called Copernicus an "idiot." Nor did the Arts fare any better. According to Luther, artistic education must be wholly rooted out as a work of the Devil. No wonder that Erasmus, writing to Pirkheimer, in 1528, laments: "Wherever Lutheranism prevails, there we see the downfall of learning." W. MANN.

The Unaggressive Jew.

WHAT the Jews need to-day is another Macaulay, another Lessing, to re-state in ringing, sonorous terms the truth about this interesting and only partially understood people. They need a non-Jewish interpreter who can correct the curious focus in which, once more, they and their affairs are seen. Above all, they need in simple fairness an historian who can remind us effectively of the real history, the real position in the Western world, of this singularly unaggressive and self-absorbed race.

It sounds ironical perhaps to call the Jews "unaggressive," but no historian of repute has ever called them anything else. Surely it is worth while reminding ourselves that in the terrible religious wars of the past nineteen centuries the Jew alone has not attempted to impose upon alien peoples his religious faith. In the cockpit of Europe he has been a victim, a sufferer, scarcely a participant. The Jew alone has sent forth no missionaries, no crusaders, has set up no Inquisitions, has initiated no holy wars. If the Jew had that passion for domination which is picturesquely ascribed to him in to-day's ephemera on the so-called "Jewish Problem," surely some evidence of it should appear in his nineteen hundred years in Western Europe; but the precise opposite appears. Most remarkable of all—as evidence of the Jew's lack of aggressiveness—is his extraordinary silence, amounting almost to racial self-discipline, on the question (which surely must at times have been tempting to the Jew) of the historicity of Jesus Christ.

Millions upon millions of Christians believe firmly in the existence at a definite time of the particular Jesus Christ outlined in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. (We ignore, for the moment, the more complex figure projected on the Christian world by the Fourth Gospel as a figure which raises issues that are theological rather than historical.) Millions upon millions of Christians believe firmly that such a figure actually lived at the time indicated and did precisely the things attributed to him in the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke. And not one Christian in a million has ever heard from the lips of a Jew the faintest suggestion of scepticism based upon the Jewish "legends," the Jewish "evidence" in the case.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Jew has had in his own literature "evidence" which he might have pressed—had he chosen to—against the historical existence of the Jesus Christ portrayed in the Synoptic Gospels. He might have pointed out, had he seen fit to do so, that the "official records" of the Jewish people present, as has been said, insuperable difficulties in the way of the acceptance by secular historians of the precise figure sketched for us in the first three Gospels.

Briefly, the Talmud says that Rabbi ben Perahyah fled to Alexandria with his pupil Jesus to escape the persecution of the Jewish King Jannacus. On his return from Alexandria he, Jesus, founded a sect of "apostate Jews." But King Jannacus, as we know, lived from 103 B.C. to 76 B.C., so that the Talmudic

"legend," to use the phrase of biblical scholarship, invites us to reconcile if we can the existence at two widely separated periods of two men both bearing the name of Jesus and both founding sects of "apostate Jews." The Talmud, in short, holds a challenge. It raises a question: How can Jesus, as described in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, have flourished in the year A.D. 1, and yet have been a Jewish historical figure flourishing, however mildly, in 76 B.C.?

Now the point is not whether the Jewish "legend" is right or wrong; the point is not which Jesus is to be accepted as historically true. The real point is that if the Jewish community, historically viewed, had been anything like as aggressive as it is assumed to be by Mr. Hilaire Belloc and others, we should have heard much from the Jews in defence of their "legend" and in downright derogation of the Christian claims. But not one Christian in a million has even so much as heard of the Jewish version, which assuredly proves, if proof were necessary, that the Hebrew people have been content to mind their own business.

This is something to be remembered to their credit when anti-Semitic myths flourish and poison the relationships between Christians and Jews.

CHARLES THOMAS HALLINAN.

The City of Dreadful Night.

O melancholy Brothers, dark, dark, dark!
O battling in black floods without an ark!
O spectral wanderers of unholy Night!
My soul hath bled for you these sunless years,
With bitter blood-drops running down like tears;
Oh, dark, dark, dark, withdrawn from joy and
light!

My heart is sick with anguish for your bale;
Your woe hath been my anguish; yea, I quail
And perish in your perishing unblest.
And I have searched the heights and depths, the
scope
Of all our universe, with desperate hope
To find some solace for your wild unrest.

And now at last authentic word I bring,
Witnessed by every dead and living thing;
Good tidings of great joy for you, for all;
There is no God; no Fiend with names divine
Made us and tortures us; if we must pine
It is to satiate no Being's gall.

It was the dark delusion of a dream,
That living Person conscious and supreme,
Whom we must curse for cursing us with life,
Whom we must curse because the life He gave
Could not be buried in the quiet grave,
Could not be killed by poison or by knife.

This little life is all we must endure,
The grave's most holy place is ever sure,
We fall asleep and never wake again;
Nothing is of us but the mouldering flesh,
Whose elements dissolve and merge afresh
In earth, air, water, plants, and other men.

We finish thus; and all our wretched race
Shall finish with its cycle, and give place
To other beings, with their own time-doom;
Infinite æons ere our kind began;
Infinite æons after the last man
Has joined the mammoth in earth's tomb and
womb.

—James Thomson.

Freethought in Nottingham.

SOME REFLECTIONS AND AN APPEAL.

WHEN the National Secular Society held its highly successful annual conference at the Corn Exchange, Nottingham, in 1922, it was felt that the time was ripe for starting, or rather re-starting, a local branch. However, although the conference was followed by a week's open-air campaign by Mr. George Whitehead no definite step has since been taken, and the object of these notes is to test local feeling and see if something cannot be done towards getting the N.S.S. officially represented in the city. At present the chief outlet for Freethinking opinions is the Nottingham Cosmopolitan Debating Society, held every Sunday afternoon during the winter season in the Minor Mechanics' Hall. Here, local and national intellectuals gather, under the able secretaryship of my friend Mr. James Farmer, to debate "with no little heat their various opinions," and much useful work is thereby done. So useful is the N.C.D.S. as a centre for Freethought that several to whom I have spoken do not deem a branch necessary, but personally I should like to see a branch formed.

Unquestionably much valuable work is done by Fabian methods of peaceful penetration, but it is—in its final analysis—only a vigorous and alert Freethought that can take the raw edge off Christian dogmatism and blunt the truth of religious intolerance, for—as Saladin wrote many years ago—"The bigot, it may be unconsciously, modifies his bigotry when he discovers that his creed not only can be attacked, but is attacked."

The position of organized Freethought in this country is to-day a curious one. The present writer cannot agree with those who deprecate the organization of advanced opinion and who would leave the dissemination of that opinion to individual effort and the passage of time. One certainly hopes that the time will come when ideas will depend, not on organization, but on their own inherent truth for the means of propagation, and that in the future "the sect, the communion, the Church, will be reserved for the united activities of those still clinging to the beliefs of the past." The idea of dispensing with organization is not so novel to the minds of Freethinkers as to those who are unable to see that "spiritual" and mental forces may be independent of the atmosphere of the meeting-house and might persist in its absence; but with reaction on one hand and apathy on the other it seems to me that the need for a strong Freethought organization is as great as ever—even at the risk of our ideals running into lower channels and forfeiting something of their purity by thus espying a characteristic of "the old bad creeds."

Another objection to active Freethought is that our ideals are never likely to become the property of more than a small cultured class, and that mankind in the mass is never likely to be interested in things other than those that affect its immediate welfare. A study of anthropology certainly tends to confirm the view that man is never likely to shake off all his superstitions, but nevertheless I feel, with Mr. Cohen, that Atheism is inevitable, that life will prove too strong for theory and that man will ultimately tire of calling on Gods who pay no heed—and when he does this it will be the death of all theologies. The duty of Freethought then is clear, it must expedite the coming of that day "unless"—again to quote Saladin—"she is to dwell in the school with a mere coterie of pundits, and, as far as public action on the arena of the world is concerned, content herself with writing cryptographs in a temple dedicated to esoterics."

To revert again to the position in Nottingham. We do not intend to aim too high, but at least hope to be a little more active than in the past. We are hoping to obtain a visit from Mr. Cohen to Nottingham, and if anyone in Nottingham and district feels that the time is ripe for the formation of a circle or branch or is willing to join in any other form of activity I should be more than delighted to hear from them at the address below.

VINCENT J. HANDS.

"Laurel Villas," Hilton Road,
Mapperley, Nottingham.

Acid Drops.

We are pleased to see the *Star* calling attention to the concerted move now being made by a large number of churches and chapels to get the L.C.C. to revoke the permission for Sunday games to be played in the parks. Petitions are being sent into the Council by all sorts of people—the majority of whom would never play games at all—women and children are being induced to sign, and the members of the Council may be thus led to believe that there is a large volume of public opinion against the games continuing. The only way to counteract this at the moment is for all trades unions and other organizations to send in protests against any alteration being made in the present position. The impertinence of these miserable specimens of Christian bigotry and ignorance should be checked. If they are successful we suggest that several hundreds of young men and women should organize and play games at any cost. We should then see what would happen.

But we do not quite understand what the *Star* means by saying that "it would be well if enlightened members of the Churches would do themselves much good in the public view if their enlightened members were of their own initiative to protest against religion being used as an instrument of Sabbatarian fanaticism." If this is not a religious move what is it? Of course, it may not be the view of religion taken by many, but what view of religion is it that it is held unanimously? And it is stupid to deny the name of religion to views merely because they do not happen to be one's own. That is no more than the intolerance of liberalism. Sabbatarianism is a religious manifestation, and the only way to effectually dispose of it is to make people less religious. It is too much, however, to expect a newspaper to lend a hand at that wholesome work. That has to be the task of the few who are careless of popular patronage.

The number of newspapers that are at present protesting against the action of the Sabbatarians in endeavouring to put an end to the Sunday games in public places, while very pleasing in itself is one more illustration of the effect of our propaganda on the public mind. Time was when the Freethinker stood alone in his plea for a rational use of the day of rest. It was only as our attack on the general influence of Christianity made itself felt, and as belief in Christianity was weakened that the general Press, and public men who were not avowed Freethinkers, began to champion the same cause. Now it is quite safe for anyone to stand up for the humanization of one-seventh of our lives. Credit is being claimed for what is called "liberal religious opinion," but it is not remembered that it was Freethinkers who made it possible for such opinion to exist.

Someone has sent us a pamphlet entitled "I am a Catholic because I am a Jew." It is the story of a Jew who became Christian, and it reminds us of the very old story of the Jew who went to Rome during the mediæval period and came back quite convinced that the Roman Church was the true Church. His reason was that nothing short of a miracle worked by God himself could possibly have kept alive so evil an institution. History is constantly repeating itself.

Instead of preaching a sermon, the Rev. G. E. Thorn, of Peckham, performed in a dramatic sketch, "The Life of Abraham." The clergyman wore Eastern dress, and was assisted by two members of the congregation in costume. If the reverend gentleman later attempts to portray Adam before the Fall there should be crowded congregations.

At the annual meeting of the Actors' Church Union a speaker deplored the absence of leading members of the profession. Perhaps the figures of the annual report supplied a reason. Of the total membership of 1523, no less

than 890 were parsons. The latter may be actors but are often players.

The Rev. George Warlow, Vicar of Aure, Glos., was fined ten shillings at Little Dean for assaulting a nine-years-old schoolgirl by chastising her for bad behaviour. Perhaps the reverend gentleman was led astray by the pious injunction: "Spare the rod and spoil the child."

"Punch and Holy Water" is the alluring title of a new book. Presumably, the allusion is to spirituous and spiritual intoxication.

Two men patients at the Highbury Hospital, Birmingham, were burnt to death, and four were injured as the result of a fire. Another prank of Providence.

Greatly daring, the Harrogate Town Council have decided to permit teas to be served in the gardens on Sundays. There was the usual protest from the religious party who complained of Sunday labour, etc. As though these people care about undue labour being forced on people, and as though there were more labour involved in serving tea on Sunday in a public garden than in running a church. Besides, one only needs to give those employed on Sunday a day off on Monday to adjust the matter. We have reached a time when religion dares no longer be honest even in its opposition to the secularising tendencies of life. We have some respect for the straight-forward Sabbatarian. He, at least, is not ashamed of his opinions. But these people who pretend to an anxiety about labour in their desire to shut up everything but the churches on Sunday fill one with nothing but disgust.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Canada has voted for union with the Congregational and Methodist Churches. Adversity, as the old proverb reminds us, makes strange bed-fellows.

At an Eastbourne inquest it was stated by the doctor that the deceased man suffered from eleven distinct diseases. This item may be useful to the defenders of the Benevolent Design Argument.

It is distinctly unkind for the newspaper men to describe the Rev. Stephen Campbell, M.P., as "Labour's Parson." There are 50,000 priests in this country alone, and the comparison in this instance is really startling.

Canon Barnes says it is very serious that young men of the better type are not coming forward to enter the Christian ministry. Naturally. Young men of the better type see through the sham and prefer a more intellectually honest way of getting a living. It is only the poorer type who either have not the brains to see the weakness of theology, or have not the moral courage to stand out against what promises to be a calling which gives social position with probable financial gain. For while it is true that there are a great number of clergymen who are paid but poorly, there are still some very nice pickings to be had, and it is the plums of a profession that attract.

Canon Barnes counts it as a gain that there is so little hostility to religion. We think the Canon minimizes this, but he is probably correct in assuming that the hostility is not quite so strong as it was. This results, not from any increase in affection for religion—there is less of this than ever there was, but rather from the fact that religion no longer dares to be so openly hostile and intolerant. The consequence is that a great many who were keyed to active hostility have been getting lax in their opposition to the historic enemy of progress. So far it is a gain to the Churches that their enemies should relax vigilance, and Freethinkers may rest quite assured that the Churches will take every advantage of the situa-

tion that is possible. It is always true that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance.

Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith, the novelist, says that "it doesn't pay to tell the truth." This is by no means a new discovery. Freethinkers have known it all the time.

The Rev. Henry Taylor, retiring President of the Primitive Methodist Church, says that he has "no room for religion which only meant personal salvation and a passport to eternal rest." Methodists of a former day would have had no room for Brother Taylor

The Bishop of Liverpool is very much afraid that the "cloud of secular education will grow bigger and bigger." We hope and believe he is correct in his fears, but Freethinkers must be on the look-out. Only recently the House of Commons passed a motion, supported by Mr. Sidney Webb and a number of members of the Labour Party, which had the effect of sanctioning the granting of large sums of money to Roman Catholic schools for buildings. This was done very quietly, and a report of the discussion was kept out of the papers, but later Mr. T. P. O'Connor boasted to a Catholic audience of all that it meant. It means State money for buildings which are built, owned and controlled by Roman priests and permeated by Catholic teaching every hour of the day.

The Bishop says that all Christian bodies should unite in fighting the danger of secular education, and in meetings of representatives of the various Churches they had agreed upon the following points: Every child in the country ought to be taught religion; religious education ought to be given by religious teachers; whatever religious instruction was given should be in accordance with the wishes of the parents. Which means (1) the clergy are all agreed that their teachings shall be given at the cost of the State, (2) that non-religious teachers shall, so far as is possible, be kept out of the schools, and (3) that the clergy shall pull the strings through the parents. Fortunately, what these representatives of the various Churches cannot agree upon is the kind of religious instruction that is to be given. They still hate each other enough to give any one of the lot a decided advantage. And long may they remain in that frame of mind. The only security we have for religious freedom in this country is the mutual intolerance of the Christian sects towards each other.

"Clericus," writing in the *Yorkshire Observer*, doubts if Atheism was ever popular. We can quite set his mind at rest on that matter. It never was. There was little to make it so. No one could get into public office by a profession of Atheism; you could not "spoo" the public by it; there were no well-paid offices attaching to it, and there were always some very hard knocks to be taken when one did avow Atheism. And on the higher ground Atheism meant at least an effort at sustained thinking, a task which the average man or woman takes to very unkindly. No, it never was popular, and it is not likely to be for a very long time to come.

But if Atheism found employment for some 5,000 preachers, a large number of whom found a far better living through it than they could ever hope to find in the open labour market, if it encouraged people in dodging mental exertion, if it gave an excuse for some of the meaner motives of which they were possessed, if it safeguarded a large number of vested interests, and if it ever had the power—used it—to suppress opposing forms of thought, and, above all, if it took little children, and by imposing on their helplessness and ignorance, brought them up with distorted and false views of life, then we think it quite likely that Atheism might become popular. And in that case it would be as worthless as Christianity now is, in spite of the efforts of "Clericus" and others to prove the contrary.

The National Secular Society.

THE Funds of the National Secular Society are now legally controlled by Trust Deed, and those who wish to benefit the Society by gift or bequest may do so with complete confidence that any money so received will be properly administered and expended.

The following form of bequest is sufficient for anyone who desires to benefit the Society by will:—

I hereby give and bequeath (*Here insert particulars of legacy*), free of all death duties, to the Trustees of the National Secular Society for all or any of the purposes of the Trust Deed of the said Society, and I direct that a receipt signed by two of the trustees of the said Society shall be a good discharge to my executors for the said legacy.

Any information concerning the Trust Deed and its administration may be had on application.

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.

R. A. CRANK.—Pleased to hear from you of the great success of Mr. Whitehead's lectures in Stockport, which we noted last week. We trust they will have the effect of stimulating the interest of many in the Freethought Cause. There was never a time when Freethinking was a more urgent need in the country.

H. WRIGHT.—Letter reached us all right, but it hardly appeared of sufficient importance at the time for insertion.

A. L. SUMMERS.—Next week. Please send along the other article.

H. AUSTIN.—The cheaper editions are quite good. The more expensive one is mainly superior on account of a better "get-up." As you say, in these times the purchase of expensive books taxes one rather heavily, and the tendency is for the price of printing to go up rather than down.

H. L.—We can only say that our own children were withdrawn from religious instruction, and we never detected any ill-consequences, but are certain that they have gained an independence of mind they might not have had in the face of religious instruction. And one ought to bear in mind that duty to the child involves more than the mere protection from things that may be momentarily a little unpleasant. The future has always to be reckoned with, and it is the child's future that is always in question.

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 the first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

We hear from a German correspondent, Herr Alfred Rehts, that there is a growing activity in Freethought circles there in spite of the many circumstances that tend to depress intellectual movements. Among other items we are informed of an independent branch of the Freemasons which is openly Atheistic in spirit. There is already on the Continent a Freemasonry which has done away with the Theistic oath of admission, but the German branch appears to be an advance on this. We wish our German fellow-Freethinkers every success in their war against the common enemy. With less religion in Germany than there has been the country would be in a much better state than it is at present.

The Birmingham Branch holds its annual excursion to-day (July 1). The place selected is Bidford, and those joining in will meet the charabanc at N. Wheatley's, Station Street, at 10.30. The price of the trip is 5s. We wish the excursionists a happy day.

Mr. James Partridge has been for over thirty years secretary to the Birmingham Branch and has now resigned his office. It was accepted with profound regret, but Mr. Partridge is entitled to relief from official responsibilities if he desires it. The next official will find that he has a hard job to live up to his predecessor, and we do not envy him the attempt. We have known Mr. Partridge ever since we have been in the movement, and we can say with assurance that Freethought never had a more devoted or a more reliable servant. No effort was too much that would advance the Cause, and his zeal was only matched by his modesty. We hear of his resignation with profound regret, but we hope and expect that he will still remain a member of the committee. That will give the Branch the benefit of his judgment and the inspiration of his enthusiasm.

Mr. Halley Stewart is one of the not by any means too numerous Nonconformists who is genuinely and warmly heartedly in favour of real equality in matters of religious belief. What he demands for himself he will fight for on behalf of others, and his work on behalf of secular education proves that he means what he says. He is treasurer of the Secular Education League, and one of its hardest workers. With a desire to excite interest among young men in the Free Church training colleges in the subject of genuine religious equality before the law, he is offering a prize of twenty guineas, one of ten guineas, and fourteen of five guineas for the best essays on the subject of "State Neutrality towards Religion in Church and School." He is also offering a special prize of fifty guineas for the best essay on "State Establishment of Religion as Detrimental to the Rights of Citizenship and the Freedom of Religious Thought."

We hope these prizes will excite the interest they deserve. By theory the Nonconformists should fight for Secular Education in the State Schools, and for the complete abolition of all forms of religious patronage and protection by the State. In practice the overwhelming majority of Nonconformists do nothing of the kind. The organized Nonconformist Churches are as greedy of State patronage as any, and their action is more often than not motivated by jealousy of the Episcopalians. They sold the whole principle of Secular Education in 1870, and have been among the principal obstacles to its establishment ever since. If Mr. Halley Stewart's offer has the effect of arousing the younger men among the Nonconformists to some appreciation of principle and its value in the everyday affairs of life it cannot but be productive of good.

HERESY.

To believe in the Antipodes constitutes a wicked heresy. God, who made the world, ought to have known if there were such a thing, and it is evident from his books that he did not believe in it.—Voltaire.

Immortality.

ONE of the most interesting and at the same time difficult problems connected with the race, is how mankind gets its beliefs. It is hopeless to ask believers themselves for information regarding the matter, since one of the most striking features of a belief is its wonderful power of getting itself accepted on trust, and of making the recipient feel that it would be uncanny and even unholy to go about seeking to know exactly where his treasure came from, and to hear all the disparaging things unsympathetic people might have to say of it. Hence, the believer, like the lover, consorts mostly with those who lend a willing ear to his tales of rapture, and who are disposed to supply him with the only kind of evidence he is ready to accept—that bearing out the truth of what he believes. If then we would have a correct knowledge regarding the origin and the development of beliefs, it is necessary to watch the process going on in the believer, rather than to rely upon his statements about the truth and the value of what he believes.

Now, observation shows that beliefs commonly go through two progressive stages. In the first they arise and become objects of distinct consciousness. In the second, they are brought under examination, sometimes to test their genuineness, sometimes only to establish it. Thus beliefs may be classed either as naive or as philosophical. Nations and individuals not yet arrived at habits of thoughtful investigation are they who get and develop their beliefs in the naive way; whilst the philosophical method prevails among such as have reached a state of intellectual alertness prompting them either to question or to defend their faiths.

If we ask what is the ordinary course whereby a naively formed belief comes into existence, it would appear that man, because of his constitution, is influenced very largely by hopes and fears, and that he possesses the faculty of educing from these feelings certain conceptions, which, though not necessarily correct, assume in his mind the appearance of truth, and persuade him to regard them as the expressions of objective realities. Conceptions thus formed are what we term naive beliefs. They have their source in, and get their evidence from, the feelings alone. Hence, man draws his beliefs out of his very nature by reading himself so to say into phenomena. But the acquisitive process is not final. For, as reason strengthens, and experience confirms and justifies the habit of applying it as the best and safest means of distinguishing reality from appearance, there comes an ever deepening conviction that before a belief derived from and supported by the feelings can be regarded as trustworthy, it must be proved capable of rational attestation, and that the strength of this attestation must be directly proportional to the importance of the belief under inquiry. The results of this process are as follows: A belief demonstrated, becomes a certainty. A belief really, or apparently, indemonstrable, yet shown to have stronger arguments for it than against it, becomes a probable opinion. A belief proved to be supported and assailed by arguments equally balanced, remains a belief only. A belief absolutely disproved, or made out to have more evidence against it than for it, becomes in the first case inadmissible; and in the second, improbable. Such it seems to us are the characteristics of the respective processes whereby man originally obtains, and subsequently attempts to verify his beliefs. If, however, an illustration of the two methods were required, perhaps nothing better could be adduced than a comparison between the attitude of a young girl towards her lover, and that of a merchant towards his customer.

In each case, the interest at stake is the highest of its kind. The maiden gives her love with the devotion and surrender of her whole being. The merchant sends forth his most precious goods. If she trusts vainly, her fair name is forever gone. If he furnishes wares to one who disperses them without paying him, his house is ruined. Here is the similarity, but there is a difference. Both these persons yield their greatest treasure with the fullest confidence, yet their faith does not spring from the same source. The girl is under the sway of her emotions. She worships the magician whose wand has thrown open the secret chambers of her heart. She revels in the fulness of her joy; every fibre thrilling at the touch of love. She feels that it would be terrible, a thing vile and sacrilegious, aye verily impossible, to doubt even for a moment the truth and loyalty of the being who has turned earth into a paradise, and made her to sit with him in heavenly places. But what does this really prove? That the one thus loved and trusted is worthy of the feelings he inspires? That the far-off divine event to which the trembling heart of the maiden furtively aspires, is destined to be a reality? Alas, no! Beggary and a life of shame may be all that follows the belief, though assuredly the most tenderly cherished, the most beautiful, and the most touching, that our nature yields.

Far otherwise proceeds the merchant. He places no reliance whatever upon a presentiment of the solvency and integrity of the intending purchaser, but inquires about the man from those whom he knows to be well informed and thoroughly trustworthy. If the report be favourable he sends the goods on credit; if not, he declines. The maiden is a thing of beauty, a creature soaring in altitudes of faith and poesy; the merchant is a plain, prosaic, man of the world; but in this case he has the advantage, and has it largely; and the only thing that helped him to it is the simple fact that whilst she trusted her feelings, he trusted his understanding.

The foregoing remarks form a natural introduction to the problem of how man comes to believe that the death awaiting him on earth does not terminate his existence. Here it should be observed that nothing in the world appears more indubitable, or more final, than death. The point is one where the testimony of sense is emphatic, for the process of corruption may be traced visually in all its ghastly details, and the man on whom it takes place is found no more, and there does not seem any prospect of his being called again into existence. Yet, nevertheless, against the senses and the conclusion they support, there comes forth the belief that death is neither real nor final; or at least, if real, then not final. This belief can take but two forms. Either it must be supposed that although the entire man dies and corrupts, still, he will be restored and reanimated; or else it must be held that a certain part of him continues to live on unimpaired when death consigns the rest to corruption. Of those who take the second view, some do not expect the reunion of the corruptible with the incorruptible, but imagine either that the latter will exist by itself, or else that it will be furnished with a new concomitant; the greater part, however, look for the corruptible and the incorruptible to be again united.

The first of the above doctrines may justly be called the resurrection of the dead, for the persons concerned are regarded as having wholly ceased to exist.¹ This

¹ This opinion was ably defended by William Coward, a physician, in a work entitled *Second Thoughts Concerning the Human Soul*, "demonstrating the notion of a human soul, as believed to be a spiritual immortal substance united to a human body, to be a plain heathenish invention, and not consonant to the principles of philosophy, reason or religion, but the ground only of many absurd and superstitious opinions, abominable to the Reformed Churches, and derogatory in

view prevailed to some extent among the Jews, as the language of the New Testament shows even in the case of writers who held a different opinion. There the word *psyche* over and over again means life and not soul, just as in the Septuagint the word *pneuma* very often means *breath* and not *spirit*. On this theory, life is not the property of any part of man's nature, but is simply a power communicated to it for a time, and then withdrawn to produce death. Breath, say the Scriptures is the source of life, and God gives it and takes it away in the case of both man and beast.

According to the second doctrine, man is composed of two parts, an invisible part called his soul, and a visible part called his body. The former animates the latter, and is the seat of intelligence. Death is the separation of these two elements, and upon this the soul continues to exist, whereas the body goes to pieces. Hence, no one really dies, and the resurrection is not that of dead people, but of dead bodies. This belief seems to have sprung partly from ghost stories, and partly from the supposition that the breath is a substance existing within the body and capable of existing apart from it. The cessation of life at the cessation of breath would occasion the opinion that breath is the cause of life. *Pneuma* certainly meant breath before it meant spirit. Hence spirit is a subtilized conception of matter. These naive beliefs are supported by the following arguments, of which some relate to the resurrection of the truly dead; others to the endurance of the soul; others to the resurrection of the body for its reunion with the soul; and others to our future existence under any of those conditions.

C. CLAYTON DOVE.

(To be Continued.)

My Baby's Mind.

Why do you preach? Why do you preach?
 Why do I grin when you rave about sin?
 Why do I fly from your mad holy din?
 Why shall I keep her from your reach?
 Why do I think your fables are thin?
 I do not believe the stuff you teach:
 Do not believe in sin!

I do not believe; I do not believe!
 So you shall not mould my baby's mind,
 She shall not grow up credulous, blind,
 But with Reason shall she perceive
 The truth of this or that, and so find
 Out freely what to love, and what to leave.
 I hope she'll leave you far behind!

No one can know, no one can know,
 What wonderful roads she may take,
 What old or new trails she may break,
 But you can't decide how she shall grow,
 Instilling fear, making her quake
 Before your gruesome, godly foe;
 Your hideous phantomous fake!

C. B. WARWICK.

general to true Christianity." The book appeared in 1702 under the pseudonym of *Estibius Psycalthes*, and on March 10, 1703-4, the House of Commons appointed a committee of twenty-five persons—among whom was Mr. St. John, afterwards Lord Bolingbroke—to examine it and another by the same author. A week later they gave an unfavourable report, and the House ordered both works to "be burned the next day by the Common Hangman in the New Palace Yard, Westminster," as "tending to the subversion of the Christian religion." This increased the sale of the condemned author, and occasioned a new edition of his *Second Thoughts*. Although a staunch Church of England man, he still received the designations customary under such circumstances, and in his *Epistolary Reply to Dr. Broughton's Psychologia*, he says: "Give me leave to tell you that when you presume to call me *atheist* or *heretic* who is known to frequent the Sacrament often in a year, and seldom fails public devotion on week-days, in the Church of England, you, or anyone else, do very ill." Swift, however, reckons him with Toland, Tindal, and Gildou.—*Bio. Brit.*, 1789.

A Modern Tyranny.

It has been my painful duty, recently, to attend the funeral of a near and dear relation, and my experience on that occasion urges me to protest against the tyranny which custom, supported by the parsons and undertakers, imposes on the relatives of the deceased.

To one who has thrown off the shackles of the Christian superstition, the mock solemnity of the undertaker's men, whose faces have become set by long usage into an expression of misery it is to be hoped they do not feel, and the droning of the parson as he reads the burial service, would be fit subjects for ridicule were it not for the grief of those mourning the loss of a loved one.

When in normal health my mother, for she it was whose remains we followed to her last resting place, was one of the most lovable, unselfish beings it is possible to imagine—always thinking of the welfare of others, ready to share anything she possessed with those in need and to help anyone in trouble without thought of fee or reward.

Here, surely, if the loving heavenly Father of the Christians be a reality, was a subject for his beneficence, but alas, the last two years of her life were clouded by intermittent periods of suffering, culminating in three months of agony during which the poor sufferer repeatedly cried out, "Oh God, why are you so wicked to me?"

But there was no help forthcoming either from God or his earthly representatives while she was alive, although at the burial service the officiating parson told us all about her destiny after death. There were three funerals taken together (I understand that the parson is paid piecemeal rates so it would mean a good day's business for him if he had many more similar cases) and when the congregation was assembled in the chapel he commenced by saying that before reading the service he wished to explain exactly what happened to the soul when it left the body.

He said it rested for three days in Paradise, which is a sort of halfway-house between earth and heaven. Unfortunately he forgot to tell us where heaven is, but he dwelt on the thoughtful providence of "Our dear Lord" in making this provision for us so that we may have time to prepare ourselves before making the acquaintance of God. He rambled on like the conductor of one of Messrs. Cook's continental tours, until one's blood boiled to think of the sham and mockery of it all. After going into all these details and leaving us just as wise on the subject as we were before he spoke, he read the burial service in a mechanical manner that would put a gramophone to shame, and then we walked in procession to the grave. Of course, we had to walk in exactly the order that etiquette demands—how could we express our grief otherwise? Then he mumbled a sort of incantation, the words of which I could not make out, over the grave, and, in the words of the song, "His day's work was done."

We wandered, disconsolate, back to the waiting carriages for the dreary drive home to the customary repast of cold ham. A dismal ending to a dismal day, relieved only by the ghostly smile which flitted over the faces of the drivers of the coaches when they were asked to quaff a flagon of ale.

Except for the pockets of the priest and the undertaker no one benefited in the slightest from the ceremony.

The rigmarole uttered by the parson brought consolation to none, for no one believed a word he said. Whether our loved one is enjoying another and better state of consciousness than this, or is in a dreamless, endless sleep, we know not. Of one thing we feel certain, that she is free from pain, released by King Death

after calling in vain for months upon the Great Almighty of the Christians.

As soon as the writer reached his own home, the first thing he did was to append to his last will and testament a written request that when his time to join the great majority comes along, there shall be no religious ceremony.

FRED HOBDAV.

"Shakespeare"; Was it Oxford, Bacon, or Derby?

My last article dealt with the bearing of the contemporary "Shakespeare" records upon the authorship problem, the immense discrepancy between the meagre biographical details and the vast claims then carefully entered on behalf of the reputed author going far to prove that fictitious credentials had been deliberately arranged for him; in other words, that he was not the actual author. It remains now to deal with the more difficult question of who *did* write the plays.

Those who carefully examine competing solutions to any problem which by its nature admits of only one solution, usually become conscious of varying degrees of feasibility amongst the different alternatives; even if all of them seem incredible some are bound to appear more absurd or fantastical than others. Such has, at any rate, been the general attitude of critics who have taken the trouble to examine the various solutions put forward in recent years for the Shakespeare problem. When, therefore, in referring to Bacon, Derby, and Oxford, George Underwood asserts that "there is as much evidence for any of these as for the others," his readers will understand that he is merely expressing a personal opinion, rather than stating an obvious fact; and that, according to what is apparently a law of the human intelligence, his opinion is not likely to be shared by many others. Probably, on second thoughts, he will agree that the statement is too loose and indiscriminating for him to adhere to it.

The soundness of general propositions can be best tested by applying them to particular cases; and as his article deals primarily with the publication of the First Folio, the editorial statements in which Stratfordians are bound to accept at their face value, we cannot do better than see how Bacon, Derby, and Oxford respectively, stand in relation to that work.

Most students are aware that the ostensible editors of the book, in both of their prefatory pieces, emphasized their regret that the author had not lived to "oversee" the publishing of his plays. Indeed, so overwhelming is the internal evidence that the volume is not an author's production (see A. W. Pollard's work on the Folios and Quartos) that those who believe that the dramatist was still living had to devise reasons for his non-participation; and so far-reaching have been the consequences of leaving the work to others that the regret of the editors has been re-echoed by all the most competent modern commentators. The whole weight of probability is therefore in favour of his being dead at the time.

If we recall, then, that the volume came from the Press in 1623, that Bacon did not die till 1626, and that Derby did not die till 1642, whilst Oxford had been dead for many years, it will hardly be contended that the First Folio furnishes "as much evidence for any one of these as for the others."

These considerations lead naturally to other aspects of "Shakespeare" publications. In 1632 the Second Folio appeared, and (see Pollard) although the printers effected some minor "improvements" all the fundamental defects remained untouched, and the

superiority of the First Folio over the Second is now fully recognized. From this point of view it is clear that Derby's case is immeasurably weaker than Bacon's, and that degrees of probability or improbability respecting the various claims are as inevitable in this as in all similar cases.

We turn now to the more significant facts of Shakespeare publication, namely those relating to the pre-Folio quartos. From *Venus* in 1593 to the authentic *Hamlet* of 1604, we have the greatest period prior to the Folio. As the Earl of Oxford was in retirement during these years, and *died in 1604*, it will be seen that not only do his circumstances fit the case, but that his death marks with peculiar precision the close of this very eventful period and what is, from other considerations, a most extraordinary date in early quarto publication. It is, of course, common knowledge that when at length the Folio appeared it contained very many plays universally admitted to have been written before those published in 1598, proving that the 1593-1604 issues were from a large accumulated stock, and that the work of publication was stopped short suddenly in 1604, with a number of plays on hand awaiting their turn to be trimmed up for printing.

Equally striking was the slight resumption of publication a few years later (1608-9). All the details cannot be given here, and therefore I would refer the reader to the outline of them in connection with the several issues as treated in Sir Sidney Lee's *Life*. There were three plays involved (*Troilus*, *Pericles*, *Lear*) and the *Sonnets*; and in every case there was some quite unusual feature, indicating the complete withdrawal of the author's hand.

The *Sonnets* especially give a very distinctive stamp to this 1608-9 revival of publication, and may be said to focus the entire "Shakespeare" mystery. A set of no less than one hundred and fifty-four poems of an intimately personal nature, poems that had taken many years to compose and had been carefully preserved, come to light from some unknown quarter, ushered in by an alien pen, with a mysterious dedication to an unrecognizable "begetter," whilst the supposed writer of them lives on for some years supinely indifferent to the outrage, meekly acquiescing in the publisher Thorpe's assumption that he was done with sonnet writing. The simplest explanation surely is that the poet himself was dead, and that his manuscripts had therefore passed legitimately into other hands. Not, however, until the Oxford hypothesis was adopted could this very natural explanation of the mystery be so much as thought of, though, once mooted, it was immediately observed that the poet's death was directly implied in the very terms of the dedication, the expression "ever-living" never being applied to any man during his lifetime.

According to the commonly accepted dates of the poems themselves, the latest are understood to have been written immediately after the death of Queen Elizabeth. So that "Shakespeare," having composed sonnets for many years, stopped suddenly and for ever at the exact time of the death of the Earl of Oxford; the exact time, too, when the great publication period closed with the authentic *Hamlet*. Then, for five years, they lay without the addition of a single verse, till they were published in the extraordinary manner just described, at the precise time when Oxford's affairs were wound up, and his widow gave up the house at Hackney, which they had occupied during the publishing of the plays, and where he had died (see Colonel Ward's *Mystery of Mr. W. H.*). The evidence that "Shakespeare" died in 1604 is about as conclusive as circumstances could make it.

During the last years of Oxford's life, and up to the very time of his death, publishers were evidently able

to secure "Shakespeare" plays for publication. From this time onward, although the manuscripts of many of these plays were lying somewhere, and although, according to the best authorities, publishers would have been only too glad to have got hold of them and published them, with the exception of the 1608-9 irregularities nothing whatever fell into their hands until 1622-3. In the First Folio, containing some twenty plays not previously published, Heming and Condell are introduced claiming that they had collected the works and thus prevented them from perishing irrevocably. Is it not amazing that eager and vigilant publishers should have been unable to secure a single one of these floating manuscripts, yet when a couple of actors set about gathering them together from miscellaneous and unspecified quarters the whole shoal come into the net at once? Would such a story have been credited in any but a "Shakespeare" connection? Even Sir Sidney Lee seems to jibe at it; and yet, if it is once rejected, and the false pretensions of the First Folio established, the house of Stratford loses its foundations and falls into irretrievable ruin.

This by the way. On the other hand, if the whole of these publication facts be viewed in relation to the death dates of Oxford, Bacon and Derby, and I put it, not this time to any hypothetical jury, but directly to George Underwood himself, to say frankly whether they do not give an immeasurably stronger support to the claims of the Earl of Oxford than to any other.

Such being the circumstances under which the plays were published, all questions relating to when they were written become matters of very doubtful conjecture. No candid reader of Captain Holland's book, *Through Oxford Glasses*, will, however, be likely to doubt that the early Shakespeare plays are related by their topical allusions to times antecedent to those commonly assigned, and that this revision is all in favour of Oxford, who was eleven years older than Bacon, and ten years older than Derby.

At the other end of the series we find that, even on the assumption of an author who died in 1616, it has been necessary to suppose that he abandoned his literary vocation in the heyday of his powers, leaving his latest masterpieces to be completed by strange pens, and so botching the close of a phenomenal career that Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch is forced to conclude that "something had happened." If this is bad for Shakespeare, it is worse for Bacon who outlived him by ten years, and worse still for Derby who outlived him for no less than twenty-six years. To Oxford alone does the very natural explanation apply, that the author was cut off in the midst of his work, and that others had to step in and make the best of a sad fatality. And this is the exact situation represented in the First Folio.

J. THOMAS LOONEY.

(To be Concluded.)

Manchester Branch N.S.S.

OUTDOOR meetings become more popular every year, and a good many people hear a Freethought lecture who would otherwise be unacquainted with them. The first two meetings were held in unsuitable places, but the others were good and the interest increased as the days went on.

An amusing feature at one of the meetings was when a young lady very excitedly denounced Mr. Whitehead for what he had said about the Roman Catholic Church, and instanced persecutions at the hands of Protestants like him. After the heated display, Mr. Whitehead explained that what the lady had said about the Protestants was quite true, but he was an Atheist—not a Protestant.

We have heard plenty of Christian misrepresentations about "Infidel Death Beds"—Paine and Voltaire were common. But on the closing night there was something

in the nature of a Christian recantation. A man came forward and said Mr. Whitehead had "run away from Father Russell"—a Roman Catholic priest of Stockport. The audience was interested to hear that a challenge to debate had been made twice in the reverend gentleman's presence, but he would not accept, only wishing to confute Ingersoll whom he admitted never having read in his life, and also to deny the truth of the lecture which he had never heard. Whilst admitting the truth of the statements made by Mr. Whitehead and Stockport friends, the informer stuck to what he said at first, thus believing in two opposites at the same time. Truly, a very creditable performance! The challenge is made known in the local Press. Wake up Father Russell!

HAROLD I. BAYFORD,
Hon. Sec.

Correspondence.

PYTHAGORAS AND COPERNICUS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mr. Strickland's reply *re* Copernicus and Pythagoras gives one the impression that he has crossed the Rubicon and damned the consequences. By misstating my position he makes out a plausible case. Nowhere in my letter did I say or give the impression that Pythagoras believed in the heliocentric theory, but rather that he was the forerunner of Aristarchus who did teach the theory. In my ignorance of Mr. Strickland's peculiar attitude I imagined that the support of Miss Buckley's classic work and the text book of so distinguished an astronomer as Prof. Moulton would have settled the question for all reasonable men. I find on referring again to the subject that practically every authority (Sir R. A. Gregory, Prof. Carl Snyder and F. A. Lange in *The History of Materialism*) supports my position. Sir Thomas Heath has gone so far as to call Aristarchus in the title of his book *The Copernicus of Antiquity*. In this interesting work he gives all the facts, proving to all reasonable men the wonderful groundwork of science established by Pythagoras, Aristarchus, and their contemporaries. He gives all the classical authorities, even the work of Aristarchus himself. I do not, as Mr. Strickland says, attempt to prove the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race. I merely object to his attempt to belittle the great names of Darwin, Newton, Lyell, and Herschel, and their countrymen, without whom science would be halfway back into the "Dark Ages." Mr. Strickland's race prejudice is, I think, evident in the following: "In what can the German, or rather German-Jew, Hersch or Herschel be considered as a pioneer.....like his fellow Jew Spinoza, etc." Surely the correct attitude is to wholeheartedly welcome all science irrespective of race, nation, class or prejudice.

R. L. TURNEY.

THE CLERGY AND WIRELESS.

SIR,—It is now common knowledge and very noticeable that the clergy control as much as possible the Sunday programmes of the British Broadcasting Company. The many Freethinkers who hold wireless licenses have as much right to call the tune as the paid Bible-lovers. It seems that as the ordinary man objects to church-going, he is to be worried after church hours by having sermons hurled at him, against his wish! A few weeks ago a prominent clergyman declared that he was aware that people took off their receivers when a sermon was to be broadcasted by the wireless. Not content with suppressing competition by getting the Sunday programmes of the B.B.C. to commence at 8.30, the clergy monopolize the rest of the time by not-wanted sermons and hymns. I suggest that a small committee be formed to make representations to the proper quarter, and failing satisfaction, to apply for a broadcasting license, in order to secure a healthy Sunday's entertainment, free from the clergy's interest and propaganda. Those interested please write to the Editor, or to—

FRANK T. DENT,

28-29, Aldersgate Street, Cheapside, E.C.1.

[This is quite a useful suggestion, and we should be interested in seeing how many of our readers are interested in the proposal. If enough were, something might be done.—EDITOR.]

CHARLES BRADLAUGH: SUGGESTED MURAL TABLETS.

SIR,—Your metropolitan readers will be familiar with the memorial tablets affixed to the front walls of houses formerly occupied by celebrities. These tablets (usually circular in form) read: "So-and-So, Such-and-Such, Lived Here, — to —." The tablets are put up by the London County Council, by societies, or by private individuals.

Most "advanced" bodies—Freethought, Rationalist, Ethicist, Reform, Neo-Malthusian, Humanitarian, Spiritualist, and the like—hold in high esteem the memory of Charles Bradlaugh. I would suggest that these bodies take action to endeavour to induce the L.C.C. to mark, by means of a mural tablet, the residences that Bradlaugh successively occupied. What is the procedure usually adopted?

In any case, a letter to the Council, signed by the respective presidents and other officers of the organizations, and by men like Morley, Shaw, Wells, Bennett, Doyle, etc., and women like Mrs. Besant, Mrs. H. Bradlaugh-Bonner, etc., could not be out of order. Nor could a deputation from a public meeting, while, of course, any Londoner is at liberty to write to his L.C.C. member.

One cannot imagine the Council refusing, but if it did the tablets should be affixed by means of funds subscribed in response to a public appeal.

SPIRITUALIST AND SOCIALIST.

Obituary.

CREMATION OF F. W. WALSH.

The cremation of the remains of Frederic Walsh took place at the Perry Barr Crematorium, Birmingham, on Saturday, June 23. The service was conducted by Mr. E. Clifford Williams, representing the Birmingham Branch of the National Secular Society, and by Dr. Higginson, representing the Positivists. Each paid eloquent tribute to the character of the dead man, to his heroic patience through years of intense suffering, and to the influence which, in spite of his crippled condition, he exerted upon others. There were a large number of mourners present, among them being Mr. J. Sumners, Mr. J. Breese, Mr. A. G. Lye (Coventry), Mr. W. R. Storr (London), Mr. Sidney Style (Liverpool), Mr. G. J. Dobson, Mr. J. Collins, Mr. H. S. Rollason, Mr. A. T. Whitwell, and Miss Alice Baker. In recognition of the love of flowers shown by the deceased there was a plentiful display of these, the Freethought emblem, the pansy, being very prominent. The flowers were mostly those the dead man loved. The service throughout was simple but effective, a fitting farewell to one whose ability, patience, and gentleness endeared him to all with whom he came in contact.

In Memoriam.

F. W. WALSH.

Yes, without God he faced the night,
Who did not count the world as dross,
Though each day winged for tardy flight
Beheld him stretched upon his cross.

Right to the edge of death's abyss,
Where woe and weal are one alway,
He drew nor craved the mystic kiss
That speeds the Christian on his way.

No light from worlds supernal beamed
On fevered brow or tortured eyes;
For in his steadfast heart he deemed
That here alone was Paradise.

The hush that men call death, the calm
Nor creed nor priest have power to shake,
Are his who living felt the balm
Of service for all men's sake.

A. D. H. SMITH.

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.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11, S. K. Ratcliffe, "Shadow and Dawn in America."

OUTDOOR.

RETINAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.15, Mr. F. P. Corrigan, a Lecture.

FINSBURY PARK.—11.15, Mr. F. P. Corrigan, a Lecture.

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

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 3.30 and 6.30, Mr. F. Shaller will lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Outside Technical Institute, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7, Mr. E. Burke, a Lecture.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BARNSELY BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. Whitehead's Freethought Mission: Every evening at 7.30. June 28, 29, 30 on Market Hill. Sunday, July 1, on May Day Green.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble: Meet Palatine Road terminus 1 p.m., take 'bus to Cheadle 1 o'clock; then take 'bus from White Hart, Cheadle, to Monks' Heath at 1.45 p.m.; leave Monks' Heath 7.23 p.m. It is very important that those who intend going should be punctual.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Moor, near North Road entrance): 7, Mr. F. Carlton, a Lecture.

FREETHINKER (48) seeks employment; 30 years' experience in the wholesale paper and stationery trade.—**JOHN COOPER**, c/o *Freethinker* Office, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

PIONEER LEAFLETS.

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

- No. 1. WHAT WILL YOU PUT IN ITS PLACE?
- No. 2. WHAT IS THE USE OF THE CLERGY?
- No. 3. DYING FREETHINKERS.
- No. 4. THE BELIEFS OF UNBELIEVERS.
- No. 5. ARE CHRISTIANS INFERIOR TO FREETHINKERS?
- No. 6. DOES MAN DESIRE GOD?

Price 1s. 6d. per 100, Postage 3d.

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

DETERMINISM OR FREEWILL?

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

NEW EDITION REVISED AND ENLARGED.

Contents: Chapter I.—The Question Stated. Chapter II.—"Freedom" and "Will." Chapter III.—Consciousness, Deliberation, and Choice. Chapter IV.—Professor James on the "Dilemma of Determinism." Chapter V.—The Nature and Implications of Responsibility. Chapter VI.—Determinism and Character. Chapter VII.—A problem in Determinism. Chapter VIII.—Environment.

Price: Paper, 1s. 9d., postage 1½d.; or strongly bound in Half-Cloth 2s. 6d., postage 2d.

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



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.

WALTER STRICKLAND'S WRITINGS

CZECH TRANSLATIONS

THE HALEK STORIES. Strickland's translations of these stories are applauded by every reader and praised in the literary Press of all countries. Halek was the great pioneer of Czech literature, and these translations capture wonderfully the sweetness of the Czech original.

UNDER THE HOLLOW TREE, 64 pp. and Cover. **POLDIK THE SCAVENGER,** 40 pp. and Cover.
OUR GRANDFATHER, 48 pp. and Cover. **EVENSONGS,** 32 pp. and Cover.

Uniform price, 4d. each. Postage extra.

PENSIONED OFF. An Anti-Militarist Story. In the Press. Watch announcements.

By SVATOPLUK CECH

HANUMAN is a mock-heroic poem. It is a wonderful study of human folly veiled under the guise of an ape epic. Powerful satire and irony, preserving the original metres and double-rhyming in translation that distinguish the original work. Price 1s. Postage extra.

NOW SELLING—Just Issued

THE TAILOR OF TROLL-HATTAN. First issued in 1901. Second Edition. Illustrated in tone and colour by Henry Bernard. Forty-four pages. Paper Covers, 1s. 6d. Cloth, 2s. 6d. Postage extra.

POPULAR CHEAP EDITIONS

THE SMUGGLER'S DOG. A story for Christians. Twenty-four pages. Splendid propaganda fable. Should be circulated by all Freethinkers. Price 2d.

PAGANS AND CHRISTIANS. An account of the Black Spot in the East. 100 pages. A scathing exposure of British Imperialist methods in India. Special propaganda price, 6d.

THE EXTINCTION OF MANKIND. 16 pages. A biting attack on Christianity and War Glory. Price 2d.

Few Copies only

SACRIFICE: OR DAUGHTER OF THE SUN. A play having the cruelty of sacrificial religion for its theme. The scene is set in an early Polar civilization. A satire on Monarchy and Sacerdotalism. To clear, 1s.

FOLKLORE. Watch for later announcements.

N.B.—Owing to the wrong number appearing for the London address several orders (about which complaints have been received) never reached the publishers.

Address all Orders to:—

THE BAKUNIN PRESS, Bakunin House, 13 Burnbank Gardens, Glasgow, W.; or
 17 Richmond Gardens, Shepherds' Bush, London, W.12

Pamphlets.

By G. W. FOOTE.

CHRISTIANITY AND PROGRESS. Price 2d., postage ½d.
THE PHILOSOPHY OF SECULARISM. Price 2d., postage ½d.
WHO WAS THE FATHER OF JESUS? Price 1d., postage ½d.
THE JEWISH LIFE OF CHRIST. Being the Sepher Toldoth Jeshu, or Book of the Generation of Jesus. With an Historical Preface and Voluminous Notes. By G. W. FOOTE and J. M. WHEELER. Price 6d., postage ½d.
VOLTAIRE'S PHILOSOPHICAL DICTIONARY. Vol. I., 128 pp., with Fine Cover Portrait, and Preface by CHAPMAN COHEN. Price 1s. 3d., postage 1d.

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

DEITY AND DESIGN. Price 1d., postage ½d.
WAR AND CIVILIZATION. Price 1d., postage ½d.
RELIGION AND THE CHILD. Price 1d., postage ½d.
GOD AND MAN: An Essay in Common Sense and Natural Morality. Price 3d., postage ½d.
CHRISTIANITY AND SLAVERY: With a Chapter on Christianity and the Labour Movement. Price 1s., postage 1d.
WOMAN AND CHRISTIANITY: The Subjection and Exploitation of a Sex. Price 1s., postage 1d.
SOCIALISM AND THE CHURCHES. Price 3d., postage 1d.
CRIBED AND CHARACTER. The Influence of Religion on Racial Life. Price 7d., postage 1d.
THE PARSON AND THE ATHEIST. A Friendly Discussion on Religion and Life between Rev. the Hon. Edward Lyttelton, D.D., and Chapman Cohen. Price 1s. 6d., postage 1½d.
BLASPHEMY: A Plea for Religious Equality. Price 3d., postage 1d.
DOES MAN SURVIVE DEATH? Is the Belief Reasonable? Verbatim Report of a Discussion between Horace Leaf and Chapman Cohen. Price 7d., postage 1d.

By J. T. LLOYD.

PRAYER: ITS ORIGIN, HISTORY, AND FUTILITY. Price 2d., postage ½d.
GOD-EATING: A Study in Christianity and Cannibalism. Price 6d., postage 1d.

By A. D. MCLAREN.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SUNDAY: Its History and Its Fruits. Price 2d., postage ½d.

By MIMNERMUS.

FREETHOUGHT AND LITERATURE. Price 1d., postage ½d.

By WALTER MANN.

PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN MORALITY. Price 2d., postage ½d.
SCIENCE AND THE SOUL. With a Chapter on Infidel Death-Beds. Price 7d., postage 1d.

By M. M. MANGASARIAN.

THE MARTYRDOM OF HYPATIA. Price 1d., postage ½d.

By GEORGE WHITEHEAD.

JESUS CHRIST: Man, God, or Myth? With a Chapter on "Was Jesus a Socialist?" Paper Covers, 2s., postage 1½d.

THE CASE AGAINST THEISM. Paper Covers, 1s. 3d., postage 2d.; Cloth, 2s. 6d., postage 2½d.

THE SUPERMAN: Essays in Social Idealism. Price 2d., postage ½d.

MAN AND HIS GODS. Price 2d., postage ½d.

By A. MILLAR.

THE ROBES OF PAN. Price 6d., postage 1d.

By ARTHUR F. THORN.

THE LIFE-WORSHIP OF RICHARD JEFFERIES. With Fine Portrait of Jefferies. Price 1s., postage 1d.

By ROBERT ARCH.

SOCIETY AND SUPERSTITION. Price 6d., postage 1d.

By H. G. FARMER.

HERESY IN ART. The Religious Opinions of Famous Artists and Musicians. Price 3d., postage ½d.

By COLONEL INGERSOLL.

IS SUICIDE A SIN? AND LAST WORDS ON SUICIDE. Price 2d., postage ½d.

WHAT IS RELIGION? Price 1d., postage ½d.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH. Price 1d., postage ½d.

By D. HUME.

ESSAY ON SUICIDE. Price 1d., postage ½d.

PIONEER PRESS PUBLICATIONS

THEISM OR ATHEISM?

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

Contents: PART I.—AN EXAMINATION OF THEISM. Chapter I.—What is God? Chapter II.—The Origin of the Idea of God. Chapter III.—Have we a Religious Sense? Chapter IV.—The Argument from Existence. Chapter V.—The Argument from Causation. Chapter VI.—The Argument from Design. Chapter VII.—The Disharmonies of Nature. Chapter VIII.—God and Evolution. Chapter IX.—The Problem of Pain.

PART II.—SUBSTITUTES FOR ATHEISM. Chapter X.—A Question of Prejudice. Chapter XI.—What is Atheism? Chapter XII.—Spencer and the Unknowable. Chapter XIII.—Agnosticism. Chapter XIV.—Atheism and Morals. Chapter XV.—Atheism Inevitable.

Bound in full Cloth, Gilt Lettered. Price 5s., postage 2½d.

An Ideal Gift-Book.

REALISTIC APHORISMS AND PURPLE PATCHES

Collected by ARTHUR B. FALLOWS, M.A.

Those who enjoy brief pithy sayings, conveying in a few lines what so often takes pages to tell, will appreciate the issue of a book of this character. It gives the essence of what virile thinkers of many ages have to say on life, while avoiding sugary commonplaces and stale platitudes. There is material for an essay on every page, and a thought-provoker in every paragraph. Those who are on the look-out for a suitable gift-book that is a little out of the ordinary will find here what they are seeking.

320 pp., Cloth Gilt, 5s., by post 5s. 5d.; Paper Covers, 3s. 6d., by post 3s. 10½d.

A Book that Made History.

THE RUINS:

A SURVEY OF THE REVOLUTIONS OF EMPIRES
To which is added THE LAW OF NATURE.

By C. F. VOLNEY.

A New Edition, being a Revised Translation with Introduction by GEORGE UNDERWOOD, Portrait, Astronomical Charts, and Artistic Cover Design by H. CUTNER.

Price 5s., postage 2½d.

This is a Work that all Freethinkers should read. Its influence on the history of Freethought has been profound, and at the distance of more than a century its philosophy must command the admiration of all serious students of human history. This is an Unabridged Edition of one of the greatest of Freethought Classics with all the original notes. No better edition has been issued.

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 Covers, 2s., postage 1½d.; Cloth Bound, 3s. 6d., postage 2d.

The Egyptian Origin of Christianity.

THE HISTORICAL JESUS AND MYTHICAL CHRIST

By GERALD MASSEY.

A Demonstration of the Egyptian Origin of the Christian Myth. Should be in the hands of every Freethinker. With Introduction by Chapman Cohen.

Price 6d., postage 1d.

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 6d.

THE BIBLE HANDBOOK

For Freethinkers and Inquiring Christians

By G. W. FOOTE and P. W. BALL.

NEW EDITION

(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited)

Contents: Part I.—Bible Contradictions. Part II.—Bible Absurdities. Part III.—Bible Atrocities. Part IV.—Bible Immoralities, Indecencies, Obscenities, Broken Promises, and Unfulfilled Prophecies.

Cloth Bound. Price 2s. 6d., postage 2½d.

One of the most useful books ever published. Invaluable to Freethinkers answering Christians.

A New Book at Pre-War Price.

ESSAYS IN FREETHINKING

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

Contents: Psychology and Saffron Tea—Christianity and the Survival of the Fittest—A Bible Barbarity—Shakespeare and the Jew—A Case of Libel—Monism and Religion—Spiritual Vision—Our Early Ancestor—Professor Huxley and the Bible—Huxley's Nemesis—Praying for Rain—A Famous Witch Trial—Christmas Trees and Tree Gods—God's Children—The Appeal to God—An Old Story—Religion and Labour—Disease and Religion—Seeing the Past—Is Religion of Use?—On Compromise—Hymns for Infants—Religion and the Young.

Cloth Gilt, 2s. 6d., postage 2½d.

COMMUNISM AND CHRISTIANISM

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., post free.

Special terms for quantities.

A New Propagandist Pamphlet.

CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION.

A Chapter from

The History of the Intellectual Development of Europe.

By JOHN WILLIAM DRAPER, M.D., LL.D.

Price 2d., postage ½d.

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 2½d.

The "FREETHINKER" for 1922.

Strongly bound in Cloth, Gilt Lettered, with Title-page. Price 17s. 6d., postage 1s.

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

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

Printed and Published by THE PIONEER PRESS (G. W. FOOTE AND CO., LTD.), 61 FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.