

# 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. 47

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1923

PRICE THREEPENCE

## PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>Prayer Shops.—The Editor</i>	- 737
<i>The Futility of Supernatural Belief.—J. T. Lloyd</i>	- 739
<i>Salvation Syrup.—Mimnermus</i>	- 740
<i>Medical Science in Sinhalese History.—A. E. Maddock</i>	- 741
<i>Jesus and Marduk.—Gustave Brocher</i>	- 742
<i>Our Sustentation Fund.—Chapman Cohen</i>	- 745
<i>The Unconscious Wish.—O. J. Boulton</i>	- 747
<i>Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc.</i>	

## Views and Opinions.

### Prayer Shops.

Some of our London daily papers have been "letting themselves go" in their accounts of the death of Frederick L. Rawson, whom they call the "Holy Man of Regent Street," and whose place of business they describe as a "Prayer Shop." Mr. Rawson died in America, where he had established an apparently profitable branch of the prayer shop business, but from the accounts printed I gather that he employed a large staff here, whose business it was to receive orders for prayer, take the attendant charges, and sell literature on the subject to all who felt inclined to purchase. During the war a very large traffic took place with prayers for the safety of those who were in the army, but in normal times the prayers were for recovering health, news of lost friends and relatives, and other things of a more solid and a more material nature. The papers have waxed facetious over the credulity displayed by those who patronized Mr. Rawson's establishment, and have displayed an air of pitying superiority over the poor dupes who were foolish enough to part with their money in the hopes of getting some benefit from the prayers of the holy man and his staff. And yet one is not quite sure. If prayers are really of benefit, if God Almighty needs reminding of things that he ought to do without any reminder at all, then it seems to me only common-sense to organize the whole business and get it done thoroughly. Belief in prayer surely implies that God could if he would; belief in his goodness must equally imply that he will respond if he knows what is required. And as to pray must be therefore in the nature of a reminder as to what is needed, what more sensible than to have a regular service run by experts and all prayers delivered in bulk, and, so to speak, by the same post daily. Mr. Rawson appears to have been bringing common-sense to the act of praying, and it does not seem to sit well on those who profess belief in prayer to poke fun at him for attempting to organize the business.

\* \* \*

### Samples of Prayers.

Mr. Rawson's activities do not appear to have been limited to this country. In America a similar movement was organized, and in that home of religious freaks it seems to have met with considerable success.

I am not quite certain, but I fancy that an American magazine, *Unity*, several copies of which have reached me, is connected with this propaganda, and at any rate it is useful as illustrating what is being done. In England Rawson employed a large staff of people, who were engaged in dealing with the prayers that were ordered. *Unity* does the same thing for America, and attends to all sorts of requirements and publishes results. These cover everything from recovery from illness to sales of property, rises in salaries, and birth of children. I append samples, merely remarking that there is no exaggeration in the ones selected:—

I wrote you asking prayers that my husband might get daytime work. A short while afterwards he was employed in day work with better pay and shorter hours.

I can never express to you my appreciation for your prayers. I wrote you last week stating facts in regard to selling my property. This week I had word from my lawyer saying the house had been sold at a good price.

When I wrote you asking for prayers I had a tuberculous hip that had been troubling me for nineteen years. I am now restored to health. You may discontinue prayers for me.

Inclosed please find my weekly tithe. At the exact time last Friday that we undertook a payment of fifty dollars a month my husband received a rise in salary. This is one of the many wonderful demonstrations of the working out of the Divine Law for us.

I thank you for the help which I received through your prayers. I have a ten-pound baby, and did not call a doctor. I thank you for the many blessings which I have received under your ministry. You may discontinue prayers.

There are many pages of this kind of thing, dealing with every possible requirement of the human mind and body, except requests for prayers that more sense may be given. That is omitted. The order to discontinue prayers, to "ring off," may be taken to mean that these people do not wish to bother the Lord more than is absolutely necessary. That shows consideration—and a sense of economy. When prayers are sold at so much a yard, some discretion is advisable.

\* \* \*

### Brother Practitioners.

Many Christians will smile at what they will call the gullibility of these people, and our daily papers have been righteously severe at the tactics of Mr. Rawson in running his "prayer shop." But are they really more gullible than other Christians, or is it simply that they are more honest? Let us see. In the New Testament the most definite advice given is that the prayer of faith shall cure the sick, and that power is given to the elders of the Church to effect the cure. Every Church in Christendom is committed to that teaching, and in both the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Churches there are set formulas for the laying on of hands and the curing of the sick by prayers. Why should people be blamed for attending to Mr. Rawson and sending their orders for prayers to the editor of *Unity*, any more than when

they request the prayers of their local priest or invite prayers in a church to meet particular circumstances? If a member of the Royal Family is ill, or if a Queen of England is about to present the king with a child, special prayers are offered to God Almighty calling his attention to what is happening and inviting his services to bring things to a satisfactory issue. Will some Christian be good enough to tell me what are the differentia in these cases? Do they believe that while the Lord may interfere and help the birth of a member of the Royal Family he will not do so in the case of Mrs. Jones of Milwaukee? If it is right to pray for the Prince of Wales to be cured of an illness, why may not Mrs. Smith of Clapham ask to be cured of a tuberculous hip? Further, if it is wrong for the Government to permit a "prayer shop" in Regent Street, why is it right to permit one on Ludgate Hill or in thousands of other places throughout the country? And what is the difference between the late Mr. Rawson and the 50,000 parsons of Great Britain? Are they not paid for their prayers on behalf of the people? The *Evening News* says that many thousands of people during the war paid Mr. Rawson for his prayers to keep their loved ones out of danger. It considers them fools for so doing. So do I. But, again, was not the same thing done in every church and chapel in the country? And what is the difference between Mr. Rawson praying in the West End of London for the preservation of Private Smith, and the Bishop of London praying for the preservation of several millions of Private Smiths? Is it the difference between an authorized and an unauthorized practitioner? Is it merely a matter of trades unionism? For my part I am willing to wager that the prayers of Mr. Rawson had quite as much effect as those of the Bishop of London. I do not believe that when God Almighty hears a prayer to cure Mrs. Jones or to save Dick Smith he sends one of the angels to look up the name of the petitioner in a heavenly trade union directory to see whether he has served an apprenticeship to the trade and has been fully licensed to practice.

\* \* \*

#### Who is Responsible?

Who is responsible for the almost incredible folly displayed by the thousands of people who are willing to pay their money to men like Mr. Rawson in order to procure the benefit of their prayers? It is idle to act as does our enlightened Press and blame Mr. Rawson. He does but take advantage of the occasion. He is reaping the harvest that has been prepared for him. The Press itself, the thousands of parsons belonging to the Established and other Churches, have been all along teaching the people that there is a God, that he listens to and answers prayers; they have been publishing accounts of prayers that have been answered, prayers that are as detailed and as precise as any of those that have been cited. The people that wrote to *Unity*, the thousands that poured their money into the West End "prayer shop," are only acting as the clergy have taught them to act; they are acting up to the education that the Press has given them. What can one expect? After all, if the people were as dishonest as our newspaper writers, or as hypocritical as the clergy, they would not pay the Rawsons of England and America to pray for them. They would know there is nothing in this praying business and they would be on their guard. But the mass of the people are neither dishonest nor hypocritical, they are simply stupid. They are taught a stupid belief, and when occasion calls they act on their stupidity. If the *Evening News* really wishes to cure the people of the habit of going to the prayer fakir they will have to teach them that not merely one of these fakirs is a fraud, but include the whole of the tribe in their

condemnation. They will have to point out that in this there is no substantial difference between the practitioner selling his prayers at 10s. or a guinea a time, and the Bishop of London who takes £10,000 a year for officiating in the same capacity on a wholesale scale. When people are educated in stupidity we do but show ourselves to be of their company if we expect them to act as philosophers.

#### A Standing Danger.

That is one aspect of the matter. But there is another, and an even graver one behind. Consider the state of the public intelligence when so large a number of the population are ready to believe that by payment of a fixed sum a prayer can be offered to some wizard in the skies who will hasten the confinement of a woman, cure her of a diseased hip, get a man a rise in salary, dispose of a property for more than it would otherwise fetch, or save a soldier in battle from an enemy's bullet. These people cannot honestly be called civilized, even though they have ceased to wear the costume of the savage. They still retain his outlook on the world, and are savages in much that really matters. But we live in a democratic age. These people have votes; they help to decide the policy of the nation, and its relations towards other nations. And how can we expect them to act rationally on matters which concern us all if they continue to act so irrationally with regard to things that are of intimate concern to themselves? I agree with Frazer that the mass of superstition with which society is honeycombed, which is active from the throne downwards, is a standing danger to our civilization. It represents a force that may at any time bring our culture crashing to the ground. In one of his works Anatole France makes one of his characters say that Rome fell because it overlooked the fact that beyond the confines of its own settled borders there existed myriads of barbarians ready to break forth and submerge its civilization. Whether the Romans overlooked this or not, we know that it occurred. It would have seemed absurd to a cultured Roman of the second century that within a few generations of his own time the culture of which he was so proud, the settled and orderly government which he saw around him, would be almost wiped out and a grossly absurd superstition established in its stead. Yet it occurred, and history has a strange habit of travelling over the same ground time after time. It is true that to-day we know the extent of the earth, and we know there are no hordes of barbarians waiting to overwhelm us from without. The barbarians that now threaten us are within. It is the menace within our gates that is the danger. And by a strange irony we insist on educating each generation to regard these savages, not as potential enemies, but as their truest guides. Folly could go no further, and we shall indeed be fortunate if we are not called upon one day to pay a price at which the more genuine civilization of the distant future may well stand aghast.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

---

One day a friend of mine was asked if there were any genuine Atheists. "Do you think," he replied, "that there are any genuine Christians?"—*Denis Diderot* (1713-1784).

---

The world has the mincing gait of a vain and foolish man, it goes along balancing itself gingerly between two absurdities: divine right and the sovereignty of the people.—*Alfred de Vigny* (1787-1863).

---

Those who hold that money can do anything are invariably prepared to do anything for money.—*Beauchamp* (1748-1824).

## The Futility of Supernatural Belief.

WHENEVER the pulpit speaks of belief the adjective "supernatural" is always implied but seldom used. There are numerous natural beliefs in the absence of which human life would perish; but the supernatural is a wholly unknown quantity, and belief in it supremely difficult. In the *Christian World Pulpit* for November 1 is published a most remarkable sermon by the Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D.D., LL.D., of the Broadway Tabernacle, New York, who is one of the most popular and eloquent of American preachers. The title of the discourse is "The Difficulty of Believing," and the text, Mark ix, 24: "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." Paraphrasing those words, Dr. Jefferson says: "Lord, I believe a little, I want to believe more. I believe feebly, and I long for a stronger faith. I believe up to a certain point, but I want to go farther. But I cannot go farther without help. I cannot believe more unless I get strength from outside. Lord, I look to thee. I have a certain measure of faith, but I am still in the grip of unbelief. Rescue me from that." That amplification of the text puts it in a much clearer light, showing that the essence of the Christian life is reliance upon supernatural aid. With this thought in mind, Dr. Jefferson adds:—

Let us think about the difficulty of believing. It is often assumed that it is easy to believe. The fact is that it is the most difficult thing in the world.

That is partly true and partly false. There is a class of people who swallow superstitions with the utmost avidity. Their poor heads are literally crammed with them, and they are of all sorts, coming down as low as an abject dread of the number thirteen. It is usual to charge the Catholics with being the most superstitious people on earth; but experience opens our eyes to the fact that Protestants cherish more superstitious beliefs than many imagine, and nothing is easier than to extend to them a welcome lodgment. But when we bear in mind that religion itself, in any of its forms, is nothing but a series of superstitious beliefs, the difficulty of believing it wholeheartedly is soon experienced. Professor Gilbert Murray admits that at first we cannot draw any distinction between religion and mere superstition, but claims that later we cannot help doing so. "Superstition," he says, "is the name given to a low or bad form of religion, to the kind of religion we disapprove." Then the Professor asks, "Does this amount to an implication that all the religions that have existed in the world are false?" and answers, "Not so." But this answer is immediately qualified by the following astounding statement:—

It is obvious indeed that most, if analysed into intellectual beliefs, are false; and I suppose that a thoroughly orthodox member of any one of the million religious bodies that exist in the world must be clear in his mind that the other million, minus one, are wrong, if not wickedly wrong. That, I think, we must be clear about (*Four Stages of Greek Religion*, pp. 20, 21).

We do not entirely agree with Professor Murray. For example, we are prepared to affirm that it is obvious indeed not only that most but that all supernatural religions, "if analysed into intellectual beliefs, are false." Now, Christianity is pre-eminently a religion completely built up on the assumed validity of faith. The Gospel Jesus is represented as absolutely powerless in the absence of faith in those with whom he had to do. He was not equal to the least bit of a miracle among unbelievers. As Dr. Jefferson so well puts it:—

Jesus is always reprimanding his disciples because

of their feeble faith. Nothing else so amazes him, and nothing else calls for such constant and pathetic rebuke, "O ye of little faith." One can hear the sob of the heart in that. "Why is it that ye have no faith?" "Be not faithless, but believing." "Do not be afraid, your Father is going to give you the kingdom."

This is in the highest degree significant. The Gospels were not written by simple-minded and ignorant Galilean fishermen, but by, or under the supervision of exceptionally clever and farsceing men whose aim was to set up a new religion. How well they understood their task and how ingeniously they ultimately executed it? During his brief life what the Gospel Jesus needed most was the full confidence of his contemporaries, of the men and women with whom he lived from day to day. And yet, according to the records this was the most difficult thing to secure. He never won the loyalty and active support of the bulk of his nation. Nevertheless, even after his death, a few remained who still believed in him, and they were the ones who really counted. The story was that Jesus died on the Cross, and on the third day rose from the dead; but the interpretation put upon that story later on was this: "To this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living" (Romans xiv, 9). It was hard enough to believe the simple story, but harder still to give credence to the theological interpretation attached to it. During the Pauline period interpretations multiplied, and afterwards creed was added to creed until Christianity assumed the form which it mostly wears to-day, necessarily becoming all the time more and more difficult of belief.

Curiously enough, Dr. Jefferson has much to say about the futility of Christian belief, especially if it is of the Catholic type. He says that it is well-nigh impossible to prevent religion from degenerating into mummery. He also concedes that "a considerable part of the religion of the world is superstition and formalism." It seems that Protestant families in America are having interesting experiences with their Catholic servants. An anonymous cook loves to attend early mass. To her mass is as indispensable as food, and to mass she goes at any cost. Dr. Jefferson informs us, however, that "on her return from mass one morning she told a lie—one of the biggest of the month." But the reverend gentleman must be aware that lying is not a prerogative peculiar to Catholics: that it is a privilege as often resorted to by Protestants and that the pulpit, Catholic and Protestant, has told millions of lies to the glory of God. The Apostle Peter is reported to have sworn in the profane fashion that he had never known the man Jesus. The truth is that Christian belief is essentially futile so far as moral conduct is concerned. Look at Christendom at this moment, after so many centuries of Christianity, and can you deny that it was never in a more perilous condition? Peace is an utter stranger within its bounds, and the prospects are of the gloomiest possible character.

Dr. Jefferson avails himself of every opportunity to revile the Catholics. He tells us that not long ago the art-editor of the *Times* quoted the remark of a distinguished British Roman Catholic "to the effect that war can never be abolished because man is a fighting animal." The reverend gentleman points out, along with the art critic of the *Times*, that the distinguished British Roman Catholic who made that remark "is not a Christian. He does not believe in Jesus Christ." From a pulpit in New York this preacher seems to take delight in flinging insults at a distinguished Roman Catholic in this country, saying:—

He is a member of the Roman Catholic Church, believes in the infallibility of the Pope, the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, the dogma of

Transubstantiation, masses for the dead, and a dozen other things, but he does not believe in Jesus.

We hold no brief for Roman Catholics, but we have no hesitation in declaring that Dr. Jefferson is obviously unjust to them. He believes in Jesus, but it is a notoriously blind belief. Neither Jesus nor the belief in him has prevented or put an end to a single war yet. During the World War the British Churches became simply war-mad, and the few ministers who courageously denounced the war were openly persecuted and driven to resign their charges, seek asylum in some other country, or bury themselves in humiliating circumstances. Dr. Jefferson tells us that Jesus "declares that man is not a fighting animal, but a son of God. And since God is love, man is a son of love, and when he comes to himself he puts away violence and hate and becomes merciful and kind." Words, words, empty words, and as impotent as they are empty. Dr. Jefferson's Jesus has been in the world for nigh on two thousand years, and man is as great a fighting animal as ever he was, and Europe more warlike to-day than ever it was before. We do not hold that war cannot be abolished, but judging the future by the past we are quite sure it will never be abolished by the Christian religion. When man comes to himself all will be well, the preacher assures us. We agree; but man shall never come to himself until he throws off the yoke of superstitious belief, until he crowns Reason as his king, and brotherly love as his queen. He who believes that "God is in his heaven and that all is right with the world" is either inconceivably ignorant, or an unpardonable trifler, whether in pulpit or in pew.

J. T. LLOYD.

### Salvation Syrup.

The crime of inquiry is one which religion never has forgiven. —Shelley.

We think our civilization near its meridian, but we are yet only at the cock-crowing and the morning star. —Emerson.

THE first Salvation Army, according to legend, was not a great and conspicuous success. It is said to have been "sold up," including its young managing director for thirty pieces of silver. Two thousand years later another Salvation Army was started by William Booth, an itinerant evangelist, which proved so successful that it celebrated its jubilee amid the plaudits of the Press and the blessings of distinguished members of the Royal Family. At the jubilee celebrations more fuss was made of the social than the religious work of the Salvation Army. The Royal testimonials were fulsome, if not hysterical. King George, who is the head of the rival Anglican Church, referred to the Salvation Army's "mighty achievements," and of its "works of love and mercy"; whilst his Royal and Gracious Mamma dwelt on "the great and beneficent work for mankind" initiated by General Booth the First. The glorious, "free Press" of England, which is the meanest and most contemptible money-making machine in the world, took up the Royal refrain, and columns of the most fulsome flapdoodle appeared in print concerning the Salvation Army and its alleged work for humanity.

The plain, blunt truth is that the Salvation Army is the most reactionary religious body, save the Roman Catholic Church, in England. General Booth's trademark, "Blood and Fire," proves it beyond dispute. It is "gross as a mountain, open, palpable." In a country pretending to culture and civilization, the motto should be sufficient to make the bronze lions in Trafalgar Square roar in indignation. It means that all must wash in the blood of Christ or fall into the

fire of everlasting hell. It may be Christian teaching, it may even be the teaching of Jesus; but most certainly it is not "great and beneficent work for mankind," as some titled folk aver.

The value of the social work of the Salvation Army is exaggerated out of all proportion. Salvationists have all to be teetotallers. What real effect has that on the country's consumption of alcohol? Salvationists have all to be abstainers from tobacco. The sale of tobacco was never so great as during the past few years. As for the alleged restoration of tens of thousands of women from lives of vice, it has not affected the conditions of our towns or the statistics of prostitution. Royal persons and the press-gang may bless the Salvation Army "shelters" and the Hadleigh Farm Colony, but what have the Trade Unionists to say of these matters? There is no "charity" in the business-like Emigration Department of the Salvation Army. The emigrants pay their fares and the Army officials take a commission from the railway and shipping companies. The so-called "Suicide Bureau" of the Salvation Army is almost as farcical as the "Suicide Club" described by Stevenson. It is supposed to have saved many thousands from self-murder, but it does not appear to have affected in any way the statistics concerning suicide.

Flamboyant journalists claim that the Salvation Army took religion into the slums. Just so! And the slums are no better for it. Indeed, the whole country is seething with industrial unrest. Look at the figures concerning converts in any issue of the *War Cry*, and then add them together from the time this pious periodical first added to the gaiety of the nation and disputed with *Punch* the position of a comic paper. The grand total amounts to millions, showing that the whole population has been converted to Christ. Despite the testimonials from Royal Palaces, the thing is a silly jest. People have been hypnotised by the big drums, noisy trumpets and tambourines of the Salvation Army.

It is also a bad joke for the Salvation Army to confine its energies to the working classes. If its officials are really interested in social problems, let them go to Park Lane and the West End of London, and tell the idle folk there that it is immoral to draw rent from slum property. Let them go to the drapery trade magnates and tell them that the so-called living-in system is simply disguised slavery. Let them go to the colliery and railway heads and tell them that men are exposed to mutilation, and even death, in order to pay royalties and dividends to shareholders. Let them tell their Royal patrons that it is immoral that women should sew fashionable garments for sixpence each, and that little children should be half-starved and ragged. Two millions of men and women to-day are unable to find work and are living from hand to mouth in the richest country in the world. Endless repetitions of the "old, old story of Jesus" will not help in these serious times. Nor will the blowing of many trumpets, the howling of hymns, and the banging of tambourines fill the empty stomachs of the poor. Nor will matters be improved whilst Royal persons and General Booth the Second stand in adoration before the highly-coloured lithograph of a Saviour who never lived.

MIMNERMUS.

The religious man believes in the visions of other men; the philosopher believes in none but his own.—Rivarol (1754-1801).

Scientific study is invariably dangerous when we regard it not merely as a method, but as an end in itself.—Auguste Comte (1798-1857).

## Medical Science in Sinhalese History.

It is not unusual to find intelligent and learned Orientals betraying some natural feelings of envy towards the marvellous achievements of modern Western science, and these feelings sometimes carry them to the length of affirming that many of those scientific truths which we moderns fondly imagine to have been discovered by ourselves were quite well known to wise men of the East centuries before modern civilization began. Having known definite statements of this sort to be made in Ceylon with reference to medical science, I once had the curiosity to search the pages of the Mahavansa—the ancient history of that island—for some evidence of the truth of these pretensions, and my search was rewarded in an unexpectedly entertaining manner in the account given, in Chapter XXXVII, of the reign of King Buddhadasa, who came to the throne of Lanka in the year A.D. 341. And I may here remark, in connection with the claims of our supposedly belated Western science, that some two centuries before this date the Greek physician Galen was writing important works on anatomy and physiology, was making careful dissections of animals, and was thus building up an edifice of genuine knowledge which proved sound and roomy enough to accommodate this department of science for many centuries afterwards.

But Galen's patient and plodding methods must have been dull and commonplace in comparison with the startling triumphs of medical science in King Buddhadasa's day. We read that this monarch not only patronized the science by building hospitals and appointing doctors to work in them, but that he was a physician and surgeon of no mean skill himself, and several instances are given of his remarkable methods of treatment—methods which no modern physician or surgeon, practising the blundering therapeutics of the West, would ever think of attempting. The King also wrote a comprehensive medical treatise entitled "Saratthasangaha," and it was his habit always to carry a case of surgical instruments about with him, so as to operate without delay on any persons in need of surgical aid whom he might meet along the road.

The first sufferer whom King Buddhadasa is reported to have cured was, curiously enough, a cobra which was suffering from appendicitis or something of that sort. One day, as the King was going along the road mounted on his elephant, he noticed this cobra stretched out on his back upon an ant-hill, and correctly concluded that there was something the matter with him. Alighting from his elephant the King told the cobra that, though anxious to be of service, he knew that cobras are sometimes a little short-tempered, and was therefore rather diffident about performing an operation which might be more dangerous to the operator than to the patient. The cobra said nothing—he was apparently not a talking snake, like the one which caused so much trouble on another occasion—but he made things easier for the King by inserting his head in one of the holes of the ant-hill, leaving the rest of his length outside to be operated on. Thus reassured, the King at once performed the operation, removed the cobra's appendix or whatever it was, and so "instantly cured the snake." The cobra was so grateful that he gave the King a valuable jewel, which the King afterwards fixed in one of the eyes of the stone Buddha at the Abhayagiri Vihara.

The King's next patient was a monk who was suffering from intestinal worms caused by drinking impure milk. The King treated this with a dose of blood obtained from a diseased horse which he was treating by phlebotomy at the time. This was meant to act as an emetic, which it very effectively did as

soon as the King informed his patient of the nature of the remedy he had used. The monk was at once cured, and the King remarked with satisfaction, "By one puncture of my surgical instrument both the monk afflicted with worms and the horse have been cured. Surely this medical science is a wonderful one!" It surely was.

The next case was also one of intestinal or gastric trouble, but the parasite this time was nothing less than a snake, developed from the "spawn of a water-serpent," which the patient had unfortunately swallowed while drinking. The King treated this case very skilfully. The patient was made to fast for seven days, at the end of which time he fell asleep from exhaustion with his mouth open. The King then placed in the patient's mouth a piece of meat with a string tied to it. The snake, very hungry by this time, rose to the bait at once and was landed by the King with all the skill of a practised angler. The royal physician congratulated himself highly over this success, too, remarking that though the great Jivaka was said to have been the physician of Buddha himself, he had never done anything so clever.

King Buddhadasa was also an experienced gynæcologist, for "by his medical skill he rendered a Chandala woman of Helloligama, who was born barren, pregnant seven times without submitting her to any inconvenience." But here the learned annotator of the English text from which I quote steps in, as he is rather fond of doing, and reduces this delightful passage to the bald commonplace statement that the King attended on the woman at her seventh accouchement with satisfactory results, though the case happened to be a rather difficult one.

Then we are told of a monk being cured of severe rheumatism, though the treatment is not described; and of another monk whose case, though given in some five lines only, seems to have been the most remarkable of all. This monk, it appears, drank some water "hurriedly," with the result that the spawn of a frog got into his nose and penetrated to his brain. Here it grew and grew till, like the twenty froggies in the nursery rhyme, a big frog it became at last. And the worst of it was that this strange batrachian seemed to be quite at home in its unusual habitat, feeding comfortably on the grey matter of the monk's cerebral cortex, and croaking away in rainy weather as happily as though it were in its own home pond. King Buddhadasa saw at once that this was a serious case. Heroic measures were necessary, and he took them by "splitting open" the monk's head, extracting the frog, and joining the two parts of the head together again. Even the learned annotator has nothing to say about this, so we assume that it was all quite correct—with no deception whatever, ladies and gentlemen.

King Buddhadasa's last recorded case was more conspicuous in its moral than in its physical aspect, and the moral cure was effected by the process known as heaping coals of fire on an enemy's head. As the King was going in state procession one day a leper by the roadside began using very abusive language towards His Majesty, striking the ground with his staff in his ungovernable fury. The King was mildly surprised at this, and sent an attendant to inquire of the leper what he was so excited about. The leper replied that he had good reason to hate the King, for in a former existence Buddhadasa had been his slave, whereas now, born as a king, he was insolently parading his triumph before his former master. And the leper went on to threaten the King's assassination at the first convenient opportunity.

One is tempted here to pause a while and draw attention to the curious fact that this weird faculty of pre-natal memory, which was apparently quite common in those days, seems to have been entirely lost in

modern times. No one nowadays seems to have the haziest idea of what happened to him before he was last born, and really this is something we should be very thankful for. A rankling sense of some injury or wrong experienced in this one brief existence is surely bad enough, and most of us would rather not have it perpetuated through an indefinite number of future existences. And as to the past, it would be very unpleasant to be exposed to the constant risk of running across some individual with whom one might have had a little difference a few thousand years ago, and possibly starting the old quarrel all over again. But these are metaphysical subtleties into which a humble transcriber of history should not presume to enter, so let us get on.

The King, on receiving his messenger's account of the leper's feelings towards him, observed, in the manner of the most approved copy-books, that "It is proper to allay the animosity of an exasperated person," and directed the attendant to make every effort to overcome the leper's angry feelings by treating him with the utmost kindness. The attendant did so, taking the leper to his own house and providing him, at the King's expense, with sumptuous food, luxurious baths, fine raiment, and a "beautifully decorated" bed on which "he arranged that a lovely female of fascinating charms should recline." But here again the learned annotator steps in and spoils the fun by "glossing" the passage—really rubbing all the beautiful gloss off, if he only knew it. According to him it was merely a bed "well prepared with comfortable bedding and linen," and the fascinating female gets pushed out of the picture altogether. This is too bad. If the Pali text be really susceptible of such widely different interpretations the English reader should be given the benefit of the doubt which seems to enshroud it, and be allowed to choose the interpretation he prefers, in which case I rather think that Turnour's picturesque renderings would get the majority of votes every time. Anyhow, to resume, all the kindnesses showered on the leper, including incidentally his restoration to health, had the desired effect, for when he was in due course informed that all these favours sprang from the King's generosity his resentment was completely disarmed, and he became one of Buddhadasa's most devoted subjects.

So, in taking our leave of good King Buddhadasa, we are quite willing to admit that he was "a mine of virtue and an ocean of riches," even though his methods of medical and surgical practice might have been somewhat peculiar. But the fact that these absurd stories have been gravely related by the historian seems hardly to bear out the contention that medical science was in a highly advanced state. It is true that stories of equal or even greater absurdity have come down to us from the Middle Ages in Europe, but we know how to appraise them at their true value, and no educated persons to-day—with perhaps the unique exception of Mr. G. K. Chesterton—regard the intellectual culture of those ages as deserving of much admiration or respect. But this is just how the educated Oriental does regard *his* ancient culture. To him the intellectual history of the distant past presents no "Dark Ages," but on the contrary the further he traces that history backward the brighter becomes its record, till it culminates in the effulgence of superhuman knowledge and the wisdom of the gods. This habit of looking backward with admiration and reverence for the spirit of bygone times is always a bad sign for any culture-stage in which it prevails, for it indicates that such culture-stage is approaching or has reached its close. When our survey of the track we have left behind us is directed upward it is obvious that we are going down hill.

A. E. MADDOCK.

## Jesus and Marduk.

MARDUK, Baal, Bel, Belinus, are various names for the same god. They represent the sun, more particularly the rising sun. This god was worshipped not only in the East, but also in Europe, and Sanvabelin Park in Lausanne gets its name from the forest of Belinus, for forests were the temples of the Celtic gods. A part of the name Bel is also that of the Hebrew God Elohim—the God of Gods. Mordecai, in the biblical romance called the book of *Esther*, is simply a personification of Marduk.

The wicked minister of King Ahasuerus, Haman, who would have put the Jews to death, and was himself slain by them, is far enough from the type of Jesus, and yet the fabricators of the Jesus-myth have connected the story of Mordecai or Bel with the death of Jesus, selecting and carefully inlaying many of the incidents. Haman, the dying god, is followed by the resurrection of Bel or Marduk.

Every year, at the feast of Purim, the Jews led through the streets two men whom they named Haman and Mordecai. Haman was executed, and Mordecai, representing the rebirth of Nature, was set free. These facts are proved by cuneiform tablets brought from Assyria.

Professor Zimmern published a little while ago at Leipzig a further section of his important work on the New Year Feast in Babylon. He there studied the lately discovered tablets of which, unfortunately, many were broken or defaced. Zimmern gives reproductions with all the blanks and dubious inscriptions, and accompanies his reproductions with translations.

Bel is held a prisoner in the mountain, that is, in a tomb carved out of the rock. The other gods have taken him captive, he has been condemned, and has disappeared (he is dead). His wife, Belis-Babili, appeals to the gods, especially to Son or Shamash (the Sun) to restore him to life. A guard is set to watch over him, a malefactor is set up beside him and put to death. Blood flows from the wounds of the Babylonian god. A goddess comes to watch with him. His garments are taken away. His people weep for him as dead. In the end he is taken away, returns to life, and ascends to heaven in the light of day.

Prof. Zimmern gives also another tablet on the celebration of the New Year at Erech; this inscription is a copy of a much older inscription.

Below the reader has a comparison of a part of the Babylonian text with the New Testament narrative:—

<i>Babylonian Text.</i>	<i>New Testament Text.</i>
Bel-Marduk a captive.	Jesus a captive.
Trial of Bel.	Trial of Jesus.
Bel is struck and wounded.	Jesus is scourged.
Bel is led to the mountain.	Jesus brought to Calvary.
A robber is put to death with Bel.	Two robbers suffer by the side of Jesus.
Another person accused but released.	Barabbas released.
Bel's garments are taken away.	Jesus' garments are shared amongst the soldiers.
A goddess wipes away the blood that flows from a lance-wound.	Jesus is wounded in the side; blood and water flows therefrom.
Bel is placed within the mountain far from the light of the sun.	Mary Magdalene and two other women would anoint the Lord's body.
Bel disappears from life and is kept within the mountain as in a prison.	Jesus laid in a rock-hewn tomb; he descends into hell (the kingdom of death).
Sentinels are set to guard the mountain.	Soldiers are set to guard the tomb.
A goddess (Bel's wife) comes to find him.	The Maries come to the tomb.
Bel is sought for. Weeping, his wife looks for him at the mouth of the tomb. She exclaims, "My brother!" when he comes forth.	The women come to seek Jesus. Mary Magdalene weeps before the empty tomb because they had taken away her Lord and because she knew not where they have laid him.
Bel comes to life again; he comes forth from the mountain. Celebration of his victory over the powers of darkness.	Resurrection of Jesus. His birthday in the winter solstice is a celebration of his victory over the powers of darkness.

Frazer declares that the feast of Purim is merely a more or less disguised form of the Babylonian feast of Marduk; he says that the story of the death of Jesus is but a variation on an old theme.

GUSTAVE BROCHER.

Englished by G. U.

## Acid Drops.

We have a Poet Laureate whose business it is to write official odes on State occasions, and we have an Archbishop whose duty it is to call the attention of God Almighty whenever anything is going on that is judged to be of national importance. So the Archbishop offers his quota to election literature. Here it is—in the form of a prayer to be offered in the churches:—

Almighty God, the source of all wisdom, direct, we beseech Thee, the minds of those now called to elect fit persons to serve in the High Court of Parliament, that they may have regard to Thy glory and the welfare of Thy people; and on those whom they shall choose, bestow, of Thy goodness the spirit of wisdom and true religion; for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—  
Amen.

Now there appears to us to be rather more in this prayer than appears on the surface. On analysis it is a bit mixed, but it is not without a vein of artfulness. It will be noted, for example, that when God is asked to move the people to elect "fit persons" he is advised that otherwise they will not have regard to "thy glory." In other words, if the Lord lends a hand in the election he will not be without his reward. He will get his share of the glory. In the last Parliament there were only two people who plainly said they were sent there by God, and one of these was Mr. Bottomley, who cannot stand for election this time. The other is the teetotal member for Dundee, and it is possible that he may not go back. We do not know whether the Lord was pleased with his chosen couple, but we have no right to complain. Heaven is a large constituency, and two members for heaven does not seem an extravagant allowance.

But the prayer, as we have said, is mixed and artful. First, God is asked to move the minds of the people so that they will elect the right sort. But in case the Lord cannot do this, he is asked to change the minds of those who are elected and endow them with wisdom and true religion. But if he works the first miracle, there will be no need for the second. And if the second is needed, it will amount to a confession that the first was not done. We suppose that this is the best the Archbishop could do, but it is not very impressive. Nor is it complimentary to the British electorate to be told by its archbishop that nothing short of a miracle can make it vote properly. But whether the Lord tries to work the miracle of getting only the right sort of people voted in, or whether he works the miracle of endowing members of Parliament with wisdom, either will be equally striking. We feel like advising the Archbishop to offer up a prayer that all might be endowed with common-sense, only that would sound like an invitation to suicide.

After all, we do not think that a new Parliament is nearly so important as the prayer would have us conclude. Prayer or no prayer we expect the mental level of the new Parliament will be about that of the old one, for it is the intelligence outside that matters, and we do not see how there can well be a drastic change here between one Parliament and another. In an election it is quantity, not quality, that tells. Half-a-dozen fools at the voting booth, all voting in the one direction will exert more power than a dozen wise men voting in different ways. And therefore the natural tendency of the politician is to pay most attention to the fools. In one of Lucian's dialogues, after the Atheist has worsted the Theist in discussion, someone tries to comfort one of the gods by remarking that while all the philosophers may agree with the Atheist the gods have all the fools on their side, and they represent the majority. Politicians all over the world seem to have taken that lesson to heart. They know that in an election we count votes, not measure cranial capacity, and we imagine that the really

important question is not what manner of man goes to Parliament—experience shows that almost any kind of an animal on two legs will do for that—but the type of man and woman that is outside.

The Archbishop appears to have overlooked the fact that our system of Parliamentary government proceeds on the assumption that there is a governing majority and an official opposition. And what in that case becomes of the divine guidance to the electors? Does God arrange it so that so many vote for one policy and so many for another? Will the deity so arrange it that a certain number will be returned in favour of Free Trade and a certain number in favour of Protection? That seems anything but a sensible policy for divinity to adopt, and, obviously, whether God helps or not, we shall get that result. So that God's guidance amounts to just nothing at all, and the Archbishop's prayer is just an elaborate piece of religious humbug. And that is the net result of the maintenance of religion in a civilized country. It must be humbug. It cannot well be anything else. Elsewhere in this issue we deal with the traffic that goes on with certain prayer merchants. We beg to call attention to the business circular of the Archbishop of Canterbury as emanating from one of the merchant princes of this particular traffic.

The wearing by military honorary chaplains to the King of a red instead of a black cassock has received the approval of the authorities. On the principle, presumably, that as such chaplains are not useful they might as well be ornamental.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin, speaking at Worcester, said, "All service ranks the same with God." We are not so sure. The Archbishop of Canterbury receives £15,000 annually, and some curates get £50 a year, yet both are said to be in God's service.

The Rev. S. Wild proposed at a meeting of the Lincoln Guardians, that the inmates of the workhouse should all wear beards in order to save the expense of a barber. He said that the King did not shave, so why should the inmates. That is the kind of suggestion one would expect from a country parson. But we do not think that anything is stopped from the King's salary on account of his not shaving. And we suggest that a very sensible way of economising would be for the Lincoln authorities to stop paying a Chaplain. The gospel without money and without price should be preached by men who are not quite so much concerned about the size of their salaries.

We have no sympathy with Lord Birkenhead's talk about the world to be won with stout hearts and shining swords, it reminds one too much of the ex-Kaiser's "mailed fist." But as we said when the war broke out, the great thing for the people of this country to do was to make up their minds whether they hated militarism or were merely jealous of it in its Prussian form. And events since the Armistice have certainly shown that with a large and noisy section it was more jealousy than anything else.

All the same we do not think that Lord Birkenhead has been treated quite fairly by his clerical and other critics. It appears to us that his principal offence is that he has pulled aside the cloak of hypocrisy with which our dear Christians love to hide their real motives and their real ideals. What is one who tries to look at the world honestly and fearlessly to think of people who denounce Lord Birkenhead for saying that we must depend upon our sharp swords for our hold on the world, and those who not only advocate increases in Army, Navy, and Air Force, but who applaud the parade of soldiers on all possible occasions, who consent to the Government advertising the life of the soldier as being superior to that of the artisan, and who assist in the glorification of the armed forces of the country on all possible occasions? If that is not hypocrisy we should like to know where that quality is to be found? So long as these things are done

the only charge that can fairly be brought against Lord Birkenhead is that he has not played the game of hypocrisy that is being played by our Christian leaders. In this Christian country he has dared to be, for the moment, mentally honest. And that is a crime that Christians do not overlook easily or quickly.

We may note one other thing merely as an exercise in clear thinking. With the hypocrite's fondness for mere words Lord Birkenhead's critics have denounced him as being anti-idealistic, and men like the Bishop of Durham have declared themselves, with a glow of self-satisfaction, on the side of the idealists, and against the ex-Lord Chancellor. But that is not the issue at all. Philosophical idealism has nothing to do with the issue, and in any other sense Lord Birkenhead is as much an idealist as any of his critics. The issue between Lord Birkenhead and they who have been denouncing him arises on the nature of the ideal that is held before the people. He says it is force that rules nations and it is force upon which this nation must depend. His critics deny this, and at the same time uphold force as the one method of our retaining our place among the nations. The substantial issue is peaceful intercourse, resting upon a basis of armed force, or peaceful intercourse depending upon the good-will and the common-sense of the peoples of the nations of the world. It is entirely a question of whether one ideal is the better or the more practicable than the other, and it ill-becomes Christians—who have established their religion by force in every country in the world, and who insist that the policeman must, in the shape of the Blasphemy Laws, protect their religion from criticism—to denounce a man who upholds the ideal of the "shining sword." As an argumentative weapon the truncheon does not strike us as being very much superior to the steel. But hypocrites have a traditional liking for customary forms.

When "Providence" sets to work it does things. Following the earthquake in Japan, which some Christians assured the world Providence kindly arranged at a time when most Europeans were absent, an epidemic of cholera has broken out. If only British people are unaffected these same Christians will again see the kindness of their deity. At any rate the Lord appears to do these things thoroughly if not well.

Some years ago a leaflet, written by Mr. Cohen, was issued by the National Secular Society calling attention to the methods adopted by the Salvation Army with regard to its alleged charities and also to the plans used in getting cheap labour. Few people who are asked to give to the Army on account of the meals it gets rid of and the beds it supplies to the poor and needy are aware that a charge is made for these, and if the price is not forthcoming there is very little given. We have not looked into the balance sheets of the Army lately, but at that time these shelters either yielded a profit, or they were promptly closed. So far as the employment of labour was concerned this consisted in getting needy wretches to work for either food and shelter or for a mere nominal wage. In this way the Army is able to get work done at a far less cost than can ordinary firms, and are able to undersell those who are engaged in legitimate trade.

From a recent issue of *The Waste Trade World* we see that in New York the Waste Paper Merchants' Association has petitioned the State Attorney General to take steps to cancel the charter of the Army on the ground that as a religious and charitable organization it is violating the provisions of the Act by conducting an extensive waste paper business. The charge is that the Salvation Army, because it gets its work done for next to nothing, through exploiting the wretchedness of those who are driven to come to it for help, is able to outbid the legitimate trader in purchasing waste paper, and then undersell the merchant in the market when he attempts to sell. The Salvation Army is not the only religious organization that carries on this kind of "rescue" work, and it will be interesting to note if the American courts are able and willing to deal with the matter. Anything

but a Christian organization would be ashamed to live on the sweated labour of the most unfortunate and the most helpless section of the population. And the worst of it is that the labour leaders of this country, because of the influence which the Army wields as a religious organization, seem afraid to speak out on the matter. If an ordinary employer were getting men to work under the conditions of the Salvation Army there would be terrific shrieks about the unscrupulousness of capitalistic employers.

Here is a subject for light comedy. From a trade paper we notice that manufacturers of confectionery are making appeals to the leaders of Sunday-schools to start clubs for the sale of chocolates and other goods. There is no difference between this and Mr. Lloyd George's famous breakfast parties to Nonconformist preachers at Downing Street, but we think that this information is indicative of the low-water mark of professional Christianity if manufacturers of confectionery regard it with the vulgar eye of business. Freethinkers must simulate the feeling of being shocked.

The Bishop of London has sent a printed letter to all in the diocese. Freethinkers may have three guesses regarding the nature of its contents. In the meantime we trust that the Bishop will read his Bible—particularly the Psalm which states, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." Bible classes conducted by Freethinkers might be illuminating; we might succeed in keeping these people to the impregnable rock which seems as firm as a blanc mange on a shaky table when the motor traffic goes by.

The Archbishop of Reccanati and Loreeto met his death through falling into a well. He was standing on the plank covering the well when it gave way, with the result noted. We are sorry to hear of the Archbishop's accident, but we beg to point out that exactly the same thing would have happened had the President of the National Secular Society stood on the same plank. It must not be taken that God went out of his way to kill the Archbishop. He would have made the same use of the opportunity had anyone else been in the same position. He is no respecter of persons.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle will be pleased to learn that his famous ectoplasm, the existence of which some sceptics have doubted, has now been verified. A young man went to a Spiritualistic meeting presided over by Mrs. Elizabeth Tomson, who specializes in ectoplasmic productions. Mrs. Tomson went into a cabinet clothed in nothing but a bath towel. Shortly after a ghostly ectoplasmic form emerged from the cabinet and softly embraced Mr. Richard Gallagher. Mr. Gallagher appears to have had a reversion to cannibalism and bit the shoulder of the materialized spirit. The spirit gave a loud scream, and Mrs. Tomson fled the room, bath towel and all, with a bitten shoulder. Mr. Gallagher was left with a mouthful of "ectoplasm" which at once materialized into a very thin slippery silken fabric well perfumed. When an investigator thus has a good mouthful of ectoplasm its existence can no longer be denied. Sir Arthur will feel very happy. He has himself handled the stuff, but we do not think he has ever tried to eat it.

The Vicar of St. Nicholas's, Wallasy, is distressed that people do not come to his church but may be seen strolling through the village with golf clubs, or may be seen going off for a day's motoring. So he asks why not come to church as they are? And he adds that it would certainly be better to come to church in flannels and to see stacks of golf clubs in the porch and a row of motors outside the church, rather than for them not to come at all. That we think is only sense. When a man buys of a grocer he is not supposed to dress in a particular manner. The grocer says dress how you please so long as you deal with me. The Vicar of Wallasy is of the same opinion. He also says that so long as people will patronize his place of business he does not care a brass button how they dress. The clergy are not so simple as some would think.



## Our Sustentation Fund.

NOVEMBER 25 was fixed as the closing date for the *Freethinker* Sustentation Fund, and this is, I think, a suitable occasion on which to thank all who have contributed to the result announced below. Naturally the very bad state of trade has prevented many of our friends of smaller means from contributing all they would have liked, and some have been prevented owing to this from contributing at all. But in their case one takes the will for the deed, and the result, as well as the many letters received, bears good witness to the affection in which this journal is held by its readers. When some of these write that the discontinuance of the *Freethinker* would be regarded by them as a disaster, I believe they are saying only what they actually feel. Fortunately, the paper has too many friends for that to occur.

During the time this Fund has been running I have received many letters offering suggestions as to what might be done to make the future secure and—so far as I am concerned—easier. I promised to deal with these at the close of the Fund, and it is certainly better to review the situation as a whole rather than deal with it piecemeal.

First as to the outlook. I am afraid that it is useless to look for any decrease in the running expenses for some time to come. There is not likely to be any fall in wages for several years, the cost of paper is again advancing, and in addition, the lease of our premises having expired, we have to face an increase in rent and extras of about £80 per year. This is not, of course, a gigantic sum, but it must be added to the existing rate of loss, and it has to be met.

All things considered I am reluctantly driven to the conclusion that for some time we must face a loss of between £300 and £400 per year. This I should explain represents about a third of the increase over the pre-war cost, so that while it is still a loss we have made headway. And when it is borne in mind that in pre-war days the paper was losing about £300 per year, our present loss represents a still smaller fraction of the increased cost of production. We are therefore making progress, although not so great as one would wish. And it should be added that the *Freethinker* is, after all, asking its friends for a smaller measure of help than many other propagandist organs require. Even in America, where the trade conditions are not so bad as they are in this country, our esteemed contemporary, the *New York Truthseeker*, announces that it will need a permanent Sustentation Fund of five thousand dollars (over £1,000 sterling) a year to keep the wolf from the door. It looks like raising the required amount this year, and we sincerely hope it will be equally successful so long as it is required. America could no more spare its *Truthseeker* than Britain could its *Freethinker*.

To meet the situation several suggestions have come to hand. The first is that the Fund should be made an annual one till affairs take a turn for the better. I have hitherto avoided making any appeal until I was driven into a corner, but in default of a better plan, perhaps that suggestion might be acted on. Second: One friend generously offers to give £50 per annum for five years, and suggests a sufficient number guaranteeing similar sums so that a public appeal might be avoided. That is a suggestion which I must leave where it is. Its fulfilment is obviously not to do with me. Third: There is the proposal that in order to relieve me of any financial worry, a small committee of business men should take this matter under their control and see to the necessary funds being raised. I should only be too glad to see this done. It would certainly save me a deal of anxiety, and it would

leave me free to do my proper work, which is writing and speaking. Fourth: It is proposed that where there is any large body of Freethinkers someone should make himself or herself responsible for the raising of a certain sum for that town or district. The difficulty here I think would be to fix the sum and to get the right kind of person to act. Fifth: It is suggested that instead of friends being asked to give from time to time they should be asked to subscribe such a sum that would supply a regular income sufficient to meet the estimated loss, and then, when the paper had been placed on a paying basis the capital invested could be spent on general propaganda. Sixth: To raise a sum of money which might be spent on advertising the paper, and so secure a larger income through an increased circulation.

These are, in the main, the suggestions received. They are all worthy of attention, and I must leave them at that. So far as the last suggestion is concerned, I do feel that some efforts ought to be made to advertise the paper. The number of letters received from people who have only recently come across the paper is surprisingly large, and this leads one to believe that with effective advertising many new readers might be secured. And every extra thousand readers secured to an established paper would represent a substantial profit. I may add that some attempt at advertising will be made with a part of the money subscribed, although to be really successful advertising should be wide and continuous.

Meanwhile I suggest that something in this direction might be done by every interested reader of the *Freethinker*. If during the next three months each of these made it his or her business to secure one new reader we should feel a substantial benefit at this end.

That is all I have to say at the moment. I have only to add that in my judgment there was never so great a need for the *Freethinker* as there is at this time. In general the trustification of the Press is proceeding rapidly, and it is becoming increasingly easy to keep away from the general reader what are regarded as undesirable views about religion. Editors are becoming more and more the slaves of large circulations, and are treated by their employers in a way that years ago very few editors would have submitted to. It has always been hard to get uncompromising Freethought expressed through the general Press, and in the near future it does not bid fair to become easier. The more reason to see that a journal such as this one gets into as many hands as possible. It has no financial interests to serve, and it has no party considerations that decide its speech. It has for more than forty years served with a single mind and open speech the great cause of intellectual freedom, and while it continues to do this it will, I am sure, receive and will merit the warm support of its many friends all over the world.

Previously acknowledged: £571 5s. 6d. J. Cahn, £10; H. Dawson, 5s.; A. Jagger, 5s.; J. B. Middleton, £5; F. Rogers, 10s.; J. W. P. 5s.; W. Judy, 10s.; J. Hewitt, 6d.; Mr. and Mrs. Turner, 10s. 6d.; E. Hirst, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Kerlake, 10s.; H. J. Minion, 10s.; An Old Atheist Cordwainer, 5s.; F. T. D., 5s.; W. Richardson, 2s.; J. Sandford, 3s. 6d.

Per F. Rose (Johannesburg)—B. M. E., £1 1s.; L. Lenk, 10s. 6d.; F. Rose, £1 1s.

Total, £593 4s. 6d.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

A human being without character is a wet nurse without milk, a soldier without weapons, a traveller without money.—*Pétit* (1784-1858).

### 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.

J. A. MOFFAT.—Thanks for verses, but they are hardly up to standard.

A. J. NOAD.—Your argument that Christ meant to found a Socialist Brotherhood because he told men to love your neighbour as yourself, is not very convincing. That is part of the Old Testament teaching and was very common with other teachings. Such bald maxims do not carry us far. Their influence is only illustrative of how easily men are led by mere words that may mean anything or nothing. We would advise you to read Mr. Cohen's *Socialism and the Churches*.

J. W. WOOD.—There are none of J. M. Wheeler's writings in print. We quite endorse your high opinion of their quality. J. M. Wheeler was one of the best informed and most thoughtful of Freethought writers, and we hope to publish soon a collected volume of his writings—perhaps more than one volume. Your epigram that "No work is so destructive of belief in the Bible as the Bible itself" is telling and has the merit of absolute truth.

C. BAKER.—Sorry to hear that trade and other conditions are so bad, but that seems a world wide phenomena at present. We are never in any doubt as to your interest in the Cause. If all were equally energetic we should be quite satisfied.

A. EARLEY.—Letter quite good, too good for the editor to publish. We shall note the matter in our next issue.

Y. OYAMA.—Shall be pleased to hear from you when you reach Japan, and trust that things will be as well as one dare hope in the circumstances.

J. COLLIER.—Pleased but not surprised to hear that the Birmingham friends so enjoyed Mr. Corrigan's visit and lecture. You will be feeling the effect of the political obsession for a week or two.

J. NEIL.—Glad to hear of your success at the poll. After all, if one has persistency and courage, with character at the back, these qualities are bound to make themselves felt and win recognition sooner or later. The trouble is that most people lack the courage to make a fight. Thanks for cuttings, also for your high opinion of the *Freethinker*.

R. J. PANKHERD.—You do well to protest against the parsons using the wireless to force their "gospel" on unwilling ears. Will deal with the subject next week.

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

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

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

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

*Lecture Notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, by 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, 7s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 9d.*

### Sugar Plums.

Thanks to the tactics of party politicians we are again in the midst of a general election. With the purely political aspect of this we are not here concerned, but we do urge upon all Freethinkers to again use the oppor-

tunity to force upon the attention of candidates and electors the importance of the two things in which all Freethinkers are interested. Every candidate should be questioned as frequently as possible upon his attitude with regard to the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws and the establishment of Secular Education in State supported schools. So far as Parliamentary candidates are concerned they should be made to feel that Freethinkers are not inclined to sit down calmly under the injustice inflicted by the maintenance of the Blasphemy Laws and the teaching of religion in schools that are supported out of public funds. An expression of opinion which threatens votes is about the only thing that the average politician cares about, and they should be made to feel that Freethinkers are not less concerned about their rights than are others.

This evening (November 25) Mr. Cohen will visit Swansea where he will lecture in the Elysium, High Street. He hopes to meet many friends from the district, and on Saturday evening he will be present at a dinner as the guest of the local Branch. Our Swansea friends have been passing through a very hard time lately, and it is to be hoped that an easier period lies ahead.

"The Church of St. Mark" Parish Magazine has a note by the Rev. Kenneth Rawlings on the discussion which recently took place between himself and Mr. Clifford Williams. He says the debate aroused considerable interest, and is candid enough to admit that "probably an unbiased judge would say that Mr. Clifford Williams, being a much more skilled and experienced debater than myself, won 'on points.'" He adds that the real value of debates on religion, when fairly and courteously conducted, is that they make people think. With that we quite agree. That is the only value of any discussion, and we suggest to Mr. Rawlings that if the clergy generally entered more into open discussion than they do, there would be no need for them to deplore lack of skill and experience in debate. To talk to people without their having a chance of talking back is good for neither speaker nor listener.

We have had a number of Press notices of our new edition of Draper's *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science*, and all of them note the marvel of cheapness in publishing a book of four hundred pages, well printed and well bound, for the price of 3s. 6d. We said when it was issued that no other publisher in London would or could publish a book of that size at that price. But it is intended for propaganda, and it will do its work. We are glad to say that the work is selling well, and those who think of getting a copy should send for one at once. When the present edition is exhausted we doubt if it will be possible to issue another at the present price. The work is being sold at 7s. 6d. by the publishers who are the holders of the copyright.

Owing to the General Election the West Ham Branch will not be holding meetings in their hall in Plashet Road, Upton Park, on November 25 and December 2. Others appear to have a prior claim on the building for these dates and the Branch is compelled to give way. After the election meetings will be held there every Sunday until the close of the winter season.

The Secular Society Limited has in view the publication of a "Freethinker's Handbook" containing articles and information that would be useful to Freethinkers and Reformers generally. Attached to the Handbook will be a list of Advanced Societies with a brief statement of their objects. Societies that would like to see their names inserted in the list will oblige by sending to Miss Vance, at 62 Farringdon Street, particulars as to the objects of their Society, name and address of Secretary, etc., with any information regarding their work which they think will be of interest to the general public.

Those who read Mr. Guy Aldred's articles on Richard Carlile which ran through these columns will be pleased

to know that Mr. Aldred has very much enlarged these and has just published a biographical study of the great reformer. The volume extends now to 192 pages, and is being sold at 1s. 6d. in paper covers, and 2s. 6d. in cloth. It is well that the present generation should know something of one of the most heroic figures in the history of Freethought, and in this little work Mr. Aldred has judged well in his sketch of the environment in which Carlile moved and against which he reacted. The book is written clearly and without ostentation, and we wish it every success. It can be supplied by the Pioneer Press, with the addition of 3d. to cover postage. Freethinkers will appreciate the portraits of Carlile and Robert Taylor ("The Devil's Chaplain") which the book contains.

Those who wish to do a little quiet propaganda will find a convenient medium in our new Ingersoll pamphlet, *What Is It Worth?* The pamphlet has been warmly welcomed by all Ingersoll lovers, it is, in our opinion, quite the equal, if not the superior, of the famous *Mistakes of Moses*, and our publishers will send twenty-four copies post free for 2s.

The last of the present course of lectures at Friars Hall will be delivered this evening (November 25). Mr. Corrigan will be the speaker and we should like to hear that the hall was crowded. There was a very appreciative audience to listen to Mr. Moss last Sunday, with considerable questioning at the close of the address. Mr. Rolph occupied the chair.

Political meetings at present hold the field, and Freethought meetings will be feeling the consequences. In the circumstances we are not surprised to hear that Mr. Rosetti's meeting in London was not so large as it otherwise would have been. All the same the subject was one that should have attracted many Freethinkers, and Mr. Rosetti is one of the group of younger lecturers who has usually something to say worth listening to and says it with desirable directness.

## The Unconscious Wish.

(Concluded from page 727.)

### III.—"UNINTENTIONAL" MISTAKES.

Nothing, implies Freud, takes place in the mind without a definite cause and without a definite meaning. Dreams, as we observed, are considered by Freud to have a definite meaning and not to be mere chaotic and haphazard collections of mental images. Similarly, Freud considers those little "slips" and "unintentional" acts which occur so often in everyday life to have a definite cause and a definite meaning, and not to be mere "accidental" and meaningless mental irregularities. We will attempt to examine some of these so-called "unintentional" mistakes in the light of Freud's theory of the Unconscious Wish.

Let us begin by considering the historical example recorded in the annals of Austrian politics. At a certain Session of the Austrian Parliament the then leader of the House intended to announce that Parliament was opened. Instead, he unwittingly informed the members that the Assembly was closed. It transpired, however, that he anticipated that no good would come of the Session—at least so far as he and his party were concerned. He realized that the sitting of the Parliament ought to be held and openly wished to get on with it. Unconsciously, however, he wished that it was all over, and his so-called "unintentional" slip revealed, and was motivated by his true, though repressed desire.

The same principle is applicable in the following case. At an evening party the hostess served only lemonade and sandwiches. All the guests expected something more elaborate but none of them dared to

make any deprecatory remarks concerning the treatment they had received at the hands of their hostess. One young man, in discussing the candidates for the American presidency, intended to say, "There's one thing about R——, he always gives us a square deal." Instead, he remarked, quite unintentionally, "There's one thing about R——, he always gives us a square meal." Here this linguistic error was clearly motivated by the young man's wish to complain about the inadequate refreshments.

"Slips" of this nature occur not only in words but also in deeds. Consider for a moment the celebrated case of the Scotch professor who went upstairs to change for a banquet. Instead of putting on his evening clothes he "absent-mindedly" went to bed. He was fully conscious of the fact that he was under an obligation to attend this function and his conscious desire was to fulfil this obligation. But he did not look forward to the dinner with pleasure. He dreaded the event; and his unconscious and repressed wish, not to go, would be, according to the Freudian hypothesis, the true cause of his ridiculous action.

Now take the case where a person asks you to post a letter for him. You really wish to refuse, but, through your social training, you repress this desire and accept the obligation. Instead of posting the letter you may "accidentally" forget to do so. Would such forgetfulness be really "accidental?" According to the Freudian theory it would be due to your repressed wish not to post the letter and not to chance. Thus an event which might have otherwise remained inadequately comprehended and unexplained is made clear and brought within the realm of cause and effect. But the reader must bear in mind that in practically all cases the method of "psycho-analysis" must be employed before a reliable explanation of any such "unintentional" mistakes can be obtained.

With the brief and elementary introduction given the reader may be able to interpret many of the mistakes of those with whom he comes in contact.

However, let me warn the reader not to become too hypercritical of the shortcomings of those around him. Some day he may suddenly find that he has been stirring his coffee with his fork, or doing something of the sort, and that some malevolent neighbour is ready with a humiliating and exposing "explanation" of the "unintentional" mental irregularity, based upon the theory of the Unconscious Wish. Be careful!

### IV.—IN EVERYDAY LIFE.

There is hardly a corner or cranny in human life, or hardly an everyday common-place that cannot, in some way or other, be brought within the pervue of Sigmund Freud's ingenuous theory of the Unconscious Wish. Space does not permit me to substantiate this far-reaching claim in its entirety, and my most auspicious plan, it seems to me, would be to give a few examples of the application of the theory of the Unconscious Wish drawn from widely varied spheres of man's activity. Those who have been following this article may remember that we considered, respectively, "Dreams" and "Unintentional Mistakes." We will now consider the subject of the choice of vocations.

Many people believe that they had no definite or significant reason for taking up their particular vocation, any more than they had for doing many other important things in life. "Psycho-analysis" reveals this to be largely untrue. Dr. Brill, in his *Fundamental Conceptions of Psycho-Analysis*, records a case of a healthy man in the prime of life who was engaged as a street-sweeper, and who was so for no particular "conscious" reason. Investigation showed, however, that, as a young man, he had been in love with a negress. His parents and friends openly opposed the

proposed match and showed that they considered the whole affair ugly and repulsive—the idea that he should contemplate marrying a dirty nigger woman! He did not marry her but partially realized his wish, which to society was ugly, dirty and repulsive, by busying himself as a street-sweeper, an affair which, to society, was also ugly, dirty and repulsive. He had long repressed his idea to marry the negress, but the now Unconscious Wish continued to demand fulfilment, at least in a partial and symbolic manner:

Admittedly, street-sweeping is a strange vocation for a healthy man in the prime of life. But explanations of this kind are not confined to "peculiar" vocations. There is a case recorded of a medical doctor who could give no satisfactory account of the motives leading to his choosing his particular life-work. After a careful and prolonged "psycho-analytic" investigation it was discovered that when a boy he had been very much afraid of his father. He had noticed, however, that his father was quite overawed by the family physician. Instinctively, as is usual with most normal boys, he felt an urge to rival and free himself from the dominance of his father. This was repressed but it found an outlet in the young man's conscious wish to become a doctor. The original "wish" had been forgotten, but it nevertheless continued to express itself in the conscious desire to be, and to practise as, a medical doctor. Thus, in the doctor's life, this wish, long repressed and long forgotten, continued a powerful and all-important factor.

Now let us turn from the subject of vocations to that of lying. Does the same principle apply here? Freud's followers maintain that it does—and in this way. The lie, like the dream, is in the last analysis nothing more than a direct or indirect expression of a conscious or Unconscious Wish. Firstly, let us notice one instance of lying that represents the direct expression of a conscious wish. It will, I think, be quite easy to explain by the theory of the Unconscious Wish. A second-hand dealer shows you a piece of pottery. It is good Japanese ware. You ask him what it is, and he replies by stating that it is a genuine piece of Meizan ware priced at such-and-such, a fairly high figure. The dealer, however, knows that it is really a very cheap imitation Meizan. Here the lie is clearly a direct expression of his conscious wish that the piece of Japanese pottery was genuine and hence one for which he could honestly ask a larger sum and thus reap a greater profit.

With Freud's theory of the Unconscious Wish before us we would, it seems to me, be better able to detect lying and be better able to ascertain its true motives. We would tolerantly laugh at, rather than condemn, the present-day penitent who, down on his marrow-bones, cries, "O Lord, I am a miserable and wicked sinner," when in fact he is probably as meek and stupid and innocent as a lamb.

Where the symbols of the lie are ethnic the perpetrator is sometimes not immediately aware that he is lying. Lies of this nature are exceedingly common in our civilization. Mythology and contemporary religion abound with them, for in this sphere of mental activity we find the human being in yet an infantile condition, the difference between reality and fiction being not yet clearly marked. And truly in superstition wise men follow, not only fools, but unwitting liars. Unwitting lies, like unintentional mistakes, have a definite cause and a significant meaning. They are direct or indirect expressions of unconscious wishes in a great many cases. Upon them, many of Freud's followers contend, whole systems of theology and philosophy have been reconstructed, and by them many popular superstitions and current concepts of property, marriage and government are maintained. For the repressed and Unconscious Wish largely

motives the ideas and acts, not only of street-sweepers, dishonest second-hand dealers and simple-minded penitents, but also philosophers, theologians, judges, legislators, and even many scientists. The application of Freud's theory of the Unconscious Wish, which appears to be capable of undermining from a new direction many of the so-called "established" conceptions of philosophy, politics and religion, will now be dealt with.

I would like to remind the reader of the varied and far-removed fields of thought in which the theory of the Unconscious Wish finds an important place, and to obtain an inkling of the catholicity of its application.

#### V.—CONCLUSION.

An attempt has been made to define the theory of the Unconscious Wish and to give some instances of its application. The theory, as previously stated, is to this effect; our conduct is profoundly motivated by our unconscious wishes. We now consider this theory as applied to matters of profundity and import, to philosophies, to theologies, to the current concepts of property-rights, marriage and international relations, and to the ideas and judgments of men of great learning and influence, as accounting for some of the bewildering twists in the thinking of many of those whose opinions popular approbation or enchanting presentation has led us to accept; and as illuminating with a new brilliance some of the many errors masquerading as truth.

I make no attempt, of course, to so momentarily and extensively apply this theory. Neither space, nor time, nor ability permit. I will, however, try to show how it may be so applied and to what its application may lead.

Consider for a moment the belief in personal immortality. The origin of this idea, as interpreted by the theory of the Unconscious Wish, lies in certain almost inevitable errors of the primitive minds of our savage progenitors. They noticed, doubtless, their shadows, their reflections in water, and how in their dreams at night, as the body lay quiet in sleep, they seemed to wander in distant places or were, possibly, visited by the dead. Upon such data, and *motivated by the strong, though likely Unconscious Wish of self-preservation*, they were led to imagine souls and doubles and to believe that the body had an inhabitant that could desert it from time to time during life, and that continued to exist even after death. Whole civilizations and religions and vast theological speculations have been and are dominated by this savage inference. How different things would have been if mankind had known and accepted this interpretation of the genesis of this belief: the idea of personal immortality and everything affected by it would have had quite another history.

Many of our actions and ideas are profoundly motivated, often unconsciously, by the desire to act and think as the herd, or society, suggests. As we grow up we simply adopt the ideas presented to us in regard to such matters as religion, family relationships, property rights, business, our country and our Empire. We unconsciously absorb them from our environment. They are persistently whispered into our ear by the group to which we happen to belong. Moreover, these judgments, being the product of suggestion and not of reasoning, have the quality of perfect obviousness, so that to question them, to use the words of Mr. Trotter in his work, *Instincts of the Herd*,

.....is to the believer to carry scepticism to an insane degree, and will be met with contempt, disapproval, or condemnation, according to the nature of the belief in question.

To act contrary to them is, ordinarily, a painful and

disagreeable process, and it is this unpleasant mental experience that we term our "conscience." From this we may conclude that many of the current beliefs are held, and many of the moral standards of our day maintained, by man's persistent and potent urge or wish to do as the herd suggests. Not through knowledge or scientific investigation do men act and think largely as they do, but through the subtle and powerful workings of their Unconscious Wish to do and think as has been unconsciously suggested to them at school, church, business, in society, by newspapers, by books, and by those with whom they live and with whose influence they come in contact.

Now surely the perturbing suspicion emerges that perhaps almost all that has passed for religion, theology, philosophy, social science, political economy and politics, may have to be carefully revised or even swept aside as tainted with this distorting and discrediting under-motive, the Unconscious Wish. This conclusion may be ranked by thinkers of a hundred years hence as one of the several great discoveries of our age. It may be that it will transform and attenuate many of the great and insistent problems of the intellectual world of our day and of the future. The theory of the Unconscious Wish may, in its application, march among us like a giant iconoclast, indifferent to "respectable" opinions and what many deem the well-tried wisdom of the ages. These are some of its possibilities; its probabilities I leave to the judgment of the reader.

O. J. BOULTON.

## Correspondence.

### DEFENDING THE FAITH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Someone has very kindly sent me a copy of the *Freethinker* containing your criticism on my article "The Case for Christianity." I see you omit to mention where it may be found. In case any of your readers should care to know what I wrote they will find it in the *Church Times* for Friday, October 19. You also say that the vital question of belief is not one of history but of psychology, and suggest that I should devote my next lecture to the evidence of credibility. May I state that I have already four times given a course of five public lectures on the Psychology of Belief, once at King's College, and three times in Hyde Park, and that they have been published by the S.P.C.K. under the title *Why Men Believe*, at the price of half-a-crown.

Also in the third lecture of a series of three called "The Christian's Claim," I have dealt with the subject "Is the Claim Credible?" These lectures I have given seven times in Hyde Park, and they have also been published by the S.P.C.K. at the price of ninepence.

CLEMENT F. ROGERS.

[We have not read Mr. Roger's lectures, but we hardly think they would affect anything we said in our criticism of the article in question. However, we will get the lectures named and see whether we are correct on this point or not.—EDITOR.]

### RELIGION AND SCIENCE.

SIR,—I have seldom read a more cogent and able reply to an opponent than that of your correspondent "Seeker After Truth" to the religious apologetics of Sir Oliver Lodge. Evil is undoubtedly the crux of Theism. The distinguished mathematician Prof. E. W. Hobson, Sc.D., F.R.S., whose Giffard Lectures, "The Domain of Natural Science," have recently been published, says in his concluding lecture entitled "Natural Science and Theism" (p. 496):—

In dealing with the argument from design, the older writers on Natural Religion laid great stress upon the beneficent results for man of many of the contrivances exhibited in Nature. The evidences of design which are discernible in natural phenomena were conceived to afford a proof not only of the intelligence and power of the Designer, but also of his goodness, as exhibited in the

benevolence with which Nature has been adapted to serve the needs and further the well-being of the human race. The reverse side of this picture was referred to by Hume, and has been strongly emphasized by later thinkers. J. S. Mill, in his essay on "Nature," framed a terrible indictment against the callousness, cruelty, and injustice exhibited in the ordinary course of natural phenomena..... The general picture of organic evolution painted by modern Biology is one in which the struggle for existence and nutriment, involving pain and death, is an important and possibly a dominant feature, although its repulsive aspect may perhaps sometimes have been drawn in too lurid colours. The ruthless sacrifice of multitudes of individuals appears to be a feature of the ordinary course of evolution; it has been said that Nature cares nothing for the individual, but much for the race. The facts brought to light by bacteriology and parasitology have disclosed the existence of many organisms, and of what have the appearance of being most ingenious contrivances, the apparent purpose of which is to inflict torture and death upon other, and usually higher, organisms. The result of modern knowledge of this kind has been to heighten the impression produced by the widespread and intricate character of what from our point of view we describe as physical evil. A consistent Theist must regard as, in some sense, God's creatures, those living organisms whose presence and activities condition the existence of tetanus, cholera, typhus, and many other diseases. The contemplation of this aspect of phenomena gives rise to a very real problem, not only for theologians, but for great numbers of thoughtful persons.

After a few remarks on the existence of moral evil, Prof. Hobson concludes by saying:—

It is, I think, admitted by candid exponents of Philosophical Theism that there do remain very real difficulties in reconciling Theism, of a type such as will completely satisfy the religious consciousness, with some aspects of the actual world of our experience.

ROBERT E. CATLING.

### THE DEVIL'S CHAPLAIN.

SIR,—This shall be my last letter.

Mr. Cutner says that the words "the phenomena of the heavens" do not occur in the *Prolegomena* to Taylor's *Diegesis*. All I said was that this introductory chapter "fully justifies my contention that Taylor attacked the finished Christ myth." In a previous letter I assert that Taylor proves Christ to be "a plagiarism from Pagan saviours," etc. As a matter of fact Taylor devotes at least one chapter to this. Mr. Cutner is employing a phrase only to avert facing a fact. He evades the real challenge entirely, however many times he has re-read the *Diegesis*. Let any Freethinker read this splendid work and then deny that Taylor maintained that the personality of Christ was borrowed from Pagan sources and attacked the finished myth. If Taylor's work were as little pointed as Mr. Cutner seems to believe, it would be as worthless as it is now invaluable.

Mr. Cutner's reference to Thomas Paine is unfortunate. Does he not know that, politically, some persons view Paine as an extremist, whilst others deem him a revisionist and reactionist? Theologically, Paine is denounced as an infidel and acclaimed as a religionist. He is, supposedly, a pioneer of reason. But Carlyle pointed out that Paine was, in many matters, a lamentable superstitionist. We have the case also of Spinoza, depicted by some as a blaspheming Atheist, deemed by others the "God-intoxicated philosopher." And so on, right through the records of biography of course, Jesus is idealized by various folk after their own imaginings. But that does not affect his existence or otherwise. Even the list Mr. Cutner gives is not contradictory. There is something wrong with your correspondent's vision when he ranks poetry and oratory, which are arts or achievements or gifts, with Spiritualism and Bolshevism, which are opinions. A little more science in thinking would not be amiss.

My reference to Buckle and Gibbon remain good, and my comment has the support of some of the greatest scholars, critics, and historians the world has known. I should not canvass early Christian opinions by an effort of memory. I understand their main outline from actual understanding of thought evolution. I should fill in the special details by consulting various authorities and records. But to cite them all is unnecessary when one is discussing with a person who can consult definite

decisions and authorities for himself. Mr. Cutner should not need me to place Church Councils and such like for him. Certain epochs should be well-frequented and familiar thoroughfares and not need signposts as though they were situated a thousand miles from the outposts of human understanding.

The *Rebel and His Disciples* is not called in. It has been revised and republished as *Communism and Religion*. A rhetorical flourish may centre about a real contention and indicate a definite bias. Mine does. Humanity, Mr. Cutner, though against your prejudice, is also a myth. For, after all, what is humanity? Men no more agree on this abstraction than on any other. Truth is always worth discussing. I have known ministers to declare that God should not be discussed. However, what with Malthus and the pure Gospel story, I think Mr. Cutner has very full hands and we will place humanity on the shelf meantime.

Modern criticism does not assign the Gospel records to A.D. 150. They are much later. Does Mr. Cutner not know about the catechisers and the oral tradition as distinct from the written word? The Gospel records may be the present source of our knowledge of Christ. But how and by whom were those records preserved? There is only one Omar to-day—Fitzgerald's. But there were more than one before Fitzgerald. And the Gospel records, edited, purged, interpolated, represent the finished myth imposed by power on the human intellect by the sixth century. That century closes an era for all who understand ecclesiastical history.

My challenge to debate stands. GUY A. ALDRED.

#### TELEPATHY.

SIR,—“Javali” says £1,000 has been offered for a proved meteorite. Some would say they had seen one fall, but no one would show one falling. I have had several experiences of telepathy, all unsought, trivial and useless, but I could no more produce an example to order than I could grow a wart to order. C. HARPUR.

#### BARGAINS IN BOOKS.—All Post Free.

*Problems of Life and Mind*, 5 vols., G. H. Lewes, 35s.; *History of Religion*, 3 vols., F. J. Gould, 6s.; *Seeing and Thinking*, Prof. W. K. Clifford, 3s.; *Pseudo-Psychology and the End of the Nineteenth Century*, Hugh Mortimer Cecil, 5s.; *Introduction to Applied Sociology*, Prof. Fairburn, 4s.; *Reminiscences and Reflections of a Mid-Victorian*, E. Belfort Bax, 4s.; *Supernatural Religion*, W. R. Cassell, 5s. 6d.; *Theological Essays and Debates*, Annie Besant, 8s. 6d.; *First Principles of Evolution*, Dr. Herbert, 5s. 6d.; *Ingersoll's Lectures*, American edition, 3 vols., cloth, 7s. 6d.; *Epitome of the Synthetic Philosophy*, with preface by Spencer, 5s. 6d.; *Life of Darwin*, 2s. 6d.; *Davidson's Introduction to the New Testament*, 2 vols., 5s.; *Faith of an Agnostic*, Sir G. Greenwood, 3s.; *Hooper's Anatomy of Knowledge*, 2s. 6d.—BOOKS, c/o Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, E.C.4.

#### Spiritualism and a Future Life.

#### THE OTHER SIDE OF DEATH.

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

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

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

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

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 FARRINGDON STREET, E.C.4.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

### LONDON.

#### INDOOR.

EAST ISLINGTON LABOUR HALL (16 Highbury Grove, N.): Tuesday, November 27, at 7.30, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, “Is Religion a Social Necessity?”

FRIARS HALL (236 Blackfriars Road, S.E.1): 7, Mr. F. P. Corrigan, “The Sermon on the Mount and Life in the Valley.”

METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (160 Great Portland Street, W.): 7.30, Debate: “Is There a God?” Father Vincent McNabb v. Mr. E. Saphin. The Discussion Circle meets every Thursday at 8 at the “Laurie Arms,” Crawford Place, Edgware Road, W. November 22, Mr. May, “The General Election.”

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N.W., off Kentish Town Road): 7.30, Mr. George Bedborough, “Which is the Best Route to Utopia?”

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Trade Union Hall, 30 Brixton Road, S.W.9): 7, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, “Some Peculiar Toilers in the Lord's Vineyard.”

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): 7, H. A. Waldegrave, “The Roman Plays of Shakespeare.”

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11, John A. Hobson, M.A., “Eugenics and Democracy.”

WEST HAM BRANCH.—No Meeting.

#### OUTDOOR.

PINSBURY PARK.—11.15, Mr. George Whitehead, “The False Assumption of Christianity.”

METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY.—Freethought Lectures every evening at Marble Arch, Sundays at 3.

### COUNTRY.

#### INDOOR.

FAILSWORTH SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Sunday-school, Pole Lane, Failsworth): An American Tea on Saturday, December 1, at 3.30. All friends cordially invited.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S. (Shop Assistant's Hall, 297 Argyle Street): 6.30, Mr. J. Grant, “A Critical Examination of Mr. Cohen's *Theism or Atheism?*”

LEEDS BRANCH N.S.S. (Youngman's Restaurant, Lowerhead Row, Leeds): 7, Mr. Ashurt, “Economic Determinism.”

NOTTINGHAM (William Morris Institute, Heathcote Street): 7.30, Mr. Vincent J. Hands, “Does the World Need Religion?” Discussion.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH N.S.S.—Discussion Circle meets at the Labour Club, next door to Central Laundry, 6 Richmond Street: Friday, November 23, at 7.30; also on Friday, November 30, at 7.30, subject, “Materialism.”

SWANSEA AND DISTRICT BRANCH N.S.S. (Elysium, High Street): 7, Mr. Chapman Cohen, “Are We Civilized?”

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.

MANAGER wanted for Leicester Secular Hall and Club. Salary £2 per week, plus house, coal, and light. Apply by letter to SECRETARY, Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester.

NO ELECTION this year or next year can take away the necessity for getting the very most for every penny you spend. The best you can get for the price you can afford to pay is the one wise way, and our claim to giving you this in clothes calls for your most earnest consideration. You can consider our offer comfortably and contentedly at home by writing to-day for any of the following: *Gents' A to G Book*, suits from 54s.; *Gents' H to N Book*, suits from 92s.; *Gents' Overcoat Book*, prices from 46s.; or *our Ladies' Costume and Coat Book*, costumes from 52s., coats from 44s. Five per cent is allowed for cash with order, and you are given proof of our ability to fit you by post, but you must write now.—MACCONNELL & MABE, Tailors and Costumiers, New Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire.

## A New Ingersoll Pamphlet

## WHAT IS IT WORTH?

## A Study of the Bible

By Colonel R. G. INGERSOLL

*(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited)*

This essay has never before appeared in pamphlet form, and is likely to rank with the world-famous *Mistakes of Moses*. It is a Bible handbook in miniature, and should be circulated by the tens of thousands.

*Special Terms for Quantities.*

Orders of 24 copies and upwards sent post free.

PRICE ONE PENNY

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

## PIONEER PRESS PUBLICATIONS

## A GRAMMAR OF FREETHOUGHT.

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

*(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.)*

*Contents:* Chapter I.—Outgrowing the Gods. Chapter II.—Life and Mind. Chapter III.—What is Freethought? Chapter IV.—Rebellion and Reform. Chapter V.—The Struggle for the Child. Chapter VI.—The Nature of Religion. Chapter VII.—The Utility of Religion. Chapter VIII.—Freethought and God. Chapter IX.—Freethought and Death. Chapter X.—This World and the Next. Chapter XI.—Evolution. Chapter XII.—Darwinism and Design. Chapter XIII.—Ancient and Modern. Chapter XIV.—Morality without God.—I. Chapter XV.—Morality without God.—II. Chapter XVI.—Christianity and Morality. Chapter XVII.—Religion and Persecution. Chapter XVIII.—What is to follow Religion?

Cloth Bound, with tasteful Cover Design. Price 5s., postage 3½d.

*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 3d.

This is a Work that all Reformers 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.

*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.

## MODERN MATERIALISM.

*A Candid Examination.*

By WALTER MANN.

*(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.)*

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

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

176 pages. Price 1s. 6d. in neat Paper Cover, postage 2d.; or strongly bound in Cloth 2s. 6d., postage 3d.

*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 3d.

## REALISTIC APHORISMS AND PURPLE PATCHES.

Collected by ARTHUR 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.

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

A Freethought Classic at less than Half Price.

# HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE

By **J. W. DRAPER, M.D., LL.D.**

(Author of *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, etc.)

This is an exact reprint of Dr. Draper's world famous work. It is not a remainder, but an exact reprint of the work which is at present being sold by the publishers as one of the well known International Scientific Series at 7s. 6d. By special arrangements with the holders of the copyright the Secular Society, Limited, is able to offer the work at 3s. 6d., just under half the usual price. The book is printed in bold type, on good paper, and neatly bound in cloth. No other publisher in London would issue a work of this size and quality at the price.

There is no need to-day to praise the "History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science." It is known all over the world, it has been translated in many languages, and its authority is unquestioned. It has had a wonderful influence on the development of liberal opinion since the day of its publication, and is emphatically a work that no Freethinker should be without and which all should read. We should like to see a copy in the hands of every reader of this paper, and of every young man or woman who is beginning to take an interest in the history of intellectual development.

(Issued by the Secular Society, Limited.)

400 pages, Cloth Bound, 3s. 6d., postage 4½d.

SEND FOR YOUR COPY AT ONCE.

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

NOW READY.

## Richard Carlile

### HIS LIFE AND TIMES

BY

**GUY A. ALDRED**

192 pages, with Portraits of Richard Carlile and Robert Taylor.

Cloth Bound, 2s. 6d., postage 3d.; Paper Covers, 1s. 6d., postage 2½d.

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

### RATIONALISM AND THE EUROPEAN CRISIS.

A LECTURE

ON THE ABOVE SUBJECT WILL BE DELIVERED BY

**Mr. JOSEPH McCABE**

At **CAXTON HALL, WESTMINSTER**  
(near St. James's Park Station, District Railway),

**On Monday, November 26, 1923.**

THE CHAIR WILL BE TAKEN AT EIGHT P.M. BY

**Mr. WILLIAM ARCHER.**

Admission Free. Reserved Front Seats, 2s.; Reserved Back Seats, 1s. Tickets may be obtained of the Rationalist Press Association, Nos. 5 and 6 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, E.C. 4.

### A SUNDAY EVENING LECTURE

TO BE DELIVERED IN

**FRIARS HALL**

236 BLACKFRIARS ROAD, S.E. 1.

Nov. 25 **F. P. CORRIGAN**

The Sermon on the Mount and Life in the Valley.

Doors open at 6.30. Chair taken at 7. Admission Free. Collection. Questions and Discussion cordially invited.