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## Views and Opinions.

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### Evolution and Creation.

Last week we dealt with the meaning of Evolution and of Darwinism. We were not then concerned with proving either to be true, only with making plain what they meant, and we did not wish to confuse issues that are already sufficiently confused in the minds of the public. But the existence of evolution as a fact is admitted by everyone in the civilized world who is worth bothering about. Cranks, fanatics, and religious ignoramus need not detain us. Darwinism, too, is admitted by all as a real force. Whether it is a force adequate to the formation of new species is the point that is gravely questioned by some very eminent scientific authorities. And against evolution there is really no argument to meet. There is nothing on the other side. Creation, as we have often said, is not an explanation, it is only a narcotic. To say that a thing is created is telling us no more than that it is here. And religiously, we defy anyone to put an intelligible meaning into such an expression as “God created.” We do talk of the creation of a piece of music, or of a table, or of a picture, and the word is intelligible enough here. We mean a new combination of things already existing, whether the things be sounds, or colours, or a piece of wood or stone. But religiously, creation implies the bringing into existence of the materials out of which things are made. It means bringing something out of nothing. And that is not a scientific statement; it is sheer unintelligibility. But that is no drawback to a theological. It is rather a recommendation. The soundest theological proposition, the only one that can command general assent and is secure against attack, is one that no one understands.

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### Pre-Christian Evolution.

What we are concerned with in these notes is the bearing of the evolutionary theory on Christian and religious beliefs. And in the first place it is necessary to bear in mind that the idea of evolution is really a very old one. Putting on one side the glimpses one gets of it in the earlier Hindoo philosophy, there is no questioning its existence in the higher reaches of Greek philosophy. The starting

point of the Greek thinkers was, indeed, to find some mechanical principle of causation which would prove the world, as it was, to be a natural growth from certain existing forces. Anixamander, Empedocles, Democritus, Aristotle, all had this idea of growth before them, all aimed at presenting a conception of the world as the outcome of a process of growth, and at formulating the “laws” of its development. And in the magnificent poem of Lucretius we have, not merely a statement of much that is now accepted as true, but an actual foreshadowing of the idea of the survival of the fittest by the emergence of better endowed organisms. Had this line of enquiry been followed up there would have been no Dayton to-day. There would have been no Christian Church to reckon with, and its rise to power meant the arrest of genuine scientific enquiry for well on a thousand years. It meant the suppression of the idea of the world as a developing process, and the establishment of the “carpenter theory” of creation. The injury done by the Christian Church to scientific enquiry cannot be over-estimated, but some idea of it may be gained if one thinks of where the world might have been to-day had the scientific enquiries of the Greeks been continued, and if all the energy spent on fighting Christian intolerance had been expended in a more fruitful direction. An impartial student can hardly doubt that no greater disaster has ever overtaken the human intellect than the triumph of the Christian Church.

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### The Bible Story.

Keeping this in mind, what bearing has the doctrine of evolution on Christian beliefs? It is almost an insult to civilized intelligence to seriously argue that the Bible story of creation is not in accord with what science teaches. For centuries Christians honestly believed that when the Bible said that God made certain forms of existence on particular days it meant what it said. When this childish belief was made impossible to even the intelligence of a Salvation Army preacher, it was suggested that the Bible day meant a period of indefinite length. But whether the “day” of Genesis meant a day of twenty-four hours or an indefinite period, it is equally unscientific. The idea that all forms of “winged fowl” or “creeping things” came into existence during a particular period is false. It is not what science teaches. Entire groups of animals no more came into existence during a particular period than they did in a day of twenty-four hours. Fresh forms of life, belonging to the same genus are constantly appearing and undergoing modification along with the persistence and disappearance of older forms. Nor have we any reason for supposing the general condition of things to be any different to-day. And what use has an evolutionist for the Christian story of the “Fall of Man”? Even the phrase “the first man” is only a figure of speech. There was no more a first man than there was a first reptile, or a first bird, or a



first animal. If evolution be true, and man has developed from a simpler form of life, who is to say at what time or at what stage he was definitely differentiated from other animal forms? One might as well try to determine at what moment the egg ceases to be an egg and becomes a chicken. The process throughout is a gradual one. We are able to distinguish differences only by leaving out some of the intermediate stages. The attempt to harmonise evolution and the Bible can only be accounted for in terms of dishonesty or stupidity.

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#### Mythology and the Bible.

The correct way, the only way, to understand the Bible story of creation is to read it in conjunction with similar stories current among existing tribes of savages. They nearly all have their stories of creation, and they all run on the same lines. Some superior being makes the world out of a cloud, or out of "nothing," or out of himself. He makes man out of a mango, or stone, or out of his breath. We have no space to give them in detail, nor is it necessary to do so. Readers will find an extensive collection of these tales in Sir James Frazer's *Folk-Lore in the Old Testament*, and their family likeness is unmistakable. But when we meet these stories among savages we do not talk of them as "sublime," or as conveying a profound truth while leaving it for science to fill in the details. We recognize them for what they are—infantile guesses at the problems of existence to which mature knowledge alone can give correct answers. Why do we not adopt the same line when we read these stories in the Bible. That is the answer—they are in the Bible. For centuries Christians believed these stories to be literally true, and when they could no longer hide their falsity, some other meaning had to be read into them. It is fortunate for all that Old Mother Hubbard was not found within the covers of the Holy Bible. Nor will it serve to treat the Biblical stories as symbolical. They are related too literally for all that. We are not told merely that God made man; we are told how he made him—he made him out of the dust of the earth, exactly the story told to the first European visitors by the people of Madagascar. These are not symbolical stories; they are the examples of the ordinary method by which the uncivilized intelligence seeks to explain the phenomena of nature.

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#### The Fundamental Conflict.

Between religion and evolution there is conflict and contradiction from the outset. To the religionist the supernatural is everywhere and is the one vital fact with which he is concerned. The world with which evolution presents us is one in which the supernatural has no place, and no conceivable function. It has no room for prayer and no place for miracles. There is not a single scientific formula in existence in which the slightest allowance is made for the operation of anything save natural forces—known or to be known. Science does not say that beyond what is known deity may exist, but that so far as what lies beyond the known can be thought of, it must be as substantially similar to what we already know. It is no use to say that the operations of deity lie outside the scope of science. If God exists, and if he acts at all, the consequences of his action must be in this world, in the world of force and matter or in the world of human nature. And if the operations of deity could be seen or traced therein, science would be compelled to make allowance for it. The fact that no scientist makes any such allowance, the fact that he would be laughed at if he did, does not mean that "God" is something that lies outside the region

with which science deals; it means that in all his investigations the scientist never encounters anything that would lead him to assume the operations of a God. It is a demonstration of the genuinely Atheistic character of all science.

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#### What is the Use of God?

After that it becomes a mere evasion to say that we see the operations of deity in the action of natural forces, and that God operates through them only. What this is telling us is that we have no knowledge of God save such as we may gather through natural forces. He speaks to us in no other way. And that is also saying that whether we believe in God or not cannot make the slightest shadow of difference to our understanding of natural forces. If an engineer is building a bridge he has to count only the volume of water passing, the nature of the soil, the force of the wind, the quality of the materials employed, etc. It does not make the slightest difference to him if the forces with which he deals express the power of deity. They would be just the same if they did not. The Atheist who is working beside him does not suffer the slightest disadvantage from his rejection of deity, nor does the theist reap any advantage from his acceptance. In practice both of them ignore God. Their science compels them to do so, and there is no question whatever that if an engineer in building a bridge talked of trusting to God to do anything in the matter, ninety-nine out of every hundred Christians would look upon him with suspicion. What is true in this instance is true of the whole range of science. Science is Atheistic or nothing. It knows nothing of God. It does not bother about God. Its triumphs are achieved by leaving him out of account.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

(To be Continued.)

## The Church of Ireland.

CHRISTIAN literature is doubtless the most extensively spread in the world to-day, and it is fully as various as it is voluminous. In the Church there are many competent scholars who discuss religious problems in a highly scholastic fashion, and who ought to be taken seriously and treated with great respect by all their opponents, because they do not at any time deliberately misrepresent those who differ from them. To argue with such men is a sheer delight. But there is a lower order of Christian apologists, though by no means the lowest, who officially hold a brief for Christianity, and who usually have some organ at their disposal, in which to give expression to their apologetic views. A copy of such an organ fell into our hands the other day for the first time, entitled, *The Church of Ireland Gazette*. The issue in our possession is that of Friday, August 7, 1925. We understood the State Church of Ireland was many years ago disestablished, and thereby ceased to have any right to that name, and became one of the several religious sects in Ireland. Judging by the present number of the *Gazette* there is no other Church in Ireland than the disestablished Episcopal one, which, to say the least, is anything but a Christian attitude to maintain. The same selfish tendency seems to sway the disestablished Church in Wales. The religious sects in Wales are numerous, and since the Act of disestablishment came into force, the Episcopal Church is but one of them. It is no longer the Church in Wales, but a Church in Wales. In this copy of the *Church of Ireland Gazette*



there are three items calling for notice; a clever sermon by the late Rev. Canon Price in defence of the Nicene creed; the London letter; and a remarkable article by the Rev. J. Riversdale Colthurst, entitled "The Place of the Old Testament in Religious Education." The very first sentence in this article challenges debate: "As an inspired record of an inspired revelation the Old Testament must needs find some place in any scheme of religious education." Many of the ripest Christian scholars have long ago abandoned the idea of such a double Divine inspiration of any part of the Bible. The Old Testament is a highly interesting compilation of all sorts of ancient documents; but it bears clearly on its face the stamp of a strictly human authorship. Jehovah is one of the most curious and impossible deities ever created by man. Many of the deeds attributed to him were criminal in the extreme. Mr. Colthurst himself makes the following strange admission:—

There is no good in blinking our eyes to the fact that very few parts of the Old Testament form a suitable medium for the inculcation of religious truths in the case of the average child. It is too strong meat—indigestible for youthful minds. Take, for example, those portions of the Books of Kings set in our Sunday School programme for the current year. What religious value have these chapters for the immature intelligences and untutored minds to be found in our schools? What impression except that of unrelieved boredom, can they make on dull-witted children, or what lesson can they teach any child that could not be taught much more simply and directly in some other way? Or, again, I can remember going through Joshua and Judges with classes of girls in preparation for the so-called Synod examinations for secondary schools, reading of battles and murders and sudden deaths, and asking myself in what way the religious education of these children was being advanced by such studies. In these examinations, and in our Sunday School examinations, the questions on the Old Testament are, for the most part, purely secular, and have little or nothing to do with religious education.

With the whole of that extract from Mr. Colthurst's paper we are in complete harmony. We are also in agreement when he says that, generally speaking, "it is doubtful whether religious instruction in the daily school, where there is little to differentiate between religious and secular teaching in the child's mind, is of much real use." We go further still and firmly declare, not only that it is not "of much real use," but that it is no use at all, and generally does incalculable harm. We are, further, at one with the quotation given from the *Review of the Churches* when it advocates the view that religion should never be taught "at school in classes," and that "no amount of Christian apologetics, no amount of Bible learning, will make a man religious, or even a Christian. If neither clergyman nor family can by personal contact make their charges religious, it is quite certain that no wholesale instruction at school will achieve this end." So far as it goes, that is certainly sound sense, and Mr. Colthurst is evidently in substantial agreement with it. Whilst admitting and advocating the great educational value of the Old Testament for men and women, the reverent gentleman wrote his article on purpose to discourage its being used for the religious education of boys and girls in the schools, whether Sunday or week-day ones. We differ from and oppose the article on two fundamental points. In the first place, as already stated, we totally reject the dogma of the Divine origin and character of the Old Testament, regarding it solely as an interesting and valuable specimen of Jewish literature. As such, it is impossible to exaggerate its importance not only to the Jewish nation,

but to the lovers of ancient literature in all the world. As time goes on its literary value correspondingly increases. In the second place, we deny the children's need of religious education. Religion is certainly not in any sense an inheritance. No baby has ever rushed to God as it always does to its mother's milk. Mr. Colthurst avers that "religion, after all, must be absorbed. We cannot inject it into the child"; but it must of necessity be absorbed from without, and not from within. It is an alien ingredient, injected into the mind bit by bit. And religious education is one of the most difficult processes known to us. Some children pass through parents, parsons, and all kinds of teachers, and arrive at manhood or womanhood without any religion at all; and as a rule they are none the worse, but all the better for that.

Now, the Church insists that it is its bounden duty to give its children the most liberal measure of religious education; but we are deeply convinced that its doing so is a crime. The children are at the mercy of their seniors. Before they can exercise their minds on the subject religion is forced down their throats, and they must swallow it whether they like it or not. Surely this cannot be a just and right process toward our ignorant and unreasoning children. It is an unutterable wrong against which there is every need to protect them. Mr. Colthurst sums up his article as follows:—

We cannot estimate too highly the religious and moral value of the Old Testament in the spiritual education and development of the adult Christian. But this need not preclude us from thinking it a mistake to devote an undue proportion of time and energy to its mechanical use in the instruction of children. Many of the passages prescribed in our schools for study and examination are beyond either the understanding or the appreciation of the ordinary child, while it would tax the ingenuity of the most skilful teacher to derive any useful moral lesson from them suited to the capacities of children.

Thus we see that Mr. Colthurst is to a certain degree anxious to protect the children from unprofitable and injurious forms of religious education, and in this we rejoice; but, being a clergyman he is in honour bound to believe in and do his utmost to safeguard what he considers to be their most wholesome form of religious education. Like several well-known Anglican clergymen, we are inclined to regard him as in favour of the secular theory of education in all State-supported schools.

The Episcopal Church of Ireland is much narrower on many points than the Anglican Church, which, as compared with the so-called Free Churches, is broad indeed. But all churches alike introduce some unnatural restrictions in the name of the supernatural. Sabbatarianism in Ulster is a perfect terror. It is bad enough in all conscience in Scotland and Wales, but the type that prevails in the North of Ireland is much worse. Even music, the purest and most elevating of all the arts, is prohibited on Sunday in all the lovely public parks of Ulster. The Presbyterians know well enough that such an attitude to the Lord's Day finds no justification in the New Testament. To St. Paul all days were alike, and thousands of the best people the Church has ever had the honour of entertaining knew no difference in sanctity between Sunday and Monday. To John Knox, John Calvin, Luther, and most of the Reformers, Sunday was a day set apart for worship and recreation, and they had the courage to put their theory into practice.

J. T. LLOYD.

Slow are the steps of freedom, but her feet turn never backward.—*Jas. Russell Lowell.*



## The Keynote of Kipling.

I claim no place in the world of letters; I am, and will be, alone, as long as I live and after.—*Landor*.

You excel yourself, my dear Watson.—*Sherlock Holmes*.

SINCE Byron awoke one morning to find himself famous, few writers ever took the field with so instant and signal a success as Mr. Rudyard Kipling. Emphatic, impetuous, and audacious, he voiced contemporary passion and sentiment with no uncertain sound. Its possibilities and dangers were both mirrored in his stirring talent. First came the rumour of a new genius from the Orient, after the manner of creeds from time immemorial. Then a slim volume, *Plain Tales from the Hills*, put many readers in an uncritical stage of admiration. *Soldiers Three* and *In Black and White* completed the conquest; and subsequent works in prose and verse caused the reading public, like *Oliver Twist*, to ask for more.

There has been, perhaps, a slackening of public interest in Mr. Kipling's works during later years, but the production of an *Edition de Luxe* of his collected writings—a rare compliment to a living author—met with so ready an appreciation that it augured well for the continuance of his fame. Yet it is true, that, whilst his later books are typical of his talents, the prevailing impression left upon the reader is surely one of falling away from his early and triumphant artistry. The range of his subjects has widened, it is true, and the variety of his experience has increased, but there is far less sympathy and artistry, and his humour lacks the old, rich relish of former days. In a sense he may be said never to have entirely grown up. His youthful ideals are his ideals still, and they are voiced with the implacable accents of an old man. The tone, too, is coarser, and the sure touch of the true artist is so often changed for the rougher methods of the politician and propagandist. It will be seen that the gods of Mr. Kipling's youth are still the deities of his old age, but sadly battered by the process of the years.

Mr. Kipling's passions were always elemental, and he has given crude expression to his hatreds in some of his stories and some of his verses. The *Recessional* embodied his creed, but the eloquence partly hid the covert sneer at the "lesser breeds." In the following lines taken from a later "poem" the sonority of the earlier verses is replaced by halting words which reveal its sinister import clearly:—

Whatsoever, for any cause,  
Seeketh to take or give,  
Power above or beyond the laws,  
Suffer it not to live!  
Holy state or holy king—  
Or Holy People's will—  
Have no truck with the senseless thing,  
Order the guns and kill.

This sort of thing is not poetry; it is not even respectable verse, but it suggests the rodomontade of the National Anthem:—

Frustrate their knavish tricks,  
Confound their politics.  
God save the King.

Happily, Mr. Kipling has done better work than write "hymns of hate." *Tomlinson*, and certain charming lyrics on the Sussex downs, show that he has the root of the matter in him, and that, under happier auspices, he might have been a poet. But, poetry apart, he has genius as a story teller, and he possesses humour. Indeed, his earlier stories, such as *The Taking of Lungtugpen*, *The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney*, *The Courtship of Dinah Shadd* (to mention only a few) recall the open-air humour of Marryat, and the high spirits of Fielding and Smollett.

Curiously, Mr. Kipling always succeeds best on a small canvas. *The Light that Failed*, *Stalky and Co.*, and *Captains Courageous* were magnificent failures; but his short stories, at their best, are admirable. As stories, *The Drums of the Fore and Aft*, *The Man Who Was*, or the grim *Bertram and Bimi*, challenge comparison with Stevenson, Bret Harte, Ambrose Bierce, and other masters, who present us with infinite riches in a little room. The best of Mr. Kipling's work would hardly bulk more largely than one of the interminable novels of old Samuel Richardson, which used to draw tears from the eyes of our great-grandmothers. For readers of to-day like their sensations brief and pungent. Had Mr. Kipling's stories been told in the manner of the old "penny dreadful," devoid alike of grace and grammar, we had yet read them with pleasure, so vital are they in essentials.

To Freethinkers, one of the most extraordinary things about Mr. Kipling is his piety, which is constantly peeping out in his writings. Indeed, one unkind critic once said that the author of *The Recessional* had fairly gutted the Bible in his various works in prose and verse. In these days such religiosity is by no means common. The young men of the Conservative press proudly acclaim Mr. Kipling as the most religious writer since Robert Browning, and the Nonconformist journalists shake their youthful heads and retort, more in sorrow than in anger, that he has no "soul." This, however, is the merest political partisanship. Of all the gods created by men in their own likeness, the Anglo-Indian deity of Mr. Kipling is one of the most astonishing. The figure seems to have come straight from the "sweet shady side of Pall Mall," for the piety is so often charged with the pettiness of politics, and the hymns are too often hymns of hate. And his anthropomorphism is almost as pronounced as that of a dustman converted overnight by the Salvation Army. Note the "spiritual uplift" in the following lines:—

When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,  
And the women creep out to cut up your remains,  
Just roll to your rifle and blow out your brains,  
And go to your Gawd like a soldier.

Mr. Kipling can do better work in the arid realm of theology. Listen to the verse describing the wondering amazement of a Hindoo maiden at the intricacies and puzzles of the Christian religion:—

Look! You have cast out Love,  
What gods are these, you bid me please.  
Not so! To my own gods I go.  
It may be that they give me greater ease  
Than your cold Christ and tangled Trinities.

Fortunately for Mr. Kipling, people read his books for the fun and fancy, and for his undoubted gifts as a story-teller, and not for his excursions into theology. And, mind you, he is more than a mere novelist. He helped, with his tales and his *Jungle Books*, to make India a reality to dwellers in Great Britain, which is no mean achievement. A clever and entertaining artist, he has made a great reputation in the oldest of the arts, and he has made the Orient a living reality to Westerners who have never left Europe.

MIMNERMUS.

For downright contradiction  
Is, to the wise and fools, an equal mystery.  
My friend, in the old almanack of history,  
You'll find such jumbles made of fact and fiction;  
And by the help of this, or some such juggle,  
Errors spread wide;—truth suffers in the struggle.  
Doctrines are lisped by infants, taught in schools,  
And are believed: for who contends with fools?  
To customary words men still will link  
Their faith—poor dolts—imagining they think!  
*Goethe (Mephistopheles in "Faust").*



## The Oriental Mysteries and Christianity.

### VI.

(Concluded from page 539.)

ANOTHER Oriental mystery, which had a great influence on Christianity, was the Mystery of Mithra. This mystery, which had long been known and established among the Oriental, Greek-speaking cities of the ancient Levant, found its way to Rome during the century immediately preceding the beginning of the Christian era, and spread with phenomenal rapidity throughout the Roman Empire. As Mr. J. M. Robertson observes: "Mithraism was in point of range the most nearly universal religion of the western world in the early centuries of the Christian era. As to this, students are agreed.....In our own country, held by the Romans for three hundred years at a time when Christianity is supposed to have penetrated the whole imperial world, there have been found no signs whatever of any Roman profession of the Christian faith; while there are a number of monuments in honour of Mithra."<sup>1</sup> So much did the rites and beliefs of Christianity resemble those of Mithraism, says Mr. Rose, that:—

In most cases the followers of Mithra, "The Friend"—for this is the meaning of the name in Sanskrit—could have experienced but little difficulty in transferring their allegiance to Jesus, "the Saviour." The same fraternity, succour, and solace were offered in both communities. Many of the same legends attached to Mithra and to Christ: for instance, that which tells of the worship of shepherds at the divine infant's birth. The Christian Church's economy of baptism, confirmation, and eucharist were similar, in many respects, to that of the seven degrees of initiation in Mithraism. Moreover, by the time Mithraism fell, these rites were celebrated by Christians in buildings which, with their altars, retables, lights, and images, must have presented less contrast to the Mithraeum than exists to-day between the "high" and "low" church places of worship in England. Further, the new converts could still celebrate Sunday as their chief day of worship; and December 25th, as the birthday of their Redeemer, the shedding of whose blood had brought salvation to the world. They could still look forward to a final conflagration, a hell, and a resurrection of the flesh such as Mithraism—in contrast to most other oriental Mystery Religions—provided for the more materially minded of her sons who were unable to appreciate the stellar theory of a mere survival of divine essence.<sup>2</sup>

Even the nimbus, or halo, which we see on the head of Christ, is derived from sun-worship. "We see Mithras upright with a person kneeling before him who, from the rayed nimbus round his head, is evidently the god Helios or Sol."<sup>3</sup>

When the Pagans pointed out that there was nothing new in Christianity, that all the Christian teachings were to be found in the older religions; the early Christian apologists fully admitted the charge, but they gave an ingenious explanation of this undeniable fact. Justin Martyr, one of the earliest of the Christian apologists, declares that it was the work of devils who knew the Christ was coming to redeem the world and prepared a parody of his life and teachings beforehand, so as to discredit the new religion when it arrived. He says: "These devilish spirits no sooner understood by the prophets that Christ was to come, and the ungodly to be punished with fire, than they trumped up that crew of Jove's

sons, above said, imagining by this forgery to debauch the world into an opinion that these prophecies concerning Christ were just such another pack of lies as the fables of the poets."<sup>4</sup> Tertullian advanced the same argument a few years later.

In the popular and widely spread Mysteries of Mithra, the early Christians found their greatest rivals. Renan says: "If Christianity had been arrested in its growth by some mortal malady, the world would have been Mithraistic."<sup>5</sup> As Mr. Robertson observes: "The critical moment in the career alike of Mithraism and of Christianity was the death of Julian, who, though biased in favour of all the older gods, gave a special adherence to the War-God, Mithra. Had Julian triumphed in the East and reigned thirty years, matters might have gone a good deal differently with Christianity."<sup>6</sup> And when the Christians obtained the power in A.D. 376, they straightway suppressed the worship of Mithra in Rome and Alexandria by physical force.

It has been asked why did such multitudes rush so eagerly into communion with these mystery-communities, where everyone had to pay according to his means, and sometimes suffered bitter persecution, when the State church offered them an inexpensive religion, respectability, and security? The answer is:—

The Mystery-gods offered what the heart of the ancient worshippers yearned for.....The salvation imparted in the Mysteries embraced deliverance from the physical ills of life, from bodily ailments, from the sense of alienation, from the galling power of fate, and the reckless caprice of fortune, from the ubiquitous terrors of the demons, from the fears of superstition, and, lastly, from the gloom of death. No other forms of pagan religion could enter into successful competition with the Mysteries in such a comprehensive evangel.<sup>7</sup>

One reason why Christianity triumphed over its rivals was because, coming last, it gathered to itself all the most attractive features—from a religious point of view—of the older religions. Everyone was provided for. The worshipper of Isis, the "Queen of Heaven," could kneel to Mary the Mother of God. The worshippers of the many saviour-gods could kneel at the feet of Christ. The Mithraist would scarcely notice any difference between the new and the old; his Sunday sacred to the sun, was sacred to the Christian; the birthdays of Mithra and Christ were celebrated on the same date.

Another reason was the intolerance of Christianity. The old Greek and Roman governments were tolerant of all beliefs so long as they did not interfere in politics or transgress the civil laws. The Oriental mysteries were persecuted, when they were first introduced, not on account of their religious beliefs, but because they transgressed the civil law against secret communities and associations, by holding their initiations in secret and at night. An ancient Pagan could worship at the Temple of Isis, at the established religion of the State, and finish up at the altar of Mithra, all in the same day, without any difficulty being raised. Christianity from the very beginning was violently intolerant. It declared that all the other religions were false and snares of the devil, and that all those partaking of them were by that very act condemned to an eternity of punishment in the life to come. It was either Christ or the devil; there could be no compromise. The Christian teachers and propagandists dwelt with horrifying detail upon the fiery torments reserved for those who rejected the

<sup>1</sup> J. M. Robertson, *Pagan Christs*, pp. 289-290.

<sup>2</sup> C. P. G. Rose, *Antecedents of Christianity*, pp. 160-161.

<sup>3</sup> F. Legge, *Forerunners and Rivals of Christianity*, vol. ii., p. 244.

<sup>4</sup> Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, xxviii.

<sup>5</sup> Renan, *Marcus Aurelius*, p. 332.

<sup>6</sup> J. M. Robertson, *Pagan Christs*, p. 347.

<sup>7</sup> S. Angus, *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity*, p. 138.



Christian faith. A Christian scholar, a specialist in early Christian literature, declares that belief in hell fire was "the fulcrum of early Christianity," and that: "In the dread of death and in the belief in the eternal fire of hell which pervaded men's minds, a few philosophers excepted, Christianity had a *point d'appui*, without availing itself of which it would not have made a single step towards the conquest of men's minds."<sup>8</sup> A panic was created; it was a *sauve qui peut*, from the wrath to come; every man for himself and the devil take the rest. The difference between the ardent faith of the early converts and the lukewarm Christians of to-day lies in the fact, as a modern writer points out: "We have never been thoroughly frightened, the ancient world was: there is a great difference."<sup>9</sup>

We have seen where the material came from for the building of Christianity. In future articles we hope to show the method of building.

W. MANN.

## "Back to Jesus."

### SOME RANDOM REFLECTIONS.

SOME years ago, when I was in the army in fact, I had quite a number of discussions on Christianity with men (and some women) from all parts of the country and of most varied opinions. I never concealed my views and was, of course, ready to discuss the question anywhere. These discussions proved extremely interesting, but really led to nowhere, and, looking back upon them after all these years, one fact stands out more clearly than anything else. Whether my opponent was a Roman Catholic, or a member of the Church of England, High or Low, or belonged to one of the dissenting sects, whether he was a Conservative or a Socialist, with practically no exception, they all believed that the real unapproachable saviour of mankind was Jesus, and that poverty, misery, war, and all the evils that beset us would never be abolished until we agreed to adopt the "simple, pure religion and ethics" of Jesus and literally followed them out. Over and over again these points were urged and it proved a most interesting psychological study to see so many types of men and women agreeing on this one thing. Even Jews, who had no use for Christianity, would insist that Jesus was a very great man, a wonderful master, and one whose teachings we could all follow irrespective of particular creeds. Socialists, of course, while railing at the churches as depositories of "bosses" and of "capitalists," always claimed that the greatest *real* Socialist that ever lived was Jesus, and if only his teachings were rigorously followed, everybody would always be well fed and educated, have a fine house to live in, a retiring pension at the age of fifty or thereabouts and full opportunity to go round the world as a sort of bonus-holiday paid for by a Christ-like Socialist Government as a recompense for the few years of daily drudgery in the Socialist State, and, in addition, all Socialist officials would be naturally influenced by the Christ ideal so beautifully expressed in the "simple and pure teachings" of Jesus in the Gospels. (I may just mention here that it was this sort of drivel which made me seriously examine the claims of Socialists and Socialism, and resulted in my finding that Charles Bradlaugh had made out a magnificent case against Socialism, which not even such a brilliant exponent of the theory as Mr. Belfort Bax could shake.)

It must not be thought that I allowed these state-

ments about Jesus to go unchallenged. Over and over again, with a small khaki-bound New Testament (given to me by the Y.M.C.A.) in my hand, would I ask for the precise teaching which made Jesus the greatest this or that, that ever lived, and the replies, when I got them, were very amusing. For one thing, it was extremely difficult to get the *precise* words of Jesus. Generally speaking, I was told that *everybody* knew that Jesus was the greatest moral force the world had ever known. "Read the New Testament for yourself and you'll have all the proof," some would say. "Love ye one another, is the sum of everything," another would tell me. "The golden Rule as enunciated by Jesus makes him the greatest Socialist this old world had ever seen or ever will see," was another illuminating reply to my queries. But the exact words which singled out Jesus as the original leader of the most wonderful reforms we would ever see, were never given to me. A few general platitudes, repeated *ad lib*, were all I could get from my average opponent. It was, I admit, a little different from those who were educated, from the very few who had any acquaintance with Biblical criticism. These claimed I had never read the New Testament properly; that all I knew were a few excerpts carefully chosen for me by Bradlaugh and Foote. "Read the New Testament without bias, as you would read a secular work," they would say, "and we do not despair of your becoming one of the strongest champions of Jesus—and even joining our church." As luck would have it, an accident confined me to hospital for some weeks and sandwiched between *Pepy's Diary* and some of the remarkable books of that American genius, Jack London, I carefully re-read the New Testament. Some of the results of that reading I gave in a few articles contributed to this journal a few years ago called *The Religion of Jesus*, to which I expected some replies, but, if I remember aright, no one criticised in any way whatever.

Armed with my new knowledge I sought out more discussion with those who were supposed to be competent to deal with me. Alas, never were evasion and retreat more complete. It was nearly impossible to get definite replies, but it was very amusing to see how eagerly Jesus was defended or apologised for, as soon as I gave some of his actual words taken from the Gospels. It was impossible for Jesus to have said what I said he said, or, it meant the very opposite, or, did I think Luke, the Great Physician, would report something really derogatory to the Saviour? or, would Jesus have held the love and adoration of the greater part of the civilised world for nearly two thousand years if he taught anything but the purest love? or, was it not obvious that this or that was merely an Oriental metaphor beautifully expressed according to Eastern standards? or, no matter what I said or what Bradlaugh or Foote said, Jesus was still the greatest ideal the world had ever seen or ever will see, and so on and so on. Never, if my opponents could manage it, was a straight discussion on the merits or demerits of Jesus allowed for long. By hook or by crook something else was introduced and soon we were all discussing war, or the marvellous Labour Party, or how England stole the greater part of the world, and therefore we shouldn't really blame the Germans; or the way in which the poor dear Irish were so terribly ill-treated by the grasping English "capitalists." Jesus, in short, was the star to which we should all hitch our wagons and the world would be all the better and brighter for it, and *everybody* knew that was true. But the exact words which made Jesus the Star seemed quite unknown, and I did not make myself popular by insisting on them. Actually, I was called intolerant and

<sup>8</sup> F. C. Conybeare, *Monuments of Early Christianity*, p. 17.

<sup>9</sup> Bevan, *Hellenism and Christianity*, p. 81.



fanatical and a precious specimen of a Freethinker, and the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution were shown me as the terrible examples of Atheistical governments. Abolish Jesus and immediately everybody would start killing everybody else. Love, as we understand the term, was unknown till Jesus introduced it and everything else that was great and beautiful and true. Remember, serious and intelligent people have talked to me like that. Can anyone wonder why Christianity still holds the mass of the people and why real Freethinkers are in such a minority?

In another article, I hope to go more into detail on the subject.

H. CUTNER.

### Acid Drops.

When will journalists leave off writing nonsense about the Bible? Presumably, not till they give up believing in it as the Word of God. Here is a writer in the *Referee* who writes about the opening chapters in Genesis as "wonderful alike in its intensity and simplicity," and also how in the "majestic first chapter," the story of creation is "set forth in terms which embody almost precisely the course of evolution." The latter statement is simply not true. The first one is a mere repetition of the customary gabble about the Bible, and we should like to see the writer make good his claim as to the majestic simplicity of the Bible story. If the writer knew enough he would know that very similar stories exist elsewhere, but we do not go into raptures about their intensity and their simplicity. Such phrases are so many stupid attempts to give the Bible a fictitious value in the minds of the people. And when the article concludes with the statement that the "first chapter of Genesis bears so much of the character of a real revelation as to be beyond the compass of the human mind at the period during which it was compiled," he is simply adding a little more nonsense on his own account. We would advise the *Referee* to stick to boxing, theatrical, and sporting news. It makes a much better show in these directions.

In spite of Shakespeare there is something in a name, or names would not play such a part in controversy. Thus a well-known writer in the *Sunday Express*, criticising the books written by Caradoc Evans on the Welsh, says they are the outcome of the author's early life in Cardiganshire, and the people are depicted as "hypocrites, materialists, sensualists, and many other things." The important thing is they are depicted as very fervent Christians, and this Mr. Howard Harris, as he is writing in the *Sunday Express*, leaves out. "Materialists" are left in, because that helps to keep alive the vulgar belief that philosophic materialism leads to sensualism, etc., even though the one thing that stands out in Caradoc Evan's characters is their sincere Christianity. They are religious through and through, and all their vices find a cover and an excuse in their religion.

Of course the play is on the word "Materialism." Philosophic or scientific materialism is one thing, and that is the very essence of sound science. Ethical materialism—the gratification of the lower impulses at the expense of the higher is another thing, and one that finds expression in Christianity. Consider the usual defences of Christianity. Unless there is another life there is no reason for decent conduct in this one. If we convince man that there is no eternal judge before whom he will one day appear how can we expect him to do what is right? If we be not raised from the dead, then let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die, and so on to the end of the chapter. Now all this is what we mean when we speak of ethical materialism, and there is no greater sinner in this respect than the

Christian. And the corrosive effects of it are all the greater because it is covered up by language that disguises its real nature. There is no more powerful aid to evil than that which enables a man to gratify his lower passions under cover of an appeal to his higher qualities. And Christianity does that better than any other system with which we are acquainted.

The annual Wesleyan *Pastoral* says, "It is obviously a matter of the utmost gravity that for a number of years we have been compelled to publish a rapidly diminishing number of boys and girls in our schools, and other churches have had to do the same." Very grave indeed, for it means that the youth of the country is escaping the net of the churches. And if the churches cannot get hold of the immature intellect and "dope" it thoroughly, how on earth can it hope to alter the mature mind? If we could only get a single generation without Christianity, the chances of Christianity again getting hold of the people would be infinity to nothing—at least, so far as the civilized part of the world is concerned. Amongst the uncivilized it might still find a chance.

Once more an attempt has been made to get the Wembley Exhibition open on Sundays, but without success. The power of the clergy is too strong, although the authorities say it is the Lord's Day Observance Act that stands in the way. But if it was really intended to open the exhibition there are ways of getting round the Act, or it might be openly broken and leave it for the law to act. In that case it would probably be thought too dangerous, as it might lead to the repeal of this particular statute. Cinema proprietors, with the consent of the magistrates, break it every week. The *Observer* thinks that religion gains nothing by this "rigid and fearful obedience to convention." But the clergy might lose a lot by keeping people away from church, and they know that anything that breaks the convention of going to church means a loss to them, and this particular trading combination is very keen where its interests are concerned. The Act should be repealed.

The *Review of Reviews* for August contains a lengthy article on the Dayton case, with a report of Bryan's cross-examination by Darrow. The writer, who signs himself "Euphrosyne," rightly sees in the trial the marshalling of the forces of orthodoxy against modern thought, and the fight is not yet over. Nor will it end with the Dayton trial. That is only a skirmish in the larger campaign. But "Euphrosyne" rightly enquires if when we smile at Bryan we have forgotten Mr. Gladstone's *Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*? It is evident we have, for Gladstone's book, although written in a more verbose style, and with a pretence of learning, was fundamentally as ignorant as anything Bryan has said. "Euphrosyne" also asks whether any teacher in a National School of fifty years ago who had attempted to teach evolution would have been treated any differently from the way in which Scopes was treated?

It is a pity that "Euphrosyne" does not notice the Bootle case. That is quite as significant to us in England as is the Dayton case. Moreover, we are still waiting for a reply which will give us the name of a public school in which a teacher would be permitted to teach evolution and contrast it with the Bible, and still be permitted to retain his position. We have had a number of letters from teachers agreeing with us that it would no more be allowed in England than it is in Dayton, but we have not heard from a single teacher of any place where it would be permitted.

"Euphrosyne" says:—

To simple minds, Genesis seems to relate not only the story of the creation of the world and of man, but that of the temptation and the fall of man, by reason of original sin, from a semi-divine to an unredeemed human state. These stories do not appear to have been



intended as symbolical poems; but as doctrinal facts; for from the fall of man proceeds the necessity for a Redemption which necessitates a Redeemer who by his sacrifice ransoms man from original sin. Take away from the Christian doctrine the fall, the need for Redemption, and the Crucifixion of Christ as propitiatory sacrifice, and what remains may indeed be Christian, though very little room will be left in it for dogmatic teaching.

So that all we need say is that if these things are taken away the whole "plan of salvation" falls to pieces. The figure of Jesus as the mouther of very old moral commonplaces is not the basis on which Christianity is built. To build Christianity on moral maxims, is to deny that man alone has a chance of realizing morality, and that is a statement even more ignorant than anything Bryan and his followers have said. It is a denial of all that we know of the nature of morals and of social evolution. Of course, "Euphrosyne" does not point this out. English papers and magazines would not permit his article to appear if it did.

It is curious that in all the articles and opinions that have appeared on the Dayton case, not a single anti-Christian writer has been invited to express an opinion. This is the usual plan and one of the ways in which the press of this country keeps the people in ignorance. As none appears the public is induced to believe that no such opinion exists. Thanks to our press the need for specific laws distinctly prohibiting anti-Christian teaching is partly obviated. The press does its fair share in misinforming the people and in hiding the truth.

Darrow's questions to Bryan brought forward the statement of belief in the literal truth of the story of the "big fish swallowing Jonah, of the sun standing still for Joshua, of the truth of the Bible dates of the age of the world, of the Flood, etc." It makes very curious reading, and we intend reprinting it next week, or at least large parts of it. It makes a curious document, and serves as a definite account of what all Christians believed only a little time ago, and what many millions of Christians still believe. Indeed, if a vote be taken of Christians all over the world, the modernists would be hopelessly outvoted, and the majority would be able to call on their side about ninety-nine per cent. of all the great Christians of the past and every one of the official creeds of the Churches.

Firmin Gemier, a notable French actor and producer, in his book on the theatre, tells us that "Everyone has a right to be free, and it is a duty to respect the freedom of others." Mussolini, an actor in another sphere, weighs in with a handful of sand for the watch with, "I maintain that there can be no such thing as liberty." We prefer the sentiments of the stage actor, and, Italy may find to her cost, that she will have to pay for the luxury of a "great man."

The *Daily Express*, the commercial travellers' *vade mecum*, publishes an autographed photo of Mussolini. Judging by the expression we should say that the poor man wants a holiday, but, we are informed, this hero of Mr. Oscar Levy is credited with saying that "Julius Cæsar is the greatest man that ever lived." This will not please all his admirers, and, when Cæsar ruled an empire, there was not even a second fiddle for a pope to play.

Another vision of the Virgin has been seen—of course, to the usual kind of person and in the usual way. In this case two schoolgirls in Hungary declare that they had a vision of the Virgin—under a bridge. And, not to be outdone, the farmer on whose property the vision was seen, asserts that he, too, has seen the Virgin, and for five hours. That was rather an extended interview, and we hope that nothing untoward occurred. The usual pilgrimages have taken place, and the clergy

are getting a bit upset over it, as people are staying away from Church to visit the place where the vision was seen. And not to be beaten in the vision-seeing line, this same farmer says he has seen visions of Jesus, and even of the Creator himself. He has gone the whole hog and seen the entire family—Joseph being only in the family circle by adoption, so to speak. And if he saw the Virgin, there is no reason that we can see why he should not have made the acquaintance of the entire family. It is the first step that counts.

It is curious what little common sense is shown in the granting of these visions. Over and over again they are given, presumably to strengthen the faith of mankind. But they are given to the wrong people and in the wrong place. Always it is ignorant people who see them, always it is in some out-of-the-way place in which they occur. But one good-sized vision, one really first-class miracle to some responsible and critical person, would convert the world once for all. It is a waste of a good miracle to perform it to an ignorant peasant girl, or to some farmer whose word may not be taken. We should welcome one of these visions as warmly as does the most fervent Christian, and we may say without conceit it would do more, if we had one, to convert unbelievers than performing them for the benefit of those who already believe. But the Lord works not alone in mysterious ways, but in ways that are downright nonsensical.

A cargo of mummified cats, dug up in Egypt, says the *Liverpool Echo*, is being sent to this country to be used as manure. The paper is good enough to explain that these cats were once regarded as sacred by the Egyptians and worshipped as gods. They have been brought at about £4 per ton. They are regarded as excellent fertilizers. So far this is the first time we have heard of dead gods being put to some useful purpose. Generally they are allowed to lie about, getting in everybody's way, and creating no end of trouble. We seriously commend the episode to the consideration of present-day Christians. It is high time something of the kind were done with existing deities.

From the report below, taken from the *Daily News*, it would almost appear that Protestantism was in the same bad way as the building of St. Paul's. Freethinkers, however, must be on their guard, as the account is somewhat biased, coming, as it does, from the relics of Puritanism, which is the skeleton at the feast. With a fanfare of trumpets or a portable harmonium, here it is:

There was a great noise of machinery and tapping right up to the first stroke of four, when it ceased. There was even one woman who had wandered in from the street and insisted on singing, "Where Are the Boys of the Old Brigade?" as soon as the organ began. The outstanding impression was the utter inaudibility of the cleric who read the Lessons. All he succeeded in conveying to most of the crowded congregation was just waves of high pitched sound: altogether not too agreeable an impression of Evensong in the Empire's Cathedral.

Brothers, it is not us as says it.

A writer on Public Schools, in the course of which emerge undeniable truths, exhorts well-to-do parents to throw snobbery to the winds. This is all very fine and large, but, is not this weakness most apparent in the official religion of the British Empire? One admires its David-like insolence on the face of Buddhism, Mahomedanism, and all the other larger "isms" that can cheerfully swallow the followers of Christianity. Public schools might make a worse start than accepting the facts of evolution. If we all came of the same stock some few evolutionary days previous to Genesis, the chosen people myth, salvation by circumcision, or baptism and a few other puerilities might with advantage be emptied over the side of the ship.



### 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.

C. F. RUDGE.—Thanks for doing what you can to introduce the *Freethinker* into new quarters. We shall be pleased to send you new specimen copies when you require them. Every new reader gained is a very real help, and we greatly appreciate the help our friends give in this direction. "Everyone another one" should be the motto.

D. STICKELLS.—We have already said that we shall be glad to do what we can to help forward the suggested Free-thought Athletic Clubs, or in any other way to bring Freethinkers into touch with one another. All we can do now is to ask those who are interested to write us, and we will soon put those interested into touch with one another. If this were done, we might find one or two who are prepared to play an active part in organizing. We can say no more than that we regard it as useful from many points of view. The next step must lie with others.

MORGAN WALTERS.—It is not unusual for parsons to hold shares in brewery concerns. But it seems to us that if the working men in Wales do not like to put money into their pockets in the shape of dividends, the remedy lies with them. Why not drink less beer? It seems childish to rush for the beer and then grumble that someone is getting a profit from it.

W. G. TOWN.—We have written the newsagent concerning the supply of the *Freethinker*. Please keep on pressing till you get the supply regularly. If you wish the back numbers sent on from the office, we can do so.

J. R. RAEBURN.—The paragraph in the *Citizen* is written either in ignorance or malice. There has been no split in the N.S.S. The National Secular Society has nothing to do with the speakers in Hyde Park. They are free lances, so far as the Society is concerned. The N.S.S. has nothing whatever to do with Communism or with any other form of political propaganda.

H. R. MORTIMER.—Thanks for the report of the Rev. A. C. Dixon's sermon as published in the *Calcutta Statesman*, but it is really not worth while dealing with here. No one takes the least notice here of such an ignoramus as Mr. Dixon, although it may impose upon some people in India. When a man talks of evolution teaching that the egg was "created" millions of years ago, and then left to develop other forms of life, or that Huxley meant by Agnosticism that he could not find God by looking through a telescope, he is past hope. We should have thought the *Statesman* would have had more respect than to have published such drivel. As you say, we are fighting tremendous odds, but it is a fascinating struggle all the same.

S. PULMAN.—Thanks for report. Will prove useful.

L. KANE.—We are gratified to hear that you found our statement of Evolution and Darwinism so helpful. We meant it to be so, and in your case it has served the purpose for which it was written. We would cheerfully write more frequently on scientific and philosophic subjects, but we must bear in mind the special purpose for which the *Freethinker* exists. There is not much intellectual pleasure in criticising the childish imbecilities of Christianity, but it is work that has to be done.

E. G. STAFFORD.—Article received and shall appear as early as possible. Will bear in mind what you say about Liverpool lectures. We will try to set things going again this autumn if at all possible. We are waiting to hear if the hall is available.

A. B. MADDOCK.—Article received. Will publish it as early as possible, but rather overcrowded at the moment.

BREW.—We quite agree with you as to the statesmanlike qualities of Bradlaugh. There is too great a habit of regarding the State as another kind of deity, able to work a different order of miracle from those which distinguished religions.

ATROS ZENO.—Sorry for the misprint. As you say, it was the omission of the double dash that did it. The comp. has been slayed alive, and we will exhibit his skin when next you call at the office.

R. STEVENSON.—Thanks for letter. The article on Freemasonry is in type, and will appear just as soon as we can find space.

H. BLACK.—We have not yet arranged an autumn date for Manchester. Thanks for cutting. The paper you name

is not the only one that borrows from the *Freethinker*, but it would never do to mention the *Freethinker*. That might lead people to enquire as to what the *Freethinker* was.

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

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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.

We have said many times that when history comes to be truthfully written Thomas Paine will be recognized as one of the most important figures in the history of English and American democracy. Had he mixed up his political and sociological thinking with a number of fatuous phrases about "our brother Christ," or spent his time in slobbering sentimental nonsense about genuine Christianity, it is possible that by now he would have figured prominently in current political writings. But Paine attacked Christianity because he saw how much that had to do with the enslavement of the people. He was not out vote-catching, and so spoke the truth, and the truth about religion is the offence that the British public forgives last. And when it is forced into recognition it often enough accompanies it with the crowning insult in calling the hitherto neglected reformer a real Christian.

It is, therefore, with the greater pleasure that we welcome a new pamphlet in the Fabian Biographical Series, *Thomas Paine*, by Kingsley Martin. As is to be expected, Mr. Martin lays greatest stress upon Paine's political and sociological influence, but he also recognizes Paine's real aim in attacking Christianity in the remark:

The revolution at which Paine aimed was primarily a mental one, and when he saw that the passions and the follies of men could survive a change of their institutions, he felt, as Robert Owen felt thirty years later, that until men could be released from the bonds of superstition they were likely to remain subject to political chicanery.

It would not pay most of the present-day labour leaders to recognize this publicly, but it is a sentence they would do well to think over. A confession of this kind might lose them many votes; it would keep some of them out of Parliament, but it would greatly enhance their value as social reformers. In that summary of Paine's position is contained the justification of the militant Freethought movement.

We quite agree with Mr. Martin that:—

If we may judge by their enormous sale (Paine's works) in cheap editions and the prosecutions which the upper classes thought it worth while to enforce against those who circulated them, Paine's influence over the working classes grew steadily after his death, and was,



perhaps, on the whole, greater than that of any other single revolutionary writer in the nineteenth century.

That is quite true, but there is the additional truth that reformers who came after Paine were compelled to work largely along the lines marked out by Paine. But reformers have been slow to admit their indebtedness to Thomas Paine. Again to cite Mr. Martin, "Many who would have welcomed the author of *Common sense* and the *Rights of Man* were virtuously cold towards the infidel who could write the *Age of Reason*." Naturally we should like to see greater space devoted to Paine's work in connection with Christianity, but we do not complain overmuch of that because Mr. Martin has acted with so much justice towards Paine in other directions. We have not read for a long time a pamphlet on Paine that has given us so much pleasure as Mr. Martin's has done. It should be sold by the thousand.

The Pioneer Press is issuing shortly, on behalf of the Secular Society, Limited, a new pamphlet by Mr. George Whitehead, under the title of *What is Morality?* The pamphlet is very carefully written, and will be published at the price of fourpence.

### Thomas Paine in Scotland.

ROUND about the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, the Church in Scotland was yet in the ascendant. The General Assembly, a sort of ecclesiastical parliament, was the arbiter in most things; ministers walked abroad conscious of their supremacy and delighting in the exercise of almost sovereign power. Needless to say, they were in league with the powers that be; the lairds and the lawyers and professional classes generally, in suppressing any attempt made by pioneer souls to lighten the burden of the common people. They were indifferent to the most poignant misery and keenly alive to the danger that came to them from freedom in thinking. In 1755 there were thousands of slaves in Scotland. The colliers and salters were bought and sold along with the mines in which they worked. The children born to them were enslaved just as soon as they started work. In that year an Act of George III. was put upon the statute book emancipating those who in future entered the trade of colliers and salters, but those already in were liberated only after a lapse of years and after they had instituted a legal proceeding in the Sheriff Court and incurred all the expenses of a law-suit. The majority were really only free by death. It was not until 1799 that a law was passed freeing all those in servitude. Lord Cockburn, in his *Memorials*, records that these two statutes seem to have been neither the effect nor the cause of any public excitement. "Jupiter" Carlisle, a comparatively broadminded minister of the period and a friend of David Hume—he says some very generous things about St. David—wrote his autobiography in which there is not the slightest indication that there was a people's problem in existence. He was one of the gladiators in the General Assembly, gallantly breaking lances in defence of parsons' privileges, but leaving the "state of the people" problem severely alone. Not that he did not know; a passionate outburst in one of his letters against "the vile levelling Jacobins, whom I abhor," is sufficient evidence that the more or less subterranean rumbling had come within his ken, but neither then nor after did the Kirk concern itself with the welfare of the people. There was plenty of interference with the coming and going of the commonalty, but it was all designed with the object of shackling them the more securely to the established system. There was a certain amount of deism among the

middle classes which did not obtrude itself unduly, for the ministers had a flair for detecting "infidelity," and knew the damaging effect of imputing Atheism to anyone. When Professor Leslie was proposed for the chair of mathematics in the University of Edinburgh, the fact that in a treatise on heat he had written, "Mr. Hume is the first, as far as I know, who has treated of Causation in a truly philosophical manner," was made the foundation of a charge of Atheism against him, and for a couple of days the Capital was convulsed with the spectacle of the General Assembly seeking to make the belief in Christianity the necessary basis for the teaching of mathematics. These men were permeated with God, "sir," said one of them during the strife, "I sucked in the being and attributes of God with my mother's milk," and there was no room for anything else.

Law and its administration was even worse. They broke men on the wheel in those days and took schoolboys along to see the show. Stripping offending women partially naked and processioning them out of the town was considered a good moral lesson for the young. They had a perfect mania for hanging and used it as a means of reducing the number of vagrants that abounded. There are records of tribes of gypsies being rounded up and charged with some fanciful crime and hung wholesale. And there were no squeamish scruples about age or sex. The judges—there were fifteen of them, "the auld fifteen," as they were called—hung on to the privilege of hanging their countrymen and fought against every attempt at reform. They were a drunken lot. Lord Cockburn—he was of the succeeding generation—says that black bottles of strong port wine were set down beside them on the bench, and the procession at the close of the day's proceedings "were far less true to the music than that of the morning." And every jack man of them was loyal. They saw in the Georges the very embodiment of every human virtue; the royal touch sanctifying everything. One of them, Lord Eskgrove, once had occasion to sentence a man to death for stabbing a soldier, and the prosy old fossil addressed the prisoner thus: "Not only did you murder him, whereby he was bereaved of his life, but you did thrust, or pierce, or project, or propel the lethal weapon through the belly-band of his regimental trousers, which were His Majesty's property," which probably made the poor wretch wonder what he really was sentenced for.

There was a good deal of sordid motive underlying it all, however. Sir Walter Scott, later on in a letter to Sir Robert Dundas, avowed that the upper classes stood by "sound principles" because "they desire advancement for their sons and appointments and so on"; having the same motive, apparently, that animated the old Highlander, whose son, out in the "45," had marched down to Derby with the Pretender. When he was asked if he did not think it absurd to imagine that the British Monarchy could be overturned, he answered, "Na, na, sir, I ne'er thocht about it. I just thocht hoo plesant it wad be ta see Donal' risin' London." The administration of Scottish justice did not emulate Donald; they sat tight at Edinburgh and "there probably were not fifteen other men in the island to whom political independence was more offensive than to these fifteen judges." It was not only the judges who displayed an unwholesome zeal in the more brutal side of legal ethics. We find Advocate Walter Scott returning from a remote ramble in the Highlands for the express purpose of seeing Watt executed for the crime of proclaiming a provisional government and plotting to seize the castle. And he waxed scornful because Watt's conduct on the scaffold was not up to his expectation.



Sir Walter Scott, in many respects, may be taken as typical of the lawyer of those days: animated by a hatred of any thought not rooted in the past; filled with an ever present fear of democratic activity, and underneath it all a slavish loyalty to the house of Brunswick. The French Revolution kept them awake at nights. There is nothing more pronounced in the annals of the period than the alarm among the governing classes at the thought of French invasion. Robert Burns sent a couple of carronades to the revolutionists in token of his sympathy, but the pressure exerted by the authorities forced even him to contribute to the prevailing feeling and he put himself right with "Does haughty Gual invasion threaten?" Burns, of course, was more or less inclined to be cautious in the expression of his political opinions; "the wife and weans" was a powerful check against any undue enthusiasm and a watchful enemy in church and State was ever ready to strike at the rhyming protagonist of new ideas.

The ground for new ideas was prepared, in Scotland at least, mainly as a result of the dissatisfaction with the war in America and the shameless corruption in borough government. Here and there a writer propounded ideas concerning the governance of peoples; one, John Logan, produced a play in Edinburgh, called "Runnamede," in which were phrases like the "Rights of Britons" and "the majesty of the people," but the Scots playgoers were hostile to any majesty other than that of the George then reigning, and the play had a short run. The corresponding clubs had begun their operations in England, and had extended their influence to Scotland, but it was not until Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* began to circulate north of the Tweed that the democratic idea began to gather headway.

H. B. DODDS.

(To be Concluded.)

### Logic and Science.

In my former college days (for I had two turns at the mill) we studied, or tried to, Thompson's *Laws of Thought* and Whateley's *Logic*—two well-known text-books in the long ago—and one of them, I forget which, discussed the question whether logic was an art or a science. How he solved the problem I have not the faintest idea. But I have, years ago, found a solution that fully satisfies me, though, I fear, it will only amuse or possibly shock many, if not most, of my readers.

That great study virtually created by Aristotle and which is known as deductive, syllogistic, or formal logic is to my mind neither science nor art, but a bogus affair akin to such great problems as "perpetual motion," "the philosopher stone," "the constancy of the son," "this the best of all possible worlds," "how many angels can dance on the point of a needle," and the like. Puzzles and riddles of this sort have always proved to be an irresistible lure to the ingenious mind (and the more fantastic the greater the fascination), to the solution of which they would joyfully devote a life-time and ten life-times if they had them. There is something in human nature that goads one on to try the impossible. That such is the nature and the use of the famous syllogism will appear further on.

Confining our attention for a minute to the "court, anti-chamber, and annexes" of the central structure, that is, to the preliminaries of the syllogism or logic "proper," we find that logic in that restricted sense, is based on grammar and grammar is the analysis of language into its elements, and is therefore a true

science. Their community of nature, however, ends there. Grammar considers speech as a means of telling something about something, and dissects it with a view to discovering how it achieves that end. It is true that it does apply its results to some trifling extent to enable us to speak correctly; but what is, or is not, correct, is mere convention, so that grammar in its essence is a pure and not an applied science or art.

Logic, on the other hand, studies speech with an object—with a view of deducing rules from its analytical results, to avoid errors and fallacies in the process of reasoning. To logic speech is not merely a means of predication, but is the receptacle and vehicle of ideas and thought; and as such a new idea—the idea of truth—emerges into being. What, then, is truth? It is the *conformity* of expressed ideas and thought to the realities they represent. When the correspondence between our conceptions as expressed in language and the facts of experience is *exact*, the conceptions or their expressions, are said to be true.

Now to serve this new purpose, speech being a slow straggling growth, is a mere *makeshift*; and it is to this makeshift that the study of logic is due. It studied speech with a view of finding out wherein lay its imperfections as a vehicle of truth, so as to devise rules to avoid the pitfalls of error. Broadly speaking, these defects are of three kinds: (1) The multiplicity of meaning that words generally have; (2) The meaning of a term is, by its intrinsic nature, chameleon-like and worse, for while certain elements of its connotation are generally more or less persistent, others incessantly change; (3) Quite a large number of terms represent wholly imaginary objects and mythical events. Now, defect No. 1 we overcome by noting its application in the sentences in which it is used, and make the context tell us what the word itself does not do—obviously a mere makeshift. Defect No. 2 we try to amend by the clumsy device of definitions which often require to be defined in turn—another cumbersome makeshift. Defect No. 3 is not only an imperfection, but is entrenched behind religion with its wire entanglements a thousand deep, and is defended by a garrison of a million strong. There is only one way by which this defect can be diminished, and that is, by demanding evidence for alleged existences and events.

But what made the study of logic a crying necessity, an imperative need, was the restless activities of the sophist, whether as mystifier, quibbler, sophisticator, or falsifier, his stock-in-trade was ever the same—the shortcomings and imperfections of language. His activities were usually manifested in the interest of religion, and so effective were they that truth ran as much risk of being falsified as an organism is of being diseased and injured amid the perils of life, so that logic, in devising means to checkmate and frustrate the machinations of the sophist, did a service somewhat analagous to that performed by hygiene or applied medical science, to maintain individual and social health.

For logic as an inductive art, that is, as an instrumental equipment for preventing the falsification of truth, for demanding evidence in support of dogmatic and oracular assertions, and for insisting on the elimination of fallacies in applying the evidence—that is, for the study of Induction as exercised in the establishment of scientific truth, no one has a greater esteem than myself. But for the high-browed pretensions of Aristotelian logic, with its claim to be the discoverer or "miner" of truth in a quarry of words, I have nothing but unqualified contempt.

I cannot help regarding, be not shocked, gentle reader, the famous medieval seats of scholastic learn-



ing, including our own Oxford and Cambridge, as so many metaphysical sausage factories! in each of which was installed the celebrated "sausage" machine—the *Syllogism*. At one end you put in the pork or the pig (the premises), and out at the other end, after much laborious and exhaustive working at the handle, emerges the verbal sausage—the conclusion.

But it was a most complex machine, and by no means uniform in its action, and therefore demanded exceptional skill to work it if the output was to have a marketable value—to which, no doubt, it owed much of its fame. There were no less than sixty-four routes by which the metaphysical pork could reach the exit, but out of the sixty-four routes only from nineteen were the products fit for the market! In the case of the other thirty-five it was spoiled in transit—kinked, twisted, ripped, or otherwise damaged. So you had always to be on the alert and watch the stops and keys.

Such great importance was attached to the machine that the famous mnemonic—"Barbara, Celarent, Darii, Ferioquo prioris, etc." was invented to assist the operator to remember the valid nineteen. But, alas, even of the perfect specimens that came through *nothing* could be guaranteed save the verbal skin! The contents, instead of being real pork, *i.e.* truth, might consist of cats, rats, toads, or of any substance under the sun. What a return for so much arduous labour!

And the difficulty of working the instrument is yet far from being fully stated. There were between thirty and forty different types of machine: the apodictic, the biform, the didascalie, the cryptic, etc., syllogism, and the flavour and digestibility of the product depended much on the machine used.

Let us append a specimen of its working:—

All men are mortal,  
John Smith is a man.  
Therefore John Smith is mortal!

A sound specimen in the mood of Barbara. And what a valuable "sausage"—the discovery that John Smith is mortal!

But, lo and behold, John Smith is included in the "all," otherwise to say "all" is a false statement; so that the infallible machine is itself installed upon the old fallacy of "begging the question," which enables you to prove anything. So, after all, the historic boasting that deductive logic was the only form of reasoning grounded on granite, is in reality planted on the treacherous quicksand of a fallacy! No wonder resort is made to Hegelianism to infiltrate the quicksand, under *high pressure*, with metaphysical cement and prevent, if possible, the colossal fiasco of seeing the hoary mass crash to the ground. Is it possible to save it? Certainly. Why, nothing is impossible to Hegelianism. The creative magic of Genesis is nothing to Hegel's wheel which creates and de-creates the universe as it spins round!

In view of the fact that it can be safely said that during the whole period of its undisputed sway, never a single new truth was discovered by its means, however did such a fatuity get itself established in the serious belief of mankind? Simply because that during, what I may call the platonic era, "words" had become to be regarded as mystic entities with magic potencies. Note the opening verse of John's Gospel: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and God was the word." It was therefore quite in keeping with Zeitgeist of the Mediterranean world. It was in harmony with the ideas of the ages of faith, during which the only "realities" dealt with were practically the words of dogma and creed and cognate subjects. KERIDON.

## Thoughts About Souls.

Sons and daughters of rich and refined and well-born people have souls. So have the sons and daughters of the poor and ignorant and lowly born. There are two kinds of people and they have two kinds of souls. The souls of the poor sort require saving. The Eton and Girton kind of folk don't bother.

All souls last for ever. Even God cannot kill one. They mostly start at the same time as bodies. They are creatable but indestructible. In this way they are unique.

Some say, "I *am* a soul," but most say, "I *have* a soul." If I *have* a soul there must be two souls about, for we are forced to think of the ego as a kind of soul. I am therefore a trinity—body, ego and soul. Now it is obvious to everybody that this ego, whatever it is, is born with the body, develops with it, decays with it, and is vitally affected by any accident that may happen to it. And when the body dies the ego disappears; so surely we have every right to assume that it dies with it. The soul also is born with the body, but is never thought of as subject to decay or death.

True, there are those who deny that the soul is born. They conceive of it as eternal. It has been hovering about for all eternity waiting to get a body allotted to it, which it is to occupy for a short time. If the body (or the ego, or the soul) behaves itself well, the soul, when it is released from it (or them) will exist for the other half of eternity in a blissful condition. Otherwise it is doomed to be a semi-eternal unit of misery. Obviously the risk is considerable. Now why is the soul, which has apparently existed for ever in a blissful condition, forced to take this dreadful leap in the dark? God only knows.

But most of those great thinkers (such as archbishops and Salvation Army captains) who have penetrated the realms of occult truth, ignore the eternity behind the soul and think only of the eternity in front of it. In other words, they assume that the soul is born.

Very well then, it is born, this eternally existing spirit, because the ego Jack and the ego Jill met on the sands of Margate one summer's day, and, by kind permission of a registrar, were able to consummate a desire to coumingle. It is to live for ever, this soul, in a state of everlasting delight or everlasting torment. Now consider this: Compared with the half of eternity, what is the life period of a human body? Of course, no true comparison is possible between the finite and the infinite. But allow yourself the license of supposing such a comparison possible. At once you see the absurdity of it all. The longest life, compared with eternity, is as a second to millions of millions of years. Say a second. The millionth part of a second or the millionth part of that would be vastly overstating it, but say a second. Then a being that has to live for millions of millions of years in pleasure or pain has its fate decided by something it does, or its body does, or its ego does, during the first second of its existence! Does that strike you as a sensible arrangement?

Which is more logical (or less illogical)—to say I *am* a soul or I *have* a soul? Think this over. If you say the soul is immortal you are pinned down to spiritual duality. You doubt it? Listen to this then:—

Poor Jack falls off a 'bus and his head strikes a kerbstone. He was a good and sensible fellow; now he is a vicious imbecile. Apparently his immortal soul was not involved in the catastrophe, for nobody troubles about it now. Supposedly its fate has been



decided by what happened during the period of sanity. So you see when Jack was sane and sensible and virtuous his soul and his ego might possibly have been considered identical. Now, we are told that he is not responsible for his actions. There is a vicious and dangerous something in charge of his body now and he has to be locked up. Now it is preposterous to suppose that an immortal spirit can be changed in character because a mortal head suffers a contusion. Then the something which commands him to perform bad and silly actions must be what, for want of a better name, I call the "ego." Here comes another poser: Where is the soul now then and what is it doing? I must leave those who assert its existence to explain. It is their funny story—not mine.

Here let me anticipate opposition from another quarter. Are we bound to believe in the existence of an ego? May we not regard consciousness as a quality or an aspect? Well, you may, if you like, and perhaps you would be right. That is the theory I started with. It is very easy to assert it, but I for one find it impossible to imagine a quality or an aspect feeling and loving and wanting and rejoicing and pining. I could imagine it twenty years ago, but not now. In the days of my callow innocence I could imagine a body as consisting of a vast number of tiny marbles that bumped together in such a manner as to produce life and other phenomena. Long ago has that delusively simple solution gone the way of all cut and dried theories.

Twenty years more of living life and pondering over it have brought me to the position whither all philosophising inevitably leads—scepticism. Life, in its nature and functions, is a more puzzling thing the more we know about it. The more data we have for our investigation the less certain are we of our conclusions. That is not the experience of one, but the experience of all.

A word of advice here to young Freethinkers. If you are tempted to grope into the mysteries of metaphysics, hold on tight to the rope of common sense, or you will be lost. And do not be downhearted if the net result of a long and tedious examination of the relations of phenomena to noumena leave you far more uncertain of your knowledge of ultimate reality than you were at the outset. The mightiest brains the world has produced have achieved similar results.

Leaving abstruse philosophy to the metaphysicians then, what does simple logic tell us about life? Well, it tells us nothing at all about its essence: nevertheless, some useful facts concerning it easily become apparent to the enquirer who is wise enough to look dispassionately at obvious facts.

Whatever life is—I mean self-conscious life—every certain fact about it confirms the view that it is something inseparable from the organism that manifests it. Thus far, materialism, or to use a more expressive word, monism, is firmly supported by every scrap of evidence worth the name. Consider the kind of evidence that is offered in support of the opposite theory. What a pitiful collection of old wives' fables, witch stories, fairy tales, and spiritualistic humbug it all is!—from first to last, nothing firm, constructive, or useful about it—nothing but puerile wonder-gaping. A surgeon may believe in it, but he has no use for it in his practice. His friends who return from the grave tell him not to worry but never enlighten him regarding the means of avoiding worry. A statesman may believe in it, but he dare not frame his policy on spirit communications. If he tried to, even the official medicine men of his country would declare him to be insane. It was not so in the days of Samuel, but it is so now. Ghosts frighten the silly and impress the simple but they say nothing worth hearing and forestall nothing worth knowing, 'teach nothing

worth learning, and never by any chance throw any light on any event, a fuller knowledge of which would benefit mankind. To account for embodied spirit is difficult, perhaps impossible, but to account for disembodied spirit does not present any insuperable difficulty to the mind that has seen the connection between bodiless ghosts and disordered imaginations.

So while I agree with the Sage of Chelsea that we are all ghosts, I see not the ghost of a reason to admit the existence of spirit as a separate, independent entity. And if I am a ghost, so is a dog and so is a "tiddler" in a brook. Not for nothing did Haeckel write of the "soul cells" of fishes. It is nice to think that we are made of finer stuff than what we call the lower animals, but, sentiment apart, we are bound to admit that the difference is one of degree, or perhaps of quality, but not of essence. That the soul of a pope is made of the same stuff as the soul of a codfish will seem a shocking doctrine to many, but that cannot be helped.

Whither then have my thoughts on Souls led me? Not to any knowledge of noumena certainly—and yet these thoughts need not be devoid of profit. For the one doctrine, the truth of which becomes more clearly demonstrated the further we proceed, is a very vital, enlightening, and humane generalization—the essential unity of all forms of organic life. If this does not appeal to you, read the *Ancient Mariner*, and the poet may strike a chord that my cold prose has failed to touch.

LECAPITAINE.

## A Midnight Moon.

The moon's rimpled face in the wave.—Burns.

SILLY poets have made verses to the autumn moon, or to the hope and tender beauty of the spring; other "wiser" people have been fascinated by the footlights and the jazz antics and rattle of the mummerys of the village theatre, and have gone into raptures over the artificial moons and tender wooings of the stage—the same people, who are, perhaps, little impressed by the wonder and significance of the skies by day, and night, find baser uses for this "mischievous and libidinous" star as it lights and conceals the "Peeping Tom" who creeps and peers to enjoy vicarious excitation on the sand dunes of the seaside or the inland solitudes. Happily he is often disappointed in his search: certainly his is the little beastly mind: *Honi soit que mal y pense*: and why does he not go home to his wife? He is never moon-worshipper or spring-poet, though he is "luny" enough, and he is very seldom an Atheist.

Not as a superior person, but philosophical as Addison's Mirza, I wandered along the shore the other night and over the silent dunes—sincerely hoping that here I would not disturb any belated courting couple—hoping, also, that elder's hours and decent morals still had their influence on the passionate Joe and Janet of the holidays. It was even so; the last lover and his lass, family party, and solitary walker, had forsaken the scene; I was monarch of all I surveyed, and of what an outer and inner kingdom so might the desert of the Arab be transformed under his Eastern stars! The moon that shone on Marathon was shimmering on the moving waters, making eerie shadows in the hollows, and white spectres of the sandstone slabs. Ghosts are as plentiful by day as night, but we only see and fear them by night. They are the furniture of religion and require darkness to show in. They do not even love the moon, but in its light venture out here and there, by force of habit, we may suppose, in the night and solitude. I have never believed in ghosts, but I have been



terribly afraid of them. The material desperado is a simple and negotiable menace compared with these immaterial entities. Query: Where do the ghosts end and the gods begin? According to Grant Allen, and other intrepid investigators, the ghosts were once the gods, and are even now the same in substance, equal in power and glory—in terror, we should say. When the ghosts cease to appear—which they still persist in doing, even to the sceptic—the gods will cease to exist; and what will the parson do then, poor thing? True to his nature and tradition will he not just make a mystery of something else? For the sublimation of ideas, we may presume, will still go on: the clarification of ideas will have to go on, also, and in those ghostless, godless days suggested, the Freethinker will still be needed, with the difference, of course, he will then be able to devote himself to one world at a time; to showing—as Mr. Repton quotes from Conrad, that: "The world, the temporal world, rests on a very few simple ideas; so simple that they must be as old as the hills."

The moon that shone on Marathon still sailed and shone upon the sea; as it did upon that Troy on Troy, that uttermost antiquity of the buried Maya civilization of the Central American jungle, and where, and when, austere and awful priests and kings ruled and sacrificed their victims and their slaves.

And long since then of bloody men  
(Whose deeds tradition saves)  
Of horrid stabs in groves forlorn,  
And murders done in caves!

Thou venerable star! oh, idiot moon! thou hast lighted all those faiths and dynasties, to rise, and rule, and fall, in thy constant round and the flight of ages. That is no smile that marks thy silver face, nor frown; impassive as the many gods man has imposed upon himself thou hast been always utterly unconcerned, lighting the savage sacrificial saint of old, as the imbecile "bushranger" of the lovers' walk of to-day; he, not in his immediate pursuit only, but the type of the numerous savage still in our midst. But under thy beam what a glory doth the world put on! how old and wide thy survey: how crude and narrow by contrast the Christian cosmogony: to the natural philosopher himself, a passing glory and illusion, but shall he not enjoy it while it lasts? nothing was "planned" for him; he is but the adaptation; the fool expects too much of man and nature; of the Freethinker, also, it may be said: "As thy days thy strength shall be"—there will be mental adaptation to the very last; such is the iron, yet eluctable law of life. Reluctantly at last the man retires; the moon remains and its effulgence follows him, softly lighting his bedroom from chinks of gold in his window curtains. He feels like the good Abou Ben Adhem, but expects no "presence in the room"; but all the world, all time, all human fate is there in sympathetic thought; adaptive still, and hoping for, and resolving he will still strive for the best, even as a good Christian might, he falls into a sound refreshing sleep, while the moon that shone o'er Marathon shines on his gentler rest.

A. MILLAR.

#### MR. G. WHITEHEAD'S MISSION.

Mr. Whitehead reports a very successful week at Leeds, with the prospect of an even better week to follow. Seven good meetings were held and an access of new members is expected. From August 30 to September 6 our missioner will be at Ashton-under-Lyne.—E.

Shower the fiery grain of Freedom broadcast.—Tennyson.

## 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 postcard.

### LONDON.

#### OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 6.15, Mr. Constable, a Lecture.

FINSBURY PARK BRANCH N.S.S. (Finsbury Park): 11.15, a Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6, Mr. A. D. McLaren, a Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 3 and 6, Mr. C. H. Keeling will lecture.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY.—Ramble to The Chilterns. Conducted by Mr. Brooks. Train Baker Street 9.58 a.m. Take Walking Tour Ticket 32 (ask for ticket in reverse direction) 2s. 11d. Out Chorley Wood and Chenies, back Amersham and Chesham Bois. Tea at Chesham Bois. Will all rambblers bring lunch and verify times of trains please?

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

### COUNTRY.

#### OUTDOOR.

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Ground, Ashton-under-Lyne): Mr. G. Whitehead's Mission, Sunday, August 30, at 7; every week-night at 7.30.

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

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