

The

FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

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

Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper

VOL. XLV.—No. 36

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1925

PRICE THREEPENCE

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Science and Religion.

Apologies which profess to harmonize evolution with religion take many forms, but they may all be arranged under two heads. The first seeks not to disprove the scientific case, but simply challenges its relevancy. It argues that religion and science works along parallel and distinct lines, and can therefore come into conflict only when they poach on one another's preserves. And that is untrue. An examination of religious ideas from the earliest to the latest stages shows that religion aims at giving man an understanding of himself, of the world, and of the relations existing between them. Apart from this religion would have no value for anyone. How long would man be interested in God if he was quite certain that he did nothing but merely sat up aloft seeing things go? Men believe in God because they think he does something, and the aim of religion is to show us what he does. He answers prayers, he works miracles, he operates as a force in men's lives, and in dealing with the springs of human action we must, it is argued, take into consideration the power of God on their minds. Differently expressed that is exactly what science aims at doing. It also explains to man the nature of the forces around him; it describes the mode in which things happen, and in the science of psychology it claims to lay bare the springs of human conduct. This is the ultimate justification of science, and it claims, not that there are certain parts of existence with which it is unable to deal, but that its sphere of operations covers the whole range of nature, from the nebula which flames in the heavens to the most complex of mental operations.

* * *

A Fundamental Conflict.

The conflict between religion and science does not commence when one enters on a sphere belonging to the other; there are not different spheres for them to deal with. It commences with a difference of interpretation concerning the same phenomena. In the earliest stages of human enquiry religion covers everything. The primitive mind finds an explanation of everything in terms of what we should now call supernaturalism. But bit by bit, in astronomy, in geology, in physics, the religious explanation is discredited and

displaced by the scientific one. Step by step the growth of positive knowledge forces religious teachers to admit they were wrong in their teachings and to accept the truth of what science has to tell them. The earlier teachings of religion are completely discredited. No educated person now seriously believes that the growth of crops may be hastened, or rain secured, or disease prevented by prayer. It is recognized that the basis of belief in any alteration in the processes of nature by incantation is pure ignorance. To-day it is only in the more complex and less understood departments of life that religion even pretends to have a message of its own to deliver. And the basis of that claim is that science cannot explain; in other words, it is ignorance that supplies the grounds for the religious claim. And that is true of religion from the earliest times onward. It is, then, with a different interpretation of the same phenomena that the quarrel between religion and science begins. And the choice to-day is whether we accept the discredited views of the uncivilized mind, or the explanation based upon exact and verifiable knowledge.

* * *

Design.

The other line of defence is to find within the evolutionary process some proof of God's activity, and it is evidence of the small amount of reasoning with which religious controversy is conducted that these contradictory positions are held by the same people. On the one hand science is warned off because religion is concerned with a territory to which it has no right of entry. On the other hand proof of God's activity is found within that sphere which admittedly belongs to science. So that the alleged two spheres are both separate and identical. God is to be found in the world, exactly as the savage found him—so long as no one disputes the finding. But so soon as the hypothesis of God is threatened by another and a more satisfactory one, it is suddenly discovered that religion and science have quite different spheres of operation. It can be only because stupidity has so great a traditional right in religious defences that such a glaring contradiction passes without comment. But these defenders admit that evolution has at least killed the old Paleyan form of the argument from design. For long it was seriously argued that the nature of animal organs, the way in which the eye was fashioned for seeing, the ear for hearing, etc., and the whole animal structure adapted to its environment were proofs of an intelligent design. Thousands of works were written in this vein, and those who dig into the forgotten natural theology of a century ago may well be surprised at both its range and quality. The logic was faulty and the whole argument thoroughly irrelevant, but it dazzled the unthinking with a parade of learning, and so served its purpose.

* * *

Growth versus Manufacture.

Against the pure assumption of the natural theologian, evolution came with a contradictory and a verifiable explanation. In place of the teaching that

an organ was turned out to pattern, in much the same way as a carpenter makes a table, it was shown that organs existed in all stages of development, from a beginning that hardly differentiated it from the surrounding tissue, up to their most distinctive forms. These stages could actually be traced in the development of the embryo, and the struggle for existence supplied a natural explanation of the manner in which the development of animal forms had been brought about. To all clear thinkers the Paleyan argument by which Christian defenders had sworn was dead, the era of the *Bridgewater Treatises*—those fatuous volumes which sought to dazzle readers with a parade of the wonders of nature and so gain assent to the god-theory on no better ground than an appeal to ignorance, was ended. Henceforth students were asked to contemplate, not a world that was made, but one that had grown. But the argument was put forward in another form. It was Huxley, I think, who presented the religious world with the foolish phrase "the wider teleology," and the Christian world was not slow to take advantage of the gift. It would puzzle anyone to say in what way a teleology that was "wide" was any better than a teleology that was "narrow," or to show that there could be any stronger evidence, or more convincing reasoning in favour of the evolutionary process being designed as a whole, than of its being designed in all its parts. It is much like saying that although one cannot say that the wheels, and pistons, etc., of an engine are designed, still one may believe that the engine as a whole was. But one may always trust public men in this country, when their teachings seriously threaten the life of the Churches, to say something that will help them out of their difficulties.

* * *

The "Plan of Creation."

At any rate it soon became the fashion with the more astute Christian leaders to put forward this "wider teleology" as a basis for belief in God. Thus, Archbishop Temple said, "There was something more befitting Him to whom a thousand years are as one day, and a day as a thousand years, thus to impress his will, once for all, on his creation, and provide for its countless varieties, than by special acts of creation to be continually modifying what he had previously made." And that clever spinner of fantastically feeble, pseudo-philosophic theories, Lord Balfour, is of opinion that evolution "leaves untouched all that can be inferred from the existence of the conditions which make organic evolution possible." So that while you cannot find evolution anywhere in particular, in some unindicated manner you can find it everywhere in general. All the same one is rather puzzled why it is more befitting that God should produce a comparatively perfect animal after a multitude of experiments rather than make a perfect animal at once. It looks almost as though God was not quite sure of himself, but was attempting a number of experiments to decide just what he could do. But, as a matter of fact, if God is at work behind evolution, then he is continually modifying what he had previously made. Every form of life has reached its present phase after a number of inferior forms have died out. More than that there is hardly an organ in the human body with regard to which a modern professional could not suggest an improvement. The spinal column, the intestines, the eye, the ear, none of them are without imperfections, some of them clumsy imperfections, and the medical world is kept busy trying to correct the imperfections of God's handiwork. We can excuse this kind of thing with a human designer, he has to make the best of the material and the wisdom at his disposal. But

there is no excuse for a God who made the materials, and to whose wisdom there are no limits. Instead of the "plan" causing us to marvel at its unapproachable wisdom, we are set wondering at its almost incredible folly and wastefulness. There is an unconscious sarcasm in the phrase that God's ways are not as our ways. That is a compliment to man and an indictment of deity. For when human folly is the equivalent of divine wisdom, and divine wisdom finds its parallel in human folly, no Freethinker will care to dispute the truth of the proposition.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

(To be Concluded.)

Religion at the Conference of Modern Churchmen.

THERE is a consensus of opinion among the clergy of all denominations that Christianity is in a parlous condition. The Rev. Richard Free, of St. Clement's Vicarage, Fulham, has even addressed an "Open Letter to my fellow members of the Christian Ministry," which appeared in the *Star* of August 26. He tells us that "although for the past fortnight he had been trying to solve a very knotty problem, not one of his brethren had offered him the slightest assistance." He solemnly reminds them that "for woe or woe, the Anglo-Saxon race is at this moment entering on the third and final stage of its evolution. 'Thou shalt' has already been destroyed by 'Why should I?' and 'Why should I?' must presently be succeeded by—something else." In everything Mr. Free discerns signs of degradation. He says:—

If we Christians do not quickly bestir ourselves, "Belial" may very well get the upper hand and "Christ" be sucked down into the abyss. If that be a real possibility, what are you going to do about it? Leave the lonely ploughman to plough on in his loneliness? That is certainly one way out of the difficulty, and a sure method of escape from unpopularity. For there never was a truly prophetic voice upraised which was not howled down by the world; and for us, even if we are only minor prophets, the "World" is represented by a pulpit afraid to deliver its message, by a press gagged by its patrons, and by a platform cowering under the lash of political exigencies.

If Mr. Free's descriptions are accurate nothing can be more undeniable than that Christianity is doomed to disappear, which would be the happiest of issues for mankind.

The last conference of Modern Churchmen has just been held at Oxford, and, as usual, their utterances were characterized by increasing freedom from bondage to any ancient or modern creed. We rely on the report in the *Daily Express* of August 26. In this report we are supplied with a lengthy account of the views expressed by the Rev. J. S. Bezzant, vice-president of Ripon Hall Theological College, Oxford, in what the newspaper calls "a startling address." The *Daily Express* entitles it, "'Myth' in the Bible: Churchman on Beliefs the war killed." There can be no doubt whatever of Mr. Bezzant's modernism. It is present in every sentence. He says:—

The main obstacles to religious belief in the younger generation are not the familiar difficulties of the Gospels, such as the Virgin Birth or the physical Resurrection. Young people are anxious about the much more fundamental things, which concern the action of God in the world to-day. They can find little or no acceptable evidence that he does anything. They are only certain that they disbelieve much of what the Churches' formulae appear to say or the Bible seems to imply.

What Mr. Bezzant states may be true of young people educated at colleges and universities; but of the bulk of young people who are not so highly educated, and who attend churches and chapels it is scarcely true at all. The Gospel they hear concerns itself almost exclusively with Jesus Christ—his birth of a virgin, his miracle-working life, his atoning death for the sins of the whole world, and his mighty resurrection from the dead to live forever more in the service of his people. To innumerable young people it is these dogmas that are the chief obstacles to belief. The failure to accept these as truths leads in most cases to uncertainty about God and his place in the universe. A friend of ours quite recently expressed his entire disbelief in Christianity; but when asked if he believed in God all he could say was: "Well, I think their must be something; I feel that behind the wonderful phenomena there must be some infinite force at work." In such instances God is the last to go. The war in several cases hastened his departure. A man on the verge of eighty, whom we knew very well, believed there was a God who had made and governed all things, but when he began to realize the horrible deeds done in the war for which his God, if he existed, was directly responsible, the very thought of Divinity vanished for ever from his mind. Mr. Bezzant observes:—

The nature of God, his power, love, and relations to the world and individuals are problems to which Christian theologians must pay increasing attention if they are to help those to whom these vital matters are open questions. There can be little doubt that the war finally killed even the popular belief that cataclysmic and miraculous happenings are parts of the methods of God's work. People ask, "Why did not God stop the wickedness of war?" In the Bible men saw God acting visibly, while the experience in life of young people to-day forces them to doubt if he ever did act, and if he did, to ask why he no longer does so.

In that passage Mr. Bezzant has ventured much beyond his depth. To write about the nature of God, his power, love, and relations to the world and individuals is to write about what one has absolutely no knowledge upon. Mr. Bezzant himself possesses no reliable information concerning such matters. They are, as Spencer used to say, not only unknown, but unknowable. Even the very existence of God, to say nothing of his nature and relationships, is utterly unknown, and can never be demonstrated. Mr. Bezzant has evidently shorn many beliefs about God which he once firmly held; but is he convinced that the few he now harbours are not one whit more valid than those which he so rightly relinquished?

We are now introduced to the Modernist view of the Bible. Mr. Bezzant, without a moment's hesitation, thus characterizes the Bible:—

The way in which these difficulties can be met is for Churchmen to say frankly that biblical stories of cataclysmic interference with the natural order of things were in some cases dramatic interpretations of natural events, and in others were not history at all, but myth.

To the American and British Fundamentalists such teaching is fatal heresy. The late Mr. William Jennings Bryan was a Fundamentalist hero who had the courage to say: "I am satisfied by no evidence that I have found that would justify me in accepting the opinions of these men against what I believe to be the inspired Word of God." Losing patience with counsel, Clarence Darrow, who examined him, he replied in a temper: "I believe the Bible as it is, and I do not permit you to put your language in the place of the language of the Almighty. You read the Bible and ask me questions, and I will answer them. I will not answer your questions in your

language." To Bryan the Bible was God's Book, and so it is to millions of people in all European countries. And yet we know full well that originally it was not so regarded. Mr. Bezzant is much nearer the truth about it than Bryan, but not nearly so consistent. Bryan accepted the whole book, but vice-president Bezzant picks and chooses, though he probably rejects more than he accepts. Take the following as the final specimen:—

The use of the term "omnipotent" should be dropped. It is a relic of the time when God was chiefly useful for military purposes. Objection can also be taken to the term "omnipresence." It suggests God as everywhere present, like a finely diffused gas or ether, and lends itself too readily to Pantheism of the lower kind. The conception of God as love, and of his Fatherhood has been almost obscured by the crude and dreadful doctrine of everlasting punishment and by the fact that most of the popular metaphores of God have their origin in that type of civilization to which Europe has been too long familiar.

Curiously enough, Mr. Bezzant's acceptance and rejection of biblical passages are determined by his own views of Nature and Supernature. Dramatic interpretations are common to such books as the Bible, and they generally contain stories which are not history but myth. The conception of God as love is obscured by many passages in the Bible itself, for a God who is all love is a thoroughly impossible being, and the passages, if any there be, which so represent him, are false to all the facts of history. There is no trace anywhere of the active existence of such a being.

Modernism is in many respects more reasonable than Anglo-Catholicism, but neither is a religion of brotherly love. Do they not continually curse each other in the name of the God of love? Neither of them is true to the Thirty-Nine Articles which both have officially signed. Modernism is gaining in numbers, but the sense of consistency will eventually drive them to Secularism. Such is the only destination towards which they are slowly tending.

J. T. LLOYD.

Carlyle's "Blackguard."

Age cannot wither nor custom stale
His infinite variety. —Shakespeare.

If all cannot live on the Piazza, everyone may feel the sun.—Italian Proverb.

HEINRICH HEINE is one of those writers who are bound to be misunderstood. The puritanical Carlyle called him a "blackguard." Thackeray, on the other hand, admitted his "great genius"; and Matthew Arnold, after damning him with faint praise, finally hailed him as the mouthpiece of his stormy generation. These varying estimates are typical of the general attitude. Heine kindled enthusiasm or roused repulsion wherever he was read. If we would seek a comparison, we may find it in Voltaire. Both men championed Liberty, produced deep effects on their generations, and left immortal legacies to posterity. The writings of both ring with the challenge of Freedom, and hurl defiance at "the lie at the lips of the priest."

Heine's rare genius almost defies analysis. He is, and must ever remain, a problem. Multifarious, luminous, brilliant, he is like a diamond giving light from a hundred facets. To many he appears as a youthful champion tilting against the enemies of Democracy; to others he seems Anti-Christ, the very embodiment of Anarchy. It seems well nigh impossible to reach the roots of the man's nature. He is

a bundle of contradictions. A Jew who despised money; a convert without zeal; a model of resignation, and yet no Stoic; a Parisian whose heart was in Germany; a poet living amid the sternest conditions of prose; a comedian whose life was a tragedy "too deep for tears." Yet in spite of all these contradictory traits in his character, Heine is more truly representative of his time than the serene Goethe, for he gathers in one vivid personality all those influences of his century which are the live forces to-day.

Heine was born at a great crisis in European history. The long and terrible period during which the vampires of Church and State had sucked away the life-blood of the world was ending rapidly, and before his tenth year little Heine had lived through, and seen, great events. It was the day of Napoleon, and, as Heine puts it, "all boundaries were dislocated." As a boy, he found it hard to learn Latin declensions, which he was sure the Romans never did, "for if they had first to learn Latin grammar, they never would have had time to conquer the world." Young Harry was so troubled that he broke into heterodox prayer: "O thou poor, once-persecuted god, do help me, if possible, to keep the irregular verbs in my head."

One memorable day the impressionable boy saw Napoleon ride through Dusseldorf on his famous white horse, and he never lost the glamour cast over him by the great soldier. Republican as he afterwards became, Heine always had a tender place in his heart for the Emperor. Nor is this to be wondered at, for the Code Napoleon, to the proud but persecuted Jewish race in particular, was a charter of freedom from the ghastly ghettos of the Middle Ages to the rights of citizens, and the Jews justly hailed the great commander on that account as their deliverer and protector.

A precocious child, Heine loved reading, and his juvenile instincts were very keen. His favourite authors were brave old Cervantes and witty Jonathan Swift, and he revelled in the fascinating pages of *Don Quixote* and *Gulliver's Travels*. At the age of seventeen a rich uncle at Hamburg tried in vain to induce him to choose a business career, but it was useless. The young poet, full of idealism, regarded money-making as a thing of no moment. But he was reminded that even poets have to eat bread, and he condescended to study law, and fell under the influence of Hegel. Years afterwards, when he had forgotten all his law, he referred, caustically, to this period as that in which he "herded swine with the Hegelians."

Characteristically, he mixed poetry with his law studies, and wrote verse. With the appearance of his first volume he began to discern his real vocation. He still talked of becoming a lawyer, but his thoughts were all for other things than "wise saws and modern instances." For example, he wrote:—

Red life boils in my veins. Every woman is to me
the gift of a world. I hear a thousand nightingales.
I could eat all the elephants of Hindustan, and pick
my teeth with the spire of Strasburg Cathedral. Life
is the greatest of blessings.

His energies were devoted to writing, and not to pleading. Instead of cultivating his clients he wrote his *Travel Pictures*, a book so full of word magic that it showed Heine to be as great an artist in prose as in verse. Its irony was so mordant, so disrespectful, that it was at once placed on the Index Expurgatorius, and thus achieved a wider publicity. Indeed, as a writer, Heine never elected to dwell beside the still waters. To think of his career is to think of alarms and excursions, of church calling unto conventicle, of pamphlet answering pamphlet, of re-

criminations and vituperations manifold, and all the joys of literary battle. With all his love of fighting his enthusiasm burns for noble ends. The love of liberty shines through the mist of his dreams. And let a man love Freedom and live long enough, and there is no doubt with whom his place must be in the end.

In *The Romantic School* he poured vitriol over the literary chiefs of reaction in their tenderest spot. He compared their assumption of mediævalism to the hallucinations of Charenton, the Bedlam of Paris. This is how he ridicules Ludwig Tieck:—

He drank so deeply of the mediæval folk-tale
ballads that he became almost a child again, and
dropped into that juvenile lisp which it cost
Mdm. de Stael so much effort to admire.

It was not roses all the way. There came the grey,
sad days in which the poet could no longer:—

Sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Nœra's hair.

But when the bad days arrived he never complained. For seven long years prior to his death he lay bent and solitary on a "mattress grave," his back bent, his legs paralysed, his hands powerless, his sight unailing. His ungrudging nature found excuses for his friends' desertion of his sick-chamber in the reflection that he was "unconsciously long a-dying." As Matthew Arnold sings in his fine dirge on his brother-poet:—

Oh! not little, where pain
Is most quelling, and man
Easily quelled, and the fine
Temper of genius so soon
Thrills at each smart, is the praise
Not to have yielded to pain.

"God's satire weighs heavily upon me," said Heine:—

The Great Author of the Universe, the Aristophanes of Heaven, was bent on demonstrating with crushing force to me, the little earthly so-called German Aristophanes, how my weightiest sarcasms are only pitiful attempts at jesting in comparison with His, and how miserably I am beneath Him in humour, in colossal mockery.

The untameable humourist kept his most wonderful jest for the last. "God will forgive me," he said, "it is his trade."

Fundamentally, Heine was a Freethinker, and he hated Priestcraft with every drop of his blood. He never wearied of pouring scorn on the "molly-coddle homœopathic soul-doctors, who pour the thousandth part of a pint of reason into a gallon of morals, and send people to sleep with it on Sundays." He loathed that "abortion called State Religion, that monster born of the intrigue between temporal and spiritual power." He was not "over-partial to anthropomorphism." The bolts of his unerring irony are often directed towards the most sacred characters in the Christian mythology. In an oft-quoted passage he says that God is dying, and, in a daring figure of speech, suggests the administration to him of the last sacraments of the Church. In the lambent flames of his sardonic humour he searched everything that the Christian counts dearest. Writing of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, he says that the philosopher "has stormed heaven, and put the whole garrison to the edge of the sword." Even the idea of immortality did not escape his sharp satire. He suggests, mockingly, that the notion of living for ever must have first occurred to some young lover in the arms of his mistress, or to some worthy citizen drinking his beer in the cool of a summer evening.

As a poet, Heine's fame has attained to that height in which praise has become superfluous; but in the

character of iconoclast he has a claim on the attention of all Freethinkers. Heine himself said he knew not if he were worthy of a laurel-wreath, but, he added proudly, "lay on my coffin a sword, for I was a brave soldier in the war of the Liberation of Humanity." No one will deny the laurel-wreath, and, assuredly, to Heinrich Heine belongs the sword of a valiant soldier of Liberty.

MIMNERMUS.

The Arch Enemy of Joy.

Joy and laughter may be accepted as eminent signs of abundant life. The philosopher who cannot laugh will never attain the real peak of intellect. A sense of joy must thrill the spirit of every artist in poetry, music, drama, architecture, painting, sculpture, and, I will add, gardening and costume. Most people, I suppose, will agree that human life would be a very drab affair without the lovely and enchanting things (not forgetting philosophy) which I have just named. Hence an enemy of joy and laughter is an enemy of mankind. Of enemies of mankind, the number is unfortunately large; it includes, for example, cancer, insanity, and pessimism. But, on turning the pages of Mr. Sidney Dark's *English Child's Book of the Church*,¹ I learned the name of an enemy who, in some history-books, is classed as one of our best friends—namely, Puritanism. In the Preface, Mr. Dark intimates that he will not hesitate to put black stuff over the sacred images of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Puritans. Read his staggering and shocking words:—

Half the ills of the modern world are, I believe, due to Puritanism, and if I can instil into the modern child a wholesome hatred of the arch-enemy of joy and laughter and real religion, I shall, from my point of view, certainly not have written in vain.

It is, indeed, a long time since I escaped from the most chilly and uncomfortable system of faith which my teachers used to call the Evangelical Truth. When I was about seventeen or eighteen years of age, I had access to a library of "Low-Church" volumes on Sin, Atonement, Forgiveness, Sanctification, Conversion, Hell, and other such material for feasts of the soul. At that time I earnestly believed that the solemn gentlemen who composed these works were the masters of wisdom, and the lamps in a gloomy world. They were Puritans. They were Christians. They crowned Jesus Lord of All. They washed themselves in the blood of the Lamb. They groaned over the damnation of the heathen. They cursed the theatre, and all things "worldly." And, for some years I accepted, with reverential bowed head, the most unpleasant verdicts which they passed on human history and human nature. In the period, 1876-1880, I wrestled my way out of this horrible vault, and, as I emerged into the sunlight, I seemed to hear the noisome dead men's bones of Puritanism shouting after me, "Infidel!" I can now see, from Mr. Dark's comments, that I might justly have turned back a moment, to cry down into the Puritan shade: "Unhappy lost souls! you know not how to laugh."

Mr. Dark fulfils—nobly fulfils—the promise of his Preface. After he has told the children about Christ and the Apostles, Constantine, Anglo-Saxons, Danes, Crusaders, and the Reformation, he presents several sad chapters in which we behold the ominous figures of the Puritans of the days of Queen Elizabeth, the Stuart Kings, and Cromwell. He reveals facts that

were never disclosed to me when I was taught English "history," such as, for instance, that Queen Elizabeth went to Mass after coronation; and that she "disliked the Puritans far more than she disliked the Roman Catholics." But Mr. Dark regrets to tell the children that "things happen in a funny way in this world, and when Queen Elizabeth died without any children, she was followed on the throne by the son of Mary, Queen of Scots, whom she had put to death." This son, James, "was not a good man"; but his son, Charles, was "one of the best and most pious kings who ever sat on the English throne." Mr. Dark here heads a chapter: "King Charles the Martyr," and he makes the children shudder by passing dreadful groups of Puritans over his historical stage—the stage on which a Puritan axe took off the royal martyr's head.

Of the "Reformers," whom I was trained to all but worship, Mr. Dark furnishes dismal revelations. Take the hero, Martin Luther:—

Luther was a very bitter enemy of the poor in Germany. When they tried to obtain more food and better houses for themselves and their children he urged that they should be cruelly punished. But when a great lord did a very wicked thing, Luther said that it did not matter at all.

And I used to imagine that, when he nailed his Protestant theses to a church-door, he was brother to the angels.²

Next, consider Calvin, in whose honour to this very day in 1925, Welsh chapels boast the title of Calvinist, and who was so perfectly sure of his own orthodoxy that he wrote a book (a priggish, bigoted, and repulsive book) on the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*:—

Calvin lived for some time in the Swiss city of Geneva. There he ruled the people very harshly, and burned people who opposed his will.....Calvinism is the most dreadful religion that the world has ever known. It teaches that nearly all men and women born in the world are intended by God to spend eternity in torment.

The English child is being conducted on a singular tour among the creeds! And here is a third portraiture—that of Knox: "John Knox, the Scotsman, was a bitter, hard-hearted man, who was rude to women, and narrow-minded, and altogether nasty."

I have often visited Glasgow, and looked up with awe at the lofty column on which Knox's monument is fixed. But Sidney Dark has shown me that figure in a new and terrible light—it is "altogether nasty." And if, as the children are told in this frank volume, "the Calvinists hated everything that was beautiful," the delightful scene that occurred in 1660 will seem truly logical:—

When Cromwell died, hundreds of the people found their courage again. They rebelled against the tyranny of the Puritans, and they sent to Holland for King Charles's son to come back to England and to reign over the country. King Charles II., as he was called, arrived at Dover in 1660, and bonfires were lighted all over the country, and men and women sang and danced, happy in the thought that the gloomy Puritans who had made their lives so unhappy for so many years had now lost their power.

By this time the child-readers of Mr. Dark's sweet story may wonder how the Christian Church can turn out a great success when a gracious Catholic like Sidney Dark is obliged to say such cutting things about his brethren in Christ. He admits the case is sad:—

Our Lord's Church is unfortunately broken into three parts.....the great Roman Church, of which

¹ Published by Society of SS. Peter and Paul, Westminster, 104 pp. (1925).

² The student who would like a carefully-told story of social conditions in Germany in Luther's century will find ample material in Belfort Bax's *Peasants' War in Germany*.

we must always think with love and admiration..... the Eastern Orthodox Church, to which the Christians belong in Russia and Greece, and the countries in the Balkan Mountains, and in Asia Minor..... then there is our own English Church.....and there are other Christians who love Our Lord and try to obey him, and yet remain outside his Church. Every day we must say our prayers that they will be led to understand, and that all these parts of the body of Our Lord will soon be joined together and will work to carry out his great plan for the salvation of the world.³

Children learn to-day a vast deal more geography than their grandparents did, and, happily, such geography embraces at least elementary glimpses of non-Christian faiths. An intelligent child may be prompted to ask how long it will take this broken Church to glue itself together, and to instruct the Jews, Moslems, Confucians, Buddhists, Taoists, Hindus, Christian Scientists, and Unitarians. It is not simply a question of slow development, but of reasonable probability. For example, an intelligent child who is taken to the great Experimental Farm at Rothamsted, Herts, and gets a general idea of scientific cultivation, can, without difficulty, see the likelihood of scientific agriculture one day extending over the globe. He will, at the same time, perceive that the process will take a very long time. But when he is assured that the Hindus and Moslems, and the rest, will at a future date all attend Mass, and believe the Apostles' Creed, and expect "Our Lord" to come from Heaven, the process may appear to him—with all respect to Mr. Dark—as not naturally following from the present facts. The Society of SS. Peter and Paul, which prints this educational manual, has faith in Almighty God; yet, according to this book, God seems to work at no faster rate than medical science, or a political party aiming at some reform in suffrage or economics, or the League of Nations seeking to encircle all peoples on earth. It may be true, as Mr. Dark candidly indicates, that some so-called Christians, like Glasgow's hero, John Knox, are "altogether nasty," and put obstacles in the path of progress. But it is our poor human race that suffers martyrdoms owing to the slow pace at which things move, and—again with all respect to Mr. Dark—we have a right to complain.

F. J. GOULD.

"Back to Jesus."

II.

HIS PRESS AGENTS.

OUR newspapers and journals have nearly always fought shy of even any reference to anti-Jesus literature. If they do refer to such works, it is only to give more prominence to "apologetic" replies from famous Christian divines. But most editors are ready to fill columns of gush about Jesus, no matter from what standpoint, so long as it is unstinted eulogy. I can understand Christians ranting in this way, however. Most of them seriously believe what they say. Just as very few Socialists have ever read Marx—I mean the genuine editions as revised by Marx himself—so few ordinary Christians have really ever read the Gospels, even in the Authorised Version. Over and over again I was told I was a liar when I quoted the actual words of Jesus from the Gospels (I hope to give Jesus lovers later on some of these quotations)

³ It may be remarked that in Mr. Dark's book the divine pronouns "he," "his," etc., are not printed with the capital H; and, indeed, he merely follows the good method of the ordinary English Bible. It is a flunkey habit to use the big H.

and it was only a comparison of various editions which made my opponents reluctantly agree that he did say what I quoted; but naturally these were "the difficult sayings" which obviously contained some esoteric meaning. But go to our newspaper writers and critics. You can hardly pick up a journal or a magazine or a daily paper without finding someone appealing to Jesus in some way as the greatest, the most wonderful, the most extraordinary marvel in everything that ever was thought or written about, that ever was born.

For example, I picked up quite by accident one of the latest numbers of the *Review of Reviews* and the June number of the *American Forum*. In the former will be found a letter entitled, "Is the Church of England Christian?" written by Mr. E. E. Piercy, and it is a typical specimen of the kind of thing Christians seem to have no difficulty in getting into journals and papers all over the kingdom. "Lay it on with a trowel" is their motto. Boost up Jesus in which ever way the wind blows and you can always find a sympathetic editor. Mr. Piercy tells us that "the essential teachings of Christ are too solidly founded to be under any danger from honest enquiry." What the "essential teachings" really are in the exact words of Jesus, Mr. Piercy barely tells us. One gets this sort of thing: "He was not surely 'the Way, the Truth, and the Life' for Himself alone; but He urged His disciples to drink His cup, to exercise His powers (aye, and greater than His) to live in remembrance of Him." What all this balderdash really means it would be difficult to even guess. Local preachers turn it out by the yard as well as those gentle Roman Catholic ladies who, in shrill voices, at the corner of the street, insist that only *their* particular Church has the key to the understanding of the hidden mysteries of the Word of God. But Mr. Piercy goes further. He says: "It would almost be possible to furnish scientific justification for the teachings of Jesus"—though he takes good care to give no names—"occasionally, in fact, it is left to science to uphold doctrines which the Church as a whole has long since ceased to understand or preach." And what do you think one of these doctrines (by implication) is? "In spite of the storms it aroused and still occasionally arouses, among Church people, the *conception of evolution is essentially Christian.*" (Italics mine.) What do you think of that? Jesus, in fact, was an *evolutionist*, and it will not be long before he is acclaimed as the greatest Evolutionist the world has ever seen. He must have showed Lamarck, Weismann, and Darwin the way. Could anything be clearer? And Mr. Piercy concludes by saying: "The religion of Jesus is on the forward swirl of the greatest high tide since the apostles." The only thing indeed that Mr. Piercy has regretably omitted is to tell us what exactly is the "religion" of Jesus in Jesus's own words; and as, no doubt, he would tell me to go to the New Testament for that, I shall have the greatest pleasure in doing so and asking his opinion, later on.

In the *American Forum* there is an article by Mr. Sherwood Eddy discussing Pacifism. Mr. Eddy had served in the late war, and had written a pamphlet "justifying America's entrance into the war." Now, after some years of mature reflection, the question of Jesus and war has begun to trouble him. "Was the Sermon on the Mount, the teaching and example of Jesus Christ, applicable to a concrete world situation, or was it mere sentimental idealism?" It is extraordinary how editors will make a rush for articles such as this. Jesus, the Sermon on the Mount, and war, will bring in a fat fee any time, so long as in *war time* Jesus is turned out fully armed

as the God of Battles, and in *peace time*, he appears in beautifully laundered white raiment, with a halo, as the Prince of Peace. Anyway, you need have no fear about the orthodoxy of Mr. Eddy. "War is un-Christian. It is the antithesis of everything for which Jesus stood. The essence of Jesus's message was love; the dominant motive of war is hate," and so on again, *ad lib.* I suppose it would be useless to insist with a man of Mr. Eddy's Christ-like ideas that neither Jesus nor his example ever stopped a single war. The horde of German military ruffians in 1914 were to a man thoroughly Christian and religious, and could have justified, and, indeed, did justify, all they did from the Bible. The foulness and bestiality of war has been the subject of dozens of works from Freethinkers, and their ideas, coupled with their *facts*, are gaining the thoughtful minds in the world. Not what Jesus said or meant two thousand years ago will ever influence mankind, but the full story of the tragedies and the horrors of the battlefields incessantly dinned into the ears of men and women will make them loathe the foul thing and have no more of it.

Yet in pictures and stories and ethical articles everywhere will be found the appeal to stop war, not in the name of the blind and disabled heroes of the battlefield, not in the millions killed under the most horrible conditions of carnage, not in the eternal suffering of the widows and the children, not in the hopeless uselessness of war—but in the sacred name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace!

It is a funny world.

H. CUTNER.

Acid Drops.

We are not aware whether an article on the Dayton question by Mr. Lloyd George has appeared in England. If so it escaped our notice. But we are indebted to one of our readers who has sent us a copy of the *Family Herald* and *Montreal Star* for a sight of it. Mr. Lloyd George gives his article the title of "Darwin or Moses," which is an exact enough summing up of the situation, but his dealing with it is anything but exact. To begin with he says there is no question here whether the results of science shall be taught in the schools. "No county council worries about Darwin." Well, that is not true. We refer Mr. Lloyd George to the Bootle case, and he will see that at least one county council has bothered very much about setting evolution above the Bible story of creation. The Dayton people did not say that some kind of science should not be taught in the schools; they said that no science which deliberately ran counter to the Bible should be taught—particularly if it was so taught that the children understood it opposed the Biblical teaching. Our councils are, in this respect, no more enlightened than Dayton. And, as we cannot get the information from anyone else, perhaps Mr. Lloyd George will inform us of a Council in England that will tolerate a teacher telling his pupils all about the evolutionary account of the origin of man, and dismissing the Bible story as mere mythology. We differ from Dayton only in a larger measure of religious humbug.

Mr. Lloyd George says that our trouble in the school was "ethical and not theological." And that is simply not true. The whole trouble was theological. The Episcopalians wanted their special brand of theology teaching, and the Nonconformists opposed it. And as they despaired of the Government teaching *their* religion at the public expense, they accidently became the champions of straightforward principle and advocated a policy of complete Secular education on the ground that it was not the function of the State to teach religion. And then someone suggested that as neither Episcopalians nor Nonconformists looked like getting all their

own way, and if they persisted it looked also as if Secular education would be established in the schools, it might be better if the two Christian bodies agreed upon certain religious teachings to be given in the schools, leaving it to the churches to rub in a more definite theology on their own account.

That, as we know, was done. The people who were championing a principle, when it thought a rival Christian sect was about to benefit, promptly forgot all about it when they saw a chance of making a profit on their own account. It became the duty of the State to see that the children got some kind of Christian instruction, and at the public expense. Mr. Lloyd George says the Nonconformists thought it better to have secular education at once than to tax people belonging to all sorts of religions for teaching a religion they did not agree with. But that is exactly what the present system does. Jews, and Freethinkers, and Buddhists, and all non-Christians are taxed to pay for a religion they do not believe in. And the people who see it is quite wrong to tax them to pay for a form of Christianity they do not accept, find it quite right to tax them for teaching a form of religion with which Nonconformists happen to agree. The Episcopalians were standing in defence of a wrong principle. The Nonconformists forsook principle altogether. After that, the statement that Christianity is taught in our schools "without sectarian bias" is a characteristic piece of Christian duplicity. Christianity itself is a sect. It represents only a part of the people. That is a lesson we should not let Christians forget.

We are waiting for the published report of the British Association addresses to see if there is anything in them which calls for special notice in these columns. Newspaper reports are too scrappy nowadays for one to quite understand what these speakers really mean. One paper does indeed note that the addresses nowadays do not lend themselves to newspaper headings, which is a way of confessing that what the press requires is scare headlines which will pander to the kind who have no real interest in scientific matters, but who are quite ready to be amused if the information given can be stated in a few lines. Even the *Times*, which once upon a time would have given a full report of the president's speech, cuts it down to the usual summary, and picks out the sensational, rather than the informative, portions.

But we note that Professor Parkes, in his address to the Geological section, has thrown out the usual sop to theism. He is reported as saying: "I believe that the inconceivably long gradient that has ever led upward to the mentality of man has not been traced without design, and I see no reason why that gradient should terminate." He is also credited with saying that the study of geology lends a basis to theism. We are rather curious as to what are the geological phenomena that point to design. Professor Parkes seems to find it in the fact that the trend of things is "upward," which rather shows that the Professor of Geology is a little out of his depth, and however exact his knowledge of geologic *facts* may be, there is room here for a little sounder thinking. For "upward" and "downward" are not things that we find in nature, they are mere arbitrary standards of measurement we create for our own convenience. If we can imagine a Dinosaur giving his opinion on the trend of geology we imagine he would find it anything but "upward." Moreover, if the general testimony of science can be trusted, one day, however remote the time, the whole series of geological changes will come to an end, and what then becomes of the upward trend? Measured in terms of the ultimate fate of the earth and its inhabitants, and if we are to believe in design, we are warranted in saying that the design illustrated is the extinction of all life. Of course, it is always possible that Professor Parkes did not mean what he is credited with meaning, and the reporter just put in as much as he understood. But it is characteristic of the press that the more foolish portion of the speech should have been selected for favourable notice.

Last Sunday, Sir Oliver Lodge preached to a Southampton congregation and made an excursion into ways and byways of science in which he has little experience. It is more a matter for tears than laughter, as a matter of fact, and especially as we hold the Professor in the greatest credit, when he is dealing with those things in which he is an undoubted authority. We are dependent for our information on the newspaper report, and, taking that as authentic, we must confess that certain statements of Sir Oliver Lodge are unworthy of his position and liable to mislead, or at least to confuse, his hearers. "Nothing went out of existence," he is reported to have said. That needs careful explanation scientifically. It is an axiom of physics that "matter" is eternal, but we all know that matter is subject to change of conditions. If any should say, as some of the congregation, being without scientific training or knowledge, might say: Well, if everything that ever existed still exists, then all the insects and vermin, all the plants and vegetables, all the fishes and animals, as well as all the human species are somewhere now, and what about the governments, councils, engines of war, and peace, the tools which man has made and used, the candles, which have been consumed, the chairs and tables which have served their purpose and been turned into firekindlers and bonfires? All these are *things* which we know do not exist for ever. Further, if man exists for ever, why not other animals? If animals, why not vegetables? If vegetables, why not minerals? and if these, why not vermin?

The statement, one sees, is absurd as it stands; it requires some extensive explanation, and I conceive that any explanation to such a statement merely explains it away. Just as every theological definition destroys some belief. For instance, immediately one attempts to define God, destruction sets in, and such an existence is proved impossible. But Sir Oliver means that he believes man to be composed of matter and spirit. This we know, because he has said so. He has apparently shed the teaching of the churches that man has also a soul, whatever that may be. He knows well that the bodily life of a man is merely a condition of matter, and that the conditions depend upon environment. He does not believe that the bodies of mankind will exist for ever, but he thinks that the "spirit," whatever that is, will do so. He does not know what spirit is, but he thinks he has evidence that his son, who is dead in body, still exists in, or as, a spirit. Moreover that spirits can, and do, communicate with persons who still live in the body.

This belief, in itself, is not theological. That is to say, it is independent of a belief in a God or Gods, and yet, in the person of Sir Oliver, it is used by the preachers of theology to bolster up their creeds, and he is doing a distinct dis-service to the world of science in accepting an invitation to preach to the Congregationalists as though he accepted their dogmas. Worse even than that, too, is his statements in the pulpit which lead his hearers to think that he is one of them. For he is not. In our opinion it would be better for the scientists to boycott all religious gatherings. At the best, a belief is merely a guess and when any section of persons force upon those who cannot accept their imaginings the opinions they hold, there is great harm in giving this section the slightest support. When we read of the frightful results of the beliefs in the past, and when we know that the same feeling permeates the supporters of the Christian creed at the present day, as shown by the way they act towards Freethinkers when a chance occurs, it surely behoves one who disagrees with them on so many points to keep away from their conventicles.

There is trouble again with Bishop Barnes. That this should be so is significant as to where the mass of Christian believers in this country really stand. For it will be remembered that Bishop Barnes' chief claim to notoriety is that he does not accept the Bible story of creation, and does profess a belief in evolution. And our British Daytonites cannot stand that. Now we see there is some talk of Birmingham being relieved of its Bishop

by his being a well-paid Deanery in Westminster Abbey. It is said that this will give him ample opportunities for study, which is another way of saying that it will keep him a little less before the public, and less likely to offend Christians than where he is. But the outcry against him for not believing in the mythology of the Bible is worth noting by those who think the Christians in this country are so much ahead of those of Tennessee. We agree with those who say that if the Bishop does not believe in the Bible he ought not to hold office in the Church, but one has quite given up hope of seeing that standard of intellectual honesty practised by the Christian clergy.

The Bishop's latest outburst is in connection with the Sacrament. Bishop Barnes objects to the "magical element" which is believed in by so many Christians, and insists that the operation of the Sacrament is of a psychological nature. But it is quite certain that this is not what the Christian Church has always meant by the taking of the Sacrament. And it is also certain that magic does lie at the base of the practice. God eating is one of the most primitive of practices in the history of religion, and it was by eating the God that his devotees hoped to share in his nature. And that again connects with the practice of religious cannibalism in general, when, by partaking of the flesh of a man, it was believed one would partake of the qualities for which he was admired. Readers of Mr. Lloyd's pamphlet on *God-eating* will be quite conversant with this, and in *A Short History of Christian Theophagy*, by Dr. Preserved Smith, will be found a full and instructive account of the whole matter. It was the actual body and blood of Christ which the primitive Christians believed they were eating, and the bread and wine became such in virtue of the magic of the priest.

Bishop Barnes must know this quite as well as we do, and it is quite beside the point to sit down and see what other meaning can be read into it. To the honest interpreter of religious beliefs and practices the question should be, not what can we make a doctrine mean, but what actually did it mean to those who created it and practised it. If religious cannibalism is stupid and brutal, the straightforward course is to give it up and have done with it. To maintain institutions because it is possible to give them an artificial meaning which they never did bear, and cannot honestly bear, is a practice of which anyone would be ashamed in any other connection than that of religion.

Those who doubt the first-rate intelligence of Christian leaders would do well to notice the Dean of Ripon. This gentleman decided that the Lord should be reminded of some church in the Diocese every day for a month. So every day prayers are offered in Ripon Cathedral for a different church. We can quite understand that a great many of the Churches could do with a little help—whether it came from heaven or the other place, but we are quite lost at the colossal intellect that could work out a scheme of this kind, publish it to the world, and then rest content that something really worthy of note had been accomplished. So when anyone doubts the ability of Churchmen, let them think of the Dean of Ripon, and be silent.

"Artifex," in the *Manchester Guardian*, deals with the question of evolution and religion in the light of the Dayton case. He says:—

Grant the oneness of man with the universe, and accept the theory of evolution and all that it carries with it, and you are sooner or later forced to accept the thesis that the entire universe is in some sense corrupt, fallen from what it is meant to be.

The latter part of this is just nonsense. The only reason why "Artifex" must believe the universe is corrupt, and falls short of what it is intended to be, is because, being a clergyman, he must believe that it was created by a God who intended it to be perfect. And having embraced a quite unjustifiable belief, he must next assume an absurdity so that his belief may not be too obviously contradicted by the facts.

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.

E. ANDERSON.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

M. BARNARD.—Sorry we have to hold over your letter till next issue. Crowded out this week.

J. HUTCHINSON.—There was no discussion of either Socialism or Capitalism in Mr. Cutner's article, but a mere expression of his own personal view, which readers would accept at its proper value. And, as you say, it was quite as likely that the Bradlaugh-Bax discussion sent others to Socialism. At any rate we are not concerned with the special merits of either form of economics in these columns.

J. BREESE.—We are glad to see so much outspokenness in the newspaper you send. It may be taken as an example of the effectiveness of Freethought work in general. Pleased you like the articles on evolution. Mr. Cohen hopes to have his pamphlet ready by the end of the month on the subject.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

We think most of our readers will be glad to see the report, printed in another column, of the examination of W. J. Bryan by Mr. Darrow. It contains a very good account of what all Christians once believed, and what most Christians still believe. The altered attitude of the "advanced" Christians may also be taken as some measure of the work done by Freethought during the past sixty or seventy years. It is only a century ago since men and women in this country were being sent to prison for attacking the beliefs which the Fundamentalists now champion and Modernists disown.

May we take this opportunity of suggesting to those who are interested in increasing the circulation of the *Freethinker* that it would be well to buy an extra copy or two of this week's issue and place it in likely quarters? A taste of the paper often means getting a regular reader.

"Bradlaugh Sunday" this year falls on September 27. It has been the custom of late to keep the memory of the great Atheist leader green by means of demonstrations and lectures dealing with his life and work. This will be the case this year with many Branches of the N.S.S. in both London and the provinces, and we should like to see it done by all. Christians do their best to bury the names and work of avowed Freethinkers, and that should serve as a stimulus to us to see that their aim is defeated.

With reference to the suggested formation of social and athletic circles among Freethinkers, Mr. J. A. Rudham writes suggesting the calling of a meeting of London Freethinkers for the purpose of starting off with a musical section, which would aim at forming a small orchestra, and, if possible, a male voice choir. The meeting could also discuss the formation of a cricket section, and other forms of sport. There used to be a cricket club in connection with the old Camberwell Branch, and it was, we believe, very successful. Mr. Rudham's suggestion is a practical one, and if others support it, a meeting could be easily arranged. Perhaps some of the London members will write us on the matter, and we will then see about getting them together.

We are glad to learn from Leeds that Mr. Whitehead's "Mission" there was very successful. There were good meetings there during the whole of the time, a good sale of literature, and a number of new members made. There were many requests for a return visit. To-day (September 6) a meeting is being arranged at 19 Lowerhead Row, to consider the future work of the Branch, and it is hoped that all interested will make a special effort to attend. The Secretary is Mrs. Newell, 13 Oxford Row, Leeds.

Mr. J. T. Lloyd has not been in the best of health lately, but his many friends and admirers will be glad to learn that he is reaping much benefit from a short holiday he is taking at Ramsgate. He writes that while his progress towards "vigorous health" is slow, he is feeling considerably better for the change. We are delighted with the news, and if he will take our advice he will remain where he is while the fine weather lasts. Freethought has suffered enough from his ceasing platform work; it wants the services of his pen as long as is possible.

The Birmingham Branch, N.S.S., takes its annual excursion to-day, September 6. It will take the form of a charabanc run of ninety miles to Edge Hill, and as there are good prospects of the weather taking a turn for the better, the trip should be an enjoyable one. The charabanc will leave Old Square at 10.30, and tickets will be 8s. 6d., each, including tea.

"Fundamentalism" and Evolution.

So much attention has been given to the Dayton case that we believe our readers will be interested in seeing the larger part of the cross-examination through which Mr. Darrow, the lawyer for the defence, put Mr. W. J. Bryan, the champion of the anti-evolutionary party.

Q.—You have given considerable study to the Bible, haven't you, Mr. Bryan? A.—Yes, sir, I have tried to.

Q.—Then you have made a general study of it? A.—Yes, I have; I have studied the Bible for about fifty years, or some time more than that. But, of course, I have studied it more as I have become older than when I was but a boy.

Q.—Do you claim that everything in the Bible should be literally interpreted? A.—I believe everything in the Bible should be accepted as it is given there; some of the Bible is given illustratively. For instance: "Ye are the salt of the earth." I would not insist that man was actually salt, or that he had flesh of salt, but it is used in the sense of salt as saving God's people.

Q.—But when you read that Jonah swallowed the whale—or that the whale swallowed Jonah, excuse me, please—how do you literally interpret that? A.—When I read that a big fish swallowed Jonah—it does not say whale.

Q.—Doesn't it? Are you sure? A.—That is my recollection of it, a big fish; and I believe it; and I believe in a God who can make a whale and can make a man, and make both do what He pleases.

Q.—Now, you say, the big fish swallowed Jonah, and he remained how long—three days—and then he spewed

him up on the land. You believe that the big fish was made to swallow Jonah? A.—I am not prepared to say that; the Bible merely says it was done.

Q.—The Bible says Joshua commanded the sun to stand still for the purpose of lengthening the day, doesn't it, and you believe it? A.—I do.

Q.—Do you believe at that time the entire sun went around the earth? A.—No, I believe that the earth goes around the sun.

Q.—Do you believe that the men who wrote it thought that the day could be lengthened or that the sun could be stopped? A.—I don't know what they thought.

Q.—You don't know? A.—I think they wrote the fact without expressing their own thoughts.

Q.—Have you an opinion as to whether—whoever wrote the book. I believe it is Joshua—the Book of Joshua—thought the sun went around the earth or not? A.—I believe that he was inspired.

Q.—Can you answer my question? A.—When you let me finish the statement. I believe that the Bible is inspired, and an inspired author, whether one who wrote as he was directed to write, understood the things he was writing about, I don't know.

Q.—You believe the story of the flood to be a literal interpretation? When was that flood? A.—I wouldn't attempt to fix the date. The date is fixed, as suggested this morning.

Further questioning developed Mr. Bryan's belief that the flood occurred about 2384 B.C., and the questioning proceeded:

Q.—You believe that all the living things that were not contained in the ark were destroyed? A.—I think the fish may have lived.

Q.—Outside the fish? A.—I cannot say.

Q.—You cannot say? A.—No, except that just as it is, I have no proof to the contrary.

Q.—I am asking you whether you believe. A.—I do. I accept that as the Bible gives it, and I have never found any reason for denying, disputing or rejecting it.

Q.—Let me make it definite, 2348 years? A.—I didn't say that. That is the time given (indicating a Bible), but I don't pretend to say that is exact.

Q.—You are not satisfied there is any civilization that can be traced back five thousand years? A.—I would not want to say there is, because I have no evidence of it that is satisfactory.

Q.—Would you say there is not? A.—Well, so far as I know, but when the scientists differ from twenty-four millions to three hundred and six millions in their opinion as to how long ago life came here, I want them to be nearer, to come nearer together, before they demand of me to give up my belief in the Bible.

Q.—Do you say that you do not believe that there were any civilizations on this earth that reach back beyond five thousand years? A.—I am not satisfied by any evidence that I have seen.

Q.—I didn't ask what you are satisfied with. I asked if you believed it. A.—Will you let me answer it?

The Court—Go right on.

The Witness—I am satisfied by no evidence that I have found that would justify me in accepting the opinions of these men against what I believe to be the inspired Word of God.

Q.—And you believe every nation, every organization of men, every animal in the world outside of the fishes—

The witness—The fish, I want you to understand, is merely a matter of humour.

Q.—I believe the Bible says so. Take the fishes in? A.—Let us get together and look over this.

Mr. Darrow—Probably we would better. We will after we get through.

Q.—Let me make this definite. You believe that every civilization on the earth and every living thing except possibly the fishes, that came out of the ark, were wiped out by the flood? A.—At that time.

Q.—At that time, and then, whatever human beings including all the tribes that inhabited the world, and have inhabited the world, and who run their pedigree

straight back, and all the animals have come on to the earth since the flood? A.—Yes.

Q.—Don't you know that the ancient civilizations of China are six or seven thousand years old, at the very least? A.—No; but they would not run back beyond the creation, according to the Bible, six thousand years.

Q.—You don't know how old they are, is that right? A.—I don't know how old they are; but possibly you do. (Laughter.)

Q.—Have you any idea how old the Egyptian civilization is. A.—No.

Q.—Do you know of any record in the world, outside of the story of the Bible, which conforms to any statement that it is 4300 years ago or thereabouts, that all life was wiped off the face of the earth? A.—I think they have found records.

Q.—Do you know of any? A.—Records reciting the flood, but I am not an authority on the subject.

Q.—Mr. Bryan, don't you know that there are many old religions that describe the flood? A.—I don't know.

Q.—You know there are others besides the Jewish? A.—I don't know whether these are the record of any other religion, or refer to this flood.

Q.—You have heard of the Tower of Babel, haven't you? A.—Yes, sir.

Q.—That tower was built under the ambition that they could build a tower up to Heaven, wasn't it? And God saw what they were at and to prevent their getting into Heaven he confused their tongues? A.—Something like that, I wouldn't say to prevent their getting into Heaven. I don't think it is necessary to believe that God was afraid they would get to Heaven.

Q.—I mean that way? A.—I think it was a rebuke to them.

Q.—A rebuke to them trying to go that way? A.—To build that tower for that purpose.

Q.—Take that short cut? A.—That is your language, not mine.

Q.—Now when was that? A.—Give us the Bible.

Q.—Yes, we will have strict authority on it—scientific authority? A.—That was about one hundred years before the flood, Mr. Darrow, according to this chronology. It was 2247—the date on one page is 2218 and on the other 2247 and it is described in here—

Q.—That is the year 2247? A.—2218 B.C. is at the top of one page and 2247 at the other and there is nothing in here to indicate the change.

Q.—Well, make it 2230 then. A.—All right, about.

Then you add 1500 to that. A.—No, 1925.

Q.—Add 1925 to that, that would be 4155 years ago. Up to 4155 years ago every human being on earth spoke the same language? A.—Yes, sir, I think that is the inference that could be drawn from that.

Q.—All the different languages of the earth, dating from the tower of Babel, is that right? Do you know how many languages are spoken on the face of the earth? A.—No. I know the Bible has been translated into five hundred, and no other book has been translated into anything like that many.

Q.—That is interesting, if true. Do you know all the languages there are? A.—No, sir, I can't tell you. There may be many dialects besides that and some languages, but those are all the principal languages.

Q.—There are a great many that are not principal languages? A.—Yes, sir.

Q.—You haven't any idea how many there are? A.—No, sir.

Q.—How many people have spoken all those various languages? A.—No, sir.

Q.—And you say that all those languages of all the sons of men have come on the earth not over 4150 years ago? A.—I have seen no evidence that would lead me to put it any farther back than that.

Q.—That is your belief, anyway? That was due to the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel. Did you ever study philology at all? A.—No, I have never made a study of it—not in the sense in which you speak of it.

Q.—You have used language all your life—ever since I was about a year old.

Q.—And good language, too, and you never took any pains to find anything about the origin of languages?

A.—I never studied it as a science.

Q.—Have you ever by any chance read Max Mueller?

A.—No.

Q.—The great German philologist? A.—No.

Q.—Or any book on that subject? A.—I don't remember to have read a book on that subject especially, but I have read extracts, of course, and articles on philology.

Q.—Mr. Bryan, could you tell me how old the earth is?

A.—No, sir, I couldn't.

Q.—Could you come anywhere near it? A.—I wouldn't attempt to. I could possibly come as near as the scientists do, but I had rather be more accurate before I give a guess.

Q.—You don't think much of scientists, do you? A.—Yes, I do, sir.

He gave the name of George M. Price, formerly Professor of Geology in a college in Nebraska and now in a small Californian college, whom Mr. Darrow later characterized as a mountebank and not a geologist at all.

Q.—Do you know how old his book is? A.—No, sir; it is a recent book.

Q.—Do you know anything about his training? A.—No, I can't say on that.

Q.—Do you know of any geologist on the face of the earth who ever recognized him? A.—I couldn't say.

Q.—But you think he is all right? How old does he say the earth is? A.—I am not sure that I would insist on some particular geologist that you picked out recognizing him before I could consider him worthy of belief.

Q.—You would consider him worthy if he agreed with your views? A.—Well, I think his argument is very good.

Q.—How old does Mr. Price say the earth is? A.—I haven't examined the book in order to answer questions on it.

Q.—Then you don't know anything about how old he says it is? A.—He speaks of the layers that are supposed to measure age and points out that they are not uniform and not always the same, and that attempts to measure age by those layers where they are not in the order in which they are usually found makes it difficult to fix the exact age.

Q.—Does he say anything whatever about the age of the earth? A.—I wouldn't be able to testify.

Q.—You didn't get anything about the age from him?

A.—Well, I know he disputes what you say and I say there is very good evidence to dispute it—what some others say about the age.

.

Q.—Mr. Bryan, do you believe that the first woman was Eve? A.—Yes.

Q.—Do you believe she was literally made out of Adam's rib? A.—I do.

Q.—Did you ever discover where Cain got his wife?

A.—No, sir I leave the agnostics to hunt for her.

Q.—You have never found out? A.—I have never tried to find.

Q.—You have never tried to find? A.—No.

Q.—The Bible says he got one, doesn't it? Were there other people on the earth at that time? A.—I cannot say.

Q.—You cannot say? Did that never enter your consideration? A.—Never bothered me.

There were no others recorded, but Cain got a wife.

That is what the Bible says. Where she came from you don't know. All right. Does the statement, "The morning and the evening were the first day" and "the morning and the evening were the second day," mean anything to you? A.—I do not think it necessarily means a twenty-four hour day.

Q.—You do not? A.—No.

Q.—What do you consider it to be? A.—I have not attempted to explain it. If you will take the second chapter—let me have the book. (Examining Bible.) The fourth verse of the second chapter says: "These are the generation of the heavens and of the earth, when they were created in the day the Lord God made the earth and the Heavens." The word "day" there in the very next chapter is used to describe a period. I do not see that there is necessity for construing the

words, "the evening and the mornings" as meaning necessarily a twenty-four day," in the day when the Lord made the Heavens and the earth.

Q.—Then when the Bible said, for instance, "And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day," that does not necessarily mean twenty-four hours? A.—I do not think it necessarily does.

Q.—Do you think it does or does not? A.—I know a great many think so.

Q.—What do you think? A.—I do not think it does.

Q.—You think these were not literal days? A.—I do not think they were twenty-four hour days.

Q.—What do you think about it? A.—That is my opinion—I do not know that my opinion is better on that subject than those who think it does.

Q.—Do you not think that? A.—No. But I think it would be just as easy for the kind of God we believe in to make the earth in six days as in six years or in six million years or in six hundred million years. I do not think it important whether we believe one or the other.

Q.—Do you think those were literal days? A.—My impression is they were periods, but I would not attempt to argue as against anybody who wanted to believe in literal days.

Q.—Have you any idea of the length of the periods? A.—No, I don't.

Q.—Do you think the sun was made on the fourth day? A.—Yes.

Q.—And they had evening and morning without the sun? A.—I am simply saying it is a period.

Q.—They had evening for four periods without the sun, do you think? A.—I believe in creation as there told, and if I am not able to explain it I will accept it.

Mr. Darrow.—Then you can explain it to suit yourself.

Q.—And they had the evening and the morning before that time for three days or three periods. All right, that settles it. Now, if you call those periods, they may have been a very long time. A.—They might have been.

Q.—The creation might have been going on for a very long time? A.—It might have continued for millions of years.

Q.—Yes, all right. Do you believe the story of the temptation of Eve by the serpent? A.—I do.

Q.—Do you believe that after Eve ate the apple or gave it to Adam, whichever way it was, that God cursed Eve, and at that time decreed that all womankind thenceforth and forever should suffer the pains of childbirth in the reproduction of the earth? A.—I believe what it says, and I believe the fact as fully.

Q.—That is what it says, doesn't it? A.—Yes.

Q.—And for that reason, every woman born of woman, who has to carry on the race, the reason they have childbirth pains is because Eve tempted Adam in the Garden of Eden? A.—I will believe the language of the Bible, for I prefer that to your own language. Read the Bible, and I will answer.

Q.—All right, I will do that: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman." That is referring to the serpent? A.—The serpent.

Q. (reading).—"And between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." That is right, is it? A.—I accept it as it is.

Mr. Darrow then asked if Mr. Bryan believed that came about because Eve tempted Adam to eat the fruit. Mr. Bryan replied that he believed it was just as the Bible said.

Q.—And you believe that is the reason that God made the serpent to go on his belly after he tempted Eve? A.—I believe the Bible as it is, and I do not permit you to put your language in the place of the language of the Almighty. You read that Bible and ask me questions and I will answer them. I will not answer your questions in your language.

Q.—I will read it to you from the Bible: "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, 'Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast in the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go and

dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.' " Do you think that is why the serpent is compelled to crawl upon its belly? A.—I believe that.

Q.—Have you any idea how the snake went before that time? A.—No, sir.

Q.—Do you know whether he walked on his tail or not? A.—No, sir. I have no way to know (Laughter in the audience.)

Q.—Now, you refer to the bow that was put in the heaven after the flood, the rainbow. Do you believe in that? A.—Read it.

Q.—All right, Mr. Bryan, I will read it for you.

"Your Honour, I think I can shorten this testimony," Mr. Bryan broke in to remark. "The only purpose Mr. Darrow has is to slur at the Bible, but I will answer his questions. I will answer it all at once, and I have no objection in the world. I want the world to know that this man, who does not believe in a God, is trying to use a court in Tennessee."

"I object to that," Mr. Darrow interrupted.

"To slur at it," Mr. Bryan went on, "and, while it will require time, I am willing to take it."

"I object to your statement. I am examining you on your fool ideas that no intelligent Christian on earth believes," exclaimed Mr. Darrow.

"The court is adjourned until 9 o'clock to-morrow morning," Judge Raulston remarked, and ended the dispute for the time being.

Books and Life.

At the risk of writing something out of place—for praise should come from other quarters—have you, reader, ever tried re-reading the *Freethinker*? The hours went by as we turned over the leaves of some old volumes and we browsed on pages written ten and twelve years ago. To the making of the matter there went energy and purpose for, touch where we would, there was common sense in abundance. For whom shall we write? For the world. How long shall we intend our written word to last? For eternity. Let those who are the flotsam and jetsam of caprice write as they may. Matthew Arnold's "high seriousness" was the subject of a joke; intensity and sincerity make him still a canon of criticism let the width of Oxford trousers be wide enough to girdle the moon.

The late G. W. Foote had a paragraph in the *Freethinker*, December 15, 1912. He was no dabbler in books; his valuation of books on literature was sound, and he knew the terrific weight of verifying his quotations. In the paragraph he makes the following remarks:—

It is a curious thing that the earliest spade work, so to speak, in the field of William Blake's reputation as a poet and seer was, for the most part, done by Freethinkers. Dante and William Rossetti, Alexander Gilchrist, Swinburne, and James Thomson ("B. V.") are prominent names in this connection. Now we find High Church parsons, and other orating Christians, especially the Christian Socialists, quoting Blake as an ideal Christian—though they seldom get beyond the tag about building Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land.

Blake was too big for any church; he carried independence to excess, and was as a consequence perpetually poor. He would not take "bread and cheese" advice. In our day the prices paid for his pictures would have been enough to keep him in all his requirements for three lifetimes. The Nonsuch Press are issuing Blake in an edition of 1,500 sets in three volumes at £5 17s. 6d. The other day a water-colour drawing by him, "By the Waters of Babylon," dated 1806, brought £600. We hope the Nonsuch Press will clear their editions—and that the buyers will read their purchases. Swinburne shall round off this paragraph: "The dead only, and not the living, ought, while any trace of his doings remain, to forget what was the work and what were the wages of William Blake."

It was Voltaire who struck an attitude in a phrase; when he wrote that we may have preferences but no prejudices we had the beginning of a universal language on his tongue. The prehistoric beasts of our press who alternately ring the bells of prejudice with such cries as Bolshevik, Sinn Feiner, Pro-German, Chartist, *ad nauseum*, are the disintegrating forces at work to keep the world in the cages of nationalism. There is a halo of religious light round the noble head of Blake; he frequently uses the name of God in his writings—so do writers in this paper, but, in the rationalizing of creatures of the imagination of the human race hear this: "God is no more than man; because man is no less than God." But it will take more than this to coax the Day-tonites of all countries to get up off their marrow-bones and make a fresh start with their religious complex put in its proper place. And there is no need, reader, for you to neglect Blake because the Nonsuch Press charge £5 19s. 6d. for three volumes. There are book buyers who don't read, there are book readers who don't buy, there are people who buy books to go with the furniture, but give us the book-buyer who buys a book to read and, like Montaigne, to make it bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Blake's works can be bought for a shilling, but their value cannot be assessed in a world where the resources of an Empire cannot settle the traffic problem outside the gates of the House of Commons.

In 1868 *The Fisher Maiden*, a novel, by Björnson, was published. It was a barbaric narrative and the translation from the German reads somewhat stilted and crude. There are in it the first glimmerings of the stage as a medium for presenting social questions, and in 1877 the Norwegian definitely allies himself with Ibsen in his passion to make the stage the forum for the purpose of "having it out" with the perplexities of modern life. And what, pray, is this attitude towards the stage but the frank admission that the Church had failed? In a land where the jest that "salt fish and the Bible" were the chief industries, the struggle to turn national taste towards the stage was not an easy matter. The last chapters of *The Fisher Maiden* enable us to estimate the reception of Dionysian ideas; they are cast in the form of a discussion among a company of ministers. A pastor, in supporting the stage, does so in the following negative manner: "The objections to the stage on the ground that it excites our emotions, plunges us into more gratification of the senses, and induces us to appropriate the characters of the fictitious models of virtue held up to our view, are no less applicable to the pulpit." Was, then, the antagonism of the Church to the Stage so difficult to understand? Another Rupert in the field with pictorial fiction that should not turn the miserable hurly-gurly of "original sin"; a vast landscape whereon should be shown the nobility and its opposite of man—"the glory and offscouring of the universe"; all the reasons of the Church against the stage were only so much leather and prunella, for the unspoken reason was trade jealousy.

An ordinary Englishman's mind is like a public-house in its precise divisions; the four-ale bar of everyday life is not on speaking terms with the saloon of his better ideas that are left for quiet hours of withdrawal from the hurly-burly of life. We shall be pardoned for our Bacchus-like simile, but these remarks have been prompted by an announcement that the publishers, Messrs. Ernest Benn, Ltd., are making the experiment of publishing good poetry in sixpenny books. Rupert Brooke, Robert Bridges, Hilaire Belloc, Edmund Blunden, Tagore, Shelley, Keats—extracts from each of these for sixpence. The publishers are to be congratulated; it wanted doing. Blunden, a young poet, in "Forefathers," has a glimpse of ancestor worship seen through English eyes, and with clarity sets down a picture of those who went before us. No wise man asks "Why was I ever born?" There is the answer if he likes to look back over his shoulder at the past; the direction in which

he is moving is the all important question. Looking backward the poet can see the picture clearly:—

Here they went with smock and crook,
Toiled in the sun, lolled in the shade;
Here they mudded out the brook,
And here their hatchet cleared the glade:
Harvest-supper woke their wit,
Huntsman's moon their woings lit.

The best is yet to be; through the mincing machine of history Christianity has made murderous attempts at unity, and now that its failure is complete through the Great War, mankind may put its trust in poet legislators, in genuine scientists, in creative artists or, in a word, may put its trust in itself.

WILLIAM REPTON.

Correspondence.

TRAINING ADVOCATES FOR FREETHOUGHT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Referring to the contribution by Mr. Douglas P. Stickells, in your issue of August 23, I would esteem it a favour if I might offer a few supplementary words. One can only envy the young advocate who might be so placed as to have all the books recommended for his guidance. But experience tells us that Freethought depends upon, very often, much less ambitious things in the way of book preparation than is set out by Mr. Stickells. It seems to me that by the time that one has become a Freethinker, in anything like the full sense of the term, there will consequently come with it a fair power of articulation. The point that I would bring out here is the fact that the hope of maintaining Freethought is by way of the individual, which does not seem to be fully recognized by Mr. Stickells. This does not, of course, lessen the value of the suggestion as to the establishing of "miniature colleges"; but my experience has been that I have had to "plough a lonely furrow." I think Mr. Stickells stumbles somewhat in his reference to debating societies of churches and adult schools; and if it is that he frequents such places, and gains some credence there, he must indeed "temper the wind to the shorn lamb." We are left wondering at the amount of success in "implanting the demon of doubt in the minds of the conventional." We are on surer ground in the correspondence columns of local papers. At the same time I am not so sure that the "proviso" is correctly supported. Conciseness and clarity are doubtful qualifications in newspaper warfare. Tactfulness and urbanity are undoubted and valuable qualifications. Much has to be implied, because it must never be overlooked that the pioneer of Freethought has to chasten and be forever endeavouring to shape the environment to his will. By way of illustration I might mention that I have in a few years had hundreds of "attempts" accepted. I tried a quatrain from old Omar, where he describes the non-human aspect of nature, on a few occasions, but it did not for a while appear. Recently I was successful, the atmosphere had lifted. We are told that we must not be "dogmatic." This, again, raises in me a feeling of difference, the strongly supported dogma is a fine addition to the Freethinker's armoury. My test of a Freethinker may be somewhat austere, I am nevertheless left with some doubts as to Mr. Stickells possessing that needful grip in a claim to "train advocates for Freethought."

J. FOTHERGILL.

DEBATES AND DEFINITIONS.

SIR,—In reply to the letter of "Keridon" in your issue of August 23, I may remark that he cannot be allowed to wander away from the original title and substitute another for the purpose of switching on extraneous matter. The point of discussion is whether the energy of steam is kinetic or static. Instead of keeping to this point, "Keridon" appears to be camouflaging his error under a cloud of inky verbosity, with which is mingled the acrid poison-gas of personal abuse, apparently because I have had the audacity to differ from such

a profound scientist as himself. The phrases muddle-headed tyro, culpable stupidity, superlative bumptiousness, etc., come from his pen with such facility and vigour that an onlooker is at once intuitively aware, without any knowledge of the subject, which of the two has blundered. "Keridon" at the outset was careful to advertise the fact? that he was not a sophist. Possibly he is really unsophisticated, and in the depths of his study has acquired so little practical knowledge of humanity that he does not know personalities are like boomerangs, they come whizzing back to whence they went.

With respect to his charge of falsification, one can only say that "Keridon's" method of argument? shows a lack of power of analysis. I must necessarily premise that as "Keridon" is a Freethinker he is always in search of Truth, and would, therefore, always sacrifice vanity and proberty to this deity, provided that he is satisfied regarding the character of the priesthood. Taking "Keridon's" love for Truth as granted, he should have seen that there may have been a printer's error. On the other hand, the word left out may have been immaterial. For instance, if someone remarks that "'Keridon' received some carrots," there would be no falsification if it were re-written, "Keridon" received some carrots." The word "bunch" not being of any value, as both statements convey to the mind the same impression. Unless "Keridon" can show that the word engine is material, his charge falls somewhat flat. The engine is of course merely the medium by means of which the invisible kinetic energy of the steam is converted into the visible kinetic energy of masses of matter. We cannot dispense with the medium in practice, but we are at liberty to do so when considering the properties of steam.

"Keridon" acknowledges that he read my letter hastily. He has had to acknowledge also that his "concocted diatribe" on the uselessness of logic requires modification. Evidently this correspondent reads in haste, writes in haste, and presumably repents at leisure.

TREPEN.

LOGIC AND SCIENCE.

SIR,—Since in his most interesting article on "Logic and Science," "Keridon" demolishes the ground of syllogistic inference, is all inference, therefore, to be banned and discarded? Has he nothing to offer us in its place? Perhaps "Keridon" would enlighten us on this very important subject.

H. RUSSELL.

TEACHERS AND EVOLUTION.

SIR,—You are anxious to hear of a public school in which a teacher could safely teach evolution and contrast it with the Bible. I have in front of me my notes in 1880 of geology lessons at Winchester. Here is an extract: "The gradual production of new forms of life out of old ones is called Evolution." The teacher was Mr. C. Griffiths, who died only a few months ago, aged over ninety. He did not expressly point out that his teaching was a little hard to reconcile with Genesis, but we boys all quite saw it was. The real hindrance to free discussion, however, was not the religious boycott, but the sex boycott. Reproduction and embryology are such improper subjects! A schoolfellow of mine dared not be seen reading Darwin (whose books were all in the school library) because he had found in one of them a description of organs developed in certain insects to hold the female!

C. HARPER.

[This is the only reply we have received to our request for information as to where in this country a public school teacher would be permitted to teach plainly and authoritatively the doctrine of evolution, and to set that against the Biblical story. And it does not meet the case. Nor is it quite clear, even this explanation of what evolution meant, implied by its acceptance, or that the school was a Council or a Board school.—RD.]

WAS BRADLAUGH A SOCIALIST?

SIR,—In the original of my letter, which you printed on page 525, I wrote: "There are Atheists who are not Socialists (Bradlaugh, e.g.) and there are Socialists who are not Atheists (Lansbury, e.g.)." In the process of

editing, type-setting, and printing this has become metamorphosed into "There are many Socialists who are Atheists (Bradlaugh, *e.g.*), etc." Was Bradlaugh a Socialist? I think not, but I speak under correction. If I am not mistaken, he more than once took the anti-Socialist side in a debate. He was a Republican certainly, and I think he called himself a Radical, but he was one of those men of energy and grit who are the last to be converted to a system of social organization which creates bureaucrats (at whose hands he had suffered much), and limits individual aspiration. I am inclined to think he believed that given limitation of that population which provides strike breakers for the employers, and given sundry reforms (such as the taxation of unimproved land), the interplay of individual efforts would produce a tolerably even distribution of wealth. What he would have been had he lived in these strenuous times and seen the development of finance and trusts, it is, of course, idle to speculate. F. J. NANCE.

"Le Coteau," Simiane, Bouches-du-Rhône.

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON AUGUST 27.

The President, Mr. C. Cohen, in the chair. Also present: Messrs. Corrigan, Moss, Neate, Quinton, Rosetti, and Samuels, Mrs. Quinton, Miss Kough, and the Secretary.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. The financial statement was presented and adopted and the pass book produced.

New members were received for Ashton-under-Lyne, Newcastle, South London, Swansea, and West Ham Branches and the Parent Society.

A request for the formation of a new Branch at Ashton-under-Lyne was submitted and the conditions having been complied with, permission was granted.

The Secretary reported Mr. Whitehead's tour to date, with special reference to his success at Swansea. The President reported that he had recently visited Leeds, where there was very prospect of a revival, provided a hall could be obtained, and also that negotiations were pending for the revival of the work in Liverpool.

Correspondence was read from Birmingham in *re* the coming lecture season, and instructions given.

It was resolved, unanimously, that Mr. G. Wood, President of the South London Branch, be co-opted as a member of the Executive.

The Executive recorded its thanks to Mr. Greevz Fysher and to his son, Mr. Aubry Fysher, of Leeds, for their sympathy and kindness in carrying out a Secular Burial Service for an old and indigent Freethinker.

A letter was received from a London member of experience in sports and music, offering his assistance towards the formation of football and rambling clubs, and an orchestral society. The offer was accepted with thanks.

It was further reported that arrangements had been made for the Annual Dinner at the Midland Grand Hotel on Tuesday, January 12, 1926, and the hope expressed that members and readers of the *Freethinker* would make a note of the date.

The meeting then closed.

E. M. VANCE,
General Secretary.

MR. G. WHITEHEAD'S MISSION.

Mr. Whitehead reports a very successful termination to his fortnight's mission in Leeds. Several new members were made, who had given enthusiastic support during the last week. The Branch has received a good filip and is now settling down to work, with the determination to make things hum during the winter. Proceedings at Ashton are beginning well, and will be more fully reported next week. From September 5 Mr. Whitehead will be at Hull.—E.

Obituary.

Freethought circles in Abertillery, S. Wales, are the poorer by the death of Mr. W. Trenhall, which took place last week. Mr. Trenhall was a native of Manchester, and a firm supporter of the "best of causes." In this respect he set a good example to the many Freethinkers who are playing so large a part in the industrial and political life of South Wales. During the latter stages of a lengthy illness, Mr. Trenhall often expressed a wish for a Secular service, and his wishes were faithfully observed by his family. A Secular service was conducted at the Council Cemetery by Mr. Theo. J. Davis, who dwelt upon the sterling character of our dead friend, and his wholesome influence upon others. The address excited great interest, and the most profound sympathy was expressed by all to the widow and family. Mr. Trenhall had many friends in the district, and his example as a sturdy fighter in the Freethought Cause will serve as an inspiration to all.—A. J. C.

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, Mr. J. Marshall, a Lecture.

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

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 5.45, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, a Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 3, Mr. E. Grant, "Harvest Festivals"; 6, Mr. E. C. Saphin, a Lecture.

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

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S. (Grand Central Café, Jamaica Street, Glasgow): 12 noon, Committee Meeting.

OUTDOOR.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Hall Steps): Friday, September 4, at 7.30, Messrs. Addison, Partington, and Sisson will speak.

HULL BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. G. Whitehead's Mission.—Saturday, Victoria Pier at 7.30 and Sunday at 11; Sunday, Waltham Street at 7.30 and every night during week.

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

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