

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. 44

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1925

PRICE THREEPENCE

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Missing the Point.

When an Irish soldier, home on leave from the war, was asked what had struck him most in France, he replied it was the number of bullets that had missed him. My prevailing impression of the ten writers who contributed their opinions on religion to the *Daily Express* is of the same kind. I was most impressed by what each of them left unsaid. Why it was left unsaid I do not know, but as these writers are assumed to be keenly interested in life and its numerous ramifications it is certainly curious they should have left a whole department of life untouched, and one which has a very vital bearing on the validity of religious beliefs. Everyone is aware that during the past sixty or seventy years there has been an enormous development in our knowledge of religion. I do not mean by this merely a knowledge of the different forms which religious belief assumes; these are curious enough, and are enough to rob any one religion of a valid claim to pre-eminence. What I have in mind is our present knowledge of the origin of religious ideas, and of the conditions that have kept them alive. Yet so far as the *Express* writers are concerned, Spencer, Tylor, Frazer, Westermarck, Wundt, Durkheim, and others might never have written a line and we might still be living in the eighteenth century discussing religion as a matter of mere logic. It is as though one were to discuss evolution and leave out the work and influence of Darwin and his successors. It is interesting no doubt to know whether certain men consider modern religious ideas to be reasonable, or morally irreproachable, but it would be far more to the point to discuss religion in the light of what we actually know of the origin and nature of religious ideas.

Primitive Religion. * * *

Writing about the middle of the last century Feuerbach said that the key to religion was anthropology. Everything that we have learned about the nature and history of religious ideas has only served to confirm that dictum. And the evidence is not drawn from the perhaps wrongly deciphered beliefs of people who lived thousands of years ago, but from the study

of the mental habits of primitive races existing to-day. The school of writers represented by the men I have named differ among themselves as to details, but on one point they are in absolute agreement. This is that the fundamental religious beliefs, the belief in a soul or double, and the belief in spirits or ghosts—afterwards developing into gods—have no other cause for their being than the abyssmal ignorance of primitive mankind. And that assertion is based upon the beliefs of tribes and races existing to-day. Just as the naturalist finds it possible to arrange existing forms of life in a serial order, and to show that the more complex forms have developed from the simpler ones, so the anthropologist is able to take the existing forms of the religious idea and to show how the forms of religion which exist among the more civilized races are descended from the simpler ones which are found existing among savages. So long as we restrict ourselves to the belief in God or a soul as it is presented in the apologetic literature of current theology we may go on discussing for ever without getting to any definite conclusion. But when we bring these beliefs into relation with those existing among savages, the whole subject becomes simple. We are not then called upon to test the truth of a hypothesis; our business is to discuss the origin and nature of a delusion.

Some Parallels. * * *

Let us take one or two examples of this. If we find in the New Testament a religious teacher who when he sees a lunatic or an epileptic solemnly declares that the man is possessed by an evil spirit, and prescribes its expulsion by prayer and fasting, and if we find among existing savages the same belief concerning epileptics and lunatics, and if we find also the medicine man prescribing fasting and the burning of evil smelling herbs under the nose of the patient, on what ground do we differentiate between the two cases? What need is there to discuss in the first case whether there were really demons existing, while in the other we attribute the belief to pure ignorance? Why will not the same explanation serve in both cases? Or if we can show that the belief in a "soul" starts among savages with the belief that during sleep a man can leave the body and travel to distant places, and if, further, we can trace this belief through various modifications until we arrive at the belief as it exists among ourselves, why may we not treat the one as derived from the other? Or, yet once more, if we see that gods are actually being made to-day by deifying some actual person after death, or by personifying natural forces, and if we can trace this belief generation after generation, undergoing modification after modification under pressure from growing knowledge, where is the need to go on discussing whether there is a God or not? The whole discussion becomes farcical, unless we banish from our minds what we actually know of the origin of the belief. We start with the actual knowledge that the belief rests upon a delusion, we trace that delusion, through phase after phase, and then

suddenly we turn round and say, "Now let us discuss whether this belief is true or not." On that line there is really nothing to discuss. If a belief began in a delusion it is sheer waste of time considering its truth. All we have left for discussion is the psychological conditions that gave it birth.

* * *

The Beginnings of Deity.

It is an accepted maxim in biology that all anatomical structure may be ultimately traced back to the cell. Whenever and wherever the pedigree of a structure is traced it is found leading back to this point. And it may be taken as an equally demonstrable truth whenever and wherever the pedigree of a God is traced it leads us back to the ghosts and supernatural agencies of primitive life. The most abstract of deities originate here. Then under pressure of increasing knowledge we find these primitive gods undergoing a series of modifications which ends in the nebulous deity of apologetic theology. Theologians explain this by saying that man reaches a truer conception of God in the course of his own development. But that is quite wrong. The truest conception of deity is the primitive one, because we have here the idea of ghostly beings as it was given birth. What takes place afterwards is not growth in a knowledge of God, but surrender of one conception after another. The history of theology is not an advance, but a retreat. Man does not advance in his knowledge of God, he discovers that he knows less and less about him, and ends by getting rid of the idea altogether. If the cell had never developed we should never have had the more complex living structures. If the savage had never surrounded himself with the terrifying ghosts of his dead, if he had never wrongly interpreted the forces at work in nature as so many separate and independent living agencies, we should have had no beginnings for the gods and no subsequent "development." That is the great fact to be kept in mind. Unless all that modern anthropology has to tell us is false, in studying the genealogy and meaning of the god-idea we are not tracing the record of a discovery, we are following the history of a delusion. The facts upon which the god idea are built are well known, as well known as are the facts upon which the universal delusion of witches was built. But we do not to-day discuss whether witches ever rode through the air on broomsticks. We only consider the causes which led to the existence of the belief. And that is all there is, from a strictly scientific point of view, to discuss about the existence of God. We may discuss how the delusion arose, but it is waste of time, once the facts are known, to speculate as to its truth.

* * *

Religion and Common Sense.

Mark, I am only applying to this particular idea of God rules and principles which everyone readily applies to all other beliefs. So long as the nature of nervous diseases was unknown it was natural to discuss whether they were the product of demons or not. Once their true nature was shown, no one discussed demons, the fact remained, but the interpretation was different. While the savage is unaware of the nature of the forces which determine the growth of crops, he may believe that the medicine man's incantations, or the killing of a man-god will assist the process. As ignorance gives place to knowledge a better understanding of forces at work leads to a new theory of agriculture. In all directions the facts remain, our interpretation of them differs. We do not talk about the profound truth that was hidden in the belief in witchcraft, or possession by demons, or in incantations, we simply set them on one side

as theories to which ignorance gives birth and which knowledge deposes. But can anyone point to any substantial difference between the beliefs of savages, which we all reject, and those religious ideas which so many still accept? For many years I have been asking that question, and never yet have I come across anyone who could supply a satisfactory answer. Parsons, naturally, will not reply. To disclose their relationship to the primitive savage would destroy their profession. Every anthropologist of standing knows the proper reply to such a question, but hardly one will give it plainly. They are content, as Frazer once put it, to drag the guns into position for the final attack, but they leave it for someone else to do the shooting. And in the series of articles I have been examining we have ten prominent writers who feel justified in writing on the subject of religion, and who completely ignore the only branch of research that throws a helpful light on religious beliefs. All seem more or less afraid to bell the cat. The truth may be spoken about almost every other subject under the sun, but silence must be maintained with regard to the nature of religion. And yet the truth is plain enough. The religion of to-day is the direct descendant of the religion of the primitive mind, and that rests upon no other and no better foundation than an interpretation of phenomena which every civilized mind in the world rejects without the slightest hesitation. CHAPMAN COHEN.

"The Problem of Evil."

WE commence this article by emphatically denying the real existence of such a problem. Whilst frankly admitting that there are many terrible evils in the world we are firmly convinced that their presence does not suggest or present to the scientific thinker any problem whatsoever. The so-called problem of evil is purely a theological invention, an invention which seems to have been a theological necessity, and which is so even to-day. The *Guardian* of October 16 contains a significant sermon on the subject by the Rev. C. J. Shebbeare, rector of Stanhope, Durham. Mr. Shebbeare is an exceedingly bold man, for he chose as the text of his discourse one of the strangest verses in the Bible, namely Isaiah lxxv. 7, which reads as follows: "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I am the Lord that doeth all these things." To a clergyman such words naturally bring up the problem of evil; and yet if the text were true, if a God existed who could utter such words, the existence evil would involve no problem. The problem forces itself upon the preacher because he does not accept the statement of the text as literally true. If he did there would be no problem left. But Mr. Shebbeare persists in clinging to the reality of the problem, and while recognizing its difficulty, proceeds thus:—

There are two suggested solutions—obviously inadequate if we think of them, yet attractive to some people at first sight—against which we specially need to be on our guard. The first is to deny God's responsibility for evil; the second is to suggest that our moral principles are not binding upon God. This latter suggestion is usually made in reference to the doctrine of everlasting punishment. But there is obviously no meaning in saying that God is good and merciful unless we are using those words in their natural sense. It is simply dishonest to call a method of action merciful on the part of God which we should call tyrannical in the case of anyone else.

Mr. Shebbeare is fully justified in rejecting the savage and wicked doctrine of everlasting punishment, and also in insisting that God, if God there

be, must be amenable to the same standards of right and wrong, justice, and truth, as those which are in force among ourselves. On both points the reverend gentleman stands almost alone. Sermons on everlasting punishment may now be few and far between, but all believers in the infallibility of the Bible as God's word are bound to hold the doctrine. Furthermore, the Bible teaches that God is a being absolutely unrestrained by any law. As a sample take Paul's words in Roman ix. 20, 21: "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why didst thou make me thus? Or hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" This is what is meant by the phrase Divine sovereignty or Divine autocracy. God is regarded as infinitely above the universe and in no sense or degree responsible to it. Theologically he is, as Matthew Arnold describes him, "a magnified, non-natural man"; that is, a wholly impossible being.

We are now face to face with the most glaring contradiction conceivable. On the one hand we are confidently assured that God is all-good, all-just, all-powerful, and all-merciful, a being incapable of either thinking or doing wrong, and that he is "the Maker and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible." On the other hand, we are painfully aware that the universe, created and governed by this ideally perfect Being of "infinite power, wisdom, and goodness," is darkened and distorted by countless disharmonies and evils, for which, alas, the Creator cannot be held responsible. The Divine irresponsibility the theologians are utterly powerless either to prove or to justify on any reasonable ground. Our sense of fairness compels us to admit that Mr. Shebbeare does believe to a certain extent in God's responsibility. Speaking of the Anglican pulpit, he says:—

Evil is accounted for by reference to the free will of man. Free-will is a popular subject in our pulpits, and for a very creditable reason. The Anglican preacher wishes to bring home to us a sense of moral responsibility. He wishes to be able to warn and to encourage: to tell the man who thinks he stands to watch—to take heed lest he fall; and also to encourage the sinner, to tell him that it is "never too late to mend." But beside this moral interest in speaking of free-will there is also a theological one. The preacher wishes to lift from God the whole responsibility for the evil in the world, and to place it upon us. Here he is less successful. Can we possibly be right in saying that all the evil in the world is due to human free-will? There was evil, in the form of pain and strife, before man appeared on the earth at all. Can we say even that all moral evil is due to the free-will of man? Our Collect says that God knows us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers that by reason of the weakness of our mortal nature we cannot always stand upright. Are the dangers and the weakness all due to our own fault? Has not God set us in the midst of these great dangers? It is a manlier defence of God's dealings which admits his responsibility for all that is in the world, but seeks to show that the acceptance of that responsibility is consistent with goodness.

We cannot but admire the reverend gentleman's courage in admitting God's responsibility for all the evil in the world. Very few clergymen have the honesty to follow his example, as he himself acknowledges. But our admiration is tempered by his contention that the acceptance of that responsibility is consistent with goodness. We challenge him to establish the truth of that claim by any process of solid argumentation. It cannot be done. It should be borne in mind that the chief evils in the world to-day existed on a larger and more ferocious scale thousands of years before man made his appearance.

The struggle for existence has always been cruel beyond the power of words to portray, and its outcome can only be characterized as the destruction of the weak and the survival of the strong. Can such a struggle with all its attendant evils be treated as an expression of the goodness of a just and tender-hearted Deity? A thousand times, no. A supreme being capable of such vile conduct would have been a callous, heartless, and despicable monster.

Like most preachers Mr. Shebbeare is the victim of an amazing confusion of thought. He believes in the existence of a good God, and with this belief the following is his attempt to solve the problem of evil:—

A good God will not be cruel: he will not inflict pain for its own sake. But is it clear that he will not inflict any pain at all? Remember that a world without suffering would be a world without patience, and patience is one of the noblest of human qualities. Would you really prefer a universe in which patience was wholly unknown? Take, again, danger. A world without danger would be a world without courage. Would you really prefer a world in which the word "danger" was unmeaning? And so with sorrow. You know the French saying that "man has need not only of joy, but also of sorrow, among his soul's great needs." And so with other temptations—the tendency to pride, envy, concupiscence.

That is false reasoning of the worst kind. Mr. Shebbeare has never seen a world devoid of suffering, danger, and sorrow, and consequently he has no right to assert with such cocksureness what it would be like. How does he know that it would be able to display neither patience nor courage? His only reason for looking upon the evils in the world as blessings in disguise is his belief in a good God who cannot be cruel, and we maintain that such a reason is at once illogical and unethical. Remember that he only *believes* there is a God and that he is good and cannot be cruel. He has absolutely no knowledge of such a being and cannot acquire any. God is unknown and unknowable, and even the beliefs in him differ so enormously from one another that the only safe conclusion is that there is no God at all. Indeed, it is in the light of Atheism alone that the history and the present condition of the world can be intelligibly interpreted. The world came to be what it is just now by a long, dreary, and often painful process of evolution which is still going on, and with no likelihood of ever coming to a full stop. Once the history of this process has been fully grasped there will be no temptation to believe in an intelligent objective guidance. It would be sheer madness to believe that a good God had anything whatever to do with it. Evolution had no plan or plans to follow, no goal towards which it was unflinchingly aiming. Intelligence is only one of its products, not its cause and regulator. It entirely discredits every supernatural belief ever held, and puts to shame many views found in the Bible. It is the unconscious parent of all the so-called evils in the world, which we are not to bear patiently and derive benefits therefrom, but which we are to do our utmost to outgrow and become quite free from. Is toothache or earache ever a good thing for which we are humbly to thank a good God? Are typhoid fever, influenza, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions so many blessings in disguise? The very questions are insults to our intelligence. Nature is neither good nor evil, neither kind nor cruel, neither moral nor immoral, and all we can do is to study and try to understand it, and endeavour so to arrange our lives as to rise above its disharmonies and convert as many of its forces into our servants as we possibly can.

J. T. LLOYD.

The Wail of the "Mail."

Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.—
Lucretius.

Prefer knowledge to wealth; for one is transitory, the other perpetual.—*Socrates.*

THE English newspaper press, popularly supposed to be free and independent, is timid and hypocritical in matters of religion. It is really in a far worse state to-day than it was a generation since. Now, even Democratic periodicals publish articles of extreme unction on the subject of religion, and treat the clergy with fulsome and nauseous flattery. Socialist publications "butter up" Priestcraft with the same zeal as old-fashioned Tories, and there is very little difference between the published theological opinions of the *Daily Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph*, except that the latter is somewhat less highly coloured than the former.

Presumably, the idea of the editors is to follow the line of least resistance in order to promote huge circulations. This is perhaps understandable in the case of the purely commercial Christianity of the *Daily Telegraph*; but what can one do but raise one's eyebrows at the action of the *Daily Herald* with regard to the Christian Churches and the people. Throughout Europe Socialists have no illusions whatever concerning the Roman Catholic and the Greek churches, and they are consistently anti-clerical. In England, although Socialists are conspicuous by their absence from churches and chapels, the one and only daily paper of the Labour movement acts as if the clergy were the guardian angels of Democracy, instead of being the bitterest enemies of the people.

There is one paper, however, which can always be relied upon to "out-Herod Herod" in matters of this kind. The *Daily Mail* stands alone in this respect. Other newspapers may use the sweet arts of flattery, but the young writers on the *Mail* would speak respectfully of a monkey, provided that the animal had a priest's cowl on its head. Just as they write columns of hysterical nonsense concerning the Queen's dolls' house, and the smile of the Prince of Wales, so they write reams of make-believe regarding the clergy.

Following the Church Congress, held at Eastbourne, the *Daily Mail* published a leading article, entitled "The Churches and the People." So propagandist was it in tone, so perfervid in its piety, that the whole might easily have been composed in Church House, Westminster, instead of Carmelite Street. After stating that the clergy of the Anglican Church "often work for wages less than those of a rural postman," the *Daily Mail* says in large type:—

There are few, indeed, of whom it could not be said, in the words of the great Athenian to his judges: "I am in extreme poverty by reason of my service to God."

And then the journalist adds:—

The effect upon them of this state of affairs has been to deprive them of the power to buy the books which would enable them to keep in touch with modern thought and modern science.

The terrible implication is that the clergy are poor in mind and estate. Let us therefore examine the matter a little more closely than the Carmelite House Christian has done. The plaint of clerical poverty is largely a matter of heated rhetoric. It must be remembered that the *Daily Mail* is dealing with the Church of England, by Law established, and not with the ministers of Nonconformist bodies. And the first thing that the *Mail* should have known is that the Anglican Church is the wealthiest Christian Church in the world. The property held in trust by the Ecclesi-

astical Commissioners is worth many millions; that in the City of London alone being worth over £2,000,000. In addition there are very valuable coal royalties belonging to the Church. The total should amount to the income of a small State. That it is very considerable is apparent from the clever juggling with figures shown in *The Church of England Year Book*, which is almost as confusing as the maze at Hampton Court, and is calculated to that end.

This money may be shared unevenly amongst the Anglican clergy, but it is absolutely untrue that the Church of England parsons "work for wages less than those of a rural postman." The Bench of Bishops, forty in number, receive between them £182,000 yearly, with emoluments in the shape of palaces and palatial residences. The Archbishop of Canterbury takes a modest £15,000, and the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of London have £10,000 each. This latter figure is worth noting. It works out at £200 weekly, which is quite remote from the poverty line, and in itself sufficient to keep forty working-class families in fair comfort. The Suffragan Bishops are not very far behind their superiors in matters of money, and the incomes of the ordinary parson may be seen set out in *Crockford's Clerical Directory*. For example, within the very narrow confines of the City of London, £50,000 is spent yearly on ministering to the spiritual needs of a small resident population of caretakers, policemen, and Jews. The latter, who form a very large proportion of the total, never trouble the pew-openers of the Anglican Church. So small is the actual "spiritual" work in the City, that, recently, the Church authorities decided to sell no less than nineteen derelict churches in order to use the money so obtained in other directions. The higher clergy are as far from the poverty line as the North Pole is from the South. It is idle to pretend otherwise. The salaries mentioned in *Crockford* prove it, and the comfortable condition of the rectories and vicarages scattered throughout the country corroborate it. The endowments of the Church of England are far more solid than the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, and they were not invested in the Bank of Faith. Lord Addington's return of 1891 showed that the annual value of these ancient ecclesiastical endowments was then £5,469,171, exclusive of modern private benefactions, which amount to £283,000 a year.

As for the alleged poverty of curates, much of it is pure make-believe. The Bishop of London was himself a curate in Bethnal Green at one time, but he was only a bird of passage in that verdant spot. If he stood at Poverty Corner, he was clothed in broadcloth and fine linen, and was not as the others. So with so many of the curates. They come from sheltered homes of the middle-class, and often have had training at a public school and at one of the Universities. At an age when other men have long since settled down to business, their parents are able to spend hundreds of pounds on their education, and, if Mother Church is somewhat niggardly in paying salaries, the curates are in no worse plight than the church-organists, choristers, and other ecclesiastical workers. The cry of clerical poverty is very largely propaganda, and is used to promote generous subscriptions among the faithful.

After all, why should Christian priests complain of poverty? According to the story, the founder of their religion was a pauper, and "had not where to lay his head." Why should priests nearly always prefer to follow Mammon rather than "God"? They profess to follow their Saviour, they even pretend to regulate their lives by the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount. And yet, prating of the blessings

of poverty, they sigh for Lambeth Palace and its guard-room, Fulham Palace, with its pleasure-grounds, Farnham Palace, with its deer-park, and Wells, with its moated garden.

As for the *Mail's* nonsense concerning the price of books of modern thought and modern science, it only shows how illiterate some journalists can be. Judging by their published utterances, the clergy know nothing of evolution. They can add to their knowledge by spending a shilling on Darwin's *Origin of Species*. Many of Huxley's works are issued at the same modest price. The bolder ones might even spend a sixpence on *The Age of Reason*. Any bookseller worthy of the name could advise them as to publications of advanced thought, issued at a price that even a genuinely poor man could buy if he had a mind to do it.

The wail of the *Mail* is quite unnecessary. The statistics of deaths from starvation do not include the names of many clergymen. There are cases of real hardship amongst doctors, barristers, and other professional men, but no one sends the hat round to ease their sufferings. If the clergy are not satisfied with their incomes, let them turn to more honest employment than "stuffing the ears of honest men with false reports."

MIMNERMUS.

Freemasonry and Freedom.

III.

(Concluded from page 679.)

THE founders of our Order wished to remove from our lodges religious and political disputes. By introducing into our lodges metaphysical disputes, thus driving out honest men because of their philosophical convictions, we would disobey our fundamental law.

The "stupid" Atheist of the constitution of 1723 was not, could not possibly be, the thinker who formulates scientific conclusions, the philosopher who, investigating nature and humanity, freely expresses the results of this thinking. This is the man whom the "men of God" think to make ashamed by calling him an Atheist. No; Anderson and his executive committee in adopting that formula aimed only at the expulsion from the Order of the debauchee who, in the poverty of his brain, attacks his own conscience by denying the thing that terrifies him.

The philosophical foundation of toleration and freedom of conscience which the eighteenth century philosophers discovered in the principle of equal rights and respect for the individual became assured conquests in the nineteenth century through the general acceptance of the idea of relativity in our positive knowledge. We can never escape from the sphere of the tangible, and our certainties can never be absolute truths. And so it is our duty to tolerate the opinions of others because we have no right of interferences in the thought of another. Fouillée said:—

Do not behave to other men as if you knew the meaning of things and the meaning of man. Do not pretend to be an absolute power—a God; lacking absolute knowledge; do not put absolutism in its place.

And the same thought has been expressed by Kuyan in these words:—

There exists a more solid foundation for toleration, which, step by step, with the disappearance of dogmatic faith, is more and more gaining ground: this is distrust in human thought and even in our will, which is not able to avoid deception, and thus every absolute precept is of necessity a precept of error.

Let no metaphysical, philosophic, or scientific

dogma paralyse or hinder the work of universal Freemasonry. Religious dogmatism puts a stop to the enlightenment of humanity and is the cause of inexpressible suffering to the peoples under its sway. Freemasonry has been founded to bring about the brotherhood of man and respect for the opinions of all.

It does not set up an altar amid other altars: it is a cosmopolitan and progressive institution pursuing the quest after truth and the betterment of the human race; it rests on freedom and toleration; it utters no dogma; it appeals to no dogma.

Freemasonry must fight against the prejudices firmly rooted in the popular conscience by centuries of dogmatic culture. During many centuries these gave birth to hatred and anger against the Jews by Christians, and in the Middle Ages caused terrible massacres. The Roman Church in the nineteenth century continues the glorification of these in religious processions like that of the Sacrament of the Miracles, which every year disgraces the streets of Brussels.

In the eighteenth century the prejudice against Jews was still very strong, and they were denied entrance to the Masonic temples. But in the nineteenth century everywhere protests were made against this ostracism so completely opposed to the principles of the Order. In 1845 the Grand Lodge of Berlin, "Zur Freundschaft" (Friendship), having refused to receive as visitors Jewish brothers in the possession of regular diplomas from English lodges, the question was raised before the Grand Lodge of England by Count De Zetland. Twenty years later the matter was explored by the German Masons:—

The exchange of opinions on this subject had one good result, it clarified the question and brought about an important move towards its solution; many of the grand lodges in Germany, such as the grand lodge elected in Frankfurt s/M and the grand lodge, "Zur Sonne" (The Sun) in Bayreuth returned to the great principles of Masonry which do not forbid admittance to non-Christians. The grand lodges, "Z dem dem drei Weltkugeln," "The Three Globes," and the "Royal York zur Freundschaft," in Berlin, made known to other lodges their obedience to these principles, stating that they only examined the testimonials of good behaviour given to the brothers from their own lodges, and took no note of their religious opinions.

The question of the admission of men belonging to non-Aryan races was also raised among Masons. Racial prejudice had been opposed by Freemasons. In 1775, the preacher, Prince Hall, founded in Boston the "African Lodge," whose membership consisted of freed negroes, and in the following year this motion of his own was adopted: "That freed negroes can be enrolled in the Army of the Revolution for Independence."

On July 8, 1869, the Grand Orient of France made the following declaration of principle:—

Freemasons obeying the Grand Orient of France, represented by their legally chosen delegates, at a meeting of the 5869, declare that mankind and the Masonic brotherhood are affronted when colour, race, or religion are obstacles to the entrance of an outsider into the Masonic family.

On June 8, 1873, in Bayreuth, it was proclaimed, during the meeting of the Confederated Chief Lodges of Germany, "that difference of race and colour is not a barrier to initiation."

Thus the question has been solved; entry into Masonry must be universal, without distinction of race, religion, or philosophic opinion. The sole necessary conditions are: to be a free, good-living man, able to understand and practise the fundamental principles of the Order.

The clearly stated declarations just quoted make doubt no longer possible.

Freemasonry was, is and must remain, the fraternal and universal bond, which aims at the betterment of its members and of humanity. It examines freely all questions, scientific, philosophic, religious, and political, which in their due time and place, interest the members of the lodges. But it decides no question by a vote binding on its members. As a body, all external political action whatsoever is forbidden, but it leaves its members full liberty to act in the outside world according to their conscience: to them it issues no order.

As in Belgium, so in France and other places, Masonry abstains, in the lodges, from every discussion of events in public life and the elections. But they freely explore and discuss questions in science, philosophy, religion, and politics. It is plain that the questions thus discussed are precisely those which at the same time occupy the public mind. But the distinguishing mark of such Masonic discussion is that the lodge itself does not impose a definite solution: it allows its members the widest liberty in the "profane" world.

Yet, it would not fulfil its duty if it did not persistently and energetically advocate the foundation principle of its being—freedom of conscience. That is constantly being done through its initiations, its speeches, its discussions. It inspires in its members the manly resolve to practise that freedom of the "profane" world, to fight against intolerance and fanaticism, to defend those who are victims of oppression, to labour unceasingly, each in his own field, for such a freedom, if it should not exist, to labour in its defence, if, being already in existence, it is threatened by a reactionary party, and to spread its principles so that it may remain indestructible and eternally beneficent.

In Catholic countries, even in the family circle, Freemasons endure persecution from the Roman priesthood. That priesthood even undermines the foundation of the State and national institutions with its teaching, through its inspired press, and by every kind of bribery and oppression at its command, by its authority, the riches gathered by monks, and supported by a powerful party which it leads and commands. In Belgium that party (Clerical) has succeeded in capturing political power (1914) and uses it for the oppression of a blinded nation and in defiance of the best interests of civilization. Is it not, then, the duty of Masonry to work without wearying and without rest in the defence of the modern State, for freedom of conscience against that vast conspiracy of reaction, against that return to barbarism?

That labour it has never neglected, and never shall!

When, through its initiations, its teachings, its symbols, it has made plain that the greatest treasure in life is freedom of conscience, won through the efforts of generations, if chiefly of Freemasons, it encourages those who are overcome with fear of the danger that threatens them, and instigates the brethren to even more fervid labour in defence of liberties achieved with such difficulty. In France the same battle is forced on Masons; it is not their fault that it has not begun.

The Roman Church condemned the principles of the Revolution and has done its utmost to destroy them. Masonry has defended them with tireless energy because they are its own principles, so doing it has done its duty. By its teaching, by its incessant and conquering work, it has powerfully assisted the frustration of reaction and has preserved inviolate, the rights of man and of our civilization, whose foundations were laid by Masons in the eighteenth century.

Do we not all do well to congratulate it, and ourselves for that service?

In 1871 the Grand Orient of Belgium revised the

general rules of the Masonic Order and defined its object (aim) and character in these phrases:—

First paragraph—Freemasonry, a cosmopolitan and progressive institution, pursues the search for truth and the betterment of humanity. It rests on freedom and toleration: it neither formulates nor bows down to any dogma.

It demands from the person who presents himself for initiation that he be an honest man with a brain able to comprehend and disseminate the principles of Masonry.

It demands of its adepts sincerity of opinion, a desire for self-instruction and self-sacrifice. Thus it is a society of honest men, united together by feelings of freedom, equality and fraternity, who work individually and collectively for social progress, and in this way practise beneficence in its widest meaning.

That definition is in conformity with the spirit of our foundation statutes. The lodges have been ever faithful to it. The removal of the appeal to the "Great Architect of the Universe" is justified because Masonry formulates no dogma and imposes no doctrine.

Latin Masonry of necessity has to defend freedom of conscience from the continuously threatening attacks of the Vatican and the Clerical Party. It cannot remain indifferent to the attack launched by the Papacy against modern liberties.

It would not fulfil its duty if it did not defend itself, if it did not protest against the destruction of and the systematic clericalization of education and public administration, against persecutions directed at Freemasons, against calumnies of the Order, made by a party which labours for the re-establishing on the ruins of the modern State, the terrible political and social system of the sixteenth century.

In all countries where the Papacy has maintained its privileges and sovereignty, the fight for civilization is a duty laid on the National Masonic Body and also on all citizens who understand their rights and duties. Toleration and a love of peace must not degenerate into indifference. That would be a betrayal of the fundamental principle of the Masonic Order and of the Modern State.—(Translated from the French), of A. Sluys by R. Stevenson.

PIOUS OPTIMISM.

How can I adequately express my contempt for the assertion that all things occur for the best, for a wise and beneficent end, and are ordered by a humane intelligence! It is the most utter falsehood and a crime against the human race. Even in my brief time I have been contemporary with events of the most horrible character; as when the mothers in the Balkans cast their own children from the train to perish in the snow; as when the "Princess Alice" foundered, and six hundred human beings were smothered in foul water; as when the hecatomb of two thousand maidens were burned in the church at Santiago; as when the miserable creatures tore at the walls of the Vienna theatre. Consider only the fates which overtake the little children. Human suffering is so great, so endless, so awful that I can hardly write of it. I could never go into hospitals and face it, as some do, lest my mind should be temporarily overcome. The whole and the worst the worst pessimist can say is far beneath the least particle of the truth, so immense is the misery of man. It is the duty of all rational beings to acknowledge the truth. There is not the least trace of directing intelligence in human affairs. This is a foundation of hope, because, if the present condition of things were ordered by a superior power, there would be no possibility of improving it for the better in the spite of that power. Acknowledging that no such direction exists, all things become at once plastic to our will.—Richard Jefferies, "The Story of My Heart."

Acid Drops.

The Bishop of Chichester is reported to have said that all nations acted and reacted on one another, and that our country, beyond all others, could not live in isolated detachment from the misery, ambitions, problems, and developments of all other people on the face of the earth. It is true whether spoken by a Bishop or a dustman. At this rate, the Bishop would appear to be in danger of catching up with the times of a hundred years ago—but Thomas Paine put the case better.

Competition at home, competition abroad, the business of Christianity is beset now on every side. A correspondent in the *Manchester Guardian* informs us that Christian missions in Africa are having to enter in the sternest of contests with their Mohammedan rivals for the soul of the Bantu. We are not told what the Bantu's opinion is, but if it means working in factories and getting up at the word of command from a Birmingham alarm clock, he will be wise and stick to his own particular god, for there is no need to hawk gods about for the world is full of them.

The Rev. T. H. Passmore, in a book with a title almost running to a paragraph, is a good sample from bulk in the niceties of language. First, his book, *What the Man in the Street wants to know: Is there a plan?* The author, jumping to his subject quickly, addresses himself to "neither an Atheist nor a fool.....just a man of average intelligence, suspicious of clerical assertions, but quite interested in things that matter." There are many ways of answering this. First, the *tu quoque*; listening, neither as a parson nor a jackass. What have you to say? Second, the retort courteous: my dear sir, what is the matter with the pulpit when you have come out in a shilling book? Third, the retort effective: the man in the street wants to know where his next dinner is coming from, he probably wants a house to live in; he also wants a job, and if there is a plan, he wonders how the parson and his 50,000 brethren fitted into the design during the Great War—or if they are only useful for unveiling war memorials.

To keep the above gentleman company, another Rupert appears in the field. The Rev. Matthew J. W. Smith weighs in with a book entitled *Letters to an Infidel*. Says he, "To be an Atheist is a sign of a weak brain, and the infidel who denies the possibility of miracles is an ass." Shall we, brothers, turn on the Archbishop of Canterbury to answer this perfect Christian knight? The Archbishop has admitted that his band of men are a poor lot and they must burn more midnight oil. Or shall we tell Mr. Smith that the Christian is regarded as an infidel by the Turk? Or shall we tell him that he has forgotten the part played by an ass in his particular form of geographical belief? Or shall we tell him that this method of attack on Atheism went out of fashion two hundred years ago? We will do nothing of the kind, but let the member of the first-class brain society speak for himself:

Noah, a wealthy man, would scarcely have had more trouble hiring men to gather his menagerie together than the owner of a modern circus.....God could easily see that Noah got the price.

The conclusion of his book is that faith in Christ finds complete expression in the Roman Catholic Church. The rev. gentleman has much to learn, for even a rationalist could have put the Roman Catholic case much better.

Following the example of St. Paul's, the Sphinx now shows signs of cracking. Swedenborg's doctrine of correspondence could be used as a hat to fit the case if we wished to reach out at a theory that is like a nose of wax. Gods, monuments, institutions grow and decay, and in a thousand years pilgrims to London will wonder what particular joss was at the back of the people's mind who permitted a howitzer in stone to

be erected near to St. George's Hospital. The nation cannot shoot the moon with it, and the professional jealousy and animosity shown over Epstein's "Rima" is dumb and deaf over this monstrosity in stone that is not even up-to-date. A monument to a bomb containing a ton of poison gas would be *au fait* with the times and the crowning symbol of a Christian civilization.

During the fighting with the Turk the general opinion from the British soldier was that Johnny was a clean fighter and possessed virtues that were recognized at a time when in civilian life it was almost unlawful to mention them. Dr. Rennie McInnes, Bishop of Jerusalem, speaking at a meeting in London, pokes his ecclesiastical finger in the pie of politics, by saying that "it would be disastrous if we were to pursue the policy of scuttle in regard to the Irak mandate. It was a mistake to confuse the Turk with the Mohammedan world, where the Turk was profoundly distrusted." And the plain man can either take the word of a soldier of Christ or a soldier of Mars.

The *Spectator* for October 17 contains some suggestions for Parliamentary reform. Among other things it suggests "a reasonable number of life peers appointed to represent interests—such as the Free Churches—which are now excluded as such." That is a proposal which, if we remember rightly, was put forward some time back by some prominent Nonconformists, but that does not make it the less impertinent. The Free Churches have no greater right to be represented in this way than have friendly societies, or cricket and football clubs. The only possible ground for such a proposal is that religious organizations are an essential part of the State, and that is simply absurd. The State should have no knowledge of any Church, as such. It should be concerned with a Church exactly as it is concerned with any other group of people for any purpose whatever—giving it the same rights as other groups, neither more nor less. But we are so used to the impertinent claims of churches and chapels that they are usually taken as a matter of course.

Another writer in the same issue of the *Spectator* thinks that the life of the Christian Church in England would be enriched if turned "to the service of Christ the grandeurs of earlier beliefs, Egyptian, Persian, Babylonian, Indian, Chinese." Taking up bits from these earlier forms of faith as a means of giving renewed strength to the tottering Christian faith is distinctly good.

A friend suggests that in our notes on the *Daily Express* articles we ought to emphasize the fact that many of the writers have made a distinct approach towards Secularism even if they have not come the whole way. We pointed this out in the first article we wrote, but we are not given to brandishing the name of a man or woman as being upon our side merely because they happen to bulk in the public eye. Our work will go on whether these publicists recognize it or not, and, indeed, the extent to which they recognize it is usually a measure of the degree to which Free-thought has made it safe for them to view their own heresy. What they say is only a part of what they ought to say, and if they did say it, our own work would be so much the easier.

But there is a distinct danger in falling down in adoration before this or that man who has been lisping some qualified doubts about religion, merely because that man happens to have a title or is a well-known public character. The churches are quick to make the most of their admissions, and to slur over what they say against religion, and if we join the praising crowd, we are helping to strengthen the impression that this is all that Free-thought stands for, and what has been said represents all that can be said against religion. We do not care to weaken our position by any such intellectual tuft-hunting. In the history of Free-thought in this country

it has seldom been the highly-placed men who have made the running. This has been done by others, who have made it possible for the rest to speak a little more freely than they would have done without the preparation that has been made for them.

In the invocation of Ducdame we must include another exponent of leather who blows cold to the hot of his friends. In *The Real Thing*, by Benedict Williamson, with a preface by His Eminence Cardinal Gasquet—we shan't go on if you don't keep your face straight,—we are told that there is an overwhelming majority of the youth of to-day who are without a religion. The Benedict's remedy for this is to "expound the nature and being of God, the constitution of the spirit world, the Incarnation and Redemption of Christ, the grace of the sacraments, and the conditions of life after death." And from this one will readily understand the incantations of ancient medicine-men and incidentally admire, but not imitate, the wisdom of Ireland and Spain that can see a meaning in a string of words such as this rigma-role.

Edward Lawrence O'Toole was sentenced to sixteen months' imprisonment in the second division for perjury in a slander action. The judge, in his summing up, delivered himself as follows:—

And I am bound to accept such verdict, which is so strongly supported in the evidence. It follows as the result of that verdict that you are a man who is a discredit to your profession, your faith [O'Toole is a Roman Catholic], and your manhood. It is a lamentable thing that a man like you should ever have been allowed to be in charge of small children.

It is no pleasure to use the space of the *Freethinker* for matter of this kind, but, as our religious opponents, plain and coloured, high heels and low heels, would have the world believe that the absence of religion would spell disaster we are compelled to acknowledge its presence.

The latest biblical joke is the discovery of a tablet on which Moses returns thanks to the daughter of one of the Pharaohs rescuing him from the Nile. It is true that the professor who made this discovery was for many years puzzling his head as to the language in which the tablet was written and as it would not fit any other he came to the conclusion it must be Hebrew. It is also true that the name might not be Moses but would equally well read another name altogether, and that the Pharaoh named is not the one who is assumed to have lived at the time of the finding of Moses. But little things like these do not matter where theology is concerned. And there are people who have questioned the genuineness of the bottle of the original darkness that overspread Egypt.

Mr. Lloyd George occupied the pulpit of the City Temple the other day, and his obvious purpose was to mobilize, if possible, the Free Church vote at the next election in favour of whatever he decides by then will be the most likely policy to get votes. The churches, he said, had got to dominate the rulers of the world, which is what they have always been trying to do, sometimes with a fair measure of success, but generally with very little benefit to the people in general. If Mr. Lloyd George was in the habit of reading history we might remind him that the Christian Churches dominated the rulers and the people during the Dark Ages, and one consequence was the practical disappearance of the civilization of antiquity. It dominated in Byzantium, and that fell in its own rottenness. It had a period of domination in England, in Scotland, in Spain, in America, and in France, always there was the same result. Mr. Lloyd George reminded his audience that nineteen hundred years "after the Message" we had the most cruel war in the history of mankind, and it was waged by Christian nations." Quite true, and there are two things that the speaker conveniently forgot. The one is that the whole influence of the Christian

clergy in every country at war was thrown on the side of keeping at fever heat the hatred among the nations, and it was under his own administration that the circulation of the Sermon on the Mount was construed to be an offence against the well-being of the nation.

We rather like that phrase, "If we are spared," which religious people use as an equivalent of "If I am alive." If they are spared by whom? Obviously by God. If God can manage without them! Looking at a lot of people we know, we should feel inclined to ask how the Devil God will manage with them? But there is a world of conceit in most religious attitudes. It begins with the pious man's belief that God sent him here for a special purpose, continues with the conviction that God watches over his welfare, and ends with the avowal that God can no longer do without him, and so calls him home. We often wish him a rapid return.

Our religious fraternity during the Great War were the example *par excellence* in the instruction of hatred. There is no doubt that Germany's spiritual pastors were equally busy in the same direction. A weekly paper suggests that it is infinitely better that grievances should be aired in Geneva than that they should be stored up to inspire with revengeful hatred the younger German generation. And it was a Jew who stated that we all had enough religion to make us hate each other. In nineteen thick volumes there is work for Professor Quizzbagg to trace the murky streak of strife and hatred caused by the supposed discovery that man had a soul.

The Church Congress has found a hornet's nest in the Colour problem. A writer in the *Saturday Review*, discussing the actual difficulties, says: "When once we preach equality we must not forget that on that footing no nation will submit to being guided by foreigners." The missionary chickens are coming home to roost; they have preached from a basis fundamentally unsound; in the process they have thrown up a vast problem for Old England. And we have faith in the fact that there are still intelligent statesmen who will settle the matter with equity; if they do, they will be wise to close down the missionary section of the Empire together with Wembley; this would save expense.

In the *Life and Letters of William Boyd-Carpenter* we learn that the Bishop was a great favourite with Queen Victoria. She would have liked him to be Laureate, and Kaiser, several of whose letters as an eager Christian are included, set himself to popularise his religious writings in Germany. In spite of wind and water by the quacks of history the Kaiser has not got that choking feeling in the neck, and those who know of the rascality associated with State religions will only smile when the wonderful power of Christianity is mentioned.

ATHEISM AND THE RABBLE.

Narrow-mindedness sometimes expresses its apprehension that the people, when they no longer believe in a theological world and in immortality, will brutishly squander this life, and give the reins to the coarsest passions. I say nothing of the coarseness of referring mankind in general for their morality, not to reason, but to fear; but I ask you to consider how foolish is the supposition that the people, when they no longer believe in those things, will be still the same people who are now feared. The total discarding of such a belief does not take place in a day. But where it does occur there is necessarily connected with it a transformation of the whole manner of thought and a cultivation which excludes all fear of unbridled bestiality. Of this be assured, the rabble will never be made licentious through unbelief, because it will no longer be a rabble when it really abandons its belief. Only religion and the rabble belong together; Atheism and the rabble are a contradiction.—Karl Heinzen.

"Freethinker" Endowment Trust.

THE purpose of this Trust is to acquire sufficient funds which, by investment, will produce an income of £400 annually, the capital remaining intact. It is an endowment secured by legal Trust Deed, administered by five Trustees, of whom the editor of the *Freethinker* is one. It means giving the *Freethinker* permanent financial security, and is thus a businesslike and sound scheme, which should commend itself to all supporters of the Cause. A full explanation of the Trust was given in the issue of the *Freethinker* for October 4, and any further information will be given to anyone interested. At least £8,000 will be required, but, considering the number of *Freethinkers* at home and abroad who value the *Freethinker* and its work, there should be no great difficulty in securing that sum. It should be enough to remind givers that every gift to this Trust equals an annual donation.

The following is a complete list of subscriptions to date:—

Previously acknowledged, £3,181 8s. 6d. G. Saunders, £1; G. Robertson, £1; J. Robertson, £1; H. J. V. Templeman, £10; A. J. Watson, 10s.; E. L. Bishop, 2s.; J. W. Wood, £3 3s.; E. Whitehorn, £5 5s.; F. E. Thomas, £5; F. A. Hornibrook, £10 10s.; M. Barnard, 10s.; C. Rudd, £25; V. H. Smith, £10; George Royle, £10; L. W. Willis, £1; L. Ward, 10s.; J. Richards, £1; H. Bayliss, 10s.; W. McKelvie, £1; J. Ross, 5s.; J. Dobson, 5s.; J. C. K., £5; H. B. D., £1; A. G. Lyc, £10; Mr. H. M. S. Butler, £2 2s.; Mrs. L. J. Bourrows, 2s. 6d.; Miss D. M. Bourrows, 2s. 6d.; J. F. Hampson, £1; Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Harden, £5. Total, £3,293 5s. 6d.

Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the "Freethinker Endowment Trust," and crossed to the Midland Bank, Limited (Clerkenwell Branch). All letters should be addressed to the Editor, *Freethinker*, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

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.

We are obliged to hold over a number of replies to letters, including those received in connection with the Endowment Fund, till next week.

MR. C. E. STILL, who has been a reader of the *Freethinker* since its first issue, suggests that the raising of the sum required by the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust might be helped if someone in each locality would make himself responsible for collecting a given sum amongst his friends.

W. OWEN.—Thanks for promise of further subscription to Fund.

"TING."—Shall hope to see you if we are down Plymouth way.

H. R. MORTIMER.—We have no recollection of any book being left at our office, but as you say it was in 1917 it might have escaped our memory. Will you please let us know the title of the book. We may then be able to trace it, if it was received.

J. RICHARDS.—We greatly appreciate your good wishes for and high opinion of the *Freethinker*.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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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.

There was a fine audience in the Picton Hall, Liverpool, on Sunday last, to listen to Mr. Cohen's lecture on "Evolution and Christianity." The large hall was well filled, there being but few empty seats, and the lecture was followed throughout with evident appreciation. At the close of the lecture there was an avalanche of questions—not all of them pertinent to the subject. Mr. Egerton Stafford occupied the chair, and impressed upon all those who wished to see regular lecturing in Liverpool the need for their help. It is to be hoped that the advice will be taken to heart by all interested.

Mr. McKelvie, Mr. Stafford, and others had worked well to make the meeting—one of the largest held in Liverpool for many years—a success, and the result was well deserved. It is quite evident there is a large public in Liverpool for Freethought, and provided Mr. McKelvie receives the support he ought to get the hall should be crowded out when Mr. Cohen again lectures there on Nov. 22.

Mr. George Whitehead will visit Swansea next week, and on the Saturday evening (November 7) will lecture outside the Victoria Park gates. On the Sunday evening he will speak in the Shaftesbury Hall, St. Helen's Road. Both meetings will commence at 7 o'clock. Mr. Cohen has arranged to visit Swansea on December 13.

Too late for insertion last week, we received a report from our Plymouth Branch of their meeting on October 18, which augurs well for the future. There are several young, energetic, and sincere stalwarts in Plymouth, and it will not be their fault if the apathy of the town is not overcome. They meet again to-day (November 1) at the Labour Club Hall, Richmond Street, at 7.30.

Our readers will remember how frequently we asked, in connection with the Dayton case, whether any teacher would be permitted to do in an English school what Mr. Scopes was dismissed for doing in Texas. We had no reply, and we do not believe that it would be permitted anywhere in the country. We are reminded of this by a letter from an old friend, Mr. D. O. Bonvouini. Mr. Bonvouini was a teacher of many years' standing, and his work had given complete satisfaction. But he was accused of teaching his pupils evolution, and of saying that man made his gods. He was tried by the school managers, and although defended by the National Union of Teachers, ultimately dismissed, within a few years of arriving at pension age. The matter did not end there. His wife, also a head mistress in a school some few miles away, was also relieved of her

post. In this way there was a complete parallel to the Dayton case, for it will be remembered that Mr. Scope's sister was discharged on account of the views held by her brother. So between the Christians of Dayton and those of this country the substantial difference is too small for anyone but a parson to perceive. Both persecute so far as their opportunities will permit. The moral is that the only guarantee for genuine freedom of thought and expression is to go on making free-thinkers. With Christians it is never safe.

Dynamics, Philology, and Logic.

ONE may hope that it will not offend to write a few thoughts on the above-named subjects in the mere desire to be understood, and not to lay down any law, or force acquiescence in matters where there is room for cool and reasonable debate.

In the first place, there is no such thing as static energy. The words are mutually destructive. A very elementary study of astronomy, geology, anthropology, or any other of what may be called the basic sciences, or the sciences which divide into minor paths of research, will easily show this to be true. All energy is dynamic, though those of its forms which act as in the paths just named are so slow, and take such immense periods in the accomplishment of such small changes, that man in his short and hurried life cannot appreciate them, and speaks of the agents of such tremendous changes as the formation of the solar system, and the evolution of life, as dead matter.

The wonderful energy of "dead matter" is ever striving to produce more perfect forms, that is, not perfect according to the orthodox biblical, or stage hero, meaning of that term, but perfect in assimilation to, or mastery of, environment. Man, the most marvellous product of this "static energy," has, by its continuous action, been evolved from inorganic matter to the highly efficient automaton of to-day, which appears likely to embody in the future all "static energy"; that is, to be the means through which it will act. One must hesitate to describe man as a machine, or a contrivance for the accomplishment of certain tasks; man is, like the mighty bodies of "dead matter" which circle in space, an automaton, without contriver, without purpose, and without controller, save that mysterious gravitation which keeps all things temporarily within certain limits. Temporarily, because, like everything else, the law of gravity is only relatively true, being dependent upon conditions which have not always existed, and which must inevitably change. Nothing is true for all time except the great truth—continuous change.

This fact brings up the second theme, philology. Language is a very wonderful and a very beautiful medium of human (and, perhaps, in a humble way, of animal) intercourse.

When one looks back and realizes that at a comparatively recent geological period man must have been dumb, save for such cries as those of a modern dog to its kind, the perfection of human speech is an amazing thing. But speech is like all other things and from its great labours, in a greater degree than most things, the creature of change. The early small groups of men must have even found out the futility of sounds and names without order, and invented means by which coherence might be given to their new accomplishment, and thus brought into being the beautiful science of grammar, without which language is mere noise. The first need in grammar was and is, that the people in any tribe or nation shall agree to certain fixed rules in their oral and written intercourse, and this is so absolutely necessary and

generally known that the elementary rules as to the tenses, and, in a lesser degree, the moods, are inherited, as it were, and not taught. No one, however illiterate, ignores the necessity for distinguishing past, present, and future. The process of perfecting a language went on until the machinery was too complicated for everyday human needs, and it became a "dead language," only to be used, like a ruined building, as a source of raw material for new tongues. The fate befell the sanscrit (which bears the same relation to the Aryan group of languages as Latin does to the Romance group), the Greek, the Latin, and, no doubt, will in due time overtake each of the great living tongues. The Romance languages sprung from the general ruin of things Roman, and compounded of Latin, Celtic, and German elements, have gone farther on the way than English; they have reached the rule-and-line stage which precedes old age, though, circumstances being very much different from those which saw the death of the older tongues, it may be long ere they be relegated to the libraries. English is a brand-new tongue, dating only from the Tudor period, Shakespeare being the first writer of it as we know it to-day. Anglo-Saxon, Norman, French, Gaelic or Celtic, and Latin joined in the production of the wonderful and beautiful medium used by Englishmen now. To speak of Latin as Anglo-Saxon as "old English" is just as meaningless as to speak of Latin as "old French." English is the newest language, and has all the drawbacks of that condition. But it is evolving a grammar of its own, and in spite of its youth, can be used for the expression of the most subtle shades of meaning. In the application of energy to his everyday needs man has coined certain phrases such as "generation of energy," "static energy," "kinetic energy," which are not strictly correct, but are generally understood. By the first phrase, most people at once understand the changing of energy, which is useless to man into energy which serves his needs. It is also widely known that "static" is the accepted name of the first and "kinetic" of the second. As to generation, man cannot generate anything; he is merely one of the vehicles of expression of "static energy," which uses him in the "generation" of "kinetic energy."

It has been remarked above that in the phrase "static energy," the words are mutually destructive, and that is true if original meanings are considered; but original meanings are constantly giving way to generally accepted meanings, which eventually are the only ones that count. The phrase "false friend" is just as contradictory, yet it is generally used and understood, while there are many words like "let," "knave," etc., whose meanings are now the exact opposite to their original ones. Words exactly alike in structure, mean quite different things in French and English, and in the latter tongue especially, words are so overworked, have so many meanings, or shades of meaning, that it is the phrase, or sentence, which must convey the sense.

Logic, the handmaid of grammar, long the slut of medieval godologists, endeavours to teach the arts of careful thinking and adequate expression of thought, and is only useful as long as it is kept to those purposes. Logic, in the service of the Scottists and Thomists, was the handmaid of lunacy.

What is said above about the law of gravity may appear indefensible to many persons. For an outright Atheist, Newton's dictum, while superficially convincing, and apparently explaining the motions discovered by Copernicus and Kepler, is suspect. By particularizing matter, it would seem to imply that matter is not alone in the universe, an implication which, like the Trinity of the Athanasian Creed, is

incomprehensible. Matter in some form, or without form, "prisoned in the viewless winds, and blown with restless violence round about the pendant world," must be omnipresent, as vacuity is not comprehensible to the only media of recognition—the five senses. So that, in order to prove gravity absolutely true, it must be shown how the atoms composing the great heavenly bodies came together, what took the places they vacated, and why a form of matter exists over which it has no control, but through which it must act. Ether is a "lame and impotent conclusion" which explains nothing. It may be alleged that the Atheist is too ready to see "God in clouds and hear him in the wind," but when one sees him being reincarnated as often as Vishnu through the media of pseudo-sciences like phrenology, psychology, bacteriology, etc., and even Freethinkers gravitating towards "First Cause" idiocy, one is bound to be watchful. Newton, of course, even if he were an "infidel" himself, which is not probable, would have been forced by his time to leave a loophole for "the Ancient of Days" to peep through. Another thing which will have to be explained is, what is becoming of the particles of the diminishing sun, and why are the relative positions of the planets slowly but surely changing? One cannot reconcile these things with the absolute truth of the law of gravity.

It should be quite possible to discuss these things without rancour when one knows that one's opponent is not actuated by desire of gain, or by ignorant faith in ridiculous idols. For the first, no satire, no condemnation, can be too strong; for the second, the proper weapon is not rancour, but laughter. For earnest seekers after truth, a careful consideration of all points of view in friendly intercourse.

A. RUSSELL.

Society News.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.

The debate between Mr. Kerr and Mr. Saville went off extremely well, and was followed by a good discussion and some excellent speeches from members of the audience, which was a very good one. Mr. Ratcliffe's chairmanship is always a feature of these meetings, his cheery good humour helping to keep up the tone of the proceedings. The lecture on Sunday, November 1, is by Mr. F. A. Hornibrook, author of *The Culture of the Abdomen and Physical Fitness in Middle Life*. The subject of the lecture is "Cleanliness v. Godliness." Mr. Hornibrook will deal particularly with the subject of constipation, its cure, and its deleterious effects on the mind and body. During the course of the lecture, Mr. Hornibrook will give an exhibition of several native dances, and will demonstrate the remedial exercises based on these. North London friends, please be early, as we expect a full house and the accommodation is limited.—K.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.

On Sunday next (November 1) the South London Branch N.S.S. will open its indoor season at New Morris Hall, 79 Bedford Road, Clapham, with a musical evening, to which all local friends are cordially invited. Members of the Branch are asked to note also that a library and recreation room has been established at the hall by the local Branch, where members (who may bring their friends along) are cordially invited to spend an hour or two in congenial company. The room will be open from 7.30 to 10 o'clock each Wednesday during the indoor season, or until further notice. Please note that no lecture programmes will be printed, but the usual notices of lectures will appear in the *Freethinker*.—A. HEATH, Hon. Sec.

The Bernard Shaw Illusion.

It is time someone told the truth about George Bernard Shaw. For many moons I have waited for the coming of a superman who would, once and for all, put an end to the conspiracy surrounding "the most brilliant, baffling, and provocative writer of modern times." But mankind hugs its illusions; it does not like to be undeceived; and it is more than possible that did such an one arise and proclaim the fact that the Shavian divinity is a myth, that he has no more tangible existence than Jehovah or Mumbo Jumbo, there would immediately go up a cry of "Crucify Him!"—or rather, "to the lethal chamber with him"—from the devotees of the Shavian religion. Yet have I waited in the hope that the Life Force would screw its courage to the sticking point and produce such a hero—but, in vain! At last, my impatience outrunning my discretion, I have decided to do it myself. Know ye then that the Shavian divinity is a chimera—a myth. George Bernard Shaw? My dear unsophisticated reader: "there ain't no sich person!"

I have been led—or perhaps I ought to say *provoked*—to undertake this delicate and difficult task by the unfortunate indiscretion of my friend, George Whitehead. Mr. Whitehead is the gentlest, as well as the most genial, soul who ever smote God in the solar plexus; he is, moreover, an *ethical* God-smiter, he would scorn to smite the most vengeful god were he not assured that it was for the latter's own good—and yet, in *Bernard Shaw Explained*, we find him joining in this monstrous conspiracy to foist upon an indulgent public an alleged genius who is not only *not* a genius, but who—as I hope to show—has no more real existence than Tom Thumb. I have long since abandoned any pretence at understanding the motives of the gentlemen—many of them honourable enough in other respects—who continue year in and year out to countenance this deception. In some dim sort of way I feel that their action is only explicable ultimately on pathological grounds. In Mr. Whitehead's case I can only assume that he himself has been deceived by others; it is incredible that he should present me with a copy of his book with the suggestion that I might "find something in it to write about," unless he was acting in good faith. I value his friendship too highly to believe that he would consciously draw me into the conspiracy, and have me perjure my soul by keeping up this miserable pretence that George Bernard Shaw is really a man of flesh and blood and "one of the most remarkable products the Life Force has so far evolved." I therefore accept his good faith the while I marvel at his credulity. He is evidently a "true believer."

I have already hinted at the fact that my task is a difficult one; in attempting to show that George Bernard Shaw has no tangible existence I have to sustain a negative. Clearly one cannot prove non-existence: the onus of proof rests on they who assert his existence. Unfortunately the people who assert the existence of George Bernard Shaw never offer any proof, they take his existence for granted. There are no Boyle lectures to prove the existence of G. B. S. Under these circumstances one can only examine critically the writings said to have emanated from the Shavian divinity, together with the other indirect testimonies to his existence, alleged photographs of the accused, etc., and if we do this I think we shall find ourselves reaching a negative conclusion—not negative in an agnostic sense, the completeness of the evidence leaves no room for suspended judgment, but the negation of complete Atheism. George Bernard Shaw is as mythical as the Gospel Jesus, and

the writings bearing his name are a composite collection of unknown origin bearing internal evidence of their varied authorship. There are times when even Mr. Whitehead appears to be about to stumble on this truth, as shall presently appear, but in all such cases his faith in the Shaw illusion proves too strong for his more critical intelligence.

At the conclusion of one of my lectures a questioner once arose and said, "Mr. Speaker, Bernard Shaw says—" I forget now what it was that Shaw was supposed to have said—I know it was something perfectly idiotic—but I remember the feeling of terror that gripped my heart, I felt instinctively that if ever I attempted to defend anything that G. B. S. was supposed to have said I was a lost man. The crisis passed, however, and, recovering my self-possession, I replied that I couldn't be justly held responsible for the mental aberrations of George Bernard Shaw. Something of this sort appears to have occurred to Mr. Whitehead, for his "critical exposition of the Shavian religion" is much more critical than expository. I am glad of this. I should hate to see him go down to posterity as the founder of a Neo-Shavian cult. My only complaint is that his critical faculty is employed in the wrong direction. He gathers together under various headings all the insane and contradictory things G. B. S. is supposed to have written, and attempts the hopeless task of reconciling the divergencies, explaining just what Shaw meant, and generally extracting the wheat from the chaff—and there is certainly an abundance of "chaff" in the purported writings of G. B. S. But once realize that these contradictory utterances are not the work of *one* person, but *several*, and how easy the problem becomes! There is nothing to reconcile, and a critical exposition becomes a work of supererogation.

On page 62 Mr. Whitehead says:—

Unfortunately, the two [contradictory] aspects of Shaw's teaching.....do not occur sequentially, but concurrently. If Mr. Shaw at one time in his career had preached selfishness and railed at duty, and had later become converted to opposite views of life, writing consistently as he felt during the two periods, he would be both easier to explain and easier to understand. *But, then, he would not be Bernard Shaw!*

You will observe in the sentence I have italicized how near Mr. Whitehead comes to the heart of the problem. But the inference is all wrong. I submit that the very fact that we find this mysterious personage uttering contradictory opinions at one and the same time suggests the fact that he is *not* Bernard Shaw—in other words it suggests that *the name* Bernard Shaw is an invention, and that the opinions expressed are those of more than one person.

In order to support the Shavian thesis Mr. Whitehead embarks on what I am compelled to regard as the wildest imagining ever brought to the support of a hard-pressed theory. He says:—

If a good, full-face portrait of Bernard Shaw is studied, it will be noticed that the two sides of the face are dissimilar in appearance.....one side being gravely respectable, the other being blessed with a Mephistophelian impishness, both together expressing the two aspects of his temperament.....Having these diverse elements in his nature, and being in the habit of very definitely voicing the claims of any of his instincts or ideas, the result is the somewhat confusing medley of opinions which is scattered throughout his works.

Thus does Mr. Whitehead expound the "duality of Bernard Shaw." Personally, if George's analysis of Shaw's portrait is correct, I think it demonstrates the truth of the mythical theory. Being a mythical character any "portrait" is bound to be a fake, and a portrait with two dissimilar sides to the features

sounds like a composite creation—I certainly have never encountered any such thing in the flesh. There is a further point not touched upon—the Shavian beard. Why should any man nowadays wear a beard except for purposes of disguise? It's not hygienic. And so I say to those who declare they have *seen* Bernard Shaw—"Ah! You have seen a man with a beard who said he was Shaw." Anyone can hide their features behind a wilderness of fungi, talk nonsense, and pose as Shaw.

The late Frank Richardson, who spent his life in denouncing what he termed "the folly of face-fittings," said:—

The man who is perpetually "made up" to represent the thing he is not should be shunned both in business and in society. I do not maintain that all bearded men are rogues and murderers. But I reserve my judgment, and suspect them of roguery and homicide. Of the clean-shaven man I know the worst after some few moments of inspection. But the man whose mouth you have never seen must ever remain a stranger to you. Though you meet him daily for twenty years, yet you never see his smile. In moments of merriment *something* happens behind a hairy curtain. Is it the treacherous smile of the false friend? You are in the dark.....The worst face in the world may be rendered negative at least, benevolent at best, by the addition of a long white beard. A man on whose mouth and chin are stamped the trade-marks of a hundred brands of villainy can with such an appendage march gravely and reverently through the world.

The significance of the foregoing, and its bearing on the Shaw illusion, will be apparent to every intelligent reader.

Having thus thoroughly shattered the case for the historicity of George Bernard Shaw there is no need for me to deal at length with the Shavian religion. Its chief dogma lies in the postulate of a Life Force which is part and parcel of—nay which *is*—the universal process. Logically it is a form of Pantheism. It meets the old theistic dilemma thus: "Evils such as cancer and other diseases occur not by the will of the Life Force, but because at the time it can do no better." This reminds one of Anatole France's ironic apology for Nature—"We should not *blame* Nature. Nature *is everything*. And it is very difficult to be everything. It results in much awkwardness and heavy-handedness." One may hope that once the mythical character of the Shavian idol becomes known the religion will cease to attract adherents. And yet I am *not* hopeful. Credulity dies hard. It is sufficient for me to send forth this little treatise in the hope that it will commend itself to all earnest students and ripe scholars. As it leaves me at present.

VINCENT J. HANDS.

Correspondence.

SIR OLIVER LODGE: AN APPRECIATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—As Mr. Crowest is apparently unaware that Sir Oliver Lodge has any other claim to scientific distinction than the authorship of an excellent book on Mechanics, perhaps you will allow me to correct the false impression likely to be made by his letter of September 27.

In the first place, Sir Oliver Lodge would probably prefer to be called a physicist rather than a scientist, as physics was his special subject, and the day is long since past when any one man, however able, can spread himself over the whole range of science.

Sir Oliver is not, I believe, a Cambridge man, but attended at University College, London, where he was a student of, among others, the late William Kingdon

Clifford, from whom he no doubt acquired something of his very clear and vigorous style of exposition. In 1881 he was appointed Professor of Physics at University College, Liverpool, which position he held until 1900, when he was appointed Principal of the, then, new University of Birmingham. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society, which awarded him the Rumford Medal in 1898 for his researches in physics. These are a few of his scientific distinctions.

It will thus appear that in his own subject Sir Oliver was, in his day, an authority, and though now an old man he is still writing vigorously (*e.g. Atoms and Rays*, 1924), to bring home to the general reader the results of the work of younger men, to whom he always pays ungrudging tribute, in the field in which he was himself years ago a pioneer.

I am glad to be able to make this correction in the case of one of whom I count myself a student, for though I never attended his classes, I have learned much from his books and papers, have heard him at scientific societies and met him personally. In his excursions, however, in religious and psychical subjects I, like many others, am quite unable to follow him, and this applies also to the utterances of other great physicists such as Stokes, Kelvin, Clerk Maxwell, Tait and Balfour Stewart, who, though rigorously scientific in their own domain, seem to shed all their science when dealing with these matters. This, however, is no justification for disparaging such men in the subjects which they have made their own.

J. A. TOMKINS.

BLACK AND WHITE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

SIR,—The sarcastic tone of Mr. Latham's letter hardly makes it a serious contribution to a very serious matter. Perhaps as an old resident in South Africa (thirty-two years, including twelve in Johannesburg), you may permit me a few words on the subject. How serious the matter is will be apparent when I point out that in the Union of South Africa (which includes the Cape, Natal, the Transvaal and Orange Free State) there are only a million and a half whites, whilst there are about seven millions of blacks. These blacks are virile (their natural rate of increase being greater than that of the whites), and they are intelligent—rapidly learning trades and the handling of machines. They are, moreover, increasingly anxious to acquire book learning. They have several newspapers of their own, and they are rapidly becoming colour-conscious, which is more dangerous than class-consciousness, for each member carries with him a most conspicuous sign of his membership! The natives are being forced to learn (in the interests of the whites) to be industrious, obedient, and frugal, and if it be true, as Dean Inge says (and I think it is) that the thrifty races shall inherit the earth, the outlook is gloomy for that impossible abstraction, "White South Africa." I admit it is not true that the natives are, generally, personally ill-treated. No such excesses as have disgraced America have ever soiled South Africa. Of course, instances of brutality have occurred. The white offender is usually frowned upon but allowed to go free. In the courts when charged with serious offences the natives get fair justice done to them. In the smaller courts, for lesser charges, they do not get the same justice as a white man. And, of course, they are never tried by their "peers."

The big employers, such as the mining houses, treat them well, just as they do their mules; obviously it is their own interest to treat them so. The natives are well fed, well housed, provided with recreation, a certain amount of liberty outside the "compound," and excellent medical attendance. I fear they are frequently robbed by the concession stores (shops) and when Johannesburg is occasionally startled by the murder of a storekeeper and the burning of his store, the wise man knows that Nemesis has followed tardily on evil-doing and that the cup of the storekeeper's iniquity was full. For the South African native on the whole is a good fellow, easy going, merry, timid. At least, I have found him so. Probably such men are formidable when roused: I do not know; I am by no means saying that there are no bad natives; that would be absurd, but they are usually most in evidence in the slack

newspaper season, when there are no test matches and the giant gooseberry is not yet ripe.

That is one side of the picture. Now for the slavery side. The S.A. native has no rights whatever in his own land, in the only land he and his ancestors have ever known. When a Minister of the Crown in S.A. said the other day, threateningly to the Imperial Government, that the country was going to be governed by the people of the country, he meant the white people only, the one-eighth of the total population. This was during the discussion of the Colour Bar Bill (happily thrown out by the Senate, but by no means dead) which barred a man of black skin from certain jobs, no matter what his ability might be. A negro may be a B.Sc. and a M.I.C.E., yet he would not be allowed to wire a house for electric light. In his own country he must abandon hope, for never can he be anything but a hewer of wood and a drawer of water. When in 1899 President Kruger refused to give the franchise to the rich outlanders who openly threatened to use it to subvert the State, and who wanted all the advantages of enfranchisement without any of its disadvantages, Lord Milner called them "helots," and the Boer War, costing England three hundred million pounds, was the consequence. If these men are helots, what are the natives?

What I have already said will probably have only a distant interest for readers of the *Freethinker*. The following may be more *a propos*. The seven million natives are described in the census returns as having no religion, except a very small percentage, who have been, at considerable cost, raked into one or other of the orthodox churches, including Mohammedans. But the curious fact stands out that Rationalists and Christians in South Africa unite in agreeing that a Christianized native is a spoiled native. That Christians should denounce the merits of their own religion is curious, but explicable. There is nothing that will more easily make a white Christian in S.A. angry than to suggest that in Heaven he may have to associate with negroes, and to point out that Jesus was a coloured man and would not be allowed to enter South Africa, much less to have a vote there, is one of the easiest ways of making these same Christians gnash upon you with their teeth. But I cannot understand how Freethinkers get into that galley.

F. J. NANCE.

Marseilles.

JESUS AS A FREETHINKER.

SIR,—Miss Rout's second letter is an amusing example of "how to get out of it." It seems now that I ought to define the word "freethinker." But I never said Jesus was a Freethinker, and if Miss Rout had a special significance for the word as applied to Jesus, she ought to have carefully said so. Jesus, we are told now, thought freely "in accordance with available knowledge." That is, he added to the Judaism of his time, a "Son of God," heavenly mansions and hell fire and immortality in one or the other, and he was, therefore, a "Freethinker." I hope we poor "out-of-date" Freethinkers are now satisfied.

Miss Rout also claims that she never said Bradlaugh and Ingersoll were "simple" Bible-bangers or "wholly" out of date, for which the shades of these two great men ought to be humbly thankful. It is a characteristic of "reverent" Rationalists that, while lauding up Jesus to the skies, they go quite out of their way to disparage the pioneers of Rationalism. One finds the same characteristic in Christian birth-controllers. Dr. Marie Stopes can never mention Bradlaugh without Christian contempt, and the joke is that, if any admirer of the work of Bradlaugh or Ingersoll or Paine dares to stand up in defence of the kind of disparagement, both Miss Rout and Dr. Stopes indulges in, he is called to task for his "hero" worship or his "Secular Saints' Calendar." Perhaps when Miss Rout can once again come into the lurid light of publicity, she will tell us how one can defend the great Freethinkers without showing she and those who think like her, are quite wrong?

But my discussion with Miss Rout was on the question of Jesus as a Freethinker, and not about Bradlaugh or Ingersoll at all. And I am very sorry that she has not told me how I can find the real Jesus stripped of

"priestly tinsel and lies." Is it not extraordinary that when I—poor out-of-date Freethinker—do the stripping, Jesus himself completely disappears!

Is it too much to hope that when Miss Rout has finished her big book that she will give us the true Jesus as a Freethinker once for all? "Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished."

H. CUTNER.

SIR,—I notice a letter in your issue of the 11th, signed by Miss Ettie A. Rout. If this is the eminent authoress whose books have given me such pleasure, it (the letter) seems to me incompatible with her previous writings. She says: "I see no inherent beauty or wisdom in irrationality and irreverence." As to the irrationality, I agree, but the second is, in my opinion, the very first step in mental freedom, and Miss Rout would know it before long if she lived here. One objection I have to the Bible is this very attitude of reverence, which precludes the possibility of anyone judging it impartially, and is one reason why its tyranny has been so pernicious and lasting. Further, there is the sentence: "Some so-called Christians believe that the Bible is the word of God; some so-called Freethinkers that it is a fake." Both statements seem to me entirely wrong. I would say: All Christians believe the Bible to be the word of God; no Freethinkers believe it to be a fake, but a book that was written by ignorant men for a still more ignorant people. The idea of Jesus as a Freethinker when his intolerance is cited and his denunciation of others who would not accept his absurd ethics, disposes of this contention. In conclusion, I do not agree that the fundamental principles of Freethought alter. Ingersoll is just as good to-day—and as appropriate—as fifty years ago, and the same applies to Foote.

I would conclude by advising Miss Rout to get amongst some *real* Christians such as we have here—the "true" variety, and I am sure her views will be considerably modified.

ROBERT BROWN.

Belfast.

Obituary.

It is with deep regret we have to announce the death, at the age of thirty-six, of John Morley Richards, of the Manchester Branch, which occurred on Sunday morning, October 18. He was one of the most regular supporters of the Branch, and had recently been elected a member of the Committee. He was a man in whom everyone could place reliance. Whatever he did he did well. His last words were expressions of appreciation for the attention given him by relatives and friends during his short illness. An appropriate service was conducted at the Manchester Crematorium at noon on Thursday, October 22, by Mr. Bayford, who added a personal tribute. We extend to his wife, children, and relatives our very deepest sympathy in their great loss.—W. COLLINS.

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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.

INDOOR.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N.W.): 7.30, Mr. F. A. Hornibrook, "Cleanliness *versus* Godliness."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (New Morris Hall, Middle Floor, 79 Bedford Road, Clapham): 7, Social. All friends welcome.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): 7, R. Dimsdale Stocker, "The Consumer as a Social Asset."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11, Right Hon. J. M. Robertson, "The Pretensions of Religious Emotion."

STANLEY HALL (Hallam Street, Great Portland Street, W.1.): 8, Mr. E. C. Saphin, "The Phallic Element in Christianity." With Lantern Illustrations.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Socialist Club, 17 Wood Street): 2.30, W. J. Sisson, "Christ and Reformers."

FAILSWORTH SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Sunday-school, Pole Lane, Failsworth): Saturday, November 7, American Tea and Social.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Hon. Bertrand A. W. Russell, M.A., "What I Believe."

PLYMOUTH BRANCH N.S.S. (Labour Club Hall, Richmond Street): 7.30, a Lecture.

OUTDOOR.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Hall Steps): Friday, November 6, at 7.30, Messrs. Addison, Partington, and Sisson.

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Friends desiring to benefit the Society are invited to make donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favour in their wills. The now historic decision of the House of Lords in *re Bowman and Others v. the Secular Society, Limited*, in 1917, a verbatim report of which may be obtained from its publishers, the Pioneer Press, or from the Secretary, makes it quite impossible to set aside such bequests.A *Form of Bequest*.—The following is a sufficient form of bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—

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