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Views and Opinions.

Society and Religion.

There is one passage in a letter of Spinoza's in which the philosopher shows—what is not usual with him—passion. He is replying to a correspondent who asks him what reason there is for good conduct if there be no future life in which rewards and punishments are served out. I see, he says, in what mud this man sticks. He has no perception of the nature of morality, and only bridles his passions here in order that he may the more fully gratify them hereafter. It was a scathing, but a deserved reply, and the position attacked represented the orthodox Christian position from St. Paul, with his paltry "If there be no resurrection from the dead, then let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die," down to quite recent times when the growth of unbelief forced upon Christians a better understanding of the nature of morals. And along with Spinoza's scathing reply might well go that of John Ruskin to one who had written to him saying that if the clergy were to disappear from English society the poor and the oppressed would lose their best friends. That, replied Ruskin, I consider the very hardest thing that has ever been said about the clergy. For, he went on to explain, what it means is that the Christian clergy, having had charge of society for so long, have done their work so badly that we are still ignorant of the duties we owed to each other. What others saw as a good side of the priesthood, Ruskin properly took to be a count in the indictment against them. A Church, wielding the power that the Christian Church has wielded, would not have left society in the state it is in, had it, instead of impressing upon men the necessity for eternal salvation, aimed at educating them in a sane and useful conception of social life and its duties.

* * *

Morality as Difference.

These two comments of two great characters came into our mind on reading a sentence in the *Church Times* for April 23. The sentence was written—editorially—apropos of what is alleged to be taking place in Russia and Mexico. We do not know whether it is correct in what it says or not. Our readers know quite well that we are no advocates of coercion in matters of opinion, whether the

opinion that does the coercion be Christian or non-Christian. The *Freethinker* has always upheld the right of a Christian body to all the freedom that a State allows any other corporate body, and holds it to be the duty of the State to leave religion alone, to stand quite neutral. But for very good reasons we strongly suspect the truth of the statement that the governments of either Mexico or Russia are opposed to moral conduct. Christians are very peculiar, particularly the British variety, and very many of them seem quite unable to discriminate between different standards of morality, or a different scale of moral values, and a denial of morality as such. Freedom from insular and religious prejudice might convince them that the notion of a people being either opposed to morality, or bent upon destroying morality, is simply absurd. The early Christian Church, with its laudation of the celibate life, and its neglect of the social and intellectual virtues, came as near a destruction of what we should now regard as a healthy morality, as was possible. But it would be absurd to talk of it as aiming at the destruction of morality. What it did was to rearrange qualities in a new order of value, and place first what should have been placed last. In all these cases we must learn to distinguish between degrees of difference and the question of better or worse. Unfortunately the average Christian cannot so discriminate. If people are different from us, they must be worse than us. And the British variety cannot see why if the world takes its time from the meridian of Greenwich, it cannot also take its morality from Clapham.

* * *

A Hopeless Creed.

At any rate the *Church Times* in criticising Russia and Mexico sets out the resounding statement that "the destruction of religion means the destruction of morality." We do not want, at least for the moment, to argue whether that is true or not, but merely to re-echo Ruskin and to say that if it is true it is one of the most frightful condemnations of the Christian Church that has ever been written. Of course, to an earlier generation of Christians the expression would pass without comment. The sole business of man being to save his immortal soul in the next world, anything that interfered with that aim was bad, and anything that promoted it was good. But we are living in the twentieth century, not in the tenth, and things are different. Christian writers are fond of reminding us that the civilization of the West is fundamentally Christian, and without agreeing with the statement, it may be taken to carry the admission that for many centuries the Christian Church has exerted a powerful influence on the life of the people of Europe. More, in the region of conduct it has claimed supreme rights, and has gone a long way towards moulding popular conceptions of right and wrong. And as the outcome of all this we have—if the *Church Times* is correct in saying that if the destruction of religion goes, morality goes—a people so immature in matters of morals that their preference for honesty over roguery, for truth-telling

over lying, or for cleanliness over uncleanness, is so weak, that only the belief in God and a future life can keep them within the confines of decent behaviour. Well, a Church that has had the education of the people in hand for about sixteen centuries, and can do no better than that hardly needs an elaborate indictment to secure its conviction. Some weeks ago when a Manchester parson made a similar statement in a local paper, in the course of a reply, we declined to consider the statement as representative of anything but the more orthodox and lower type of religious belief. I did not expect he would have on his side the *Church Times* in his advocacy of the policeman theory of morals.

* * *

A Broken Reed.

It is possible that the *Church Times* might cite some cases in which the rejection of religious beliefs have been followed by general loose living. We do not believe such cases are common, but we are prepared to admit them, and the more numerous such cases are the worse it is for the Christian Church, the more telling becomes the sentence cited from Ruskin. For it is certain that if the Christian Church had taught healthy doctrines such things would never have been possible. Of course, if you go on teaching, with St. Paul, that the only reason for behaving is that there is a resurrection from the dead, after which you will go to heaven or hell, or with Jesus that the reason for doing good is that your Father in Heaven will reward you, or with the bulk of orthodox Christian teachers that a man is a fool who "restrains" his passions if there are no future rewards and punishments, if young men and women are brought up with no better and no saner teaching than this, if their morality rests on no better basis than a man's withholding from picking a pocket because he sees a detective at his elbow, there can be small wonder if when religious doctrines lose their force there sets in a weakening in other directions. But the responsibility for this surely lies with those teachers who, in the name of morality, have been pursuing a course of inevitable demoralization. And if the demoralization does not usually occur one must thank forces other than religious ones which have proven themselves superior to all that religious teaching could do to weaken and destroy. If the intelligence of the pulpit were at all commensurate with its clamour, or if its good influence equalled its opportunities, we should not have Christian preachers asserting that their congregations are made up of men and women who would not lead decent lives without the belief in a number of more or less ridiculous religious dogmas.

* * *

Man and Morals.

A sentence such as the one cited from the *Church Times* throws a strong light on the claims made nowadays as to the value of the social gospel of Christianity. Christianity has no such message. Essentially it is undiluted Supernaturalism, with no conception whatever as to the determination of social growth by forces resident within society itself. It knows nothing of the nature of morality nor of the conditions of its growth. We do not mean by this that it has been without the commonplace moral maxims which sheer experience has forced upon all, careless of what their views on religion might be. We mean only that the statement "the destruction of religion means the destruction of morality" implies that the natural relations between people, and the feelings engendered by such relations, are not in themselves adequate to induce a decent level of

conduct. And that is really about as demoralizing a doctrine as one could preach. Fortunately, it is not true. Fortunately Christians are not quite so bad as their champions would have us believe. Parentage, friendship, citizenship, all the relations of life would certainly have as strong claims in the absence of religion as they have with it. It is an insult to every decent-minded man or woman to pretend otherwise. And if the Christian Church had played the part of a real educator in matters of morals the nature of morality would to-day be sufficiently understood to make claims as to the dependence of morality upon religion read like the utterances of a fool or a lunatic. The world, it is true, is not so good as it might be; its blunders, and even its crimes, are great enough in all conscience, but mankind is hardly the poor helpless and degraded thing that Christian philosophy pictures it.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Immortality.

THE Rev. W. R. Matthews, D.D., Dean of King's College, London, recently preached in Westminster Abbey a remarkable sermon, entitled, "The Gift of Eternal Life," a verbatim report of which appears in the *Christian World Pulpit* for April 22. The text is John vi. 40: "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who seeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." While Dr. Matthews does not regard John's Gospel as being historically as reliable as the other three, yet he finds that criticism is inclined to give increasing value to its "interpretations of the significance of Christ." For example, in the other Gospels Jesus is represented as continually speaking of the kingdom of God, a conception which, the preacher thinks, "was a necessary and fruitful one," because it was taken from "the current thought of the time," and Jesus "used it as the vehicle for his spiritual message." In John's Gospel, however, that conception does not occur. John reports Jesus as employing another and more philosophical conception, namely that of eternal life, and naturally Dr. Matthews proceeds to consider the meaning of this conception. He dwells on the sadness of human life, and endeavours to show how the sense of that sadness, the sense, that is, that life has no permanence, gave rise to the belief in a future life. "Nothing is more surprising," he tells us, "than the fact that even the lowest savages seem invariably to believe in some future life beyond the grave. They have refused, or perhaps they have been unable, to imagine the world going on without themselves, and they have asserted that the appearance of universal death and extinction is not true." Of course, readers of Tylor's *Primitive Culture* are fully aware that this is by no means an accurate account of the origin of the belief in a life after death, but the all-important point is that Dr. Matthews does not seem to hold the view that man is by nature an immortal being. Indeed, he holds that primitive belief in contempt, saying:—

Let us try to understand what this belief meant, to see how it differs from the Christian faith in eternal life. The savages to whom I have referred, and other more civilized nations, such as the Egyptians, believed that the soul would be transported after death to another place where it would go on living and acting in much the same way as it had done in this life. The essence of their hopes was for an indefinite prolongation of the present. Are there not many people to-day who

have the same hope and nothing more? The Gospel they want to hear, the good news they want to prove, if that be possible, is simply that they will not be extinguished. But how banal and unsatisfying this really is! We want to be assured that life is not futile, that its apparent inconclusiveness is not true. But what answer is there to our need in the bare assurance that it will not be cut short by death? There is no value in constantly repeating the same kind of thing without end. Matthew Arnold, in one of his bitter moods, once said that he could see no sign of progress in the fact that a man could go quickly from Fulham to Peckham if it meant that he went from a dull and unenlightened life in Fulham to an equally dull and unenlightened life in Peckham. We might say the same about the next world. There is no value in succession. Shakespeare, by one of his magical touches, has crammed the burden of the world into one line—"To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow." There is no gain in heaping up to-morrows. Say that my to-morrows will extend to the last syllable of recorded time, what is that to me?

We heartily agree with almost every word in that long passage, and are delighted to know that it was delivered by an Anglican divine in so orthodox a shrine as Westminster Abbey.

Our agreement with the Dean of King's College ends at this stage. To us the Christian view of immortality is equally unbelievable as the Pagan. To be perfectly fair we are bound to admit that Dr. Matthews' exegesis of relevant New Testament passages is quite correct. Take the following paragraph:—

It is usually supposed that the New Testament teaches that every human being is destined to an endless existence, either of happiness or of misery. I do not think that that is really the case; it is doubtful whether St. Paul believed it; and our text suggests certainly a very different view: "He who seeth the Son and believeth hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." To be raised up, you see, is the gift of God to those who have eternal life already. It is they who have value for God in his world; it is they who have become more than sons of time—sons of eternity; and, therefore, though the stream of years may carry others to annihilation, they remain, for they share the eternity of God.

At the same time, it must be borne in mind that it is a dangerous policy to erect a theory on specific Bible texts, for there may be other texts of a contradictory character, as there certainly are in the present case. In Matthew xxv. 41, Jesus, acting as the Judge at the last day, is made to say to those on his left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the Devil and his angels," and Paul refers to the punishment of the wicked after death.

Let us now examine the dogma of eternal life as taught by Dr. Matthews. There is a subtlety in his argument which one cannot help admiring, but it is not convincing. Curiously enough, he admits that "to ordinary common sense it seems clear that time is the master of everything—*Tempus edax rerum*—and most surely it is clear that, as the hymn says, men are sons of time, and as sons of time destined to be swept away." But is there extraordinary common sense which makes the opposite seem equally clear? Certainly not; but then the Dean believes in the existence of eternity which is at once within and beyond time. Now comes the argument:—

Reflection shows that there are some activities of human beings in which they seem to go beyond time, where that which has no part in time comes in. In the activity of knowing, for instance, I seem to employ principles which do not depend

on time. Two contradictory statements cannot both be true. That holds always and everywhere. It makes no difference what day of the week it is or what century; the principles which I employ in the search for truth are independent of time. And so is truth itself. Doubtless it is discovered in time; there was a time when it was not known, and there is a time when it is known, but the truth itself was true all the time, and in knowing the truth I have somehow transcended time. In the same way goodness takes us beyond the sphere of to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow. Certainly, when I do good I must do it in some time and place, but the essence of good, of right action, is that it is done on a principle which is valid always and everywhere.

A more openly fallacious piece of reasoning it has never been our misfortune to come across before. It is not ordinary common sense, but the reflection of a professional theologian which shows that in some human actions there are elements or principles at work which are beyond and independent of time, but we are certainly not informed what those elements or principles are. Will Dr. Matthews be good enough to supply us with this information? In the acquisition of knowledge what action is there which stretches out beyond time and space? Again, what on earth does the preacher mean by "truth itself"? Has a substance or entity called truth ever existed anywhere? Truth always signifies some item of knowledge concerning something that actually exists, acquired by various natural means. Now, eternity is not an object of knowledge, but of belief. It follows of necessity that immortality, or eternal life, is purely an object of imagination, concerning which absolutely no knowledge whatever is obtainable. It is easy enough to assert, as Dr. Matthews does, that within man, though a creature of time, there "lurk signs that he is made for eternity—intimations of immortality"; but it is an assertion completely unsusceptible of any form of verification. How true are the words in Ecclesiastes ix. 5: "The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten." On that account the Preacher's exhortation is, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Beside such wise words how infinitely silly sounds Tennyson's little song:—

A voice spake out of the skies
To a just man and a wise—
"The world and all within it
Will only last a minute!"
And a beggar began to cry
"Food, food, or I die!"
Is it worth his while to eat
Or mine to give him meat,
If the world and all within it
Will be nothing the next minute?

J. T. LLOYD.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* consists mainly of a series of infamous libels upon life and things; it is a blasphemy against certain fundamental ideas of right and wrong which our consciences most instinctively approve; its notions of heaven is hardly higher than a transformation scene at Drury Lane; it is essentially infidel. "Hold out to me the chance of a golden crown and harp with freedom from all further worries, give me angels to flatter me and fetch and carry for me, and I shall think the game worth playing, notwithstanding the great and horrible risk of failure; but no crown, no cross for me. Pay me well and I will wait for payment, but if I have to give credit I shall expect to be paid better in the end."
—Samuel Butler.

What is Wrong with State Education?

It is alleged that Christ was born in a stable. Judging by their want of manners, many Christians appear to have been educated in a similar place.—G. W. Foote.

Books is for them that can't enjoy themselves in any other way.—Martin Dooley.

Light, more light.—Goethe.

THIS country spends more money on education than any other nation in the world, and, considering the truly enormous outlay the results are very disappointing. The average school life is nine years, and the educational programme is so arranged by the authorities that when the scholars finally leave to go into the world they know so little that it is surprising what has been done in the time. There are most serious defects in the present system. Apart from a few bright pupils who would get on anywhere, the huge majority of the students are so badly educated that they are necessarily doomed to a life of poverty. It must be so, for the children are trained as slaves and destined to be slaves, and as such are a hindrance instead of a help in a civilized community.

The enormous drawbacks of National Education may be seen at a glance by comparing it to the education imparted in middle-class schools. Whatever may be the demerits of middle-class education, it has the supreme merit of being far more thorough than its State rival. Middle-class scholars can read, write, and understand arithmetic. What is far more important, they have self-respect, initiative, and some manners and culture. Yet, in reality, the cost of scholars in private schools is less than the vaunted National Schools. It is true that in the one case the cost is borne by the parents and in the other by the community, but the fact remains. Ironically, the middle-class parent not only has the privilege of educating his own children but also those of his working-class neighbours, often earning more money than himself.

Estimates framed for 1926-7 provide for an expenditure of £32,333,908 for elementary education alone, which is an increase of over a million over the figures for last year. The amount is so large, and the results so small, that the products of so costly a system are worth scrutiny.

It is easy for educationalists to boast the importance of training the young, but National Education is largely a huge failure. Complaints by business men regarding the defective spelling, arithmetic, and composition of boys are heard all over the country. So serious is this defect that private commercial colleges flourish in all the large towns supplying the defects of the primary schools. After nine years of so-called State education far too many boys are fit only to empty waste-paper baskets or to run errands. If they be more ambitious they may be fit for a blind-alley occupation, which too often leads to criminality.

On my making this complaint to a prominent headmaster of a State school I was told that it was not the province of educationalists to provide "cheap office and errand boys." But a boy who cannot properly use the English language, or write a legible letter at fourteen years of age is not a scholar that any schoolmaster should be proud of. And, mark you, if the boy had attended a private school, instead of a State institution, the parents would be justified in asking for the return of the fees charged.

State education has now been in existence over half a century. It has cost thousands of millions of money, and taxpayers would be more impressed by apologies of State educationalists if complaints of

most serious defects in the present system were not so numerous and so widespread. The working class is shockingly ill-educated. Any election agent will tell you that there are thousands of men and women in every working-class constituency who do not know the difference between a Conservative, a Liberal, and a Socialist. Indeed, if it were not for the open-air speakers of the Freethought and Labour movements it is highly doubtful if any but the merest handful of them would know the meaning of economics, or that there was any religion in the world except the one taught in the local churches and chapels.

It is the system that is at fault and not the teachers. For the teaching profession I have the highest admiration. But State teachers are broken on the wheel of a system that appears to have been specially designed to keep the majority of the pupils in ignorance. Not even a genius could control and impart knowledge to the huge classes entrusted to them. And the curriculum is as confusing as the maze at Hampton Court. History, for example, is taught as fiction; and fiction as history. Ask any ordinary scholar in a State school what he knows of the French Revolution. If you are lucky enough to get an answer it will be that there was a devil of a row somewhere and somebody got hurt. One budding historian, aged fourteen, actually suggested to me that "Lord Kitchener was in command." Apparently our boasted State education system is turning out youths as ignorant of the most elementary facts of history as they are of the commonest subjects a knowledge of which is absolutely essential to commercial success.

Further, the educational programme, so splendid on paper, so poor in practice, is hampered by clerical intervention. An hour daily is absolutely wasted in devotions, hymn-singing, and Bible lessons. Hence it follows that the scholar who uses obscene language as a matter of course, and who is ignorant of the most elementary culture, always regards the dear clergy with awe and, perhaps, veneration. In plain English the scholar is trained to be a slave, and to be exploited in after-life by all sorts of tyrants.

The last person to benefit by the present system is the scholar. Builders get millions for building elaborate schools; educational outfitters get huge contracts for scholastic materials; the clergy use the schools to feather their own nests. But the poor, unfortunate scholar, after nine years of so-called State education, enters the battlefield of life with the same chances as a young negro in the cotton-fields of Carolina.

What is to be done? The most important step is to double the number of teachers, and halve the size of the classes. Not even an educational genius could teach the gigantic classes they have at present. The next step is to simplify the curriculum, because it is far better to know a few things thoroughly rather than have hazy ideas regarding a large number of subjects. The third step is to eliminate the priest from education. School teachers can be safely entrusted with the care of the rising generation without outside interference. And, last, but certainly not least, money can be far more usefully spent than in providing builders with fortunes. What is the sense of educating a boy in a beautiful building if the result is that he enters it as innocent as a bull-pup and leaves it a first-class ignoramus.

The principal of one of the most important commercial colleges assured me that his staff had greater difficulty in teaching shorthand to elementary school pupils because their spelling was so bad. This was not a casual remark, but was the result of thirty years' experience. What a criticism of State education in a civilized country!

It may be urged that vested interests and ecclesiastical influence are too powerful to permit these changes, but the alteration must be effected. When an American traveller was visiting the shrine of a very renowned saint in an Italian town, remarkable for its extreme age and sanctity, he noticed an old lamp burning there. Asking a priest what use it was, he was told it had been alight for two thousand years without a break. The American went near the lamp and blew hard, and calmly remarked: "Well! It's out now, I guess."

MIMNERMUS.

Hypocrisy.

II.

(Concluded from page 268.)

THE result of Mr. Gladstone's bomb, aimed at Parnell—at the command of the Nonconformists—was to split the Irish party in two. Out of the great party that he had organized for victory only twenty-six remained faithful, forty-four deserted him, and there was quite as much hypocrisy displayed by them as by the English. As Mr. St. John Ervine points out:—

Much nauseous nonsense has been talked about the innate purity of the Irish people, but the Irish are no more innately pure than any other of God's creatures. Both of Parnell's immediate predecessors in the leadership of the Nationalists—Daniel O'Connell and Isaac Butt—were men of notoriously loose lives. Butt had several bastards, one of whom caused him some embarrassment by filial enquiries at an election meeting.....Biggar, as we have already noted, was the father of illegitimate children by different mothers.....the majority of them were undoubtedly polygamous in their habits. One of Mr. Healy's most devoted supporters among the seceders, a man who grossly and persistently insulted Parnell during the debates about to be described in Committee Room 15, was a Rabelaisian gentleman whose business caused him to travel over a certain railway track in his own part of Ireland. It was commonly known among his colleagues that he frequently slept with each one of five barmaids in five separate towns in the course of his business travels. By comparison with his predecessors in the leadership and some of his colleagues, Parnell was a chaste man.¹

When we reflect that the most popular hero of the English nation is Lord Nelson, who lived openly—though a married man, which Parnell was not—with Lady Hamilton, an adventuress who began life as a nursemaid, and, after various sordid intrigues, became the mistress of the Hon. Charles Greville, passing, in the same capacity, to Sir William Hamilton, who afterwards married her. Yet Nelson's monument occupies the most prominent position in the heart of London, while his tomb is the most spectacular object in St. Paul's Cathedral. Even the highly moral and respectable Corporation of the City of London, the pious prosecutors of Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, presented Nelson with a dinner-service decorated with portraits of Lady Hamilton. As for Lady Hamilton, her portrait was painted, over and over again, by the greatest artists of the time and is considered among the greatest treasures of our picture galleries. Why should Parnell and Mrs. O'Shea be cast out and Nelson and Lady Hamilton honoured?

Then consider the multitude of evils that followed upon Gladstone's refusal to recognize Parnell as leader of the Irish party after the divorce case. The Irish party was wrecked and the Home Rule Bill dropped. If it had been passed, as it would have

been but for the Nonconformists, Ireland would have settled down peacefully; the fourteen years before the outbreak of the Great War would have given time to heal the bitterness of the struggle, and Ireland would, like the Boers and other self-governing Colonies, have equipped an army to fight in defence of the Allies. Instead of which we had to keep an army of 40,000 men in Ireland to hold the Irish down and prevent them from joining the enemy. With this army released, together with the other troops that would have voluntarily enlisted, the war might have been ended a couple of years earlier. Nor is this all. The very large Irish population in America was working against us and on the side of our enemies, and were holding America back from coming to the help of the Allies. Ireland itself burst out in open rebellion, during which a large part of Dublin went up in smoke and flame, with great bloodshed upon both sides. All this carnage and destruction lies directly at the door of that Moloch, the Nonconformist conscience. Parnell himself died shortly after being repudiated by Gladstone, worn out and broken-hearted.

Many a man who would face death or mutilation on the field of battle, would be afraid to openly confess that he read, and enjoyed Swinburne and George Moore, or Byron and Maupassant; because the Puritans have denounced these writers. Many men enjoy these great writers who would not dare to praise them in print for fear of the crack of the Puritan whip. Mr. Le Gallienne, the poet and essayist—rather contemptuously referred to by Arthur Symons, in his *Dramatis Personæ*, as having forsaken the muse, "to officiate, in *The Religion of a Literary Man*, as the Canon Farrar of the younger generation"—was once praising the works of Mr. George Moore, and Mr. Moore turned to him and said: "Charming of you, my dear Le Gallienne! It's very charming, but why not in a newspaper?" Is it any wonder that we are regarded as a nation of hypocrites?

Jack London, the American writer, in his novel, *Martin Eden*, mocks at our Puritanism when he describes how Martin Eden, the uneducated young sailor, is taken to the house of the wealthy man whose son's life he had been the means of saving. While the son has gone to find his sister, Martin picks up a copy of Swinburne's poems, and when the highly-educated young lady appears, Martin asks her how she likes Swinburne's poetry. Upon which the following conversation takes place. She replies:—

"Swinburne fails, when, as it is said, because he is—well, indelicate. There are many of his poems that should never be read....."

Martin replies. "I thought it was great," he said hesitatingly, "the little I read, I had no idea he was such a—a scoundrel. I guess that crops out in his other books."

"There are many lines that could be spared from the book you were reading," she said, her voice primly firm and dogmatic.

"I must a—missed 'em," he announced. "What I read was the real goods. It was all lighted up an' shining, an' it shun right into me an' lighted me up inside, like the sun or a searchlight. That's the way it landed on me, but I guess I ain't up much on poetry, miss".....

"Now, Longfellow——" she was saying.

Byron, again, is much more highly appreciated abroad than in his own country, simply because the Puritans have not the power on the Continent that they have here. Byron despised the conventional and puritanical hypocrisy by which he was surrounded. He declared:—

I have not loved the world, nor the world me.
I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor bow'd
To its idolatries a patient knee.

¹ St. John Ervine, *Parnell*, p. 274.

"Oh, you haven't, haven't you?" said the Philistines, "then we will make you suffer for it." And they did. Most of his life was spent in exile, and there is quite a library of books concerned with scandal-mongering about his character, everything possible has been raked up to blacken his name. Consider the very different treatment meted out to the poet Wordsworth.

Wordsworth, in his youth, was inspired by visions of liberty, and hailed the French Revolution with joy, but he quickly came to heel, turned Tory, became the poet of immortality, and ranged himself, like Disraeli, "on the side of the angels." He had his reward. His sins were not broadcast to the world. They were carefully wrapped up and buried. It is now known that he had an illegitimate child by a young French girl named Annette Vallon. When Bishop Wordsworth—the poet's nephew—wrote the poet's biography, he had the evidence in his hands and burned it. He no doubt thought he had destroyed all the evidence there was; he had not, for an American, Professor Harper, while working at the British Museum, in 1915, came across a collection of letters from the poet's sister Dorothy, which revealed the secret, and which he published to the world in 1921, under the title, *Wordsworth's French Daughter*. A Frenchman, M. Emile Legois, investigated the subject in France, and established the facts, which he published in 1922, under the title, *William Wordsworth and Annette Vallon*.

It was not until the poet had been dead more than fifty years, and more than a hundred years after the birth of the child, that the facts became publicly known, and then only through the agency of two foreigners. No word escaped from the English scholars who consulted the letters in the British Museum. How long would the secret have been kept if it had been Byron instead of Wordsworth? If we bear an evil reputation for cant and hypocrisy, there is good reason for it.

W. MANN.

Acid Drops.

"The Great Lying Church" may generally be trusted to live up to its historic reputation. One of the Italian cities has decided to remove the street name of "Francisco Ferrer" from one of its thoroughfares. So the Catholic *Universe* suggests that this example might well be followed in Rome with those street names and inscriptions which commemorate certain men that are objectionable to Catholics. And it adds that the powers that be "have deserved so well of the Church in other spheres that it may be hoped it will take this gentle hint." We presume that the Church would like to see the monument to Bruno, erected in the square in which he was burned, and which we remember was denounced at the time it was erected as an insult to the Roman Church. There is no telling. Mussolini is finding the Church a very useful aid, and the Church is finding Mussolini a very great aid. So we shall see what we shall see.

But to illustrate the opening sentence of the above paragraph. For the benefit of the more ignorant of his readers, the editor appends a note explaining who and what Ferrer was. He explains that Ferrer was an anarchist and a Freemason, who was shot in 1909, after the outrages committed under his leadership in Barcelona in that year. Churches were burned and profaned, and persons consecrated to God were butchered and violated. Now that is a lie, and a deliberate lie. Ferrer was not an anarchist, there were no butcheries, nor profanation of churches, etc., under his leadership, and the editor of the *Universe*—unless he is frightfully ignorant—must know that these things are not true. Ferrer's sole

offence was his attempt to educate the people of Spain. His sole crime that he tried to educate the people. The Church hated education as it had always hated it, and it was to the horror of every civilized nation in the world that Ferrer was seized and shot. But the Great Lying Church is true to itself. It is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. It is the same to-day as when it crushed the civilization of antiquity. And it would crush the civilization of to-day had it the opportunity. A Church that murders an educationalist and then defames his memory deserves the name of Christian.

A captain of the Salvation Army at Wingate (Durham) recently dismissed the bandmaster because he attended a colliery official's dinner on licensed premises. The local Licensed Victuallers' Association thereupon wrote to the captain informing him that in future Salvationists will not be permitted to enter licensed premises to beg for funds or to sell Salvation "literature," as hitherto. The Victuallers have clearly scored off the captain. As Salvationist propaganda consists largely of blackguarding the publican and his legally permitted trade, we wonder other local Victuallers' Associations do not adopt the same tactics with these howling street-corner nuisances.

The Bishop of Willesden declares that Sunday games in the London parks would be abolished if only voters would go to the poll. For the general public he is sure is not in favour of Sunday games. In support of this he instanced a public discussion at Willesden to test public opinion, where 278 voted against and only 8 in favour of games. The Bishop is unduly optimistic. His so-called "test" counts for nothing; the meeting was merely one of Sabbatarians. If people in favour of Sunday games were to go solidly to the poll, the bigots would be routed. For in this sport-loving country, there are always more persons in favour of freedom to play than there are against it. We commend the Bishop to the recent decision of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to permit games on Sundays.

Dr. Frank Ballard at Sheffield recently had a sad tale to unfold in the course of an address, "The Christianity of the Future." Things were most unsatisfactory. In a London area of 37,000 people, only 200 were to be found in the churches on Easter Sunday. In Sheffield, out of a population of half a million only one in ten were associated with the Christian Church. The chief reasons for the people's aversion to religion he maintained, were the many perversions, such as Ecclesiasticism, Romanism, Sacerdotalism, and the presenting of the Bible as infallible and verbally inspired. The reverend gentleman, however, has a cure for this aversion. Christianity means growth and adaptation to environment, and the present-day environment, he says, is different from that of any other age. There has been a great spread of knowledge, an enjoyment of liberty, a development of democracy and science, an increase of pleasure, and so forth. Christianity therefore "has to be adapted to this new age or die." In other words, the Christian ship must trim its sails to suit the prevailing wind. That advice, however, is a little moth-eaten; some few Christian leaders have been practising it for a considerable time now. But the result, we fear, is none too gratifying; the slump in religion still continues. We fancy the growth of knowledge and the development of science have caused this clerical manoeuvre to be largely unsuccessful.

There is one other point we will mention. If the Christian religion is, as Dr. Ballard alleges, so far behind the things common to our time, Christianity obviously has had no hand in bringing such things into being. But this fact will not prevent our clerical friends and pious Labour leaders from arrogantly claiming that Christianity is largely responsible for the spread of knowledge, the growth of liberty, and the development of democracy.

The best Christians, says Dr. Dimsdale Young, never have any spare time to criticise others. There must, then, be very few "best Christians" in the world. For the majority of those who attend churches and chapels are notorious for their habit of criticising and scandalising each other and those outside. And we fear the habit is incurable. It is fostered by religion in this way. The more a Christian carries out the practices enjoined by his creed and his church, the more he fancies he is entitled to find fault with his fellows. That is why priests and parsons occupy most of their time pointing out the alleged faults of other folk.

Our Home Secretary, Sir William Joynson Hicks, possesses a very lively imagination. Recently he informed the House of Commons that the position of Great Britain had been built up by "absolute freedom of opinion, thought, and expression." If we did not know that Sir William was a Christian we should suspect it from that statement. One would like to know what it was that all reformers from Thomas Paine onward fought for, and for what many of them were imprisoned, if it were not to get that freedom of expression which "Jix" discovers they already possessed. And the cream of the joke is that "Jix" is not even now in favour of the abolition of the Blasphemy Laws. For downright impudence a statement of that kind is unapproachable. We advise him to read the life of Bradlaugh, and see what it was he fought against. And when he is through with that, a run through the volumes by the Hammonds on the state of England during the last quarter of the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth century might enlighten him. But probably "Jix" thinks that for his special constituency exactness of statement and the acquisition of knowledge are quite unnecessary.

If right is might, why not impose right? asks the editor of the *Methodist Recorder*, writing on "Public Opinion and Public Morals." He answers, it was never expedient to do this, even before the war; during the war liberty was wiped out; since the war liberty has returned with passion and with glamour. He adds, we have all had enough and more than enough of desperate remedies, of compulsion and stark authority. We think this editor's statements are especially timely when a noisy mob of Sabbatarian bigots are clamouring for restrictions on this and prohibitions of that in regard to the people's use of Sunday. This editor adds later, "We can teach one another; we cannot compel one another." Here, again, though the writer is not dealing with Sunday problems, is a statement we commend to the Lord's Day fanatics who would impose what they think is right upon others who think otherwise. What we suggest is, our prohibiting friends should pin that statement in their hats and read it over every time they feel an urge to interfere with the liberty of action of other people. When one comes to think about the activities of the Sabbatarians, one is astonished to find how difficult it is for these men and women to apply the Golden Rule in their dealings with non-Sabbatarians. But perhaps they only cherish this rule because it looks pretty framed over the parlour mantelpiece.

The Rev. "Woodbine Willie" has just stumbled on a Freethought axiom. Says he, "The best road to truth is free public discussion." This is his suggestion to Capital and Labour. We wish he would make the same suggestion, and make it frequently, to his Christian friends who oppose the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws. We fancy, however, he would jib at doing that; there is a limit to that "outspokenness" of his which the popular papers pretend so greatly to admire. One thing is certain though, he would have a very hard job to get any paper to print what he did say. Even the *Daily Chronicle* which recently enlarded freedom of thought would baulk at doing that.

"Willie" continues, "But the very essence of discussion is that each side should strive to learn from

the other, and to balance its own truth with that presented by its opponents." Now in regard to the dispute between religion and Freethought, that is what the Christian side consistently refuses to do. Indeed, a goodly portion of its energy is devoted to suppressing the utterance of the Freethought case. Hence we suggest to our Woodbine friend that he might more usefully employ his talents to knock a sense of justice into bigoted Christian heads. When he has succeeded in doing this, the chances are that there will be little need for him to remind people that the best road to truth is free public discussion.

Apropos of the Lord Chamberlain's objection to her dress as Salome in "Katerina" at the Barnes Theatre, Miss Frances Carson remarks, "I can't think what is considered wrong about bare legs and arms." No more can we. But Miss Carson should remember that this is a Christian country where people, though they believe man (and woman) was made in God's own image, regard uncovered imitations of God as an indecent sight.

Many girls go wrong through having nothing to do on Sunday and nowhere to go, declared Canon England, of Hull, at the Clifton Home for Girls. Sundays, said he, is a day of awful monotony and dullness; and there is a great responsibility on the churches for having established a day which so many people hate. We agree; but most of the Canon's superiors and the Sabbatarian fanatics will not thank him for pointing out that. The reverend gentleman added that we do not want altogether the Continental Sunday, but only the Continental common sense. We need to get rid of the present stupid attitude towards Sunday recreation. We must provide something better for people to do. It is not clear to whom Canon England referred when he said, "We must provide." Doubtless he meant the churches and chapels. But one can imagine the type of entertainment that would be forthcoming if they had the organizing of Sunday recreation. Such things as Pleasant Sunday Afternoon gatherings and an hour of "sacred" music—of course, strictly out of church hours—would be all one could expect. But really the parsons and their friends need not trouble to organize Sunday recreation. Wholesome amusements and pastimes would be available in abundance so soon as the bigots ceased to restrict the liberty of the subject by opposition to the opening of public parks and amusement halls. Nor need any problem arise of a seven-day working week for the labour employed in this connection. For permission to open such places on Sunday could always be granted contingent on a rule that every employee should be free one day in seven.

In the *Report of the Adult Educational Committee*, published by the Stationery Office, there is a letter from a working man which says:—

I believe that this education of the spirit is the real need of my own class to-day. I know what modern industry means in terms of monotonous routine tasks. I know what a working-class home life means with few outlets for emotional release save the pubs and the chapel.

We like this association of the pubs and the chapel. Scientifically they are not far removed from each other. The "emotional release" secured from either is of much the same mental value. And it is suggestive to find that so many centuries of Christianity have given us a society in which large numbers have to choose between the chapel and the pub for "emotional release."

We do not usually bother with anonymous communications, but there are exceptions. For instance, a post-card from a—we judge—Christian reader of the *Freethinker* asks to give up attacking Christianity, as there are a great many evils in the world that need attention, and kindly informs us that in attacking Christianity we are like a small poodle barking at the moon. We are too modest to criticize the last statement, but we

are consoled by the reflection that Rome was once saved by the cackling of geese, and so even our little barks may serve to warn some of a danger that may be fronting them. And we are further consoled by the fact that the barking of Freethinkers generation after generation has had the effect of making the most powerful Church the world has seen swallow many of its most cherished doctrines, and behave itself in a much better way than it would have done without the barking.

Neither do we deny that there are many other evils in the world beside that of Christianity. If there were not there would not be so great a need to attack Christianity. If Christianity stood alone, and had no kind of influence on other evils, there would be no great necessity for any of us to bother very much with it. But as we believe that Christianity has contributed very much to perpetuate many of the evils that exist, and still serves to keep them alive, we conceive there is some good done in showing the part played by religious influences. After all, we may safely assume that if all the energy and time that is now being spent on religion were diverted into social channels there would soon be a marked improvement in the general outlook. One need only take the case of education for proof of this. Admitting the fact of opposition coming from other directions, it is notorious that the opposition of the Churches to schemes of educational improvement is dictated largely by the fact as the State schools improve bigger demands are made upon the Church schools, and in self-defence the level of education must be kept as low as possible.

Finally, while Freethinkers are, as a whole, very deeply interested in social reforms, it would be playing into the hands of the Churches if the *Freethinker* were to alter its policy and "leave religion alone." We have not the slightest doubt but that they would welcome this policy. The *Freethinker* is the only weekly Freethinking paper in the country, it is the only one that stands for uncompromising Freethought, and without it the fighting Freethinkers would be minus a voice. We can assure our correspondent that we think too little of Christianity from either an intellectual or an ethical point of view to be in love with the labour of dealing with it. We fight it as we should fight other forms of social or mental disease, and we flatter ourselves that there would be no better news for the established religion of this country, than that the *Freethinker* had forsaken the policy for which it has hitherto been distinguished. So all we have to say is that we will leave Christianity alone just so soon as we feel that it has left Society alone. Until then we really cannot afford to do so.

Dr. T. R. Glover, in the *Daily News*, outpaces Mr. G. K. Chesterton in wanting to "get back." The learned doctor wishes to return to the atmosphere surrounding the time of Nehemiah. With the mixed drink reasoning of theologians he brings along a familiar friend so frequently exposed in this paper. He writes: "I am always hearing the refrain: 'And science teaches us,' 'And psychology proves,' 'And statistics show,' 'And the Church says.'" Science, psychology, and statistics can be sent packing if they do not square with facts, but the Church and its teaching persist owing to the efforts of professionally interested parties. And, after all, Dr. Glover and his too numerous colleagues are simply exploiting a particular hypothesis that does not work, and in this respect are miles and centuries behind the research work of those who have the courage to drop discredited theories.

There are signs that appear to indicate a growing disgust with the older methods of evangelism which make great play on the word "love." Some of the better educated Methodist leaders are beginning to think that the type of Christian love depicted by some few evangelists is a little too like the animal brand of love for their liking. Thus the Rev. A. E. Whitham assures his

readers that Christian love is not physical. He declares that something of the bacchanalian element can be seen in present-day evangelism—"the watery-eyed, sensuous appeal; the honeyed hymn, most unhealthy; and all that low emotionalism that is more like spooning with souls than saving them." The very faces of a few men who have spent their lives indulging in these methods take on, he says, a sensual cast. He further remarks that many sentimental hymns which attempt to dignify their doggerel with the word Love are in themselves a confusion with the carnal thing, and "there is more egotism than altruism in it"; when the "sticky, honeyed thing lifts itself up in the name of religion," it must be condemned as the very devil.

All that is plain speaking, which, no doubt, will startle not a few good Methodists; but it is only more or less what has been pointed out in these columns many times. What does not appear to have been noted by Mr. Whitham is that this disguised criticism which disgusts his modern taste has been a prominent feature of Christianity from early days. If the sensual appeal had not been there the Christian creed would never have attracted the masses as it has done. Had Christian love been a purely abstract thing there would be no large and wealthy churches to-day. The masses have always demanded a religion appealing largely to the senses, and the largest church—the Roman—has always been fully aware of the fact and has provided the goods to meet the demand. And all that will happen if the Protestant demonstrations start to purify their teaching is that a goodly portion of their congregations will drift Rome-wards. What is a curious feature of this modern disgust with religious sensuality is that Christians seem never to have noticed the defect until it was pointed out by Freethinking critics.

The proper kind of Christian love as conceived by Mr. Whitham the reverend gentleman says is hard to define; so he tells us first what it is not. He then tells us how Christian love reveals itself. It shows itself in a tender, emotional act; in the Quakers feeding starving Europe; in the miner rescuing his trapped comrades; in the patriotism of Rupert Brooke; in the more than patriotism of Nurse Cavell; in Lincoln's fighting the slave trade; and so forth—not forgetting Jesus dying on the Cross. Now, omitting the alleged sacrifice of the divine personage Jesus, the actions cited are not such as are peculiar to Christians or to the Christian religion. People of other religions and of none have done similar things. Therefore, Mr. Whitham has no right to claim that such actions reveal the nature of Christian love. We advise him to try again; his present exposition of Christian love won't quite do.

Apropos of an evangelical mission at Silkworth, in Durham, a Methodist reporter says that one of the most remarkable things that happened was what a publican did in his desire to help one of the "saved." He wiped out a debt to avoid the necessity for the man coming to the house to pay it and to show his admiration for the man's fidelity. Splendid fellow, that publican. But we suspect the truth of the matter is that he wiped off the transaction as a bad debt, knowing quite well that the convert's newly acquired Christian conscience wouldn't prompt its owner to pay a just debt.

"Bogeys and Bugbears" was the theme of a stirring address by the Rev. R. Moffat Gautrey at a recent Fellowship gathering. He argued that most of the things one fears never happens. One curious point about this address was, no mention was made of the triple-headed Holy Bogey with whom the reverend gentleman pretends to be in direct communication. The reason for the omission might be this. As Mr. Gautrey earns an honest living inculcating fear of this the mightiest bogey of all, he perhaps thought a discreet silence in this connection would be his best policy.

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.

"FREETHINKER" ENDOWMENT TRUST.—J. E. Fysh (New Hebrides), £4 16s. 6d.

J. R. BHATIA.—Thanks for interesting letter on the position of Freethought in India. The general influence of religion on national life and on the higher aspects of human development are much the same all the world over. Why not send us an article dealing with Freethought in India? It would prove interesting to our readers, both here and in your own country.

J. SELBY.—Pleased to have your good opinion of the *Freethinker*. We are also pleased to note that the number of our readers in the United States is increasing.

P. H. CLIBURN.—All that is necessary is to send in to the headmaster a written request that your child is not to receive religious instruction. It does not lie within the power of either the teacher or the Council to decline to carry out your wishes. If you have any difficulty, please let us know.

W. C. ELLIOTT.—Have handed your letter to Mr. Cutner.

J. G. BURDON.—The term "Materialist" has been with many supplanted by the term "Mechanist." But so long as we bear in mind what Materialism stands for, it is literally true that the whole of modern science is based upon Materialism. Your questioner might be content with Jacques Loed and Metchnikoff, both of whom were pronounced Materialists, or with Professor Needham, the eminent Biochemist, who says that "the triumph of mechanistic biology is undoubted, and it has no serious rivals." Science is only possible on taking natural phenomena as the consequence of calculable forces, and that is the very essence of Materialism.

J. ORR.—When a Catholic receives a dispensation for divorce that should naturally entitle him to be remarried in the Church. We have no instances to hand.

J. WORLEY.—Doesn't it strike you that if the evidences for the existence of God are so clear there would not be as much argument as there is to prove his existence?

H. MATTHEWS.—We are always prepared to send specimen copies of the *Freethinker* to any address for six weeks if the postage—threepence—is forwarded.

J. E. FYSH.—Pleased to hear from you again. Hope you are keeping fit, and free from the Lord's attentions.

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.

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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.

The man who is under the influence of the last speaker lacks that stability of character without which it is hard to steer a straight course through life—Henry Seton Merriman.

Sugar Plums.

The voting of the Branches has decided Birmingham as the meeting-place for the Annual Conference this year. The Agenda of the Conference will appear in the *Freethinker*, dated May 9. The morning session will be devoted to business resolutions, the afternoon to the reading and discussing of papers. In the evening there will be the usual public demonstration.

Those who are attending the Conference from a distance, and would like accommodation secured for them, should write at once to the General Secretary, stating their requirements. We are looking forward to meeting many old friends from various parts of the country, and also to making the acquaintance of many new ones.

There was a good attendance at the meeting held in Essex Hall for the support of the Bill now before Parliament for the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws. Canon Donaldson occupied the chair, and introduced the object of the meeting with an interesting sketch of the philosophy of persecution. The resolution affirming support of the Bill was proposed by Dr. Copeland Bowie, in a neat speech, and was seconded by Mrs. Seaton Tiedeman. Mr. Thurtle, M.P., and Mr. Cohen spoke in support of the resolution, and the meeting concluded with a vote of thanks, moved by Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner and seconded by Mr. Frederick Verinder. The resolution, on being put to the meeting, was carried with a single dissident—a young man—who may take a better view of things as he grows older.

Unfortunately Mr. G. Lansbury, M.P., and Dr. Salter, M.P., were both prevented from being present, but sent letters warmly supporting the meeting. Letters of regret were also received from Lord Parmoor and Mr. Harry Snell, M.P. If only the Bill can get properly before Parliament we fancy it would receive more support than most people imagine. When it will get a chance of a second reading is more than anyone is able to say.

Mr. Thurtle, in the course of his speech, referred to the number supporting the Bill being much larger than he had expected, and mentioned that at each of his election campaigns he had been questioned by some of his constituents as to his attitude with regard to the Blasphemy Laws. That is a hint we should like all Freethinkers to take. No man nor woman who stands for Parliament should fail to elicit a candidate's opinion on the matter. If we wish the Blasphemy Laws repealed we must see to it that their existence is kept before the public, and that candidates for Parliament are made aware of what these laws are.

The *New Leader* for April 23 publishes a very good article by Mr. H. W. Nevinson, in favour of the abolition of the Blasphemy Laws. We hope that the article will have the effect of inducing members of the Labour Party, both the leaders and the rank and file, to pay attention to the removal of these monstrous survivals. There is no subject that should more concern genuine reformers than that of securing complete freedom of thought and expression.

Those in favour of a civilized Sunday have achieved a great triumph, and the advocates of the continuation of the "taboo" day received a set back by the decision of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to permit Sunday games in the open spaces under their control in and near London. It has taken a long while to bring this about, and marks the concluding stage of a fight which was initiated by Freethinkers, and in which Freethinkers have always played a leading part. It is to Puritanical influence that we owe the institution and perpetuation of a "Sabbath" that has done more to demoralize

the young of each generation than anything else that one could name.

Naturally, the permission is accompanied by certain restrictions. No paid labour is to be employed, no games are to take place on a ground that is near a Church, and no play till the afternoon. One cannot expect everything at once, and the rule that the playing-grounds must not be near a Church, adds the touch of humbug that appears to be inseparable from anything associated with religion in a modern community. We shall be interested in noting the comments of the Dissenting preachers on this departure. After telling us for so long that the secret of England's greatness depended upon the Bible and the Sunday, it will be quite amusing to find them accusing the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of working for the ruin of the country.

The *Wolverhampton Express and Star* recently invited a number of well-known local men to each write an article on "My Guiding Principles." Among those invited was Mr. William Pratt, long known for his outspoken championship of Atheism. Mr. Pratt wrote an excellent article, vigorous, logical, and straightforward. He confessed that the change in his opinions dated from hearing a couple of Freethought lectures from Mrs. Annie Besant and G. W. Foote. The tone and quality of his article may be judged from the following excerpt:

Atheism is something more than a negation of Theism. It has furnished a foundation for morals and a philosophy for the guidance of man. It teaches that all our duties are here; that all our obligations must be directed towards sentient beings; that the rubbishing gods must be left to themselves; that sincerity, patience, intelligence, the spirit of investigation, the collection of every fact, of every truth, and the courage to present one's honest conclusions to the world is the highest wisdom.

Compare this ethic in our positive philosophy of existence with the Christian scheme of things which permits a man to live a life of intellectual sloth or villainy, and to resort to all forms of rascality, and at last—at the "eleventh hour"—to receive "salvation."

Paugh! While I breathe, whilst I can hold a pen or speak a word, whenever opportunity affords I will do what I can to educate my fellows by destroying ignorance, which is the mother of devotion—of supernaturalism—because I know that supernatural worship possesses a very close relationship to all forms of personal and social vice.

But I want it to be known that the scientific Atheist opposes nothing that is good in any creed. I only attack that which is ignorant, cruel, and absurd, and my attacks are ever launched in the interests of human liberty and for the sake of human happiness. These are my guiding principles.

Mr. Pratt's article brought forth the usual shoal of replies, including a couple of special articles from Professor G. L. McKenzie. These were, in turn, replied to by Mr. Pratt, although the editor was unable to allow him the space he required. Still, it was something to have got the first article in, and things are moving when the editor of a newspaper asks a recognized Atheist to contribute to such a discussion. Other papers, finding nothing terrible happens when the Freethought case is presented, may pluck up courage and follow suit. Perhaps we may find even a London editor imitating the good example set. We understand that many letters were sent in protesting against such an article being allowed to appear, but one must expect that. The average Christian has only one idea on the matter, and that is suppression. We congratulate the editor of the *Express* on his sense of fair play, and Mr. Pratt on the quality of his article.

The system which begins by making mental indolence a virtue and intellectual narrowness a part of sanctity, ends by putting a premium on something too like hypocrisy.—*Lord Morley.*

The Cycle of Energy.

III.

(Concluded from page 267.)

CHEMICAL ENERGY.

I HAVE often said that the animal body is a physical machine kept in operation like any other machine by consuming energy. And in the ordinary meaning of the term, physical, the statement is quite correct: The etymological root of the word means "nature." In that sense, it is just equivalent to "material"; and all we denote by the epithet is, that nothing beyond the resources of Nature is called upon to work the "living mill." This contention is fully borne out by the mechanistic nature of the bodily machine, which reveal the fact that the "skill" and proficiency displayed in the manifold devices of structure met therein, are all in strict accord with the mechanics of solids, liquids, and gases: Its levers, pulleys, pumps, bellows, fulcrums, tubes, or grinders, all exemplifying the principles of the science of force. Moreover, the specific properties and texture of the materials elaborated by the living plasm to serve as bone, teeth, membrane, skin, nails, hair, tendon, ligament, or cartilage, are rigid, hard, tough, elastic, flexible, rough, smooth, thick, thin, solid, or hollow, just as the mechanical function of the organ, implement, or tissue demand.

When, however, the study and practice of alchemy came out of its chrysalis, metamorphosed as chemistry, the terms, "mechanical" and "physical," acquired restricted and specific meanings. Mechanical change, physical change, and chemical change came to stand for different modifications: the first denoted molar changes; the second, molecular, and the third, changes of constitution. Simultaneously the terms came to denote different orders of energy. If the source of the energy is gravitational or heat it is said to be physical; if it attends a change of composition and the substance thereby loses its identity, it is considered to belong to a totally different order and is called chemical energy.

What makes a living organism differ *toto caelo* from all artificial machines, is the fact that the latter are all worked by mechanical force, derived from some natural source, whereas the animal body in all its systems—muscular, alimentary, and nervous—is directly operated by the energy associated with chemical change. Chemical energy, as such, is wholly impotent to work piston, lever, crank, or pinion; it has first to undergo conversion into one of its physical forms. And no mechanism but a muscle can be operated *directly* by chemical energy so as to produce movement. Thus, the animal body as a machine is *sui generis*; and though it is quite correct to describe it as a physical mechanism, it would be wholly incorrect to say that it is operated by physical energy. Though possibly 95 per cent. or more of the energy that works all artificial machines is derived from chemical sources—coal, oil, or vegetation, yet it has all to be converted first into the molecular energy of gases, then into molar energy of piston, fly-wheel, and moving mass—the attribute of inertia playing its due part in each transformation; or it must assume the form of an electrical current.

I should perhaps here enter a warning against an ignorant and misleading assumption that electricity is a form of energy. It is no more a form of energy than is the Pacific Ocean. But as the waters of the Pacific can be made to acquire energy by being evaporated and lifted to the clouds, so may electricity, by having its two elements divorced from each other,

become a form of energy, which, by the by, surpasses all others in its transmissibility.

Now, the character or the attribute of being transmissible is a dividing line between physical and chemical energy. Physical energy can be transmitted to a distant point by shaft, belt, cable, or cog-wheels. The energy of the water-wheel or turbine is outside the mill it works, or, if converted into an electrical form, it may operate an industry two hundred miles from the spot where it was developed, as is done at Niagara.

But chemical energy is not susceptible of transmission; it is available only at the spot or point where it is developed and released. For that very reason, the energy-yielding materials, or foodstuffs, on which the animal subsists, is not made to part with its energy outside the body by being burnt, as is the case with all artificial machines. On the contrary, it has to be eaten—masticated, digested, assimilated, and circulated to the inmost recesses of every organ, gland, and tissue throughout the body. This is the secret of its miraculous capacity for developing mechanical power and effect locomotion. It is released *in situ*—in the muscular fibril itself—and compels the fibre by its katabolic products to increase its diameter and, by a geometrical necessity, to shorten its length and move the bone to which it is attached.

The alimentary system is essentially a chemical system; and the neural is probably ultra chemical—*i.e.* electronic.

What gives the bodily machine its spontaneity of movement—a movement that is wholly unsteretyped in character—is due (1) to the fact that its muscular system is thus operated *directly* by chemical energy; (2) to the multiplicity of muscles in the body which, including the involuntary ones, are probably not far short of three hundred, and all operated, not by a single shaft, but *independently* by the cerebral battery; and (3) to the irregular, capricious, or fitful way that impulses from this central organ reaches the muscles bidding them to contract. In the case of sub-human life, much of this fitfulness is due to the irregularity with which impressions are made upon the senses.

In a previous article I drew attention to the fact that the living machine had no objective other than itself and the species to which it belongs, *i.e.* had no extraneous purpose. I must now supplement that statement with another of equal significance—*viz.* that the *source* of its energy is likewise within the organism. There is no external water-wheel, fire and boiler, petrol tank, storage battery, or any equivalent outside the body, generating energy to work it. The energy-yielding foodstuff is evenly distributed within the mechanism. Moreover, not only is the source of its energy embodied in the very material which forms it and has the perpetuity of its life, individual and racial, as the goal of its activities, but the entire equipment for operating was built by this store of chemical energy out of the very material which embodied it. The living organism is thus a self-contained system, forming within itself a complete cycle. Living substance alone could produce such a machine. A physically operated one, let the complexity of its mechanism pass human comprehension, would be as stereotyped as a hurdy-gurdy, externally repeating the same tune.

KERIDON.

A governess was telling her small charge of the making of a golden calf by the Israelites, of the Israelites worshipping it—"And I suppose," remarked the little boy, "that God was cross." "Very cross indeed." "Thought so," he said, "anyone else would have laughed."—Pett Ridge.

Abner Kneeland's Trial.

THE CASE OUTLIVED COUNSEL FOR ACCUSED, WHO THEN CONDUCTED HIS OWN DEFENCE.

IN the Boston Public Library there is a volume once the property of the William Lloyd Garrison family, of which the following is the title page, as reproduced in a late number of the *Boston Globe* :—

SPEECH

of

ABNER KNEELAND

Delivered before the full Bench of Judges
of the

SUPREME COURT

In His Own Defence

For the Alleged Crime of
BLASPHEMY

Law Term, March 8, 1836

Boston :

Published by J. Q. Adams,
1836

An account of the Kneeland blasphemy case, apparently drawn from this rare volume, is contributed to the *Globe* by Carlyle H. Holt. The *Truthseeker* has in its library a book that contains the speeches of the prosecutor, one S. D. Parker, and of the defence, Andrew Dunlap, printed in 1834, but not the 1836 volume with Mr. Kneeland's speech in it. In his *Globe* article, after stating that "the case lingered in Massachusetts courts for four years, at last reaching the supreme court, which confirmed the sentence of Mr. Kneeland, one judge dissenting, to a sentence of sixty days in jail," Mr. Holt says :—

Those four years, from January, 1834, when Mr. Kneeland first went to trial in the local court in Boston, to April, 1838, when the Supreme Court handed down its decision, must have been exciting years. Both sides resorted to pamphleteering. Mr. Kneeland was supported by a small but militant minority, and his opponents, chiefly devout church-goers, fought with all the determination of people whose most sacred principles have been violated.

In the *Bimba* case this decision of the Supreme Court was several times referred to as the authoritative interpretation of the blasphemy law. The decision in the Kneeland case delivered by Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw and concurred in by two of the other three justices, not only interpreted the law against spoken blasphemy but also against printed blasphemy, since Mr. Kneeland's offence had been to print articles considered "blasphemous and obscene," and, therefore, the defence had urged as a defence that any prosecution meant an infringement of the freedom of the press.

A summary of the decision assists the understanding of the case. This summary is as follows :—

The statute is not intended to prohibit the fullest enquiry and freest discussion for all honest and fair purposes, one of which is the discovery of truth; nor to prevent the simple and sincere avowal of the disbelief in any existence and attributes of a supreme, intelligent being upon suitable and proper occasions; nor to prevent or restrain the formation of any religious opinions or the professing of any religious sentiments whatever; but it is intended to punish a denial of God made with bad intent, and in a manner calculated to give just offence; and with this construction the statute is not repugnant to the second article of the Bill of Rights, which declares that no subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained for his religious professions or sentiments provided he does not disturb the peace or obstruct others in their religious worship.

This statute (when applied to printed blasphemy) is not repugnant to the 16th article of the Bill of

Rights which declares that the liberty of the press ought not to be restrained.

This article was intended to secure to the citizens the general liberty of publishing without the previous licence of any officer of the Government, but not to restrain the legislative power in relation to the punishment of injuries to individuals, or of the disturbance of the peace, by malicious falsehoods or obscene or profane publications or exhibitions.

That ended the Kneeland case, and for almost one hundred years it has remained as the final word on the subject. It was the calm after the storm. Or more likely oil on troubled waters. From the time Mr. Kneeland first went on trial, in January, 1834, until long after his case was decided he was the centre of a raging controversy, perhaps the forerunner of the evolution controversy which later was to cause so much heart searching and difference of opinion.

But, although evolution had not been thought of in 1834, the French Revolution and Voltaire had loosed a collection of ideas that caused as much bitter difference of opinion. Mr. Kneeland, the sixty-year-old minister of austere life, was not accused of being an evolutionist, but he was accused of being a Socialist, an Atheist, and an advocate of birth control.

Robert Owen, one of the originators of the Socialist movement, was his prophet. Owen had begun experiments in community enterprises and by his writings was spreading the doctrine of his radical theories. In Boston Mr. Kneeland appears to have been the leader in the dissemination of his ideas.

The former minister is described in one of the pamphlets printed in his defence as an "apostle of a sect calling themselves the Free Inquirers and stigmatized in the newspapers as the followers of Owen and Family Wright."

This "sect" conducted a weekly newspaper, called the *Boston Investigator*, of which Mr. Kneeland was editor. Three articles appearing in the issue of December 20, 1833, were the basis of the charge brought against the man. One of the articles was a satire on the practice of prayer, in which God was represented, in the likeness of Gen. Andrew Jackson, as a bewildered old gentleman overwhelmed by floods of contradictory, urgent, and futile prayers pouring in on him from all sides. The Old Gentleman, it was said, knew not which way to turn and was so confused by the nature and number of these appeals that he found it impossible to do anything about any of them.

The second article was a quotation from the writings of Voltaire, and the third was a profession of his beliefs by Mr. Kneeland. The latter, on which he was really prosecuted, read as follows:—

Universalists believe in a God which I do not but believe that their God, with all his moral attributes (aside from Nature itself) is nothing more than a chimera of their own imagination. Universalists believe in Christ, which I do not, but believe that the whole story concerning him is as much a fable and a fiction as that of the god Prometheus, the tragedy of whose death is said to have been acted in a theatre in Athens 500 hundred years before the Christian era.

Universalists believe in miracles, which I do not; but believe that every pretension to them can be accounted for on natural principles or else is to be attributed to mere trick and imposture.

Universalists believe in the resurrection of the dead, in immortality, which I do not; but believe that all life is mortal, that death is an eternal extinction of life to the person who possesses it, and that no individual life is, ever was, or ever will be eternal.

Among the ministers of Boston and their flocks the first article aroused anger, and the second fury, but the third challenged them. Mr. Kneeland was arrested. At his trial he expressly disavowed being an Atheist, and there were lengthy arguments by counsel over the first of Mr. Kneeland's statements whether by "a" god he meant any god or only the Universalists' God.

Four days the trial lasted, three of these being used by Andrew Dunlap, Mr. Kneeland's counsel, in a "splendid oration" in his client's defence. Mr. Dunlap talked from noon Tuesday until 4 o'clock the following Friday afternoon. Then the judge charged the jury, admonishing them, among other things, to remember that no nation founded on Atheism had been able to endure, and pointing out that the experiment had just been tried by one of the "most polished nations in Europe."

A few minutes later the jury brought in a verdict of guilty. Mr. Kneeland was given 90 days in jail. He appealed.

At his second trial the following May the same ground was gone over, but not with the same result. This time the jury disagreed, standing eleven to one for conviction. At this point it is probable that accusations of jury fixing began to be heard, for in a subsequent pamphlet attacking the Free Inquirers it was said that eleven of the jury agreed on a verdict of guilty in ten minutes.

"The dissentient juror," the pamphlet continues, "was a personal and political friend of the defendant's counsel. He did not regularly belong on that jury and was put there by means of Mr. Dunlap's exertions."

This juror subsequently issued a statement defending his course, but, unfortunately, it has been lost.

The next time the case was tried, in November, 1835, Mr. Kneeland was again convicted, and given sixty days, and then ensued three years of delay before the case got to the Supreme Court. In the meantime Mr. Dunlap died and the defendant undertook his own defence. The Supreme Court ruling has already been cited.

Generally the argument of the defence was the same, although many ramifying issues were argued on both sides, that the Constitution guaranteed freedom of religion and the severance of Church and State, and, therefore, a conviction of Mr. Kneeland would be a violation of his constitutional rights and an abandonment of the old policy of the separation of Church and State. It was further argued that the freedom of the press would be controverted should the publication of the articles be punished.

To these arguments it was answered that the defendant and his followers had not been content to profess their own beliefs, but had gone out of their way to attack the religious convictions and faith of others, in a manner offensive and annoying.

In the meantime Mr. Kneeland, as a disciple of Robert Owen, had been accused of advocating Socialism and birth control, and a further accusation that he did not believe in the institution of marriage.

Regarding these accusations Mr. Kneeland has left behind, in a pamphlet written by himself in his own defence, a description of himself. He said to the jury:—

Gentlemen, I am aware it is a delicate subject for a man to speak in his own defence on the subject of morality. But it is sometimes necessary, and is always just. Hence in this respect I have nothing to fear. For I do not hesitate to say that in point of moral purity (making all due allowance for human frailty), I stand before you like a lofty oak that has braved the storms of more than sixty winters and yet remains unscathed.

Mr. Kneeland, defending himself from the charges for which he was under trial, ridiculed the presumption of men who considered it necessary to protect God from the attacks of a mere man.

What finally became of the aged rebel after his trial was over is not recorded. Except as a "case" recorded in the law records, and as a centre of a storm that blew mightily in its day, trace of him has vanished.

Here ends the information of Mr. Holt, the *Globe's* contributor. The annals of Freethought contain no more of Mr. Kneeland than that soon after serving his term in prison, at which time he was sixty-two years of age, he resigned the editorship of the *Investigator* to Horace Seaver, who had taken care of it while his chief was in jail, and retired to Salubria, Iowa, then a Territory, and died August 27, 1844. Seaver continued as editor for more than fifty years, dying at the age of 79 in 1889. The *Investigator*, under the editorship of Lemuel K. Washburn (L. K. W.), ran until about 1895, when it merged with the *Truthseeker*.—*Truthseeker* (New York).

Slavery in Scotland.

SLAVERY in Scotland has been the subject of an interesting controversy since a recent statement by Lord Oxford and Asquith that, as a domestic institution, it was stamped out in Christian Europe by the end of the twelfth century. At that period scarcely a Scottish cottage was without its English slave, and although slaves of Scots origin were at the same time common in Northern England the balance was in favour of Scotland after Bannockburn. In both countries the slaves were captives made in war or Border forays. Long after the twelfth century, however, a condition of serfdom or slavery existed among the miners and salters of Scotland, and it was not till May 23, 1775, that an Act of Parliament was passed setting them free. This Act repealed a law passed by the old Scottish Parliament in 1606, by which every man who once went to work in a coalmine was bound to labour in it all his life as a "necessary servant." If he tried to run away but was caught he was tried and punished as a thief; and if the land on which the pit stood was sold he was sold with it like any of the machinery.

Serfdom, however, had a much feebler hold on Scotland than on England, and it was confined to these two industrial classes. It was, perhaps, because he lived in an East Lothian community, where the collieries and saltworks had their oldest establishments, that Fletcher of Saltoun was led to make his curious proposal for the enlargement of the enslaved community. This was contained in the *Second Discourse Concerning the Affairs of Scotland*, written in 1698, in which he proposed that hospitals should be provided for old and feeble beggars, and that the "working classes" and harmless beggars should be employed as domestic slaves, while the dangerous ruffians should be sent to Venice "to serve in the galleys against the common enemy of Christendom." The most tragic aspect of slavery as it affected Scotland was that which is enshrined in the old Scots song, of which the following two plaintive verses describe the condition of slaves, probably 'prentice lads, or well-behaved citizens, sold to Virginian planters:—

We are yokit in a plow, and wearied sair enow;
In the land of Virginia, O,
Wi' the yoke upon our neck, till our hearts are like to break,
And, O, but I'm weary, weary, O.
When we're called home to meat, there's little there to eat,
In the land of Virginia, O;
We're whipt at every meal, and our backs are never heal,
And, O, but I'm weary, weary, O.

—*Glasgow Herald*.

A sound mind in a sound body is a short but full description of a happy state in this world.—*John Locke*.

Correspondence.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—May I be allowed space officially to reply to the open-minded, though rather satirical, remarks of Mr. Joseph Bryce on the advancing movement of Christian Science, and its leader, Annie C. Bill?

Mrs. Bill does not maintain that "Mrs. Eddy was mistaken" when she said that "God had been graciously preparing "her" for the reception of this final revelation of the absolute divine Principle of scientific *mental healing* (S & H 107, 3), but she maintains that this was the "final" conclusion which Mrs. Eddy herself came to, after investigating all the various channels of mortal belief which eventually disclosed their "feeble sense of the infinite law of God" (Mis. 172, 19).

The new generation of physicists are undoubtedly arriving at a similar conclusion in every department of so-called "natural science"; these discoverers in the realm of objective phenomena are not, however, by any means willing to admit that evolution (creation) ceases at this point, but rather that it is, according to spiritual perception—which is the only "faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation (evolution) of God" (Rev. iii. 14).

A successor in spiritual discovery cannot be nominated according to the methods of "General Booth," any more than an Edison, or Bell could have nominated Marconi as the successor in the further development of the telephone. If this method could have been adopted, Mrs. Eddy would have doubtless have made use of it, and nominated one of her students, or the body of five directors, as her successor, as she admitted all through her writings that "the successive utterances of reformers are essential" (Mess. 01, 30). The fact that she did not do so is significant when reviewing the disasters that have overtaken the "Mother Church organization" since 1910.

Mrs. Eddy very thoroughly "understood the meaning of Christian Science," but she affirmed that it could not be generally understood, until demonstrated. Mrs. Bill has made this demonstration possible through a strict adherence and implicit obedience to the rules and by-laws laid down by Mary Baker Eddy in her Manual, to impel the scientific evolution of her Church through active, living leadership.

Just as a dynamo is necessary to maintain light through the power of electricity, and darkness results if this dynamic supply is cut off, so spiritual and moral darkness was inevitable in the "Mother Church" organization when disconnected from advancing discovery.

This disconnection occurred in the field of Christian Science on December 3, 1910, but the leaven of truth which was hidden by Mary Baker Eddy in her "model" Manual was again "spiritually discerned, understood, and demonstrated by Annie C. Bill, and the Christian Science Parent Church of the New Generation is the practical outcome of this demonstration.

Mrs. Bill does not regard her revelation as "final," but re-echoes the words of Mary Baker Eddy: "What remains to lead on the centuries and reveal my successor is man in the image and likeness of the Father-Mother God, man the generic term for mankind" (My. 347, 2).

JOHN R. FELLOWES.

RELIGION AND BUSINESS.

SIR,—The letter reproduced in "Acid Drops" of April 25 from the *Clerk*, in reference to the C.W.S. applying a religious test to an applicant for a berth, will not surprise anyone who is at all acquainted with their policy and methods. The writer of the letter suggests that "one expects better things of the C.W.S." On the contrary, I submit that it is just what one might expect from an institution which invites Christian bishops to tickle the ears of its annual Congresses with pious platitudes. It is not by any means an isolated instance of their petty tyranny. A lady of my acquaintance who had served the C.W.S. faithfully and well for a long

term of years, and whose forbears had been pioneers of the movement, was quietly told that she would lose her situation and be turned into the street, unless she would submit to be dictated to as to the spending of her earnings. I could fill the *Freethinker* with such cases of mean and petty tyranny in almost every department of their activities. Whoever claims the honour of being the father of the Co-operative movement has little reason to be proud of his progeny.

JOSEPH BRYCE.

Society News.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S.

At the ninth Annual Meeting of the Manchester Branch, held on April 11, Mr. F. E. Monks was re-elected President for the eighth time, Mr. Collins was re-elected Secretary and Treasurer, and Mr. Greenall Literature Secretary. The Vice-Presidents were re-elected *en bloc*. Messrs. Monks and Collins were elected as Conference Delegates, and Messrs. Bayford, Bentley, Cohen, Rosetti, Seferian, and Unsworth, Mrs. Rosetti and Miss Unsworth were elected as Committee members. A Social Committee was elected, consisting of Messrs. Greenall and Unsworth and Mrs. Ballard, with power to co-opt. The balance-sheet, showing a small balance, was presented and adopted after the Auditor's report, stating the accounts were in order, had been read. The Branch is indebted to the Social Committee and the Literature Secretary for their efforts, which have materially assisted in enabling us to finish the year with a cash balance. Despite fewer lectures the proceeds from literature sales were greater, and this was in part due to the generosity of a friend (who desired to remain anonymous) who had given the Branch a large amount of old literature which had so far realised over £2. It is hoped that other members and friends might follow this example. The retiring officials were thanked for their services, and this concluded the meeting.—WM. COLLINS, *Hon. Sec.*

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.

We brought our indoor meetings to a close last Sunday with a thought-provoking address from Mr. George Ives, which evoked several questions and an interesting discussion. Mr. George Bedborough, now happily recovered from his recent illness, took the chair. The bad weather was no doubt responsible in a large degree for the comparatively small audience. To-day (May 2) Mr. George Whitehead opens our summer season in Regent's Park at 6 p.m. We hope North Londoners will rally round and give us a good "kick-off."—K. B. B.

Last Poem.

HE set his battle in array, and thought
To carry all before him, since he fought
For Truth, whose likeness was to him revealed;
Whose claim he blazoned on his battle-shield;
But found in front, impassably opposed,
The World against him, with its ranks all closed,
He fought, he fell, he failed to win the day,
But led to Victory another way.
For Truth it seemed in very person came
And took his hand, and they two in one flame
Of dawn divinely through the darkness passed;
Her breath far mightier than the battle-blast.
And here or there men caught a glimpse of grace,
A moment's flash of her immortal face,
And turned to follow, till the battle-ground
Transformed with foemen slowly facing round
To fight for Truth, so lately held accursed,
As if they had been Her champions from the first.
Only a change of front, and he who had led
Was left behind with Her forgotten dead.

GERALD MASSEY.

SALE AND EXCHANGE.

This column is limited to advertisements from private individuals only. Letters may, if it is so desired, be addressed to the Box Number, c/o "Freethinker" Office. Advertising rates 6d. for first line, every additional line 4d.

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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.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): 7, Dr. C. W. Saleeby, "The Things We Live By."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., D.Lit., "Disarmament."

OUTDOOR.

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

NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Hyde Park): Every Tuesday and Thursday at 7.30; Sunday at 11, 3.30, and 6.30; Lecturers—Messrs. Hart, Howell Smith, B.A., Hyatt, Le Maine, and Saphin.

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

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 3, Mr. J. J. Darby, a Lecture; 6, Mr. J. Hart, a Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (outside the Technical Institute, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, a Lecture. Monday until Friday, May 3 to 7, at 7.45, Mr. G. Whitehead.

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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.

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