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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

Views and Opinions.

Humbug.

In a modern community there is bound to be a certain amount of humbug in connection with religion—whether the humbug be of the conscious or the unconscious variety. A very large number of the inhabitants of these islands probably believe with all sincerity in the customary doctrines of the Christian world. But with even these humbug is not absent. They cannot escape the pressure of their environment, and in the following out of their ordinary lives they must yield to the better knowledge and different habits of to-day. And when we come to the more educated body of professed believers it becomes a matter of sheer impossibility for them to convince themselves of the truth of Christian teachings without stooping to some form of mental crookedness. If they profess to accept inspiration in the religious sense, they are compelled to explain it in the poetical one. God is accepted as a "person" but is explained as a "Power" as though he were a mere problem in physics. Christianity is clearly based upon the belief that Jesus Christ was God, but every modern defence rests upon his being no more than a good, or an amiable teacher of ethics. The vicar of Frizinghall, a firm believer in faith-healing, consults a doctor when he is ill, and explains that while it is true Jesus did not use medicine when he was on earth, if he were here now he would "certainly use these aids to his work." We do not doubt it. He would mix faith with medicine, just as does the vicar, and, probably, as in the case of the vicar, never realize how ridiculous he is making the whole business. Civilization places a limit to one kind of absurdity, even though it may pave the way for another variety.

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The Price of Savagery.

There is humbug all along the line. It could not be otherwise. An absence of humbug would imply that our religion sprang from the life of to-day, was fed by the life of to-day, and expressed teachings that could be accepted by educated men and women in their plain meaning. But our religious beliefs have no more vital connection with the life of to-day than they have with the building of an aeroplane. We can profess to *believe* them, but no one expects us to *practise* them. Christians are surprised that others should expect them to put their beliefs into practice. They are surprised when they discover a brother believer trying to do so. Some years ago a famous dignitary of the Church of England said that a State that tried to put the Sermon on the Mount into practice would soon fall to pieces. But this did not prevent him preaching it as of first-rate importance, nor drawing a salary for preaching what he declared would ruin a State if it tried to practise it. Over and over again coroners find a man guilty of manslaughter because he has obeyed the New Testament by trusting to the power of faith to cure the sick. And the rest of the Christian world says it serves them right. The clergy are given places of privilege because, theoretically, they are the mouthpiece of God, with possibilities of knowing his will that are denied to the ordinary man. Yet, there is not a single subject of importance to mankind on which the average man or woman bothers in the least about their opinion. Humbug, humbug, all the way! If humbug is not quite the tribute that religion yields to reality, it is certainly the veneer with which the civilized mind manages to gloss over its toleration of savagery.

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Playing for Safety.

Another instance has just been supplied by the daily press. George the Fifth is by Grace of God King of England. He is at the head of the Church established by law, and in so establishing it, the State may be assumed to say that it is the truest and the best form of religion. We do not know what the King's private opinions are about Christianity, and without proper evidence we should not like to accuse him of believing it. His religion was settled for him by Act of Parliament long before he was born. He was born into the English Church, christened in the English Church, married in the English Church, forbidden by law to belong to any other Church, and when he dies will be buried by the English Church. Naturally, therefore, when the King appoints a chaplain it is usually a parson belonging to the English Church. It would be looking a gift horse in the mouth were he to do otherwise. But now the King has made a departure from this practice, and has appointed a Wesleyan minister to be one of his chaplains. Nonconformists are very pleased about it, and we do not pretend to know what it means. It may mean that the King is beginning to have doubts as to whether Church of Englandism is the best form of religion, and he is beginning to "hedge," just as some "hedge" a bet in case the other man or the other horse should win. Or it may be that he has come to the conclusion that none of the religions of the world are of much consequence, and that it does not matter whether his chaplain belongs to one body or to another. But having gone so far, if the King wishes to be on good terms with as many Gods and as many Churches as possible, why should he stop there? The Nonconformists say they deserve recognition because they form a large part of the population of the country.

But a very large number of the King's subjects are Mohammedans. Another considerable body are Brahmans. There are a quantity of Jews, to say nothing of the hundred and one odds and ends of religious believers scattered throughout the British Empire. Why should not the King appoint a representative of each to look after his spiritual welfare? It would be impartial. And whatever he did he would then be all right with the Gods—he would be as certain of getting a winner as would a man who backed every horse in the Derby. Perhaps, too, George the Fifth is coming to the conclusion of Gibbon's Roman statesman who found all religions equally false, and all equally useful.

* * *

The State and Religion.

The President of the Congregational Union said the appointment of a Nonconformist Chaplain to the King was a great stride towards religious equality—which proves what we have said as to the relation between religion and humbug. For if this Nonconformist had been quite true to principle he would have seen in it something to be deplored. Quite apart from the—religiously—shocking spectacle of a man employing parsons belonging to different denominations to pray for him, the Nonconformists profess to be dead against the State patronage of religion. They protest—in words—that the State has no right to interfere in matters of religion; that religion is a matter for individual decision, and that having decided which religion is the right one each person should be left to practise it in his own way, at his own expense, and without any interference whatever from the State. As a statement of principle this is admirable. It expresses the Freethought position. But with the Freethinker it is an active, an operative principle. With the Nonconformist it is a form of words only. Instead of repudiating State patronage, he seeks it, and complains when he does not get it. He seeks the aid of the law to enforce upon others his conception of the way in which people should spend the day of rest. He takes full advantage of the law which releases all churches and chapels from payment of taxes, and takes quite readily a cash subsidy for his religion. He insists that the State has no right to teach religion to adults, but fights for it to teach religion to children. At every public or State ceremonial he insists upon recognition as a religious functionary ignoring his basic ground that in all such affairs we should meet on the ground of a common citizenship, and not on the divisive principle of sectarian beliefs. One may say, in fact, that while the clergy of the Established Church manifest that degree of humbug which is inseparable from the maintenance of a savage religion in a civilized community, the Nonconformist goes out of his way to import into it a number of quite gratuitous hypocrises.

* * *

Pecksniff.

The secret of it is, of course, that the Nonconformist has no desire for genuine religious equality, in the sense of the State leaving religion severely alone. If he did desire that he would only escape one piece of humbug to plunge into another. It would be to say that while religion was of all things the most important, while it was indispensable to the right ordering of life, it was the one thing with which the State may have nothing to do. Any man may be at liberty to take any God he pleases, or if he prefers to go without a God altogether. What the Nonconformist really wants, what he is always after, is a fair share in the plunder. He does not object to the State enforcing religion, but he says it must be a religion with which I agree. He does not object to the State taxing everybody for the benefit of the Christian churches, but, he says, I must get a fair share of the money so received. He does not object at all to State patronage, so long as he gets the same patronage as the other Christian bodies—of any size. One must put in that proviso, because size is everything to his standard of value. A very small sect, even a Christian one, need not be bothered about. It is only when the sect becomes a large one that it deserves consideration. And all the time his mouth is full of phrases about morality, about justice, and about freedom. It is all part of the general humbug associated with religion. One day we shall perhaps learn the lesson that intellectual strength and sincerity are important prerequisites to moral straightforwardness. But that day will only be when Christianity is much weaker than it is at present.

Chapman Cohen.

Faith.

Professor David Smith, D.D., devotes his Correspondence Column in the *British Weekly* for June 3 to a discussion of the above subject. "D. G.," an enquirer, had asked him the following question: "Would you kindly give your learned opinion on 'What is Faith?'" and in his reply thereto the Professor covers very familiar ground. In fact, he has absolutely no new idea to express, nor any fresh point of view to suggest. The whole truth on the subject is to be found in the Epistle to the Hebrews xi. 1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." That is an accurate definition of faith and of Christianity as well, for, in reality, faith and Christianity are synonymous terms. Dr. Smith calls it a "peerless" definition, and such, indeed, it is. Dealing with the word "substance" the Professor says:—

> It is used here in the everyday meaning which it bore in the writer's time. And what was that? The word signified literally "standing-ground," and it is excellently illustrated by that cry of the Psalmist in a distressful case, like the Prophet Jeremiah's (chapter xxxviii. 6), when "the waters had come in unto his soul." "I sink," he cries (Psa. lxix. 2), "in a deep mire, where there is no standing," or, as it is in the Greek version of the Septuagint, "*no substance*—no standing-ground, nothing under my feet."

That is a round-about way of getting at the signification of the term *substance*, but of the fact that it is the true meaning there can be no doubt whatever. But we are convinced that Dr. Smith's exposition of the definition of faith is entirely wrong. He says:—

> It is a picture of a mariner swimming for dear life when his boat has foundered in the darkness. Long and hard he struggles till his strength is spent and then he resigns himself to his fate. He is sinking, and just as the waters are closing over him his foot touches bottom. Ah, the joy of it, the glad surprise! There is "substance" beneath him—a standing-ground, a footing; and he is saved.

Of course, the writer of Hebrews, in penning his definition of faith, never even dreamed of a mariner swimming for dear life, and arriving at safety when in the very act of sinking. He was a Christian, inspired by many glowing hopes, and anxious to comfort himself and his fellow-disciples by the assurance that faith was the standing-ground, or foundation, of all such hopes. He seemed to say: "We believe in many things unseen and unseeable; what evidence of

their reality do we possess? None whatever, beyond the mere fact of our belief." In his estimation faith was absolute and all satisfying proof. He needed nothing more, and the same has been true of most Christians in all ages. For Professor Smith, evidently, faith is all in all in man's salvation, for he quotes, apparently with complete approval, the following pernicious lines:—

Weary, weary, burdened one, wherefore toil you so?
Cease your doing, all was done long, long ago.
Till to Jesus' work you cling by a simple faith,
Doing is a deadly thing, doing ends in death.
Cast your deadly doing down, down at Jesus' feet,
Stand in Him, in Him alone, gloriously complete.

Such verses are immeasurably detestable, injurious, and degrading, and yet they seem to give acceptable expression to the Gospel believed and taught at College Park, Belfast.

Beyond a doubt Dr. Smith is a thoroughly orthodox theologian. Both in the Gospels and the Epistles of the New Testament salvation is by faith alone. In Mark xvi. 16, we read: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." In John iii. 16. is found the famous verse: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Paul went everywhere preaching that Gospel and making numerous converts; and such has been the teaching of the Church throughout the centuries. The second person in the Holy Trinity came down to earth, became flesh, went through life a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, coining parables, healing the sick, and raising the dead, and at last gave himself up for our salvation on the cross of shame, descended to the tomb, and on the third day rose triumphant, and returned to heaven as the world's advocate with the Father. He is the world's Saviour, and there is no salvation in any other; and he redeems only those who consciously put their trust in him. Unbelievers are in a lost estate in this world and shall be damned for ever in the world to come. Heaven is the happy abode of believers alone. Such is the teaching of Christianity, or rather, such is Christianity, put in a nut-shell; and there is positively no escape from the only logical and ethical conclusion that it is an essentially immoral religion.

The question is, can such a religion, rooted and grounded in immorality, be true? Is there any intellectualy reliable argument for its reality? Thus we are brought back to the words in Hebrews, namely, "Now faith is the substance (standing ground) of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In other words, the only proof of the truth of Christianity is the bare fact that certain people believe it to be true, which is really no proof at all, and very few indeed are quite satisfied with it. Tennyson, for example, believed, or tried hard to believe in defiance of the voice of his reason. Even *In Memoriam*, the most pious of all his poems, contains many declarations of doubt. In the introduction we find the following:—

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove.

We have but faith: we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see.

His dead friend, whose loss he so sadly mourned, had been "perplext in faith, but pure in deeds." He, too, had had his doubts which he bravely fought until he died. When Tennyson lay on his dying bed the book he read last was not the Bible, but Shakespeare's Plays. It is well known that many of our great poets, such as Shelley, Byron, Swinburne, and Meredith were avowed Freethinkers. To them faith possessed no evidential value whatsoever. It is indeed an established fact that the conventionally accepted proofs of the truth of supernatural religion are not intellectually convincing, and that for the great majority of thoughtful people the supernatural world is the creation of an unenlightened and unscientific imagination. We learn from sorrowful admissions regretfully made on religious platforms that only about twenty-five per cent. of our population retain belief in the Christian faith, which signifies that it is steadily and surely becoming a thing of the past.

J. T. LLOYD.

Shelley Once More.

Song is not Truth, not Wisdom, but the rose
Upon Truth's lips, the light in Wisdom's eyes.
—*William Watson.*

Liberty, a word without which all other words are vain.—*Ingersoll.*

No one can estimate what the world of literature lost by the death of Percy Bysshe Shelley. The great poet was cut down in the fullness of his genius, just as he had finished two such different masterpieces as *The Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound*, and a sheaf of magnificent lyrics which are among the brightest contributions to the literature of his century. If Shakespeare had died at the same age as Shelley, he would have been remembered as the young author of *Romeo and Juliet*, and he would scarce have risen to the distinction which rightly belongs to the more modern poet.

Yet when the news of Shelley's death by drowning reached England the few press notices were cruel and insulting. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, for instance, actually suggested that he ought to have been hanged instead of being praised. And right through the nineteenth century this note of disparagement was heard, not from unknown scribblers but from men who ought to have known better. Even towards the end of the nineteenth century, a leading critic, such as Matthew Arnold, described the poet Shelley as "a beautiful, ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain." If there is one thing certain concerning Shelley it is that his work, from a literary standpoint, is not "ineffectual," and his artistry not in vain. Not only is Shelley's poetry loved more sincerely by present-day readers than by his contemporaries, but his opinions, once thought mad and unreasonable, have become far more acceptable to an increasing number of persons. Even a European war, with its attendant paper famine, did not stop the steady flow of books relating to Shelley.

Curiously, readers have had to wait for nigh a century for a really adequate biography of the poet. Professor Edward Bowden's was the first attempt at full-dress biography, and, unfortunately, it was only an attempt. It was published half a century after Shelley's death, and based upon inadequate knowledge and imperfect sympathies. It was not until the publication of Mr. Roger Ingpen's two books, *Shelley in England* and *Shelley in Italy* (Kegan Paul) that the great poet came into his own, and had a biography of real and unmistakable value. Mr. Ingpen did his work thoroughly, so thoroughly that Dowden's book was displaced as an authority once and for all.

Mr. Ingpen must have lived laborious days in the writing and compiling of these two volumes, which run to over a thousand pages. They contain a mass of information, derived chiefly from the Shelley archives at Boscombe. It is so fresh and illuminative that every Shelley enthusiast should run to the nearest bookseller's or library and get the books. To

read them is an experience. It is like entering a familiar room from a different angle, when the objects are all seen in a new perspective. For instance, we all knew of the estrangement between Shelley and his father. Mr. Ingpen shows us the very important part played in that unhappy affair by Mr. William Whitton, the family solicitor, who was stupid, vindicative, and almost as dangerous as an elderly spinster in a remote country village. Indeed, Sir Timothy Shelley, left to himself, would in all probability, have effected a reconciliation with his famous son. One very interesting statement is made by Whitton, "that Mr. P. B. Shelley was exhibiting himself on the Windsor stage in the character of Shakespeare's plays under the figured name of Cooke." This is very vague, but one would like to know what Shakespearean rôle the author of *The Cenci* enacted.

The thoroughness of Mr. Ingpen's methods may be estimated by the fact that he even includes an account of the later life of Mary Shelley, the daughter of William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft. He has also much to say of the poet's son, Sir Percy Florence Shelley, of whom he gives a portrait. The son inherited only one trait from his famous father, an ardent love of the sea.

The new matter is very valuable, and includes no less than twenty-nine unpublished letters of the poet. There are many epistles from Sir Timothy, and two entirely fresh letters of Byron's. And the whole story of Shelley's relations with Harriet Westbrook is clearly stated. As for the volume, *Shelley in Italy*, what can one say? At this period of the great poet's life he was in sore need of a haven of refuge, and he found it in that glorious country, so aptly named "the paradise of exiles." Shelley's letters reveal his new-found happiness. Page after page glows with glorious prose, fit company of his exquisite poetry, and reveal Shelley as one of the great letter-writers. And when he was at the very zenith of his truly extraordinary genius, his career was cut short, leaving us all to marvel at a life which was in very truth a miracle of thirty years. In short, all lovers of Shelley owe Mr. Ingpen a deep debt of gratitude for adding to our knowledge of a stupendous genius. All will hope that on some future occasion he will see his way to issue his book in a cheaper form, for he has written the standard biography of one of England's greatest and noblest sons.

As for Shelley's influence, both literary and political, much has happened since the poet's untimely death. Theodore Hook's cruel jest that *Prometheus Unbound* was likely to remain unbound has been utterly falsified, for the young Atheist who was expelled from the grave cloisters of Oxford University for his awful opinions, is now recognized as one of the greatest poets, if not the greatest, of his century. Nearly seventy years after Shelley's death William T. Stead, a most excellent judge of public opinion, pointed out that Shelley's poems met with great acceptance at the hands of the democracy, and that the great poet's verse had as their chief motive the struggle for Liberty and the aspirations of Freedom.

Those superior folk who think that progress since Shelley's time is largely illusory would do well to look occasionally at the files of old newspapers, where they would often find things to astonish them. Take, for example, the following cutting from the *Sunday Times*, January 22, 1826:—

> Rome: Previous to the execution of the Carbonari a dispute arose among the priests. It had formerly been the custom, when a criminal rejected conversion, to compel him to yield by applying to the hands and feet of the culprit burning torches. The priests wished to reintroduce this custom; they had nearly succeeded when the Court forbade their doing so, saying that such conduct would expose the Roman Government to obloquy.

In the same issue it is stated that John Mills, aged seventeen, and William Astell, aged nineteen, were found guilty of stealing a silk handkerchief, and were transported for life. Another paragraph states that two resurrection men were punished for stealing dead bodies. In an adjoining column is the statement that there were 18,000 persons unemployed in London, mostly loom-weavers. That's a picture of the "good, old times" in which Percy Shelley lived, and dreamed his dreams of a regenerated humanity. And now the great poet's visions are slowly coming into the realm of reality. In Shelley's case the whirligig of time has indeed brought in its revenge. Many of his contemporaries, who overshadowed him during his short life, have long since faded into mere names, but this Atheist poet has a message for generations yet unborn. Does it not justify Shelley's proud boast that "poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world"?

Mimnermus.

J. A. Froude and his Assailants.

III.

(*Concluded from page* 364.)

As Froude's biographer observes: "As between Froude and Freeman, the assailed and the assailant, Froude was incomparably the more laborious student of the two." Freeman wrote his *History of the Norman Conquest* "entirely from books, without consulting an original document of any kind."[1] Froude, on the contrary,

> prepared himself for the task by patient research among letters and manuscripts such as Freeman never thought of attempting. He neglected no source of information open to him, and he obtained special privileges for searching Spanish archives which entailed upon him the severest labour. He studied not only at Simancas, where none had been before him, but also in Paris, in Brussels, in Vienna. The documents he read were in half a dozen languages, sometimes in the vilest scrawls. Long afterwards he described his own experience. "Often at the end of a page," he said, "I have felt as after descending a precipice, and have wondered how I got down. I had to cut my way through a jungle, for no one had opened the road for me. I have been turned into rooms piled to the window sill with bundles of dust-covered despatches, and told to make the best of it. Often I have found the sand glittering on the ink where it had been sprinkled when a page was turned. There the letter had lain, never looked at again since it was read and put away." Out of such material Froude wrote a history which any educated person can read with undisturbed enjoyment. (Herbert Paul, *Life of Froude*, p. 192.)

Froude received permission from Lord Salisbury to search the historical papers and letters at Hatfield, handed down by the Cecil family from Elizabethan times, during which the Cecil family played such a prominent part. He worked laboriously at the British Museum and the Record Office, but his greatest find was the priceless treasure of the archives at Simancas, a little village in Spain, seven miles from Valladolid, the Moorish citadel of which, the Emperor Charles V. used for storing historical documents, also by Philip II. of "Spanish Armada" fame. It is estimated that the collection consists of 33,000,000 documents, the bulk of which have even yet not been examined. Froude made copious extracts from the letters and documents in the col-

[1] Paul, *Life of Froude*, p. 148.

lection dealing with England under the reign of Mary and Elizabeth. Philip II. wrote a remarkably bad hand, and his ambassadors were not much better. The deciphering of many of these crabbed and faded documents would tax the resources of the Spanish scholars themselves. Yet Freeman, who never attempted to compare Froude's translations with the originals, and was indeed utterly incapable of doing it, threw out hints and inuendoes that Froude's translations, and summaries of these documents were not trustworthy or reliable.

If Froude had wanted to manipulate and alter these documents to suit his personal views, he would not have sent a transcript of his translations to the British Museum, which he did do. When Froude, in his long-delayed answer to Freeman, pointed this out, Freeman said he was not aware of it, yet he had discussed it himself eight years previously in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

In the year 1877 Froude contributed to the *Nineteenth Century* a series of papers on the "Life and Times of Thomas Becket," which Freeman attacked, with all the violence of which he was capable, in the pages of the *Contemporary Review*. Hitherto his attacks had been delivered under the veil of anonimity; now he came out into the open under his own name, blinded by Froude's refusal to notice his pin-pricking criticism, and his own vanity, to the danger he was incurring. Says his biographer:—

> At last, however, Freeman had gone too far. Froude had borne a great deal, he could bear no more; and he took up a weapon which Freeman never forgot. I can well recall, as can hundreds of others, the appearance in the *Nineteenth Century* for April, 1879, of "A Few Words on Mr. Freeman." They were read with a sense of general pleasure and satisfaction, a boyish delight in seeing a big bully well thrashed before the whole school. Froude was so calm, so dignified, so self-restrained, so consciously superior to his rough antagonist in temper and behaviour. (Herbert Paul, *Life of Froude*, p. 182.)

It was not difficult to show that Freeman's articles contained worse blunders than any attributed to Froude. "Freeman's plight," says Mr. Paul, "was not to be envied. If his offence had been rank, his punishment had been tremendous." The *Spectator*, which had hitherto upheld him through thick and thin, admonished him that he had passed the bounds of decency and infringed the rules of behaviour..... After vainly trying to explain away some of the errors brought home to him by Froude, and leaving others unnoticed, he complains, with deep and obvious sincerity, that Froude had not read his books, nor even his articles in Encyclopædias" (pp. 184-185). But Freeman had learned his lesson, and Froude was never troubled with him again.

It is a significant fact that when Dean Stephens wrote the life of Freeman, he maintained utter and complete silence upon Freeman's long continued campaign against Froude and its upshot. There is only one deduction to be drawn from this, namely, that Stephens could see no defence for Freeman's conduct, and thought the less said about it the better. But the evil a man does, lives after him, and, as Mr. Paul observes: "Freeman's view of Froude is not now held by anyone whose opinion counts; yet still there seems to rise, as from a brazen head of Ananias, the dismal and monotonous chant, "He was careless of the truth; he did not make history the business of his life." He did make history the business of his life, and he cared more for truth than for anything else" (p. 186).

There is one point upon which Froude laid himself open to the attacks of his enemies. He did not, as Mr. Pollard puts it, "respect the sanctity of inverted commas." "They ought," as Mr. Paul remarks, "to imply textual quotation. Froude used them for his abridgements, openly proclaiming the fact that he had abridged, and therefore deceiving no one" (pp. 157-158). This is the foundation for all the charges of bad faith, of misquotation, and garbling of his authorities, that have been brought against Froude. Let us see what truth there is in these charges.

Everyone is agreed, both friends and opponents, that Froude wrote in a fascinating and delightful style. Indeed, his enemies declare that he should have devoted his talents to novel writing. Froude did not believe in the dry-as-dust method of writing history. He had no intention of writing like Stubbs, who wrote as a scholar for scholar, he wanted the work to be popular, to be read by the people with pleasure, and not painfully. He did not want to repel his readers with long extracts from dry, diplomatic documents; moreover, to do so would have made the work too unwieldly. As it was, he had to curtail it. He intended to carry it to the end of the reign of Elizabeth, but brought it to a close in twelve volumes, with the defeat of the Spanish Armada. So he adopted the method, which has caused such animadversion, of abridging his quotations, of condensing a long passage into a short one, which had the double advantage of making the work more readable and reducing its bulk.

This is the point selected by Mr. Chamberlin for his furious attack on Froude in his "Introduction" to *The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth* (1923). To prove the unreliability of Froude's quotations, Mr. Chamberlin compares, in parallel columns, some of Froude's abridgements with the originals, in the following manner:—

What Froude says Elizabeth Wrote:	*What Elizabeth actually Wrote:*
If she thought to terrify her she would find herself abused.	If this proceeds upon a conceit thereby to terrify her, as the only way to draw her to yield to her desire, she shall find herself greatly abused.
I cannot but tell you what all the world is thinking.	Therefore I shall not hide from you that which the majority of people are saying of it.

It will be seen at once from the above samples—and they are typical of the rest—that Froude has simply eliminated superfluous words, while preserving the meaning quite correctly. Mr. Chamberlin also compares some of Froude's Spanish translations with the originals, but he did not have to travel to the obscure village of Simancas to search among its dusty records, for the State papers relating to English affairs have been translated by an eminent scholar, Mr. Martin Hume, and have been printed, and can be read by anyone who cares to. Moreover, in the Introduction to these translations, Mr. Hume acknowledges the assistance he received from Froude's transcripts. He says: "I have very carefully compared the Spanish text when doubtful with Mr. Froude's extracts and copies and with transcripts of many of the letters in the British Museum."[2] And, as we have seen, many of these writings were extremely difficult to decipher. Mr. Chamberlin says he has set himself "the lifelong task of refuting Froude's claim." It is a pity he cannot find something better to do. He has not refuted Froude, who will be read and enjoyed by millions long after Mr. Chamberlin and his foolish tirade are forgotten, or only remembered as an example and a warning.

W. MANN.

[2] H. Paul, *Life of Froude*, p. 198.

Books and Life.

FROM the calm pools of reflection in the East we have had, in the theory of reincarnation, a working hypothesis of rewards and punishments. It has many merits, and hangs on the slender thread of the philosophy of "as if." As food for amusement and speculation, visitors to the Zoological Gardens must provide the various keepers with conundrums. Does this visitor resemble a bear? Does that one resemble a walrus? and although we need proceed no further in our comparisons there is little doubt that we possess attributes of our nearer relatives—the animals. Happy is the man who has the wisdom of the serpent and the mildness of the dove—and knows how and when to use these qualities. From the Homeric picture of the Odyssey, Mr. Eden Phillpotts has taken an enchanting scene, and in *Circe's Island*[1] the author of rural tragedy and comedy has moved into the rarer and clearer atmosphere of Greek mythology. In the *New Criterion* for January, Mr. T. S. Eliot, full of hope, stated that there was a tendency towards a higher and clearer conception of Reason; we believe that Mr. Phillpotts has never been in any doubt about this goal, and his latest book ratifies his position and confirms him in his quest even though he should risk being in a minority of one. With freshness and vigour, and dropping jewels of common sense on the way, he tells the story of a boy in search of his father, whom Circe has enchanted.

Amphion, the boy hero, when ten years of age, found a serpent's egg, took it home, and from it was hatched a beautiful little snake, which he called "Simo." Here our author seems to be knocking at another door. Time, he says, is nothing to a serpent, as it lives in a fourth dimension. This is a question that has exercised the minds of many thinkers with different results from each one; if thinkers did not have to consume so much energy for a handful of oatmeal, it would be possible to bring this subject to a closer range of inspection and the rewards might prove worth the trouble. St. Paul has tickled the subject, and a modern Russian writer, P. Ouspensky, states that time *is* the fourth dimension. *Circe's Island* is like the perfume of the hawthorn blossom; it makes one forget the clamour in the market place of the "for and against" on questions the discussion of which, do not rise to the level of intelligence, although they have to be settled. Amphion eventually finds his father, but, in the process, Mr. Phillpotts, our modern Horace, takes us to the rich store in his mind, proving that he has assimilated to advantage the best and most beautiful side of history. Here are a few jewels of common-sense, at a time when this quality appears to have received honourable mention:—

> He possessed the rare intelligence to regard himself from the outside; and we all know what most people look like from the outside.
>
> Who plans a sweet, carthartic vapour that, carried by the kindly words, shall sweep over a city like a shade on a cloudless day and flood a ferocious army with rare savour, warming every heart therein to good will? Why not strive to perfect a weapon that shall stroke the brain of man with joy, clear his bloody vision and lift his spirit to mercy?
>
> Those who have the wisdom to make wars do not fight them; but, out of their patriotism and self-denial, seek the security of the senate-house or temple, as the case may be, and thence utter winged words for the lesser men who wield the sword and bear the brunt.

These, my readers, are the result of one reading; a gleaning would bring many more. Amphion's father is restored to his home. As over-measure to this delightful story, we are given "The Girl and the Faun," which is, in our opinion, the fourth dimension in a fanciful vein—or, like Euclid illustrated in colour by Edmund Dulac. Mr. Eden Phillpotts writes from a southern aspect, and one is tempted to make comparisons with that other veteran of letters, Mr. Thomas Hardy, who will scarcely admit that the sun shines.

[1] *Circe's Island and the Girl and the Faun*, by Eden Phillpotts. Grant Richards, Ltd., 8 St. Martin's Street, W.C.2. 6s.

In the interim of waiting for national adjustments we re-visited Spinoza, and incidentally looked in through the window at a few of the propositions of Euclid. What is the practical value of Spinoza? Firstly we find that he states his case clearly; secondly, he does not get anything out of his propositions that were not in them, and lastly he helps us to see plainly the wood and the trees. We cannot touch him without rubbing shoulders with Descartes or Hobbes or Hume or Locke, and a pleasant half hour was spent in consequence of this, in reading an essay by the late W. G. Pogson Smith on the *Philosophy of Hobbes*. This may be found as a stimulating introduction to Hobbe's *Leviathan*, published by the Clarendon Press. He writes: If I were asked to name the highest and purest philosopher of the seventeenth century I should single out Spinoza without a moment's hesitation." That is plain enough and defies equivocation. "But," he continues, "Spinoza was not of the world; and if a man will be perverse enough to bind the Spirit of Christ in the fetters of Euclid, how shall he find readers?" That is not so good. Montaigne tells us that he does not care twopence whether we read him or not; Robert Burton, with his *Anatomy of Melancholy* is just as indifferent, and Spinoza, we think, may be put in the company of these two. The spectacle-glass polisher lays down certain rules:—

> 1. To speak in a manner intelligible to the multitude, and to comply with every general custom that does not hinder the attainment of our purpose.....
>
> 2. To indulge ourselves with pleasures only in so far as they are necessary for preserving health.
>
> 3. Lastly, to endeavour to obtain only sufficient money or other commodities to enable us to preserve our life and health, and to follow such general customs as are consistent with our purpose.

These acquit Spinoza of not being of this world, and a careful reading of him will enable us to pick out the fallacy in the rhetoric about the fetters of Euclid. Spinoza does not come to us like Defoe; we must go to him and be rewarded by bringing away the picture of a good man, who with the compasses of his intellect describes the emotions in terms that can be understood. A reading of many modern books on psychology almost demands a separate glossary for each.

What particular quality will gain immortality for Mr. George Bernard Shaw? As an iconoclast he has a gigantic background of smashed idols; in his own words he has admitted that he is only clever because so many people are stupid. And we may wonder as to how many of his plays will survive. None will dispute about his knowledge and technique of the stage; the dramatic faculty is second nature to him, yet beyond shocking the middle classes, who buy his books and pay to see his plays, it is doubtful whether he will be remembered to any greater degree in another generation than Mr. T. W. Robertson with his plays, out of which was made the fortune and reputation of the late Sir Squire Bancroft. Mr. Shaw has "done well" out of the public; but so did Carnegie, and, for some reason, Mr. Patrick Braybrooke, has written a book entitled *The Genius of Bernard Shaw*.[2] Writing of the "Unpleasant Plays," the author says: "Shaw seems to show that he has, at least in these plays, not only no recipe for happiness, but no solution for the problem of how to avoid unhappiness." Mr. Braybrooke writes clearly and vigorously about his subject, has very well expressed opinions of his own, and does not mince matters which are familiar to the readers of this paper. His enthusiasm and hero-worship are both tempered with critical skill, and the book is justified if only for the freshness and originality that he brings to bear on his subject-matter, that includes Mr. Shaw and his views on ethical and religious matters.

Tentatively, and in the nature of an interlude on a tin whistle, we suggest that the successful broadcasting

[2] *The Genius of Bernard Shaw*, by Patrick Braybrooke. Dranes, Ltd., Farringdon Street, E.C. 7s. 6d. net.

of a nightingale's song is an achievement. Perhaps the myth round this bird, or each individual listener's knowledge of the nightingale in history, makes the appeal different for each one. The night is associated with screech owls, croaking frogs, howling wolves, and other objectionable sounds. Out of this wilderness of unmusical sounds, a bird sings, and its rich melodious notes, the meaning of which we do not know, will weave more pictures in the imagination than the hand has time to record them. It is the appeal of beauty which silences contention, and on this note we close with a grandfather's moral; if organized religion had the same significance we might welcome the spring of mankind, after the spadework of philosophical pioneers.

WILLIAM REPTON.

Acid Drops.

During the war there was much talk of the soldier's and sailor's objection to compulsory religious services, and some promises were made that the matter should receive official attention. But like so many other official promises they came to nothing, and soldiers and sailors are not yet permitted the freedom of conscience which is enjoyed by every civilian. And it may serve as an additional note to what we say in this week's "Views and Opinions" that we do not observe any kind of protest from Nonconformists against this compulsory attendance at religious services. They do not object to compulsion, so long as it has to do with a form of religion with which they are in substantial agreement.

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In the circumstances we are pleased to see this matter raised in a recent issue of *The Fleet*, a journal devoted to the Navy. An editorial note says :—

> We have received a letter on compulsory church, and the hope that a request for its abolition will be included in the Welfare Requests. We doubt if this will be done as the reply to the last request was pretty definite and final. We would, however, have published the letter received had our correspondent confined himself to that question; but he raises the whole question of religion as such, arguing that it is unnecessary. While we hold no very pronounced views on any particular religion, and should like to see compulsory church abolished, we are not prepared to open our pages to a theological controversy, neither do we think our readers would wish us to. There is more bad blood in religion than in any other subject we know of!

The concluding remark is very illuminating. Religion, particularly the Christian religion, we are constantly being told, is based on love and brotherhood. But, says the editor of *The Fleet*, we cannot allow discussions on religion because "there is more bad blood in religion than in any subject we know of." That is a very poor testimony to the value of religion. And the curious thing is that all over the country discussions on religion are barred in numerous clubs and societies for exactly the same reason. Really everyone knows that what the editor says is correct. But all the same, people will go on repeating the nonsense about religion and brotherly love.

—

Dean Inge in a recent address to City men dealt very frankly with the failings of the Christian nations. What was the Indian to think of our denunciation of the Hindu caste system, he asked, when he knew that in South Africa the Indian was not allowed even to enter a "white" church? Educated natives, he added, could furnish severe indictments of our whole civilization. They had seen that Europeans were the most pugnacious, the most aggressive, and the most greedy people in the world. For example, they had seen people from our own country come and trample on the native's rights, take away their liberty, and establish their own form of government. They had seen Europeans quarrelling among themselves; in the Great War they saw the Christian nations attack and tear each other to pieces with organized and scientific fury quite unknown to Asia. They had witnessed, too, the unedifying spectacle of religious divisions—Christianity broken up into a dozen sects, each disliking and distrusting the others. These things, added the Dean, were quite enough to make us understand why Christian Missions were not successful in Asia.

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What the Dean said is not exactly a glowing testimonial to the influence and training of the Christian churches. The churches, we should remember, have had paramount influence for a large number of centuries. The Europeans responsible for the actions cited have been Christians trained by those churches. Yet neither the churches nor their followers appeared to notice anything ethically wrong in what was done. The enlightening of the Christian conscience has obviously come from sources other than Christian.

—

In the same address Dean Inge gave some impressions of European Christianity he had gathered from various educated members of Asiatic religions. All these gentlemen seem to have been selected because, though thinking their own creed better, they were willing to give a testimonial to the Christian creed. A liberal Jew suggested that it was possible to follow the letter of the Jewish law in the spirit of the Christian Gospel. A Japanese Buddhist affirmed that a man could be a Buddhist yet be Christian in spirit. A Moslem thought that Islam represented the religion of Jesus more truly than do the Christian churches. A Bengali declared that Christianity had rediscovered noble moral and spiritual truths lost sight of in the sacred Eastern writings, and had awakened a new spirit of enquiry into the Buddhist religion. What we could make of these testimonies, said the Dean, was that there was a common ethical and religious ideal influencing the thought of the whole civilized world, and each people was trying to find this in its own religion. Uncongenial elements were being dropped. Judaism is dropping its fierce anti-social element. Islam is dropping its militant propagandism, its sensual heaven, its contempt for women. Buddhism is modifying its mystical quietism. Hinduism is ashamed of its obscene rites and other objectionable customs, and is trying to acquire some of what we regard as "Christian" virtues. Even Christianity is no longer emphasizing some things that once seemed to be integral to the Catholic Faith and practice. But, added the Dean, none of the educated adherents of Eastern religions was satisfied with Christianity, even apart from what they called its myths. Each adherent thought his own religion had something not given in Christianity.

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Now, to account for what he sees is happening, the Dean declares he believes there is a common ethical and religious ideal influencing the thought of the whole civilized world. We agree that there is an *ethical* ideal so acting, but it is not necessarily a religious one. That ideal, we suggest, is the fruit of clear thinking on accumulated social experience and scientific knowledge. And the influence of that ideal is to be seen in the wholesale purgation and expurgation now going on in traditional Christian doctrines, and in other religions of the civilized world. What is happening is that under this influence, adherents of these religions are merely striving to read into ancient doctrines (or what is left of them after revision) modern meanings of which the original authors could have had no possible conception. And, having done this, they serve up their new interpretation in a form to tickle the palates of a public cloyed with pious incredulities.

—

Lord Cromer, the Lord Chamberlain, told a dinner-party of dramatic critics that he wholly agreed with the strong and widespread objection to any movement for the opening of theatres on Sunday for public performances. But, retorts, Mr. E. A. Baughan, the *Daily News* critic, how does the Lord Chamberlain know there is a strong and widespread objection! May not the approval of Sunday opening be just as widespread and

strong? Mr. Baughan has scored a point there. We have little doubt that the approval of Sunday opening is a good deal stronger than the objection; it merely happens to be less nosily vocal, that's all.

Mr. Baughan continues: As a dramatic critic, I am dead against Sunday performances of any kind that require my presence; as a human being, I know that the possibility of attending plays on Sunday would be a boon to many hard-worked men and women who cannot find the time for theatre-going during the week-day, and therefore I strongly advocate Sunday opening of playhouses. He adds that to suppose, as many good people do, that the vast crowds attending Sunday concerts or playing games or driving in motors on Sunday are irreligious is absurd. All he asks is that theatres should not be closed so long as cinemas everywhere are open. He points out that there is no need for staffs to work a seven-day week. The difficulty can be overcome as easily as it has been surmounted in the case of various public services, newspapers, and restaurants. He declares he seriously believes that Sunday theatre opening would be good for the art of drama, for playgoers would be in the mood for serious work after a day of rest. We are glad to see this outspoken opinion in the *Daily News;* it may perhaps broaden the outlook of some of the narrowminded supporters of that organ of Nonconformity.

Dr. R. F. Horton appealed recently for a conference of Free Churchmen. To a *Daily News* interviewer he explained that the point needing to be emphasized was that there existed to-day an intense desire for religion, but the thoughtful were put off by the impossibility of reconciling the traditional orthodoxy with the knowledge which was common property of all. He therefore wants the Christian faith presented in a way that will commend itself to those who, abreast of the knowledge of to-day, are determined not to stultify their intellect in the interests of their faith.

We don't agree that there is to-day an intense desire for religion. There is possibly a larger desire than formerly to know the truth about religion—which is a very different thing. And that desire is more likely to lead men away from religion than towards it. For if the wish is deep enough it will urge the enquirer to read what is to be said not only for religion but also against it. The difficulty of the thoughtful in reconciling orthodox religion with what scientific enquiry has revealed is no new thing. It is what has led many a man and woman into Freethought. Dr. Horton knows that well enough. Therefore he is anxious for his conference of Free Churchmen to take the Faith ("as given to our fathers!") and give it a drastic revision.

Taking the one Supreme Person for guidance, says the reverend gentleman, the Free Church can modify traditional beliefs, or frankly surrender them, without fear of the consequences. That is, for our time, the real meaning of a Free Church. He adds:—

> It is supremely freedom from the dead hand of the past, freedom from creeds which, with the advance of knowledge, are no longer credible, freedom from beliefs which, in the growth of the human spirit and man's moral nature, have become hurtful to man and dishonouring to God.

We are glad to note Dr. Horton's admission that secular knowledge has discredited many Christian beliefs, and that man's moral nature has developed to such an extent that it has outgrown traditional religious notions. What the reverend gentleman seems not to realize is that this development, this piece of progress, obviously owes nothing to the Christian religion. And if this is so, then we may be pardoned for suggesting that man can very well dispense with religion altogether. There is one thing we may add: By the time the Free Churches have finished the pruning business, poor old St. Paul looking down from heaven won't recognize the perfect creed that so greatly delighted him on earth.

The Church is suffering from a shortage of parsons—the country is suffering from a shortage of coal. The latter fact is admitted and deplored by everyone. The first is deplored only by the clergy themselves. The *Weekly Dispatch* says the position is "becoming desperate." But why? The people do not appear to worry about it. With coal there is a great deal of worry. But the parsons! Suppose the supply shrank still farther, we do not suppose that the majority of people would shed tears. No, it is entirely the parsons who find the shortage inconvenient. They do not like the supply to be short, because it is just possible that as men and women discover they are as well with a limited supply of parsons as they are with a plentiful one, they may resolve to do without them altogether.

There is one other peculiar feature about this lament. Religion, we are often told, is an indestructible thing. People cannot do without it. They will not do without it. And yet the clergy know full well that the perpetuation of religion nowadays depends altogether upon a purely artificial stimulation which commences with the child, and has to be renewed many times throughout life. In the case of vaccination it is said that we should be revaccinated every seven years. But if the ordinary adult was left without religion for seven years, how much would there be left of it at the end of the period? Continuous doses are the rule, and a shortage of clergy means that a large number will escape religious revaccination, and so outgrow altogether the religious idea.

Sir William Joynson-Hicks, who presided at a Protesant Demonstration at the Albert Hall, said that this was a free country, and people were entitled to full religious freedom. Well, it is nice to know that. Yet in this free land we fancy we have heard of there being Blasphemy Laws still in force which aim to prevent a man from freely expressing his thoughts about religion. The Home Secretary also said that the meeting was "a clarion call to the country to keep alight the candle lit by Latimer and Ridley in the sixteenth century, to stand for freedom of thought and of speech, and, above all, for freedom of access to God." We seem to remember that the Protestants of the sixteenth century lit things other than a candle, and these were the faggots that burned Catholics and Freethinkers for being over free with their speech on matters of religion. When we know that, we can accurately measure the value Protestants place on freedom of thought and speech. All they have ever concerned themselves with is freedom to express their own particular notions. They have been just as notorious as Catholics in suppressing opinions they disliked.

Mr. St. John Ervine says that if he were an archbishop he would immediately unfrock every priest who intoned. Oh, but no archbishop would think of discouraging so old a religious device as "intoning." It has served the Church well in the past; it has prevented many a chunk of clotted nonsense from being perceived for what it really is.

There is no modesty to-day, wails Colonel H. F. Bowles. All the gallant officer means is that there is less spurious modesty.

At a time when the Church is feverishly catching at anything in the nature of advertisement it may be interesting to note that in the eighteen-nineties the actor was held to be a vagabond. Nowadays certain theatres are branches of the Church to all appearances, and the dying flame of religious fervour is coaxed to glow in the drama. The history of the Church's attitude towards actors is a tale of hatred by one profession of another.

The most salutary lessons are invariably the most shocking, affirms Mr. James Branch Cabell. We agree. Some of the most salutary lessons Christians have received have come from *Freethinker* articles criticizing the absurdity and stupidity of pious doctrines.

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.

H. R. WRIGHT.—W. H. Smith, Simpkin Marshall, Messrs. Marlborough, in fact, almost any of the wholesale newsagents supply retailers all over London and district. Thanks for your interest in the matter. Order the *Freethinker* and see that you get it, should be the rule of all Freethinkers.

J. SUTHERLAND (Toronto).—We have often dealt with the position stated by Professor Coleman. What it amounts to is the admission that the Bible, inspired by God, was wrong on every occasion where it dealt with a matter of verifiable fact. To say that the writers of the Bible expressed views about the universe in terms of the knowledge of their day, suggests the enquiry whether they were better informed about man himself? And if they were wrong when dealing with a world in which they were living, why should we assume they were right concerning a world of which they had no experience whatever?

T. C. FALCONER.—Received, and shall appear.

A. MOLE.—We have been compelled to delete two or three irrelevant passages from your letter, but your argument, as you will see, remains untouched.

J. WEARING.—Certainly, advertising the *Freethinker* would be a good thing, but we do not think it would be of much use opening a fund for that purpose—at least not in the present circumstances.

R. BROWN.—Thanks for paper. May use next week.

A. J. MARRIOT.—Thanks. Best wishes for better health.

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

The World's Evangelical Alliance seemingly was dissatisfied with the rather meagre reports given in the newspapers of their Albert Hall meeting. The Alliance therefore printed a full report in the *Times* as a two-column advertisement. We fear this will establish a precedent. The Christian newspaper proprietors are likely in future to print only scrappy reports of pious activities in the hope of drawing from the religious organizations extra advertisement revenue. Well, these organizations have received free publicity long enough. It is nearly time they were made to pay for it, just the same as other business firms do.

Mr. Corrigan held two good meetings in Brockwell Park on Sunday last, in spite of the many distractions in the shape of meetings in connection with the industrial dispute. We are pleased to learn that the South London Branch is working well, and that there is plenty of enthusiasm displayed by the members. Brockwell Park is a capital "pitch" for outdoor meetings, and we wish the Branch every possible success.

We are asked to announce that the Glasgow Branch holds its first "Ramble" this season to-day (June 20) to Crookston Castle. Members and friends will meet at Crookston Toll at 12 noon, travelling by green car (Paisley) to Crookston Road. Those leaving from Glasgow will join at Glasgow Cross, Jamaica Street. We have had excellent accounts of these "Rambles," and hope the members will be favoured with fine weather.

It is astonishing how forgetful an editor can be. The *Westminster Gazette* has been worrying Lloyd George, and this is what a correspondent writes to the editor of that journal:—

> Sir,—In your dishonest attacks on Mr. Lloyd George you forget that there is still God. He is a devout Christian. In this lies his power.—Yours, etc., Pro-Lloyd Georgeite.

Fancy forgetting a little thing like that. And the correspondent throws light on an old mystery. It seems, if "Pro-Lloyd Georgeite" is to be believed, that God is a devout Christian. Well, even a god ought to stand up for his own family. Is it possible to discover to which *branch* of Christianity the deity belongs? Of course, God could hardly, in common decency, become an *Atheist*!

Dr. Harold Pritchard, we are told, has made a special study of children and their ailments. He states, "You never find a child wanting to wear anything black, which shows the correctness of its judgment, for black is bad." After this we trust that the clergy will give their attention to the matter and do their bit towards the brighter London movement.

A Footnote to "Christianity and Slavery."

WHEN George Frederick Cooke, the tragedian, on being hissed for presenting himself in a drunken condition, steadied himself at the front of the stage in a Liverpool theatre to tell the audience that he had not come there "to be insulted by a set of wretches, every brick in whose infernal town was cemented by an African's blood," he was not altogether romancing. The people of Liverpool at an earlier period were not ashamed of it. They built into the facade of their town hall the busts of blackamoors as emblems of the African infamy and encouraged their children to save their pennies for the purpose of investing them in the most lucrative of trades. Their most distinguished men drew their wealth from the sale of negroes, when it wasn't drawn from the proceeds of piracy, and they carried on the trade with such vigour and ability that Liverpool very soon won the unenviable distinction of being the chief slaving town of the Old World. Liverpool did not stand alone in respect of dealing with slaves; London and Bristol and other seaports sent out ships to trade in "black ivory," and the property in slaves was more than once specifically acknowledged by Act of Parliament. Selling negroes was as legitimate as selling coals and with the exception of a few Quakers, the people were indifferent or favourable to it; the fact that kidnapping and selling negroes returned a good profit smothering any humane feeling that otherwise might have been engendered.

The trade was saturated with Christianity. A deep religious feeling pervaded the bills of lading, and both crew and ship were often committed to the special care of God. Captain John Newton, who afterwards became a great friend of Cowper, the poet, and part author of the Olney hymns, had public worship on board the slaver he commanded and officiated himself. This devout seaman's religion was rooted in funk. He "began to know there is a God that hears and answers prayer" just after he had come safely through a violent storm, and "with the greatest solemnity" he engaged himself to be the Lord's for ever and only his." He had learnt wisdom, however, in his dealings with the subject-selling kinglets of the African coast, for he put his covenant with God on a business footing. He drew up a written document devoting himself the servant of God, "absolutely and for ever, without any reserve or competition," and it was signed, sealed, and dated as in the presence of God at "New Shebar, on the Windward coast of Africa, on Sunday, the 15th of October, 1752." In his own words, he was out there to "purchase souls," and probably at the moment of signing his precious contract had some hundreds of them sweltering in the foetid atmosphere between the decks of his slaver. He was indeed a good Christian, and many years afterwards, when he had become a rector of the church, he was fully convinced that his period of slave-dealing was a time of trial instituted by the Lord for his benefit. That selfishly narrow attitude and utter lack of vision was typical of the Christian of that period. It occasionally worried Newton. When lying ill with fever on his last voyage, and expecting to die, he wondered if God would recognize him amid the welter of souls waiting for judgment. It does not seem to have occurred to him that many among those who had formed his cargoes would be waiting to identify him in the spirit world with a view to a settlement of accounts. He consoled himself with the idea that "the Lord knoweth them that are his," but never once does his study of the gospels—he was preparing for the ministry at that time—discover anything to lift him above and beyond the brutishness of trading in black flesh and blood.

When the "Society for the Abolition of the African Trade" first made its appeal to the people of Liverpool it attracted only eight members. Picton and others state that only two Liverpool citizens subscribed to the objects of the Society, but the printed list in the Picton Reference Library contains the names of seven persons, and one who remained anonymous. Most of them were Quakers. Roscoe, the historian, was among them, and Dr. Currie, the biographer of Burns, the Ayrshire poet, was another. The opposition was widespread and immediate. Harris, the Jesuit, argued that giving up slavery was in effect giving up the Bible, a line of argument that pleased the Corporation so much that they voted the writer a gratuity of £100. Lord Hawkesbury, who afterwards, as Lord Liverpool, was Prime Minister for ten or twelve years, had the freedom of the town bestowed upon him for his services in fighting the Abolitionists, and a special deputation went up to London to present a similar document to the Duke of Clarence in recognition of a similar service. England has had two or three passable kings, but William IV., he of the sugar-loaf head, is not among them.

Sir John Hawkins was another slaver, of the spacious days of Elizabeth. He stumbled on the trade by accident, having sailed off with a few negroes who had come aboard to trade and sold them somewhere in the Western seas at what he called a good profit. The commercially-minded at that time were reeling drunk with the anticipation of easily got wealth, and Hawkins went back to the Gold Coast to repeat the deal on a much larger scale; and had a concession from Elizabeth to put the deal on a legal basis. He did not worry about the ethical side of the matter. His religion never prompted a question about the right or wrong of kidnapping human beings and filling the rest of their lives with misery and intolerable cruelty, any more than it pioneered the way against the horror of war. It did then as it does now, provides a sanction for whatever meanness the love of gold stirs in the human breast. Hawkins was a "gospeller," and the tendency to preach seems to have strengthened amid the horrors of the middle passage. "God's death," said Elizabeth, after reading one of his letters. "This fool went out a sailor and has come back a divine." Nevertheless he retained the predatory temperament, inherited probably from his father, who was the first British captain to visit Brazil and who stole a chief from that country to present to Henry VIII. As Hawkins had no scruples as to how he obtained negroes—they were secured generally by way of violence—so he had none about his methods of disposing of them. In the West Indies he persuaded governors of towns to buy by a display of force. And as an able-bodied negro brought about £160 in the Spanish Islands, it is no wonder that the trade grew at a great rate and England, by the middle of the eighteenth century was carrying one hundred thousand blacks across the ocean annually.

For long after the time of Hawkins England retained the barbarian's mind about slavery. Not merely about negro slavery, but about white bondage, and of its own people at that. Cromwell, who walked in the very footsteps of God, had about as much concern for the rights of others as a sparrow-hawk has for the rights of a day-old chick. He was militarist in every fibre of his being; forever seeking to dispossess others and he cleared his fighting expenses by selling his prisoners of war to his puritan brethren in the West Indies and America. Many hundreds from the battlefields of Dunbar and Worcester went to Maryland and Virginia to a bondage not one whit less severe than that suffered by the unfortunates from Africa. In Ireland his agents emulated the Arab slaver raiders of the Sudan by capturing Irish youths and girls for export to the West Indies. In Cromwell and his friends Christianity is seen functioning at its best—or worst. He saw nothing in slavery that was incompatible with his religion; he turned to piracy on the high seas as naturally as Newton took to slaving on the Gold Coast, and both of them thanked God for whatever success they had in their chosen spheres. The influence of Christianity for good, as far as the abolition of slavery went, was non-existent. Devout and thrice holy men, from the saints of the early Church down to pillars of it like the late William Ewart Gladstone, defended it and saw nothing in the inspired scriptures to warrant anything otherwise. It was the growth of a humane feeling, helped greatly by economic necessity, that abolished the actual buying and selling of human beings, although slavery, in less gross forms, is still rampant in the Christian British Empire.

H. B. DODDS.

The world will always be governed by self-interest. We should not try to stop this; we should try to make the self-interest of cads a little more coincident with that of decent people.—*Samuel Butler.*

When men will not be reasoned out of a vanity they must be ridiculed out of it.—*L'Estrange.*

Subman, Man and Superman.

II.

(*Continued from page* 363.)

THE Cainozoic Age, which followed the Mesozoic, and which may have extended over a period of 25,000,000 years, is known as the age of grass, mammals, and land forests.

There is not much evidence to show that true mammals existed in the Mesozoic Age, but there can be little doubt that the only land creatures that survived into the Cainozoic Age were small mammals, or semi-mammalian creatures.

The important distinction between mammals and the more primitive reptilian animals is that the females nourish their young and protect them until they are able to fend for themselves. They possess a "mothering instinct," whereas the reptiles lay their eggs and leave them to hatch in the sun; the young receiving very little protection from the parents.

The "mothering instinct" is the result of evolution, because the greater this instinct, the greater the chance for the survival of the particular species in question. The creature that, at this period, had evolved into a true mammal, or most nearly so, and had developed the "mothering instinct" to the highest degree would doubtlessly be the ancestor of man. It would be owing to the fact that our ancestral species had already begun to cuddle and shelter their young that they would be able to survive the catastrophical close of the Mesozoic Age. On the other hand, the young of the less developed reptilian creatures would perish almost at birth, or else their eggs would be addled and would not hatch.

The fossilized eggs of some of the Saurians that were recently found in the Gobi desert were about eighteen inches long.

The Cainozoic Age has been subdivided into five main epochs, namely: the Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene, Pliocene, and Pleistocene, and some of these are subdivided into a number of lesser epochs.

The first, the Eocene, meaning the dawning of recent life, is subdivided into early and later Eocene.

The early Eocene age, or epoch, was almost devoid of life, but the meagre mammalian life, that had survived from the obscurity of the Mesozoic Age, was slowly spreading, evolving and increasing in size at the same time. Modern vegetation, such as dry land forests, and green grass, was spreading over the earth. The animals were all very small, and there are no visible traces of the progenitors of man in those rocks.

The Eocene was a long and equable period of some millions of years' duration, and during the later Eocene the animals had increased greatly in size and number; many having become quite formidable types. The titanothera, a species of rhinoceros, grew to an enormous size, often eighteen feet in length. And yet in these rocks we find no trace of man, or the "missing link," but we are getting "hot on the trail," because in the strata of the next epoch, the Oligocene, roughly chipped stones, called eoliths, have been found. And if during a vast epoch man only roughly chipped stones, there must have been an equally long, or perhaps longer, epoch, in which man would pick up stones and sticks, and use them.

We can clearly visualize the sub-man of the later Eocene, picking up stones and flinging them at his enemies, or wrenching a rough stick or limb from a tree and using it for offensive and defensive purposes.

In the Oligocene Age, although we find the first traces of man in the roughly chipped eoliths, there are still no fossil remains that scientists can definitely point to as being those of man, although there are an abundance of the remains of apes, monkeys, horses, and other animals.

In the Miocene Age, which followed, there was a great crumpling up of the earth's surface; the Alps, Himalayas and other great mountain ranges came into existence. That was the last age in which there were more species of animals that are now extinct than that now exists. And yet during that long age man only continued to chip stones roughly, but he left his mark quite unmistakably in many parts of the world, although it is doubtful whether he had arrived at a stage where he could tie a knot or connect a stone with a handle.

What was the ancestral, or sub-man, of the Miocene Age like? We can form a number of conclusions from facts that cannot be reasonably disputed. The first outstanding fact is that many of the eoliths are so heavy and unwieldly that modern man would be quite unable to manipulate them efficiently.

It is evident that our Miocene ancestor must have been a terrible antagonist in combat. He must have been of the size and strength of the gorilla, with an absolutely deadly grip by which he could throttle any of the smaller animals, or shatter the skull of the more formidable beasts by a terrific blow with a heavy eolith.

The eoliths also indicate that the ancestral subman was not much addicted to climbing trees, like the arboreal apes, but rather that his habitat was mainly rocky and precipitous declivities.

If we endeavoured to locate the exact position of Miocene man in the chain of evolution, we would say that he occupied a place just half way between the anthropoid apes and the lowest types of savages existing to-day.

As yet no fossil remains have been found that can definitely be identified as those of Miocene man, although the recently discovered fossil remains in South Africa were at first believed to be the actual "missing link."

The most important difference between man and the anthropoid apes is that the aperture through which the spinal column enters the cranium is at the bottom of the skull in man, and almost at the back of the skull in the apes.

It was reported that the opening in the cranium of the South African fossil was half way between that of modern man and that of the great apes, which would be in exact agreement with the theory of evolution.

Other Miocene remains, found mostly in Asia, are the dryopithecus, a creature with a very human-like skull. If it was not the ancestor of man, or perhaps more correctly the sub-man, it must have been very closely related to him. There were also some varieties of apes that were very closely related to man.

But in the rocks of the Pliocene which follows, and in which small chipped flints first begin to make their appearance, there are to be found an abundance of the remains of the pithecanthropus erectus, which certainly may have been the true ancestor of man, or the sub-man, although many pseudo-scientific writers, especially those of religious bias, have endeavoured to prove the contrary.

But whether the pithecanthropus erectus was, or was not, the ancestor of man matters little, because the true man must have been very similar.

ONA MELTON.

(To be Continued.)

Correspondence.

THE CLERGY AND DEBATE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Your news regarding the ending of the Manchester episode, whilst somewhat unexpected, is not surprising. It is quite on a par with all the other doings and utterings of the "Black Army."

What does astonish me, however, and I feel that the majority of your readers will agree with me, is the great forbearance evinced by the *Freethinker* in dealing with this jelly-minded parson. Either in public debate or hidden behind the friendly pages of a newspaper, this man has not even sufficient courage in his convictions to defend them in any place except his own "Little Bethel" or to anyone except those whose minds are, if possible, in a darker stage of ignorance than his own.

So much for it then, but the most distressing thing of all is to see and hear this person and others of the same kidney wandering up and down the country glorifying their God for his intervention in the recent crisis and for his loving power which again enabled their *Church Times* or Parish Magazine to be printed again.

It is all too terrible for words and must give every right thinking person a most severe pain beneath the pinny to contemplate. L. M. WERREY-EASTERBROOK.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

SIR,—I am glad to read Mr. Yeldham's comments on my recent article. With much that he says I am in agreement, and as he has raised the most reasonable of all the objections to my views it is a pleasure to attempt a reply. In so far as your correspondent complains of my own partiality and so on, I sadly plead "guilty," but my faults must not stand in the way of reform and progress.

"Murder is admitted to be the most serious crime against society"—my article made this quite clear. "Some [degrees of murder] may not deserve the death penalty." I suggest to Mr. Yeldham that it would be best to consider only the point of view of society, the interests of society, the development of civilization in society, the humanity, the character, the enlightenment of society. As soon as we begin to speak about what kind of torture or punishment a criminal deserves, we are led away by sentimentalism. If I see a child or an animal being hurt I am quite rightly led by this same sentimentalism to do all in my power to prevent the outrage. If I can *only* do this with a revolver or club, then I must still do it, if I possess a spark of manliness. The case is completely altered when the child or animal is no longer in danger and we have the aggressor safely under lock and key. Mere sentimentalism is then out of order altogether. We have a problem that demands all our science, reason, and experience to solve. It is not a question of what does this man deserve: it is the much more important problem of how can society best protect itself from such brutality. We condemn the brutality and we do not want to perpetuate it. "The law that one who deprives a fellow creature of life should forfeit his own." There is a curiously Biblical flavour about this echo of Moses unexpected in the *Freethinker*. But there is no such law, and probably never was. By the time you have eliminated the exceptions of war, executions, accidents, justifiable homicide, temporary and other insanity, etc., and when you have taken into account the progress of civilization since the alleged days of the alleged Moses, the phrase quoted or paraphrased, cannot in any valid sense be called a "law."

It certainly is neither "sound" nor "based on a sense of justice." If it were "sound" it would be of general application. If it were "just" only murderers would object to its operation.

Mr. Yeldham refers to certain people as "unfit for the society of civilized men." I will not make the point that there are others besides murderers who are very much below the standard of ordinary decent people. Mr. Yeldham would probably agree. And we are only discussing the case of those who are actually in custody and are effectually deprived of "the society of civilized men." We need not therefore sentimentalize about him as if he were a free citizen.

All the references to imprisonment apply equally to all prisoners. Mr. Yeldham may be right (I think he is wrong) in his assumption that prison is so attractive that "thousands of men outside the prison walls might reasonably envy" those inside. We do not in practice find people envying prisoners, and as Mr. Yeldham admits that "they would not commit a murder to secure" imprisonment, we need not say more about the deterrent effect of punishment generally. People are not waiting to weigh consequences before they commit crime. Some of us are too busy, and most of us have no taste for it.

"The social value of the victim" is Mr. Yeldham's best argument—and a very powerful one. I fully agree with him that the social loss is often very great, because, generally speaking, the victim was a greater asset to society than the murderer. One must, however, remember that the victim is gone beyond recall, and our chief consideration at this stage is to avoid adding to our loss by any needless violence.

There is no argument for the "return of the sexual maniac (presumably a homicidal one) to society," which does not apply much more strongly to a man (or woman, or boy) who has been led away through momentary anger to kill a fellow-being. Mr. Yeldham is already a long way towards the view he denounces now that he has excepted "the sexual maniac," and has admitted that some "degrees of murder" should be recognized as not necessitating capital punishment. I also read with interest his opinion that "the present method of execution is crude and barbarous." His suggestion that the facts about abolition not increasing homicidal crimes "proves nothing except that the average of murders would appear to be maintained" is not very logical. It certainly proves that the absence of capital punishment does not cause any increase in the number of murders—and that is my case. As a Freethinker I believe that man is a creature of heredity and environment, and as the evils of capital punishment which I have pointed out do not prevent murder, I want to see this violent "remedy" abolished.

Mr. Yeldham asks "what compensation is possible to the victim's family." I echo his question with the utmost sympathy, and add, indeed, what compensation can we offer to the victim murdered, or to the innocent family and friends of the murderer? The family of the victim have a terrible sorrow, but at least they have not the added pain of knowing that *their* relative was a murderer. Vendettas will not compensate anybody. We must strive to elevate the race, and we cannot do that by legal homicide.

Mr. Yeldham's last paragraph is unworthy of him, and of his thoughtful and admirable statement of the case for capital punishment. He must not blame abolitionists for the non-eugenic methods of the very people who oppose the abolition of capital punishment. He will soon begin to see that unscientific views about epileptics and others being allowed to breed without interference is only rendered possible by the orthodox reliance on pre-Darwin, pre-Malthus, pre-Galton ideas. Capital punishment—like corporal punishment—is too easy; it requires no thought, no science, no humanity, and it is exceedingly facile to represent its opponents as sentimentalists and soft in heart and head. I fully believe that Mr. Yeldham will see this before long. GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

SIR,—*To* argue, as Mr. Yeldham does in your current issue, that society has the right to take the life of murderers simply because they are of no use to it is a very dangerous argument which might more properly be used to many other people than murderers. There are certain newspaper editors and politicians who threaten the safety of society and the happiness of its members far more. Unless your correspondent is willing to pursue his remedy to its logical conclusion it seems idle to advocate it in the sole case of every tenth murderer, for nine out of every ten in England at present are not executed!

I believe a study of history justifies the belief that civilization advances in the degree to which it cares

for its weaker members; although it may seem useless to keep a seemingly incurable homicide alive, it may do Society more moral harm to take his life.

I completely unite, however, with Mr. Yeldham's desire that epileptics, mentally defectives, and similar people should be prevented from procreating their kind Constructive efforts in this direction will be far more productive of good than the sordid strangling of a few unfortunates in a prison shed.

The Mental Deficiency Act of 1913 is now being carried out. Only two weeks ago I was privileged to investigate an institution where over two thousand persons certified under this Act were cared for. A more vigorous application of this Act is a *constructive way of preventing murder;* the fact that many other countries have dispensed with Capital Punishment without an increase in murder proves that the Death Penalty is not.

E. ROY CALVERT.

THE SUN AND THE SOLSTICES.

SIR,—My thanks are due to Mr. Strickland for his passing allusion to the criticism made by Mr. William Clark upon a statement I made in a recent article. But for that reference it is more than probable that I should have never seen it. As only last Monday I received a copy of the issue I could not have replied earlier.

For the sake of brevity and especially to avoid being again censured for using the term "radius vector," I designedly expressed myself in non-technical language, and did so, perhaps, too briefly to make my meaning clear.

What I said, or at least intended to say, if expressed in mathematical terminology, would be as follows:

That the gravitational pull along the radius vector—the line joining the sun to the earth at any instant—resolves itself into two rectangular components: one along the instantaneous tangent at the point, the other at right angles to this tangent. The former component, being positive from solstice to equinox, accelerates the earth's orbital velocity; whereas from equinox to solstice this acceleration is negative, *i.e.* a retardation—the solstice being the point when all the increment of motion (increased velocity) is cancelled.

The other compound being always at right angles to the former does not affect the orbital motion of the planet; it simply deflects it from the path along which it tends to move.

Now, the orbit has four points of *transition*—the two equinoxes and the two solstices. At the former the acceleration, as indicated above, is changed from positive to negative, *i.e.* from gain to loss of speed. This reversal implies of necessity a point where the acceleration is reduced zero value. That is to say, a point at which the resolved component along the instantaneous tangent vanishes—an impossible result unless the force exerted along the radius vector is at right angles to that tangent. At this point the increment of acquired motion is at a maximum, and the acceleration at a minimum. At the solstice, exactly the reverse obtains. The planet's motion is reduced to a minimum, and its acceleration attains a maximum value. The planet, having now lost all its increased momentum, is a "bankrupt," for its entire kinetic "stock" consists of its own "uniform motion"—that "invested" in the inertia of its mass—a property which, under the circumstances, "cannot be touched." But as soon as it passes the zero point, the earth receives her "discharge" and immediately starts "business" anew, the pull along the radius vector becoming again positive.

Such are the cardinal facts or basic principles which make the planetary system of worlds a possibility. They can be profitably studied in the phenomenon of the common pendulum or in that of the switchback car. The lowest point of the arc or the trough or the track corresponds to the equinoxes. It is for Mr. Clark to reconcile the foregoing fundamental facts with his criticism.

KERIDON.

POPULATION AND FOOD.

SIR,—Mr. Cutner will not find Mr. Mole nor "Scio" hard to answer, but I would like to ask Mr. Mole how to "increase food production a thousandfold," as he says has been done? For I am trying to make a living off a patch of very poor land (rent free), and I have not yet seen any sign either of the Christian Providence (except as a sender of wireworms, rabbits, and thistles) or of the bountiful nature of the anti-Malthusian optimists.

The "bonanza farms," with their steam ploughs and self-binders, increase the produce per man but not the produce per acre. Indeed, they lessen the latter. And as this planet has only a limited number of acres, and a still more limited number of acres you can grow a living from, it is the produce per acre which sets the pace at which population can grow. And a very slow pace it is. The books within my reach tell me that the produce of wheat per acre is only four times what it was in A.D. 1200. And even that increase is mostly due to manuring; that is, to concentrating on one patch the chemical wealth of other patches, making it a millionaire among paupers.

C. HARPUR.

SIR,—We are told by the worshippers of Malthus that the remedy for the workers quite natural discontent is to have fewer children. Herded together in slum tenements, half starved—though they produce all—ill-educated, the multitude who breed the "overflowing multitude" eke out but an animal existence at best, and "but naturally turn to the animal pleasures" at hand. Minds fed on filth, living in it, working in it, everything around them mean and ugly, is it any wonder the working people make the animal desires of the flesh their pleasures? The lower animals, when deprived of food for any length of time, try to stave off extinction by excessive breeding. Man, after all, is but an animal and his instincts vary but little from the lower animals in that respect. Man has not lived on a pinnacle of intelligence long enough to eradicate such instincts yet, for they are so deeply fundamental to his nature and find expression very readily. A life lived battling against hunger, rounded off with a pauper's grave, does not conduce to higher expressions than brutality. There is an abundance of food and pleasures of life produced, and when man awakes to the fact that it is the distribution of such human amenities wherein lies the key to the appreciation of the higher intellectual pleasures and pursuits of human existence. I may go so far as to say that it is this superabundance of wealth that prompts the crying need of social reform, the general tendency of which is to use this superabundant wealth, for without such, all efforts to social reform would be abortive. Man is desiring recreation and enjoyment of this short life and is beginning to appreciate the possible joys such abundance offers, hence the less frequently does he turn to the merely animal instincts of sexual satisfaction, which negatives all "birth control." It goes to pieces on the bedrock of economic facts.

ALF. MOLE.

SIR,—One of your correspondents claims to be a Freethinker, yet he has read Malthus several times and can say such a ridiculous thing as that Malthus states that population increases at twice the rate of the food supply. He must have read the book as Christians read the Bible, viz. with the fixed intention of finding in it only what he wants to find. Surely the essence of Freethought is that both sides of a question should be studied without any preconceived opinions giving bias one way or the other.

He also claims to be logical, yet says that the law by which more individuals are born than can possibly survive is axiomatic with regard to animals but does not apply to man! Surely he is suffering from a theological bias and regards man as a special creation.

It is claimed that the worker produces much wealth. The mistake is made of using the words "wealth" and "food" as if they were interchangeable terms. What should be meant is, that the machines invented by thinkers and built with the money of the capitalist can turn out large quantities of manufactured articles. If this is wealth, then the workers who tend the machines do produce an enormous amount, for there is hardly any limit to the production of manufactured articles. But there is a very decided limit to the production of food, without which the manufactures are

useless. There is no doubt why it is quite true that, as one of your correspondents quotes, "the trouble with the cotton, as in the coal industry, is that there is too much produced."

If any of your readers are really anxious to learn (which is doubtful), I recommend them to read Prof. East's book, *Mankind at the Crossroads* and *Wages and the Cost of Living* and *The Fallacies of Henry George* by Dr. Drysdale.

I further recommend that whenever they are going to use the words "social injustice" or its equivalent, they should substitute the words "struggle for existence." They will be surprised what a difference this will make to their outlook on life. E. S. DANIELS.

A CORRECTION.

SIR,—Referring to your "Views and Opinions" of the 6th inst., may I take the liberty of correcting a slight error? You speak of William Hazlett being imprisoned for a libel against the Regent. It was not Hazlett, but Leigh Hunt, who was sentenced, with his brother, to a fine of £500 and two years' imprisonment for having in the *Examiner* called the Prince Regent "a fat Adonis of fifty." Both Hazlett and Hunt were Freethinkers and are worthy of remembrance.

JOHN STEPHEN.

[We are obliged to hold over several letters till next week. We must again draw the attention of correspondents to the great necessity for brevity.]

Debate on Birth Control.

ON Friday evening last, at the Victoria Hall, Kentish Town, Mr. H. Cutner debated with Rev. Father Morse-Boycott on "Birth Control." Dr. Binnie Dunlop presided, and there was a large audience.

The subject-matter does not specially concern Freethinkers except that, for many years, only Freethinkers defended the right to free speech and free publication without which the recent widespread influence of neo-Malthusianism would have been impossible.

The disputants were courteous, the chairman was excellently impartial, and at times there were points of importance well put and well parried. Unfortunately Christian disputants invariably drag in their "King Charles' head": they cannot forget for a moment that they are sectarians and remember that they are also citizens. Father Boycott, beyond quoting a very mixed assortment of medical opinions chiefly against birth control on the ground that it involved sterility, had no other criterion of judgment than his own religious convictions. "Don't preach," "You are not in the pulpit now," while out of place as epithets hurled at him from the audience, nevertheless represent a perfectly accurate judgment on his method of "argument." Mr. Cutner's replies, in these circumstances, were necessarily very restricted, and the audience was left thirsting for information on Birth Control.

It is only fair to add that Father Boycott, like Mr. Cutner, never descended to personalities, and was unfortunately attending the debate at great personal inconvenience through family bereavement. G. B.

Mr. G. Whitehead's Mission.

Mr. Whitehead writes in regard to his last fortnight at Leeds:—

> Although we have had fearful weather during the week and the usual post-strike competition on the pitch, I addressed seven more meetings, making fourteen for the fortnight. Once again, the Labour people tried to interfere with me by mounting the steps where I was speaking, last night, to a huge crowd, and trying to force me to give up the meeting on the grounds that the coal question mattered more than Secularism. The idea all over the country these last few years has been that Labour and Communism have a right to all the pitches and all other speakers are interlopers on their preserves. We are well on the way to a new tyranny. Needless to say, I kept on for my appointed time.

Local interest has been decidedly revived through Mr. Whitehead's propaganda, and the Leeds Branch is now determined to hold at least one weekly meeting until October.—E. M. V.

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.

FOR SALE.

The Illustrated Byron, complete with 200 engravings, and *Life*, 1814 (7s. 6d.); *Letters of Junius*, 1878, with facsimiles, etc., handsomely bound in calf and gilt (5s.).—Box 60, c/o *Freethinker* office, 61 Farringdon Street, E.C.4.

A Treatise Partly Theological and Partly Political, London, printed in 1689; *Works of Alexander Pope*, 5 vols.; Montrose, 1804; 25 per cent. to Endowment Fund.—Offers to WHITEHEAD, 22 Hamlet Road, Chelmsford.

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 PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11, Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe, "The Case of the Young Intellectuals."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.15, 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, Mrs. H. Rosetti, a Lecture.

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

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (outside the Technical Institute, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7, Mr. A. D. McLaren, a Lecture.

COUNTRY.—INDOOR.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Socialist Club, Wood Street): 2.30, Quarterly Meeting.

OUTDOOR.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Hall Steps): Friday, June 18, at 7.30, Messrs. Partington and Sissons. Sunday, June 20, at 7, Messrs. Monks, C. Newton, and Will Sisson. All saints invited.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Branch of the N.S.S.).—Ramble to Crookston Castle. Meet at Crookston Toll at 12 noon. (Via Green (Paisley) car, "22 B" to Crookston Road. Join car at Glasgow Cross, Jamaica Street, or Paisley Road Toll.)

LEEDS BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Square): 7, Mr. Davies, "The Ten Commandments."

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. G. Whitehead's Mission, June 14 to 27.

LET YOU BE SURE to leave other men their turns to speak. Scores of fellow Atheists await their chance to testify for us. We shall name two near you if you write to-day for any of the following:—*Gents' A to D Patterns, suits from 55s.; Gents' E Patterns, suits all at 67s. 6d.; Gents' F to I Patterns, suits from 75s.; Gents' J to N Patterns, suits from 105s. 6d.; or Ladies' Fashion and Pattern Book, costumes from 60s., frocks from 56s.*—MACCONNELL & MABE, New Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire.

"THE HYDE PARK FORUM."—A Satire on its Speakers and Frequenters. Should be read by all Freethinkers. Post free, 6d., direct from J. MARLOW, 145 Walworth Road, S.E.1.

UNWANTED CHILDREN

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