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Inherited Superstitions.

The outstanding fact in the life of primitive mankind is the existence of a mysterious force which must be dealt with by way of either coercion or supplication. It is this force, afterwards developed into the definitely supernatural, that forms the groundwork of the various "taboos" with which I dealt last week. It may be found in connection with anything or everything unusual or mysterious, a curiously shaped stone, the power of a weapon to do harm, of fire to burn, of water to drown, or the strength of a man, it is the raw material out of which definite religious ideas ultimately come. The Polynesian term *Mana* has been taken as most descriptive of this force, and Mr. R. H. Codrington, in his work on *The Melanians* thus describes its assumed operations:—

If a man has been successful in fighting, it has not been his natural strength of arm, or quickness of eye, or readiness of resource that has won success; he has certainly got the *mana* of a spirit of some deceased warrior to empower him, conveyed in an amulet of stone round his neck or a tuft of leaves in his belt, in a tooth hung upon a finger of his bow hand, or in the form of words with which he brings supernatural assistance to his side. If a man's pigs multiply, and his gardens are productive, it is not because he is industrious and looks after his property, but because of the stones full of *mana* for pigs and yams that he possesses. Of course a yam naturally grows when planted, that is well known, but it will not be very large unless *mana* comes into play; a canoe will not be swift unless *mana* be brought to bear upon it, a net will not catch many fish, nor an arrow inflict a mortal wound.

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Sex and the Supernatural.

In a world such as this it is only to be expected that the strange, and sometimes terrifying, phenomena of sex would inevitably suggest evidence of

association with some supernatural force. We need not suppose this to be the case; we know it is so, and even with the less cultured strata of European society many of the superstitions connected with sex carry us straight back to the mental world of the primitive savage. Particularly is this the case with women with her periodic disturbances and the recurring fact of childbirth. Concerning the former, there is ample evidence that the taboo set upon woman during these periods has to do entirely with the assumed danger of a supernatural infection. And with the latter there is a vast amount of evidence, collected from all parts of the world, which proves that the part played by the male in the production of a baby is something that man discovers as he discovers other natural facts and the relations between them. To give but one example out of many, Spencer and Gillen, in their classic *Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, say that the Coastal tribes "have no idea of procreation as being directly associated with sexual intercourse." They "believe that the child is the direct result of the entrance into the mother of an ancestral spirit." In passing, one may note that the doctrine of reincarnation, which has been lifted to the level of a philosophical speculation, may well have had no other origin than this. But certainly the belief has a very important bearing upon the Christian doctrine of a Virgin Birth, a bearing which has never been thoroughly considered in its relation to the Christian myth. To that we may return later. At present we are only concerned with the way in which this superstition concerning the nature of woman determines the attitude of primitive humanity towards her.

* * *

Segregating Women.

One consequence of the views entertained by the savage of the nature of woman is that she is marked off as something to be feared at certain periods, and so to use Frazer's excellent phrase, must be insulated so that others may be protected. The very general custom among primitive peoples of preventing a man coming into close contact with a woman for some time after she has given birth to a child has this origin. That it is a wholesome regulation is quite accidental. In Christian times we see this lingering on in the custom of "churching" a woman after childbirth—really to spiritually disinfect her. (We think that we should have to look in the same direction for the origin of religious prostitution, but that is also a subject apart from the special one we are now considering.) But with the "churching" of women, as in so many other directions, we find the Christian Church, with a more elaborate ceremonial, reverting to the practices of primitive savagery. The deductions of the savage does not stop at the actual sexual crises. If woman is so charged with this

spiritual infection as to be specially dangerous at certain times, she may be only less dangerous in between these times. As a consequence of this reasoning we find women among primitive peoples prohibited from touching the cooking pots of the men, or their weapons, or the cattle. We can, again, see an echo of this in the New Testament where a woman is prohibited touching Jesus after the resurrection, while the doubting Thomas is permitted to plunge his hand into the wound. Or it is seen in the separation of the sexes in church, and in the medieval regulation that a woman must not touch the Eucharist with her bare hands. In defence of the savage it should be said that there does not appear to be involved in his view of the case any question of inferiority or superiority. The woman is different from man, dangerously different, and certain rules are laid down for the protection of the tribe. In the words of Frazer, the woman "is viewed as charged with a powerful force, which if not kept within bounds, may prove the destruction of the girl herself and all with whom she come into contact."

* * *

Reverting to Type.

It is thus that when we turn to Christianity we have the spectacle of the struggle of purely primitive conceptions of woman striving against a later cultural influence. On the one hand there were the primitive superstitions associated with the nature of a woman, superstitions which may easily be seen in the old Bible, which still held sway with large masses of people, even if in a diluted form, but which the better pagan mind had outgrown, and, on the other hand, there were the better views of woman as a member of the State, such as one meets in Plato and some of the Roman moralists, which found a reflection in the liberal legislation of the later Roman Empire. With the establishment of the Christian religion in a position of supreme power the primitive view gained the upper hand. Not, of course, in its most primitive form, but mixed up with certain theological notions of woman's special sinfulness, and quasi-ethical ideas concerning her greater proneness to sin than was man. In the New Testament there is not the least glimpse of the conception of either the legal or religious equality of the sexes. Woman is permitted to attend to the wants of man, but she is not selected as one of the disciples, and the subjection of woman is stressed by Paul. Following pagan practices there were certain subordinate positions permitted to woman in the early Church, but these soon disappeared, and the justification of the religious "insulation" of woman was justified on ethical and religious grounds. We do not know anywhere of a more savage and more brutal denunciation of women than is to be found in the early Christian literature, and amongst some of the greatest writers of the church for centuries afterwards. She is more dangerous than a wild beast, a sentinel of hell, a daughter of hell and a child of the devil, she is man's greatest enemy, the cause of the downfall of the race, and of the death of the Son of God. Professor Becker points out, in dealing with women under Islam, that her position became so much lower than it is in the Koran, and this can only be accounted for by the fact of the influence exerted upon it by Christianity. And Principal Donaldson asserts that if we are to define man as a male human being and woman as a female human being, what the Christian Church did was to eliminate the male from the definition of man and "human being" from the definition of woman, thus leaving the man a human being and the woman as a mere female animal on earth for no other purpose

than to inflame man's desires and to imperil his immortal salvation. This from a prominent minister of religion, and a scholar of standing, ought to give the most rabid of Christians food for thought.

* * *

The Church the Enemy.

Dean Inge, therefore, might, when addressing the woman's meeting, have said something as to the cause of the keeping of women out of the Christian pulpit—might have done so had he not been a Christian clergyman. But while an able man he is not always a candid one. Certainly he is not so where his religion is concerned. For there is the unquestionable historic fact that the Christian opinion of woman succeeded in divesting her of both liberty and dignity, and centred round her all the ignorant religious feelings of Christian leaders. The Church teaching concerning celibacy came about as near destroying home life, and with its social existence, as it is possible for any institution to do. And in any case, with its practical breeding of the socially most undesirable, it involved a coarsening and brutalizing of the surviving type. And there is the plain fact that it was the gross immorality caused by the existence of a celibate priesthood, with its entrance into every home, and its teaching concerning women, that formed one of the principal causes of the revolt against the Roman Catholic rule. The Christian teaching concerning the greater sinfulness of women, and of the greater ease with which Satan gained control over them, excused, if it did not cause, the preponderance of women executed for the crime of witchcraft. It has taken at least three generations of reformers, mainly avowed Freethinkers, to wipe away some of the influence of the Christian Church in determining the position of women. And that sinister influence is far from dead. So late as 1916, when it was proposed that women should take a hand in the "National Mission of Repentance of Hope" by preaching in the churches, a number of clergymen published a memorial in the *Times* solemnly protesting against such an innovation, and proclaiming their belief that "to grant permission to women to preach in our churches is contrary to the teaching of Holy Scriptures, and to the mind and practice of the whole Catholic Church." Much as we may dissent from the practice of these parsons, there is no denying that they are right as regards theory. And the theory, as we have tried to show, is much older than the Christian Church. The fault of the Christian Church is that it overturned the more enlightened and more liberal views that were beginning to prevail in the ancient world, and reverted to a purely savage conception of the nature of woman. And having once adopted the outlook of savagery—as it did in other things—it enforced it with all kinds of ethical and theological excuses. It is against that influence that all advocates for the legal equality of the sexes have been fighting. One of the earlier workers in the cause of the emancipation of women, Mrs. Matilda Joslyn Gage, has well said that "the most stupendous system of organized robbery known has been that of the Church towards woman." Or, as we have summed up the position elsewhere, "The Church has claimed to be the protector of woman, and in the very act has denied her the right to protect herself. It is the slaveholder claiming to protect the slave; the feudal lord claiming to be the protector of his serf; the sweating employer standing as the protector of his wage slave."

CHAPMAN COHEN.

That which is true is mine.—Seneca.

"In Christ."

The Christian life, we are told, signifies a life of complete union with Christ. Preachers wax extremely eloquent when they enlarge upon the transcendent glory and power of such a life. There is nothing worthy of a moment's comparison with it in the world, they assure us. It lifts a man entirely above the highest level attainable by his natural self. In the *Christian World Pulpit* of November 4, there is a sermon on the subject by the Rev. Bertram Lee Woolf, Ph.D., M.A., B.Sc., B.D., the text being 2 Cor. v. 17: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature." This verse is evidently the source from which the pulpit has drawn its ornate descriptions of the Christian life. Dr. Woolf begins his discourse by saying that the general thought he wishes to bring out is that "our natures are compound and that the spiritual element is the more valuable," but surely he cannot be ignorant of the utterly unscientific character of such a thought. The old theory that "each human personality is composed of two very dissimilar parts or principles, soul and body respectively," is being emphatically repudiated by present-day psychologists. Professor McDougall, in his *Psychology the Study of Behaviour*, devotes several pages to the history of the belief in the soul, and comes to the definite conviction that "it is no longer possible to define psychology as the science of the soul." Dr. Sidis, in his *Normal and Abnormal Psychology*, is of precisely the same opinion, declaring that "the soul is something that lies outside the range of experience, and could never be brought within the limits of empiricism, the basis of science." Naturally Dr. Woolf makes many remarks which in themselves are obviously true, but unfortunately the context in which they occur robs them of all practical value. As a sample take the following beautiful passage:—

Imagine a rough sailor out on the lonely high seas, coarse in language and careless in conduct. But one day of the year he is somewhat different, more silent, more restrained. It is his mother's birthday, and the pointed remembrance of her head now grown grey, of her bent hands and crinkled skin, of her patient love, makes the day different. There is such a thing as love, he feels. There is someone who cares. It does matter what a fellow does and says when no one is looking or listening. He feels a difference in the air he breathes. He hears new notes in the flapping of the sails, in the creak of the blocks and the whistle of the ropes. They remind him of familiar things and sounds about the old home. He is living in a special atmosphere, which tempers his mind and colours his outlook. He scents it in the air around. It is within yet without, and so he is a different man.

By itself that paragraph is perfectly true, but as an illustration of the change that takes place when a man becomes a Christian it is woefully inadequate and misleading. That poor, rough sailor was a different man only for a day or two once a year, but when a man accepts Christ he is supposed to become different for the rest of his life.

Dr. Woolf is undoubtedly a great scholar, being at once Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Divinity. The last mentioned degree indicates that he is above the average among theologians. Now let us see what he can tell us about Christ and about being in Christ. He says:—

St. Paul is not thinking of Jesus as he is spoken of in the Gospels, as a man living among men and holding converse with them. He is thinking of the One who was crucified and buried, and who rose

again and now lived in the spiritual realms. It is the risen and spiritual Christ of whom he speaks. It is the Lord of our Communion Table and of our familiar intercourse. For Christ as risen and transformed and glorified, is not an invisible shape about the same size as the earthly Jesus, and inhabiting some place in the heavens, and who comes down to meet us in worship. We must get away from the bodily and local idea of spiritual things. Time and space exist no more for non-carnate persons. Our risen Lord is best pictured as a vitalizing personal atmosphere and temper, a permanent mood surrounding and enveloping the receptive soul in a special sense, with an air that penetrates into the deepest places of the heart.

In that passage Dr. Woolf gives the case for Christianity away in the most innocent, simple, and obvious manner possible. His first admission is that the Christ of the Church is not the same person as the Jesus of the Gospels. Judging by what he says in his epistles the inference is natural that for Paul the Gospel Jesus did not exist at all. He does not mention one of the many alleged events of his life recorded by the Evangelists. His hero is a being called Christ, who died a sacrificial death and rose from the dead, and thereby became the Saviour of the world. He claims further that the knowledge of Christ reached him not through any human channels whatsoever, but as a direct revelation from heaven; but that is clearly a false claim. Paul was a Roman citizen and a scholar. Neo Platonism and several oriental religions were well known in the Roman Empire of his day. Mithraism, in particular, was a religion from which, without a doubt, Paul borrowed his two chief doctrines, the one of Christ's person and work, and the other of the Lord's Supper. In any case, Christ is a wholly imaginary person, whose objective existence is a natural impossibility. He is real only to those who can believe in him, and their number is growing smaller and smaller with the passing years. We now come to the phrase, being "in Christ," of which the preacher observes:—

The words "in Christ" must not be paraphrased at all. They must be understood in the perfectly literal sense. To be "in Christ" is the same thing as to be in the air and the air to be in us, breathing it in and out, our blood running the quicker and the warmer and fresher and brighter when we feel it clear and transparent all round. To be "in Christ" is like being in the sunlight when we speak of roses and daffodils bathing in the sunlight, when they are penetrated through and through by its rays. But best understand it as a moment ago we understood the phrase "in an atmosphere." To believe "in Christ" means to feel Christ though invisible to the eye and intangible to the senses. It means to be borne up by him, dependent upon him, swayed and influenced by him as by a subtle element in which we live and move.

Those are beautiful sentences, but they merely evade the difficulty of explaining what Paul meant by being "in Christ," or that being "in Christ" expresses a veritable truth. Furthermore is it not an established fact that, speaking generally, believers in Christ are not morally and socially superior to non-believers? So-called conversion, as a rule, bears no ethical fruit whatsoever. Technically it only produces a changed relation between the individual and God, and the only fruit it usually bears is an emotion called piety. Dr. Woolf has no historical right to represent Christian believers as legitimately saying of themselves: "We are indeed new creatures, creatures of a different kind, men of a different species. We are not simply patched up so that we can go on a little better. We have undergone a transformation. We are no longer merely human beings as the highest form of animals. We are men

as one with God." As a matter of plain fact, they have never had the slightest justification for the adoption of such language concerning themselves. It is true that they generally regard themselves as greatly superior in every respect to the people of the world. The churches are peculiar victims of self-righteousness. In the *British Weekly* of November 4, "Watchman," the writer of "Things in General," introduces this brief paragraph: "'He does nothing,' said Carlyle on a dark day concerning God. It seems to me that the Church of Christ exists for almost this one purpose—to make it impossible for any fair-minded man to say that." Here is self-righteousness glorified beyond all measure! Does "Watchman" really believe that the Church is the instrument through which God does his work in the world? If that is true, no wonder the belief in God and his Church is so rapidly dying out through the length and breadth of the land. After all, it is Carlyle's saying which history endorses, and the Chelsea sage was, to say the very least, as fair-minded a man as "Watchman" himself is, although it is the latter's profession to eulogize the Church as God's instrument.

J. T. LLOYD.

Crumbling Creeds.

Our age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers.—*Emerson.*

To know that we know what we know, and that we do not know what we do not know, that is true knowledge.—*Confucius.*

Be neither saint nor sophist led, but be a man.—*Matthew Arnold.*

It is sometimes affirmed by hot-headed preachers that there is a more truly religious spirit in the world than ever before. The world is a fairly large place, and the statement is redolent of that exaggeration so beloved by all priests of all denominations. It will, however, hardly be disputed that at no time has there been a larger proportion of the population of this country taking no part in public worship. Our Sunday cinemas, golf-links, and concerts are crowded, but almost every Church, from Roman Catholic to Unitarian, has the same bitter complaint that, while the elder men and women remain fairly steady in their attendance, the young are not attracted. This state of affairs reacts against the clergy. Beggarly arrays of empty benches count for anything but enthusiasm, and dreariness in the pulpit means deadly dulness in the congregations.

Religion, which in this country means the Christian Religion, has lost its hold on the people. It never had much more than lip-service from the aristocrats and the working-class, and its stronghold was always in the middle-class. Now, Sunday golfing and motor-ing lure tens of thousands of people, who, a few years ago, would have considered church-going part and parcel of the ordinary routine of life.

There is, moreover, another aspect of this question which is apt to be overlooked. The disposition to leave church alone has, doubtless, been increased by the tendency of a large part of the Anglican clergy to imitate the priests of Rome, whose ideals are the most hopelessly out of date in all Christendom. People have learnt not to expect too much from the clergy, but the spectacle of pale young curates attempting to revive the mummeries of the Middle Ages is apt to irritate rather than elevate the most docile of Englishmen. The man in the pew may not rise in his wrath and denounce Priestcraft, but he stays away and consoles himself with a Sunday newspaper, or a game of golf.

Moreover, the national intelligence is rising against twelfth-century theology. Men who read realize the immense gulf between priestly utterances and modern ideals. Women, too, are beginning to resent the attitude of the Christian Churches with regard to their sex. And it must be said that the quality of the average sermon is so very poor. And this lack of intellectual grip is fatal, for no man can hope to hold a modern audience without some mental ability. It almost appears as if the Churches had become careers for men incapable of making way in any other profession. And far more serious is the want of that special quality of sincerity which only comes of a passionate conviction of the truth of the things discoursed of. Passion in the pulpit is a thing of the past, but without passion there is no vitality. Once men of genius and compelling oratorical power occupied the foremost Christian pulpits. To-day, with a handful of exceptions, the pulpits might be occupied by trained parrots, so monotonous is the recitative uttered in those places. A generation since Joseph Parker impeached an Eastern tyrant with the words, "God damn the Sultan," but, to-day, with far greater issues at stake than Oriental atrocities, the clergy can only mumble the Liturgy.

Mind you, this failure on the part of the clergy has not seriously jeopardised their position. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners still draw the Anglican Church's coal royalties, and rents from other extensive properties. Stipends are still paid to Church of England parsons, and some of the Free Churches are busy amalgamating with other bodies in order to safeguard their position. In spite of the break-away of part of the congregations, there are still nearly 50,000 priests in this country. Nominally at variance, the various sects are quite capable of presenting a united front to a common enemy. And, on those rare occasions when priests agree, their unanimity is truly wonderful. They act like one man; a miser fighting for his gold.

Shakespeare never said a truer thing than when he wrote: "Gold will knit and break religions." A simple Act of Parliament disestablishing and disendowing the Church of England would do much towards breaking the power of Priestcraft in this country. Moreover, it would release many millions of money which could be used for far worthier purposes than the perpetuation of superstition. Another Act of Parliament, instituting Secular Education, would drive the priest from the national schools, and would almost complete the conquest of Clericalism.

Yet, these measures, once part of the planks of the old Radical political platform, have, of late years, dropped out of notice. Present-day Democrats show no hostility to the churches, but seek rather to pretend that the Labour Movement is in harmony with the ideas and beliefs of twenty centuries ago. And this very strange attitude is adopted in order to gather the Christian vote, and to tickle the ears of the groundlings, just as if Priestcraft is to be fought with the aid of people who would respect an orang-outang provided that the animal wore clerical clothes.

Present-day Labour leaders would do well to ponder the case of modern France. After the downfall of Napoleon the Little, the Republic was faced with the determined opposition of the Romish Church. So bitter was the antagonism that Gambetta denounced Clericalism as the chief enemy of the Republic, although foreign soldiers were still encamped upon the soil of France. So it has been during the succeeding half-century. Whenever there has been a Royalist agitation, there has been the petticoats of the priests, and this is also true from Moscow to Madrid.

It is inevitable that this is so. The watchwords of Democracy are "Liberty," "Equality," and

"Fraternity." What has the Great Lying Church in common with these things? Liberty is unknown within the ring-fence of the Romish Church. As for equality, the mere existence of a celibate priesthood, a caste apart from ordinary men and women, carries its own answer. With regard to fraternity, all outside the Church are considered to be outcasts, and treated accordingly. Democracy has nothing in common with an impudent and audacious set of imposters who have been gaining an easy livelihood at the expense of their fellow citizens these two thousand years.

MIMNERMUS.

Concerning the Apostle Paul.

NEXT in importance to the teachings of Christ, from the Christian point of view, are those ascribed to St. Paul, which many regard as among the most valuable portions of the Christian Faith. Indeed, Christians frequently extol the character of the Apostle Paul, praise highly his scholarship, and, above all, his enthusiasm in the propagation of the "Gospel of Jesus and him crucified," quite overlooking the fact that Paul was a bigot before his conversion; that the spirit of persecution was fully developed in his nature, and his intellectual training did not enlarge his mind or cool his temper to that degree that reason became the dominating force in his character.

Of the earnestness of St. Paul there can be no doubt; with one idea animating his mind, he went on his way cheerfully and courageously with the full hope of converting all with whom he came in contact. He was still an opponent of Christ, although he had never seen him. And then came his conversion. It was not, however, caused by an appeal to the apostles' cultivated understanding; on the contrary, it was a conversion very similar in character to those that take place at revival meetings.

The late Charles Haddon Spurgeon used to relate how he was converted by an uneducated preacher, who exclaimed suddenly, "Look, look to Jesus!" These words came to the mind of the young listener with electrical force; they thrilled his whole soul, so to speak, and seemed to convey to him a divine message—in other words, a revelation from heaven. But St. Paul's conversion occurred somewhat differently to that of the famous Baptist minister. The apostle did not even see the preacher; a light shone from heaven, and he heard a voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Some critics have suggested that he was suddenly smitten down by sunstroke, which is not at all improbable; and that this caused the extraordinary change in his mind; and from that moment his conversion was complete. It may be seen, therefore, that it was not the intellectual acceptance of the teachings of Jesus that caused Paul to embrace the Christian Faith; it was merely because he was smitten down and heard a voice that said: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Now, if Jesus could convert the scholarly Paul in this way, why could he not also convince others by the same method? A person who should declare that he heard a "still small voice" say something that caused him to become a Freethinker would be regarded as a person suffering from temporary mental derangement. Different things are expected of Freethinkers. If they embrace a belief they are expected to give some valid reason for so doing; while on the other hand, the Apostle Paul and Christians generally are considered sensible men if their conversion is produced during the time their minds are under the influence of some strange hallucination, or if it results from something they

imagine they saw in a dream. The Acts of the Apostles teem with passages which plainly show that Paul was himself conscious of the weakness of any arguments he might found upon the manner of his own conversion, for he distinctly declares that the critical and wise will be disposed to disbelieve in so sudden a change in one who was foremost among the persecutors of Christ.

Like Jesus, and most modern Christians, Paul regarded faith as the supreme virtue; and the word *faith*, it should be understood, was always used in its narrow and theological sense, as meaning the absolute relinquishment of the understanding in things unknown or not easily understood. All men were to have faith in Jesus and in his power to save. Intellectual as St. Paul was, he nevertheless believed in the barbarous doctrine that the death of the innocent can expiate the sins of the guilty. Preaching at Antioch, he declared: "Be it known unto you men and brethren that through this man (Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiv. 38-39). The Jews, however, would not listen to what they regarded as the blasphemies and contradictions of St. Paul and Barnabas, and, therefore, they drove them out of Antioch. Then Paul and his coadjutor showed the meanness of their nature by exhibiting what little vengeance they could in "shaking off the dust of their feet" against the Jews as they left their city. Chief among the doctrines of Paul was the necessity of blind belief in the crucified Jesus; and this is the more remarkable, coming, as it does, from a teacher who enjoined his followers to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good." Probably St. Paul only wished his hearers to submit to examination "all things" except the belief in Jesus; and this exception he thought they might well make, inasmuch as he himself had assured them of its truth. What more proof could they need? Had not Paul seen Jesus in a dream or a vision of some kind? Had not the spirit of the departed Nazarene, like the ghost of Hamlet's father appeared and in sonorous tones unfolded "a tale whose lightest word" was sufficient to "harrow up the spirit" of braver men than St. Paul? Therefore, if the educated Greek or the sceptical Jew did sneer and ridicule, why should weaker persons imagine for a single moment that Paul's testimony was anything but thoroughly and completely satisfactory? No one knew better than St. Paul that the scholarly Gentile did not believe in the resurrection of Jesus. Yet he did not hesitate to frighten the ignorant and superstitious with threats of punishments in store for them in another world. When Christians exultingly refer us to the passage from the Apostle wherein he declared that faith alone will not save, but that good works are also required, they do not succeed in establishing that Paul did not preach the doctrine of belief in Jesus, or damnation for unbelief; all they succeed in showing is that Paul was afflicted with that common weakness of human nature, namely, inconsistency. St. Paul was not in the least degree ahead of his times in regard to his teachings; his discourses contained much that was commonplace, and his mind was impregnated with all the prevailing errors of the age, believing in prayer, miracles, devils, and a host of other absurdities which it might have been supposed an educated man would at least have rejected. Not only did the Apostle believe in miracles, but he actually thought himself capable of performing them (see Acts xx). The moral teachings of St. Paul are more distinctive and probably more capable of being carried into practice than those of Jesus. St. Paul

taught that belief would not save a man; that work and faith have to go together. This is certainly a better and more moral teaching than the doctrine that belief is sufficient of itself. St. Paul did not altogether disapprove of marriage; of two evils he taught that men were to choose the lesser. All could be saved—Jews as well as Gentiles, heathens as well as Christians. He adjured his disciples "to speak evil of no man," to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing meekness unto all men. The injunction was almost uniformly disobeyed by Christians as soon as they gained power. St. Paul also taught that men were to do unto others as they wished to be done by, and to be charitable in all things. This doctrine of charity was one of the best teachings of the apostle, but as soon as the Christians gained power this teaching was consistently ignored, or ruthlessly set aside—for the whole history of the Christian Church shows that the spirit of persecution abounded during the ages of Faith, and that heretics and unbelievers of all kinds were subjected to torture too horrible to contemplate and too painful to endure.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

Acid Drops.

We are not very sanguine that the exposure of the Welsh medium, Harold Evans, in the course of the *Sunday Chronicle* meetings, will have any great effect on Spiritualists. Already we see that Miss Estelle Stead, while being compelled to admit that the particular act in which Mr. Harold Evans, after going through the elaborate, but worthless, process of tying, was found masquerading as St. Catherine, was a gross fraud, asserts that some of his other performances were quite genuine. And so it goes on. If the medium is detected in fraud, it is said it does not prove that other things, which were not exposed were not genuine. The bottom fact is that a large number of people go to these meetings ready to believe, and come away convinced. They resemble those who go to an evangelistic meeting to hear the call of Jesus, and, of course, hear it.

In effect, the so-called and self-styled "psychic experts" are as big a humbug as anyone. They go looking for the explanation of what occurs in terms of some unknown and inconceivable "psychic" force, and, like the Jump-to-glory-Jesusite, find what they expect to find. If they went to these gatherings in the same temper as they go to a conjuring performance, expecting to be puzzled, but convinced that there is a very simple explanation of all that goes on, they would discover more than they do. Most of them deliver themselves as ready dupes to men like Harold Evans, and it is only when someone has the courage to act on the opposite assumption and break some of the rules laid down that something occurs.

The very constitution of many of these committees invite deception. Sir Arbuthnot Lane, Professor Julian Huxley, and other men of similar standing. Biologists, chemists, physicists, doctors. What on earth is the authoritative value of their presence. All we are assured of is that none of these will lie to or deceive the public. No one expected that they would. But they are not the kind of men required. Consider the elaborate, but quite valueless, attention paid to the tying of a medium. The same care is taken by amateurs over and over again in music-halls, and the performer triumphantly frees himself without any suspicion of "spirit agency." The only committee of any value whatever is one that declines to be bound down by prescribed rules, and composed of one or two professional conjurers and a couple of experts in pathological psychology. Then we might see things. But the friends from the other side would certainly not countenance the presence of a committee

of this kind. It would outrage their spiritual susceptibilities.

The simple wonder of the conversion of Miss Christabel Pankhurst, says a pious writer, is deeply impressive. She, we learn, began during the war to realize that votes for women could not bring in the millennium. "Depressed and bewildered she went from church to church seeking the right key to the position, but failed to get any light." Chancing upon a book of prophecy, she turned to Christ as the world's hope. We fancy Miss Pankhurst has backed another loser for the Millennium race. During the past nineteen hundred years the churches of Christ have wielded almost unlimited power over the mind of man. Yet one cannot note any indication of them having achieved what Miss Pankhurst so fervently desires. This would appear to suggest that there must be something wrong with the Christian goods that these are not quite so wonderful as the advertisements allege them to be.

In Egypt are two million children of school age. At present not more than 350,000 are receiving education of any kind. The country aims at opening 6,500 schools during the next fourteen years. By 1930 the dream of universal education will be a fact. In the *World's Children* Mr. Charles Robertson, to whom we are indebted for these facts, adds: "There is something pathetic and inspiring in this small nation, with ninety per cent. of its people illiterate, determined that every child shall have opportunities for mental development." We cannot quite see how such an ambition can be styled "pathetic." Now, if the Egyptians were aiming at giving each child opportunities merely for religious development, instead of "mental development," their efforts might indeed merit the term "pathetic."

A note for £1,000 was found in the offertory, which was in aid of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, at a recent service in Salisbury Cathedral. We hazard a guess that most of the thousand will go towards the Sustentation of the Professional Pious.

Mansfield, in Nottinghamshire, ought to be an ideal borough in the near future. Its Council has elected Alderman D. H. Maltby as Mayor. This gentleman, we learn, is an ardent Christian, an able lay preacher, and a steward of the United Methodist Church. Having the Lord God to refer to for advice, and the prayers of his brothers in Christ to aid him, he ought to be able to guide the affairs of Mansfield in a way never seen before. Nevertheless, we very much doubt whether the affairs of this borough will be any better managed than those of other towns that depend merely on common-sense and experience as their guide. There is one thing we can prophesy Mansfield will be notable for. And this is—an uncompromising antagonism to any suggested wholesome recreation on the Sabbath.

The first statue of a human being ever erected in a free Mahomedan country has been unveiled in Constantinople. It is a life-size figure of the President of the Turkish Republic, and has been erected despite the teaching of the Koran, which, says the *Christian Herald*, condemns idolatry. Our Second Advent contemporary sees in this event another indication of fulfilment of prophecy. We don't. We think it is more likely to be an indication of the waning of another primitive superstition whose influence has been almost as evil a thing as that of the Christian religion.

Where are we going? This question has a wider significance than the famous one addressed to the milkmaid. We are genuinely concerned, and the cause is to be found in the following extract from the *Evening Standard* leader: "No nation can depend profitably on one personality, subduing its individual judgments to a herd-like obedience and worship. No man has long remained of use to his fellows after he began to believe

that divinity hedged him from a human lot." The writer of this was probably unaware of the full significance of what he wrote, but it is good Freethought for all that.

Now that most professional religionists have become heartily ashamed of hell and dropped it, another matter for jettison is "fear." In a letter to the press the Rev. A. P. Gold-Levin rather repudiates the translation of the Hebrew word for fear and assures us, in effect, that we may sleep comfortably in our beds. In time the gospel will be like the famous baker's loaves that became smaller and smaller, until, at last, they could be delivered through the letter-box.

Matches strike, miners' strike, and now we have had the bookmakers' strike. When are our reverend brethren going to follow suit? It would be the greatest strike of all when the "down tools" took place against small congregations, small salaries, and the fact that few take them seriously.

With the journalist the day does not have twenty-four hours. Another dimension is added to time; the journalist has forgotten what he wrote yesterday and he is sure that his readers are in the same state. Mr. James Douglas had an article in the *Daily Express* entitled "The Toxin of Hate," and here is the first sentence: "It would be interesting if the biologists could analyse the biological products and by-products of that deadly human poison, hate." This is as clear as a view of the Lord Mayor's Show on a foggy day, but, good man that he is, after telling us how hate affects him, he tells us how he gets rid of it. He writes: "I deliberately reverse the engine of hate," and from this phraseology it will be easy to see the close affinity that the journalist's journalism has with theological jargon. How they hop about from one category into another! and we feel sure that before unburdening himself of the mixed grill, Mr. James Douglas will read through all his war articles.

God help our publicists. Mr. Stuart Hodgson writing on *The End of Mr. Clissold*, mentions the cheap blasphemies in the first volume. The impotent critic does not state what they are, and appears to be living in the not state what they are, and appears to be living in the Stone Age, a period well represented by our present-day theologians without any reinforcement from writers in newspapers. Blasphemy is the big stick used by bullies whose supporters mistake words for things, but this definition is perhaps beyond one whose trade is words.

Mrs. Mary Alleyn, of Shiplake, sought a separation from her husband on the grounds that he was living with another woman, and would continue to live with her if a decree of separation were granted. She also explained to the judge that, being a Roman Catholic, her religion would not permit her to divorce him. Mr. Justice Hill said it was revolting that the two should be separated, and that while he could not come back to the one woman he could not marry the other. He adjourned the case so that the petitioner might consult her spiritual advisers. It is also monstrous that one of the most important of all human arrangements should be prevented from resting on a reasonable basis because of the influence of a number of medicine men, whose power really originates in the most savage superstitions concerning the relations of the sexes.

Mrs. Aimee Macpherson, the woman evangelist, who, when she visited this country attracted huge audiences of admiring Christians, and is also reported to have made huge sums of money from her preaching of the Gospel, has, with her mother, been committed for trial by a Los Angeles jury on a charge of conspiracy. It will be remembered that Mrs. Macpherson, finding things "sagging" a little, disappeared from her church, and when she came back, reported that she had been

kidnapped and taken to Mexico, imprisoned in a lonely cabin, from whence she escaped. It transpired that she had been spending a vacation with one of the male members of her church, and that her whole story was a lie from beginning to end. Her mother has confessed to conspiracy, but both have been allowed out on bail.

We confess that we sympathize a little with Mrs. Macpherson. She was simply following the custom of her trade, and in all directions some allowance is made for business methods. If evangelists are to be convicted and sentenced whenever they tell the public lies, the whole profession will soon be impossible. There are the inaginary converts, the invented experiences, the fanciful death-beds and repentant sinners, the early villainies of the evangelist himself, and so on. We say nothing about the tales told by the ordinary parson, most of which are devoid of a basis in fact. But it is clear that Mrs. Macpherson is being made a scapegoat. She is following the custom of her trade, and if parsons and evangelists are to stick to the truth, the occupation will just die out.

Christ, says Mr. Middleton Murray in his new *Life of Jesus*, always preferred "an honest unbeliever to a liar." It is nice to know that. When he makes his second visit to earth he will no doubt drop in at this office for a friendly chat.

A Sunday-defending Alliance advertises the day following Armistice celebration to be observed for "special prayer for help and guidance in the preservation of Sunday." A good eye to business has this Alliance. It appreciates the publicity value of linking its particular commodity on to a public event well in the people's mind. It has nothing to learn from the experts in the cunning art of advertisement.

Looking into the Subject of Sunday Closing is the title of a booklet published by the Alliance for the Defence of Sunday. It purports to be "an exposition of the true character" of the Sunday Closing Movement. We beg leave to doubt this. For it omits to mention one highly important fact. This is, that the Movement's chief aim is to eliminate all competition likely to interfere with the parson's Sunday trade.

The Archbishop of Canterbury on November 2 again issued advice that prayers should be offered up for an early termination of the coal trouble. The *Daily Express* thinks that the prayers of the Archbishop, "combined with faith and works on the part of the miners and coal-owners" will avail much. We should much like to know in just what way the *Daily Express* thinks the prayers will help? It will be remembered that at the very beginning of the trouble the attention of God Almighty was called to the matter, and he was asked to do something. Now he is being reminded that six months have passed without him doing anything. But it would be blasphemous to suggest that a God who could do something and does not do it, is one that is not worth bothering about. But it is part of the Christian teaching that the less God does the more praise he is entitled to. Then when something does happen, he is praised for not having done it before.

An advertisement of the Home Office inviting women to apply for a post as warders says: "The candidates selected will be those who, by education, temperament, and training, appear best fitted to take part in the different work of training offenders for citizenship." By this one can see that our Prison Authorities are getting right away from the old Christian notions in regard to houses of detention. They no longer look on a prison as a place where degrading punishment is dealt out to "sinners," and as a sample piece of the Christian hell.

The Vicar of Ashford (Kent) writing about Armistice Day, says: "So once again let us thank God for those who died that we might live." The vicar appears not to realize that he is asking us to thank God for arranging the deaths of our fellow-countrymen. We hope that while we are obliging with the thanking business, the vicar will not expect us to admire God's plan. God's scheme of ensuring "that we might live," and the victory of right over might, was one of appalling bloodshed. It is not exactly a testimonial to the intelligence of God that he could manage to think of no better and more humane method of achieving the desired result.

Our Lord meant his religion to be propagated by men and women who were trying humbly to follow in his steps, and not by priests or philosophers or professional advocates, declares Dean Inge. After reading this, one is puzzled to know why the Dean continues going contrary to his Lord's intention and propagates religion as a professional advocate.

That good Baptist, the Rev. F. C. Spurr, recently sent out a questionnaire respecting the attitude of modern youth towards religion, and addressed to head-teachers, parents, artisans, clerks, young men and women. The answers, from about 800 persons, deal mainly with youth outside the Church. Mr. Spurr laments: "Only three or four replies emphasized a strong personal faith on the part of the writer." He thinks that what youth is thinking about religion shows a "lamentable want of thought." No wonder the reverend gent is indignant! He was told that youths are no more interested in religion than in their own dining-table. That if one spoke about Christianity in the workshops he would be regarded as a "softy." That the Christian nations went to war in 1914-1918, and, in doing so, the humbug of the whole thing—religion—was exposed. That today "we see good in all religions; who can decide which is the only true one?" That unbelievers known to the writer have a finer code of honour than many Church members. As regards the Church, this is criticized unmercifully, says Mr. Spurr. Parsons are out of touch with life. The pulpit is too dry. There is no chance to ask questions in Church. There is much talk of brotherhood, yet where are class distinctions more marked than in the Church? Prayers are "windy orations." The Church is too busy about the heathen abroad; it neglects the slums at its own doors. The Bible, too, comes in for criticism quite as outspoken. Many youths find it boring; and others are sick of it because they were forced to read it at school—which suggests that the churches do not make so many clients as they fancy they do, by forcing their book of fairy tales upon the schools. Mr. Spurr has found out what youth is thinking about religion, but he appears not to be greatly elated over his discovery. And he seems puzzled to know what to do to alter the sad state of affairs. He has our sympathy.

The Happiness of Youth is a legend, says Miss Rebecca West. The legend of the supreme good fortune of the young works out to the detriment of society. For it makes people of other ages envious, and then they issue attacks on youth. "It is jealousy which inspires a certain sort of rural dean to preach and write articles in the Sunday papers against the modern girl for her habit of wearing a short skirt, in spite of the fact that she has contracted this because she possesses straight legs and a clean mind, which is plainly an ideal combination." Miss West's theory to account for parsonic attacks on modern youth is very ingenious, but hardly convincing. Parsons attack youth for various reasons. They dislike the young people's avowed intention to think for themselves and not be led by the nose, and their refusal to listen to the silly Christian "message." They appreciate the good advertisement resulting from the attacks. Apart from these reasons there is another, and the chief one. This is, that the parson critics have minds essentially narrow and indecent, as the result of their having been nurtured by

a Book full of narrow and gloomy pietism and oriental nastiness.

Heraclitus stated that things were always in a state of flux. An item of news to substantiate this may be gathered from the old women's gossip—pardon, we should have said newspapers, to the effect that the "Old Brew House," adjoining Lambeth Palace, is to be demolished. The place at one time was used to brew beer for Archbishops of Canterbury. No particulars are given as to when the beer was imbibed—before or after the sermons, but if they were anything like the insipid discourses that now come through on the wireless, we may conclude that the consumption of beer took place after boring through the firstly, secondly, thirdly, and geometrical parturition of how to keep the pot boiling.

A collection of "after-death communications" from Jack London, the famous novelist, has been published under the title of *The Soul of Jack London*. Pity the poor writer who happens to have a pride in his reputation as a man of intelligence! There will not be much left of that reputation after the Spiritualists have published books that purport to reveal his "soul."

The spirit of God, says Mr. Arthur Mee, comes to us in the belief that this world is made lovely by the design and will of the Eternal Father of us all. The relatives of those unfortunates wiped out by the recent disasters are, we should say, in just the right mood to appreciate the loveliness of the "design."

We shall be excused for giving the following lengthy sentence in full, but it contains the essence of that particular element against which all good men will fight without hope of reward, and that is just what confounds the fat and comfortable ecclesiastics who die with thousands of pounds round their necks—dead witnesses to the humbug they have stood for. Major Douglas is an engineer, and, in a moment of gaiety—or good digestion—the following beautiful butterfly of thought rested in his mind and came out of his pen in this form—(it is all in one breath, too):—

It should be borne in mind that the high policy of such immense organizations, as, for instance, Ultramontane Roman Catholicism and political Judaism, bears about the same relation to the views or the thoughts of the average Roman Catholic or the average Jew that British Policy in the Hindu Kush does to the thoughts and aspirations of Tom Jones, the butcher's boy.

An officer of the Salvation Army was charged at Bayswater Police-court with singing in Kildare Terrace, to the annoyance of the inhabitants. He was asked to desist, with his companions, because there was an invalid in one of the houses, but refused to do so. The magistrate said it was disgusting, but as the Police Act under which the prosecution was taken, applied only to street musicians and street singers, it did not apply to the Salvation Army, who were missionaries. The summons was dismissed. We agree with the magistrate that the conduct of the Salvation Army was disgusting, but we are also of opinion that if the singers had been a band of Freethinkers, singing a Secular hymn, or a band of Socialists singing the Red Flag, it would not have been held they were exempt because they were missionaries. The Act does not exempt missionaries, and it is clearly intended to prevent anyone being a nuisance. But the Army in this country are privileged. They are allowed to obstruct traffic, to make the streets hideous with their noises, and all because they do it in the name of religion. It wants some magistrate, who intends acting fairly between religious and non-religious groups, to bring this strident and money-making organization into line with other bodies. We cannot expect much help here from politicians, because, after all, these Salvationists have votes. And that means everything.

The "Freethinker" Endowment Trust and Sustentation Fund.

THE purpose of the Trust, which was formed in August, 1925, is to raise a sufficient sum of money, which, by investment, will yield the sum of £400 per year, sufficient to cover the loss incurred in the maintenance of the *Freethinker*. There are five Trustees, of whom one is the Editor of the *Freethinker*, and their duties are strictly prescribed by the Trust Deed. The accounts of the Trust are in the hands of Mr. H. Theobald, a certified accountant. As the result of the first appeal the sum of £3,901 14s. 10d. was raised. The result of the present year's appeal will be found below.

In addition we hold the written promises of Mr. P. G. Peabody to subscribe the sum of £1,000, provided the total reaches £7,000 by the end of next year, and from Mr. H. Jessop, who promises £200, and from Mr. W. J. W. Easterbrook, who promises £100, provided the balance of the £7,000 is subscribed. We are open to receive other promises on the same condition; that is, that no calls will be made unless the whole of the amount required is subscribed before December 31, 1927. We feel certain that this is not beyond the capacity of the friends of the *Freethinker*. Indeed, a very modest sum from each would do the trick. If each did his or her share, we could easily write "Finis" before 1926 had come to an end.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Previously acknowledged, £490 16s. F. A. Hornbrook, £10; Erle D. Side, £2 2s.; "In Memory of My Father," R. H. Side, £2 2s.; G. Saunders, £1; J. Robertson, £1; H. A. Lupton, 10s.; W. H. Orgast, 5s.; T. Dixon, £2 2s.; W. Ellis, 5s.; H. Collins, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. T. Greenall, 10s. Total, £510 17s.

Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust, and addressed to me at 61 Farringdon Street, E.C.4. Every contribution will be acknowledged week by week in the *Freethinker*.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

To Correspondents.

Those subscribers who receive their copy of the "Freethinker" in a GREEN WRAPPER will please take it that the renewal of their subscription is due. They will also oblige, if they do not want us to continue sending the paper, by notifying us to that effect.

R. H. STONE.—We agree with you as to the quality of Lady Layten's article. It begins on a note of common sense, but soon passes into the fantastic theories and pseudo-philosophical speculations of Theosophy. It will please all who take marshalled phrases for definite ideas.

"ANON."—Thanks for promise to contribute to "The Endowment Trust" after Christmas. It is a bad time for many just now, so far as money is concerned.

H. COLLINS supports Mr. Macconnell's suggestion that each interested should promise a certain amount to be paid within the year. He promises 25s. Thanks.

F. MANN (Glasgow).—We are glad to note that Miss McCall gave so much satisfaction to your members in her lecture.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

To-day (November 14) Mr. Cohen visits Weston-super-Mare. He will lecture in the Assembly Rooms, High Street, in the afternoon, at 3, on "The Farce of Faith," and in the evening, at 7, on "What the World Owes to Unbelief." Admission is free to both meetings. This is the first meeting undertaken by the new Branch, and we hope it will be a complete success.

There was a crowded meeting at Stratford Town Hall on Sunday last, and Mr. Cohen's address on "If Christ Came to Stratford" was received with much apparent satisfaction. Mr. Rosetti occupied the chair, and fulfilled his duties with firmness and decision, quite useful qualities in a chairman. There were a number of questions at the conclusion of the address, most of them rather wide of the subject, but the more knowing ones at such meetings recognize the wisdom of silence.

In a recent issue of the *Freethinker*, Mr. Cohen's "Views and Opinions" were taken up with the subject of Hell. In the course of those notes he quoted the Rev. E. W. Mowll, the organizer of the Church Congress, as saying that "Not a single clergyman of the Church of England would advance the idea of eternal punishment." One of our readers wrote to Canon Mowll, who replies under date of November 4, "I never made use of the words you quote." That is very definite. Now we are not always able to place our hands on the authority for every quotation made, as the newspaper cuttings are usually destroyed. It was so in this case, but a little search soon brought the following to light: "Not a single clergyman of the Church of England would advance the idea of eternal punishment in an actual hell." This passage will be found in the *Daily Express* for October 6, page 2, col. 4. They are repeated as part of an interview between Canon Mowll and newspaper correspondents. Canon Mowll says that what he said was that the "dynamics of Christianity had changed." Now I have not too great a faith in the veracity of newspaper men, but they would be neither liars enough nor foolish enough to take the expression which the Canon says he used, and the one they report him as using. Perhaps Canon Mowll thought that by merely disowning the passage, which he must have known did not represent the truth, it would be enough. We wonder what the Canon will say next. We venture to predict he will say nothing at all. Truth speaking is not one of the cardinal virtues of Christianity.

The very inclement weather of Sunday last interfered with the meetings held at Manchester on Sunday last by Messrs. Monks and Gosling, but those who were present greatly enjoyed both addresses. The weather is something that no one can foresee or avoid, and both speakers have our sympathy. It is far more trouble talking to an audience that has fought its way through a driving rain than one that has come amid pleasanter circumstances. Mr. Selterian occupied the chair on both occasions.

Mr. D. R. Smith, Secretary of the Glasgow Psychic Investigation Centre, will to-day (November 14) lecture to the local N.S.S. Branch on "The Romance of Psychic Science." We presume that "Romance" is not writ sarcastic.

We are asked to announce that a "Social" will be held by the West Ham Branch, on Saturday evening (November 13) at the Earlham Hall, Forest Gate, E. There will be songs, dances, music, and refreshments. The meeting is open to all Freethinkers and their friends, and admission is free. The function commences at 7 o'clock.

From the United States we get a copy of *The Neglected Book, or the Bible Unveiled* (Truthseeker Company), by our old friend, Mr. Mangasarian. This is a volume of 270 pages, well bound and well printed, and is a very painstaking, thorough, and careful examination of the value and teachings of the Old and New Testaments. The book is thorough without being extravagant, it has all the grace with which Mr. Mangasarian's writings have made us familiar, and we strongly commend it to all who wish to read a work dealing with this subject. We do not know what is the published price of the book, but we should say about 6s. or 7s. 6d. in English money. At any rate those who would like a copy can order through the Pioneer Press.

Our chief fault with *Whence, Whither, and Why?* by Mr. Robert Arch (Watts & Co., 3s. 6d.), is that there is not enough of it. Mr. Arch has endeavoured to cover, within the compass of just over one hundred pages, practically the whole sphere of philosophy. The consequence is that the amateur in philosophy will be likely to misunderstand Mr. Arch's rather condensed pages, while the more advanced student of such questions as are here discussed will wish that the author had spent more time, or more space, on some of the questions with which he deals. We feel that we could, for instance, have a quite friendly quarrel with Mr. Arch on the questions of Causation and Reality, but then, again, we feel that if we had a quarrel with him, and this led to greater elaboration, we should find ourselves in substantial agreement with him in the end. So we content ourselves with commending the work to all who have a fancy for a book written by one who thinks both clearly and cogently, and who cannot fail to rouse the interest of his readers. If he does not satisfy them, that should be counted to him as a merit, rather than a defect.

North London Branch N.S.S.

Last Sunday evening, at St. Pancras Reform Club, Mr. F. A. Hornibrook addressed a crowded room on "Health and Exercise." Mr. Hornibrook in the course of the evening gave physical demonstrations of some of the most useful exercises for the abdominal muscles. These practical illustrations of his theories were very highly appreciated by all present. Mr. Hornibrook made his lecture amusing and entertaining, without in the least detracting from what was really valuable and important in his crusade against constipation and other evils of our so-called civilization. In his opinion the elimination from the body of its waste products is even more important than any building-up of muscle. Besides quoting from Dr. Alfred Jordan, Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane, and other up-to-date authorities supporting his views, Mr. Hornibrook paid a high tribute to Colonel R. G. Ingersoll, who, so long ago as 1888, addressed the Manhattan Club in New York in terms which the lecturer regarded as expressing enlightened and pioneer views worthy of the attention of present-day Freethinkers. The lecture was followed throughout with close attention, and all who spoke in the discussion expressed their thanks for and appreciation of one of our most valuable lectures this season. Next Sunday (November 14) we hope to hear Mr. Cutner on the subject of "Communism," which Mr. Cutner will oppose.—G. B.

The Making of the Gospels.

VI.

(Continued from page 694.)

THE FASTING AND TEMPTATION.

HAVING represented Jesus Christ as filled with the spirit of God at his baptism, the Gospel-maker next made his Lord exhibit proofs of the possession of that spirit. It was recorded in the Hebrew scriptures that Moses and Elijah went without food for forty days when under the influence of that potent spirit (Exod. xxxiv. 28; 1 Kings xix. 8). Jesus was therefore stated to have fasted for exactly the same period. The same two prophets were also represented, on another occasion, as appearing to Jesus in the flesh on a mountain (Matt. xvii. 3), after which the face of the Saviour was described as shining like the sun, as was related of Moses upon coming down from Mount Horeb (Exod. xxxiv. 30).

The statement in 1 Chron. xxi. 1, in which Satan is recorded to have tempted David, suggested a temptation of Jesus by the same imaginary personage. This, in the primitive Gospel, was limited to a brief statement of the alleged fact (Mark i. 13); but, later on, the first account was elaborated, the number and nature of the temptations were specified, and texts of scripture were put in the mouths of Jesus and the tempter (Matt. iv.; Luke iv.). In concocting the detailed Gospel story the pious evangelist had his eye upon the writings of Ezekiel, in which it was related that "the spirit took" the prophet "up" into the inner court of the temple (xliii. 5; viii. 3; xi. 1), and that he was set by God (in a vision) on a "very high mountain" (xl. 2). Following this Old Testament narrative, it was recorded of Jesus that he was "led up of the Spirit into the wilderness," that Satan "set him on a wing of the temple," and that the tempter "took him unto an exceeding high mountain" (Matt. iv. 1, 5, 8).

THE SON OF MAN.

In the writings attributed to Ezekiel, Daniel, and Enoch, the Gospel-maker had seen and noted the meaningless title "son of man." In the first of these the writer, in describing his visions, almost invariably spoke of himself as "the son of man." Naturally, therefore, Jesus was represented as doing the same. In the other two books, however, the person so named was an adopted son of God, to whom was to be given power, glory, and the office of judge at the last great day. It was written in the Book of Enoch (lxi., lxviii.) that "from the beginning the Son of man existed in secret, whom the Most High preserved in the presence of his power, and revealed to the elect," and that "He sat upon the throne of his glory, and the principal part of the judgment was assigned to him, the Son of man." In accordance with this nonsense Jesus was said to have existed "in the beginning with God" (John i. 2), and was represented as saying of himself:—

When the Son of Man shall come in his glory..... then shall he sit on the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations, etc. (Matt. xxv. 31).

It was also written in the Book of Daniel:—

And before there came with the clouds of heaven one like the Son of Man.....And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom (vii. 13).

Jesus being identified as this "Son of man," it was said of him: "And they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and

great glory," etc. (Matt. xxiv. 30), and he was represented as going about proclaiming that his kingdom—"the kingdom of heaven"—was "at hand."

Furthermore, the author of the Fourth Gospel indirectly indicates the source of the appellation bestowed on Jesus; for he represents that individual as saying that God "gave him authority to execute judgment *because he is the Son of man*" (v. 27). If it be asked, Why should Jesus, *because he was "the Son of man,"* have "authority to execute judgment"? the answer is that in the works of fiction ascribed to Daniel and Enoch such authority is given to one called "the Son of man." We know, further, that the early Christians were well acquainted with the Book of Enoch, and believed it to be an inspired prophetic writing. It is even quoted as such by one of the New Testament writers (Jude 14-15), who actually believed it to have been written by the mythical Enoch named in Gen. v. 21-24.

JESUS A SHEPHERD.

Following the language of the old Hebrew prophets, the Jewish people were spoken of as sheep, and Jesus as their shepherd.

OLD TESTAMENT.—And they were *scattered* because there was no shepherd. Therefore they go their way like sheep, they are *afflicted* because there is no shepherd (Ezek. xxxiv. 5; Zech. x. 2).

THE GOSPELS.—But when he saw the multitude, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were *distressed* and *scattered*, as sheep not having a shepherd (Matt. ix. 36; Mark vi. 34).

The author of the Fourth Gospel goes a step further, and makes Jesus proclaim himself "the good shepherd" who "giveth his life for the sheep"—language unknown to the three Synoptists.

THE WORKING OF MIRACLES.

A well-known passage in the Book of Isaiah, which the Gospel-maker twisted into a prediction relating to Christ, was a most important factor in the making of Gospel history. This passage, distorted in the same way, is cited by Justin Martyr, who says (1 Apol. 48):—

And that it was predicted that our Christ should heal all diseases and raise the dead, hear what was said. These are the words: "At his coming the lame shall leap as a hart, and the tongue of the stammerer shall be clear speaking; the blind shall see, and the lepers shall be cleansed; and the dead shall rise and walk about." And that he did those things you can learn from the Acts of Pontius Pilate.

The words in this quotation predicting the raising of the dead are a Christian addition to the text; they are found neither in the Hebrew nor the Septuagint. It may also be noted that the apocryphal writing named by Justin as an historical record of facts (*i. e.*, the *Acts of Pilate*) is the first Christian book of the nature of a Gospel that we find mentioned by name.

The passage in Isaiah misquoted by Justin (xxxv. 5-6) had, of course, no reference to miraculous works of healing. The language is simply figurative, and describes the joy and alacrity with which "the ransomed of the Lord" were to return from captivity in Babylon. The Gospel-maker gave a literal interpretation to the passage, and so Jesus was represented as going about the country curing all he met who were lame, blind, dumb, or leprous, and in three instances raising the dead. Moreover, he was also represented as working various other miracles of healing not named in the passage—fever, palsy, issue of blood, etc.—and as miraculously feeding 5,000 men, turning water into wine, stilling a tempest, walking on the sea, and causing a fig-tree to wither

away. That the Gospel-maker had his eye on the passage in Isaiah is proved by the fact that he represents Jesus as appealing to the miracles therein named in proof of his being the wonder-worker supposed to be predicted in it (Matt. xi. 4-6).

Most of the stories of miracles ascribed to the Christian Saviour were made up haphazard just as the pious inventors happened to think of them. In some instances, however, the acts of some of the Old Testament heroes suggested the nature of the miracle. The great prophet Elijah, according to those scriptures, restored to life a certain widow's son (1 Kings xvii. 23); Jesus was represented as also raising a widow's son (Luke vii. 11). A miracle recorded of the prophet Elisha was likewise suggestive. This prophet, according to the ancient fiction, fed a hundred men with twenty barley loaves, and, after they had eaten their fill, had some bread remaining (2 Kings iv. 42-44). Upon this model the Gospel-maker constructed a more astonishing miracle for his Jesus, whom he represented as feeding five thousand people with only five barley loaves, and having twelve baskets of fragments left. In the miracle wrought by Elisha, the prophet said to his servant, "Give unto the people that they may eat"; upon which the servant replied, "What should I set this before a hundred men?" In the Gospel narrative, Jesus is made to say to his disciples, "Give ye them to eat," and his disciples answer, "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?" (Mark vi. 37). In each case the miracle-worker commands his servant or disciples to do something which appeared impossible; in each case the impossibility of doing it is pointed out to him; in each case fragments of the barley loaves are left.

A declaration placed in the mouths of Pharaoh's magicians representing the means by which Moses performed the miracles attributed to him—the plagues of Egypt—suggested a similar declaration on the part of Jesus. That much glorified individual was consequently also made to state the source of his miraculous power.

Exod. viii. 19.—Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the *finger of God*.

Luke xi. 20.—But if I by the *finger of God* cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come unto you.

CASTING OUT EVIL SPIRITS.

Besides the miracles of healing mentioned, Jesus was further represented as casting out imaginary evil spirits or demons, who in that age were believed to take possession of the bodies of men. Amongst the Jews in the first century there existed an order of men called exorcists, who claimed the power, in certain cases, of expelling these evil spirits—a power in those days denied by none. Jesus himself is even made to admit the exorcisms to be genuine.

If I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore shall *they* be your judges (Matt. xii. 27).

This statement is a proof that the Gospel-maker believed that demons really were expelled by professional exorcists; otherwise he would never have put such words in the mouth of his Saviour. In accordance with this belief, and that of the times, a number of imaginary cases were invented and narrated of Jesus expelling demons—one from a man in a synagogue at Capernaum; a legion from a man (or two men) in Gadara, the evil spirits being allowed to enter a herd of swine; an extremely violent one from a lad who was thrown down by the demon while being brought to Jesus; and numbers everywhere throughout the country.

ABRACADABRA.

John M. Robertson.

I REMEMBER with what surprise I one day discovered that F. J. Gould was well over sixty years of age. I had been reading his articles for long enough, and the buoyant outlook and freshness of his writing conveyed to my mind nought but exuberant youthfulness. He walked abroad with a jaunty air and his path was ever towards the Golden City, "pictured in the legends old," when by every rule and regulation he should have been in the chair by the fireside. J. M. Robertson is another of these youngsters. Measured by mental vigour and a capacity for doing original and fruitful work, he is in the heyday of his power; a very champion of the sceptical spirit, that which probes and tests every problem by the clear light of reason.

I first saw Robertson in the flesh on the platform of the Geographical Hall in Newcastle at a pro-Boer meeting, where he was anything but meek in the face of some vicious opposition. Then for three nights I sat in another hall in the same city and listened to him debating the question of Free Trade and Protection with Mr. Samuel Storey, the Radical member of Parliament for Sunderland. Storey was a wonderfully fine orator of the stately type, given to rounded periods, and with a knack of touching the feelings of his audience. But they served him but ill in the encounter. Storey, or some of his friends, had referred to J. M. R. as a carpet-bagger when the debate was being arranged, and that may have been responsible for the sting Robertson put into his onslaught. Not once, during the three nights of the debate, was the merciless attack on Storey's position slackened. Towards the close it was rather pitiful to see the efforts of Storey to retain his dignity under the hammering he was taking, and it is no wonder that a lot of sore feeling remained after the fight. The prestige of the Scot rose immensely on Tyneside after he had vanquished the Protectionist cock of the walk.

Robertson's works cover a variety of interests. Economics—he wrote a volume for the Social Science Series on the *Fallacy of Saving*, a subject that is only finding a right appreciation among economic thinkers now, after thirty years—Freethought all the time, politics, Shakespeare, and *belles lettres*. The whole constitute a formidable list of books, all of them packed with the Robertsonian depth of learning and with vigorous, if not always eloquent, writing, and reasoning that calls for constant alertness in the reader.

The more generally interesting of his work is contained in the essays written round the work of various thinkers. In *Essays towards a Critical Method* he seeks to lay down the principles of criticism and illustrates them with a very fine essay on Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*, and another on the *Art of Tennyson*. Another book on the critical method has an exceptionally fine estimate of Edgar Allan Poe, a neglected genius, and an essay on Clough, which serves as an excellent introduction to the work of the author of the *Bothie*. The same volume handles in a devastating way the work of "the poet of poets and purest of men," and is a much needed corrective to the vapourings of the "Master" worshippers.

The Rationalists have always been alive to the danger inherent in the militarist spirit. Some of the most doughty opponents of war are in the ranks of the militant Freethinkers, but none of them have exposed the fallacy of war better than John M. Robertson has done in *Patriotism and Empire*. His *Evolution of States*, an expanded edition of the earlier *Introduction to Politics*, is, in one respect, an indict-

ment of war, but not so directly argued as in *Patriotism and Empire*. Lord Oxford some time ago recommended the reading of the *Evolution of States*, presumably to politicians, but the average politician could only be made to read it by sheer force. He needs no introduction to his trade; a fluent tongue and invincible ignorance, together with a film star's ability to weep as the occasion demands, is all that is needed. Another of the books that should be read by the future statesmen is *The Saxon and the Celt*. It is an exhaustive study of the race question, packed with an astonishing array of facts and argued with all the masculine vigour of the author. Another book written during the war period, *The Germans*, is a fascinating summary of the question dealt with in the larger book and is quite free from strain set up by war feeling.

Shakespeare has always loomed large in Mr. Robertson's estimation. His ambition is to lay down the canon of the dramatist, and there is no reason, in either years or ability, why that should not be so. *The Baconian Heresy* is his Shakespearian magnum opus. It once and for all time disposes of the Baconian theory, although I don't think it establishes the Stratford Shakespeare as the author of the plays. *Did Shakespeare Write Titus Andronicus?* shows the author at his best. It has a bookish flavour and the case against the Shakespearian authorship is worked out with consummate skill. *Montaigne and Shakespeare* seeks to show that Shakespeare was indebted to the Frenchman for many of his phrases, if not ideas, and a hasty reading of it sets up the idea that Shakespeare was a champion phrase-maker with a knack of collecting the wit and wisdom of other men. In *Shakespeare and Chapman* there is an elaborate comparison of style, phraseology and method, the outcome of which is that the authorship of *The Lover's Complaint* is given to Chapman and that *All's Well that ends Well* is by other hands than Shakespeare's. And what will sound like flat blasphemy to the adorers of the Bard, is that Chapman had probably a much wider vocabulary than the immortal William. That is put forward, by the way, in answering Sir George Greenwood. He published an answer to *The Baconian Heresy* in a volume entitled *Is There a Shakespeare Problem?* It is a diverting pastime to check one by the other. Greenwood had the will, if not the power, to crush the author of *The Baconian Heresy* to powder, and, on the other hand, Robertson had not a scrap of respect for Greenwood's eminence in law or his classical education. Robertson argues that the actor who originally came from Stratford, wrote the plays; Greenwood, that he was a play-actor and nothing more; indeed, a bit of a thickhead who never at any time, according to the evidence, showed that he was capable of even appreciating the plays. There is something to be said for that view of the matter, and Greenwood lands more than one blow on Robertson. But in the argument on the knowledge of classical antiquity shown by the writer of the plays, and also on his use of legalisms, Greenwood is pushed against the wall so that he loses his temper, and we hear delightfully cattish things about Robertson's French and his use of archaic words. And innuendoes about Professor Dry-as-Dust. There is, of course, nothing in Robertson's writing to warrant that charge; he is always challenging the interest of his reader and no one answers to the old definition of sceptic as "persistent enquirer" as he does.

Robertson has done splendid work in the cause of Freethought. Two of his books, *The Jesus Problem* and *The Historical Jesus* are devoted to the question of the historicity of Jesus. J. M. R. is a pioneer in this matter. There are Freethinkers who still cling

to the actuality of Jesus; an eloquent testimony to the permanence of early impressions, but the weight of evidence and the ability with which it is presented, seems to me decisive. The Gospel story, according to J. M. R., is not a record of actual fact, but a transcription of the action of a mystery play. The main features of the Christ belief itself are paralleled in the case of scores of saviour gods. Jesus Christ is one of a mob; as common in the annals of primitive religion as blackberries are in an English hedgerow in October. *Pagan Christs* goes over the whole ground and is a permanent addition to anthropological knowledge. *Christianity and Mythology* is the weightiest contribution to Freethought I know of. In *A Short History of Christianity* Mr. Robertson concisely presents the sorry story of the Christian superstition and a *Short History of Freethought* is a record of the glorious achievement of the sceptical spirit.

His smaller books are packed with mental provender. Seventy years seem all too short for any one man to gather in the mass of knowledge concerning the Elizabethan writings that is contained in *Elizabethan Literature*. *The Life Pilgrimage of Moncure D. Conway* is a sympathetic account of one of the finest Freethinkers of the nineteenth century. In *The Dynamics of Religion* there is a spirited vindication of Anthony Collins, the seventeenth century Deist, as against Bishop Bentley. The bishop was a Christian evidence lecturer, who was insufferable in his parade of classical learning. He was taken at his own valuation by some modern Rationalists until the bubble was pricked in Mr. Robertson's book. *Explorations* has a shattering exposure of the Tolstoyan teaching and an essay that throws a flood of light on the bewildering drama of the French Revolution.

Space does not permit a notice of all his other writings. He is encyclopædical in his knowledge, and he does all things well. Personally I have a pleasant recollection of him going out of his way to instruct me, a total stranger, on an obscure point in Mithraic doctrine and for the loan of a book to still further supplement what knowledge of the subject I had.

He will attain the age of seventy years on November 14. The wish that he will retain his mental and bodily vigour for many more years will surely be echoed by all who care for that freedom of thought and expression, of which he is so distinguished an advocate.

H. B. DODDS.

The Bookshop.

What hinders one being merry, while telling the truth.
—Horace.

THERE was a smell of damp paper in the low-roofed shop. The boards of the floor were old, and the nail-heads shone somewhat sickly in their reflection from the gaslight. The blue flame was bubbling through a broken mantle, and daring summer flies had paid the penalty of their bravery in seeking the light. They lay in a disordered heap of crumpled wings and broken legs in the globe that had never been disturbed with a duster. Dull shadows hung round the titles of the books on the shelves near the roof; a gap, showing lath and beams seemed to utter a silent protest against the march of time—time that welcomes with glee a baby's face and, after wrinkling it with smiles, creasing it with tears, wearing it with worry, sans teeth, sans eyes, hands it over for committal to the kindly bosom of earth.

Rain was falling from a leaden October sky, and the cold drops had tricked out a pattern on the dirty window. They had, as it were, been attracted to the shop, stayed their flight on the glass, and the appearance seemed to suggest that a giant had stood before the old bookshop, looked at the titles of the books, and forthwith burst into tears. Who shall solve the mystery of

tears? When the heart is merry, the look-out windows on the top storey of the two-legged caravan are suddenly blurred. When the heart is sad it is the same. The washing of the windows is said to be good for the caravan that must be hawked about wherever one goes; by some, however, this opinion is considered impertinent. But, as six volumes have been written explaining why smoke rises in the air, it is no cause for wonder that there should be a difference of opinion about tears.

Rows and rows of books filled up the old shop windows. Covers, like old red wine, covers like the colour of grass that grows under trees in woods, covers the colour of a blue-enamelled jug thrown on a dustheap, and covers, the colour of mud and milk. What had made the giant—a woman? Could it have been the titles? Impossible. After all, they were only an orderly arrangement of letters from the alphabet. *At the Back of Beyond* stood out boldly defiant between two thick tomes entitled *The Silence Unveiled* and *In Tune with the Old Banjo*. Further to the left, in smug satisfaction, was *The Untrodden Path, or the How and the Why of Wherefore*, by Sideth, Jaka Jarakandananka. A little overbearing was one insolent fellow—fat, noisy, and asking for recognition, *Across the Invisible Fields*. This was to be read, not for what was to be found between the lines, but for what was to be found between the letters. Indeed, the author of the book had not written it. In a niche, and used as a support for a shelf was a rather lonely volume, *The Colour of Sub-conscious Influences on Celestial Squash*. This was a learned discourse on nothing in particular, but diagrams enclosed would be useful to enable the student to grasp the significance of the centre of gravity in a falling piece of bread and butter and jam.

The Tree of Knowledge, in six easy lessons, and the *Secrets of Success* were somewhat tightly wedged in with *The Uplands and Marshlands of the Mind*, and, a little out of place, or, perhaps the cynic would say the only book in place, was *Constipation; its Cause and Cure*.

And now, reader, you will know why the giant in passing had collapsed. You will remember, how, when you were a child, you tore up the concertina to see where the noise came from. With what wonder did you, as a child, see the white rabbit, with twitching whiskers and pink ears, come out of the silk hat. You will also remember how, in parlour games, one of the penalties was to bite a yard off the poker, and it could be done. You will also remember, I am sure, how nicely darkness fitted in with tiredness and the end of the day.

But if you should ever want *The Back of Behind* or the *Inside of the Top*, or *The Green Shutters of the Cerebellum*, a *Gnostic Treatise on Metropolitan Hydrostatics*, you can get them from the shop I have described; the proprietor only sells books by which you will be blinded and stunned with words, bewildered and flummoxed with directions that cannot even connect the words itch with scratch, or give instructions on the nearest road to the mouth with food. All the mysteries of the seven planets and one for his knob, or any to come, glad of it, are unrolled, in books, in the shop where the blue flame of the light bubbles through the broken mantle; coal is scarce and dear, but we have plenty of aeroplanes, he said, beaming on the customer, whose fingers were frostbitten.

And if you do not believe this explanation of the wet weather, the tears on the window of the bookshop, and man's capacity for being flouted and fooled, it is none of my business.

WILLIAM REPTON.

Correspondence.

THE ENDOWMENT TRUST.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I am sure all of us very heartily wish to see the full sum of the Endowment Fund subscribed in the shortest possible time. On this score I hope I may be excused for returning to the subject again. There is £2,300 to raise within thirteen months. For the Freethought movement achieving this, means that its every well-wisher must make a supremely determined effort. Very few of us, unfortunately, can give a lot at a time,

but everyone of us can give at least the price of an extra *Freethinker* every week. How many are prepared to do so? Would it not be a good plan to find out?

My suggestion in this connection is that all those to whom the *Freethinker* is posted direct be asked to fill in a form stating how much they will promise to pay between now and the end of November, 1927. Better still, have such a form inserted in the *Freethinker* for a month or two. In two or three months it would thus be easy to calculate with accuracy and certainty whether the much-longed-for end was within our practicable reach.

DAVID MACCONNELL.

"LADY'S DRESS IN ANCIENT JEWRY."—A CORRECTION.

SIR,—Some years ago an old volume (6 inches by $3\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$) containing a Latin version of the two Testaments came accidentally into my possession. As the print was very small, and much faded, and as my sight is far from good, I put the book away after a cursory glance, forgetting all about it except the name "Beza," which had caught my eye. When I came to write the above article, and was hesitating over the sense of a certain word, I recollected "Beza," and looked up the passage without referring to the title-page. On making the reference to-day, to oblige a correspondent, I find that the Old Testament version is that of Immanuel Tremellius and Francis Junius, whilst the New Testament version is that of Theodore Beza. Curiously enough the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1797) says of Junius what I said of Beza—that he was a Frenchman of noble birth. The Vulgate version, published by Dr. Eberhard Nestle (Noverm Testamentum Græce et Latine, Stuttgart, 1912), is the one that I use, which explains why I had not troubled to consult Beza's version.

C. CLAYTON DOVE.

VOLNEY—MACAULAY.

SIR,—Macaulay's New Zealander whom he pictures as sitting on a ruined pier of London Bridge sketching the ruins of St. Paul's is endlessly quoted. Is it not possible he got the idea from Volney's *Ruins of Empire*? The *Ruins* was published nine years before Macaulay's birth in 1800. Macaulay, we know, had a marvellous memory and was an omnivorous reader, and it is unlikely such a book would have escaped him. Volney wrote:—

.....Who knows but that hereafter some traveller like myself will sit down on the banks of the Seine, the Thames, or the Zuyder Sea.....Who knows but he will sit down solitary amid silent ruins, and weep a people inurned, and their greatness changed into an empty name?

J. W. WOOD.

Obituary.

On the 27th ult., at Cowpen Cemetery, Blyth, Northumberland, a Secular Burial Service was read by Mr. J. G. Bartram, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, at the graveside of Mr. Thomas Dixon, senior, of 10 Grey Street, Blyth. Death had occurred suddenly on Sunday, 24th ult., while deceased, who was in his seventy-fifth year, was visiting a niece at Ashington. Mr. Dixon was of a free and independent spirit, had been an ardent Freethinker since early manhood, and was well known amongst the local Freethinkers of his day, of whom he is perhaps the last survivor. In association with the late Martin Weatherburn, of Cramlington, the late Mr. Wharrier, of Bedlington, and others, he took an active part in organizing lectures and debates in the district by the leading advocates of those days, his activities continuing down to the earlier days of Mr. Chapman Cohen, the present Editor of the *Freethinker*, for whose keen intellect, fearless advocacy and ready and devastating repartee he had the keenest admiration. On one of Charles Bradlaugh's lecturing visits to the North, during the seventies, when feeling ran very high, deceased, with a number of other young men, was proud to form a voluntary bodyguard to protect their adored leader against threatened violence. Happily their services were not called upon. Deceased leaves a widow and three sons, one of whom has been proud to follow in his father's footsteps in his interest in, and support of, the Freethought cause.

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.

ESSEX HALL (Essex Street, Strand, W.C.): Friday, November 19, at 8, Mr. Joseph McCabe, "The Triumph of Evolution." Tickets 1s. each, apply, enclosing stamped addressed envelope, to Mr. F. L. Monnaie, 87 Ashbourne Avenue, Mitcham, Surrey.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N.W., off Kentish Town Road and three minutes from Camden Town Tube Station): 7.30, Mr. H. Cutner, "The Clap-trap of Communism."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (30 Brixton Road, S.W., near Kennington Oval): 7, Discussion on "Science and Society." Opened by Mr. F. P. Corrigan.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): 7, Mrs. M. Seaton-Tiedeman, "Marriage or the Free Union?"

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., and Professor Hu-Shih (Pekin University), "China and the West."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (101 Tottenham Court Road): 7.30, Mr. E. C. Saphin, "The Passover" (Lantern Lecture). Thursday, November 18, at the above Hall, Mr. A. Hyatt, a Lecture.

UNITY HALL (Upper Street, Islington): Tuesday, November 16, at 8, Debate—"That the Christian Religion is necessary for the Progress of Mankind." Affirmative, Mr. Victor Fox, B.A.; Negative, Mr. George Whitehead.

OUTDOOR.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Mr. F. P. Corrigan, a Lecture.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Hyde Park): 11.30 and 3 p.m. Speakers—Messrs. Botting, Hart, and Peacock.

COUNTRY.—INDOOR.

GLASGOW (Bakunin House, 13 Burnbank Gardens, Glasgow): Thursday, November 18, at 8, Mr. Guy A. Aldred, "The Secularists." Questions and discussion cordially invited.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S. (No. 2 Room, City Hall, "A" Door, Albion Street): 6.30, Mr. David R. S. Smith, "The Romance of Psychic Science." Questions and discussion cordially invited. Silver Collection.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Professor R. Peers, M.A., "Effort and Enjoyment."

WESTON-SUPER-MARE BRANCH N.S.S. (Assembly Rooms, High Street): Mr. Chapman Cohen, 3, "The Parce of Faith"; 7, "What the World owes to Unbelief." Questions and discussion cordially invited.

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Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings, and a subsequent yearly subscription of five shillings.

The liability of members is limited to £1, in case the Society should ever be wound up.

All who join the Society participate in the control of its business and the trusteeship of its resources. It is expressly provided in the Articles of Association that no member, as such, shall derive any sort of profit from the Society, either by way of dividend, bonus, or interest.

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, one-third of whom retire (by ballot), each year, but are eligible for re-election.

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

A Form of Bequest.—The following is a sufficient form of bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—

I give and bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited, the sum of £— free from Legacy Duty, and I direct that a receipt signed by two members of the Board of the said Society and the Secretary thereof shall be a good discharge to my Executors for the said Legacy.

It is advisable, but not necessary, that the Secretary should be formally notified of such bequests, as wills sometimes get lost or mislaid. A form of membership, with full particulars, will be sent on application to the Secretary, Miss E. M. VANCE, 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

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