

The
FREETHINKER

FOUNDED • 1881

EDITED BY CHAPMAN COHEN • EDITOR 1881-1915 G.W. FOOTE

Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper

VOL. XLVII.—No. 17.

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 1927.

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>Faith and Folly.—The Editor</i> - - - - -	257
<i>"Elmer Gantry."—J. T. Lloyd</i> - - - - -	259
<i>"Old Fritz" and Voltaire.—Mimnermus</i> - - - - -	260
<i>Life's Little Incidents.—Joseph Bryce</i> - - - - -	261
<i>Fundamentalism in Excelsis.—W. Mann</i> - - - - -	266
<i>Strange Tales.—Alan Tyndal</i> - - - - -	267
<i>In Quest of the Beautiful.—Tristram</i> - - - - -	268
<i>Evergreen.—W. Thompson</i> - - - - -	269

*Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums,
Letters to the Editor, etc.*

Views and Opinions.

Faith and Folly.

As a mere youth my dominant impressions concerning Christianity were, on the one hand, its intellectual puerility, and on the other, the low moral level it touched. Whatever the years may have done to me in other directions they have only confirmed me here. On the intellectual side, no genuine defence of Christianity is possible. Christian legends are most interesting and attractive things, as are most primitive myths, but from the point of view of their being accepted as statements of actual fact, they are material only for studies in mental pathology. In morals, again, Christianity appears to have achieved the feat of giving the lower all the apparent value of the higher with a success of which few religions can boast. It makes the most effective appeal to selfishness under cover of self-sacrifice. It began its career without that devotion to country which is never without its better side, and it was absolutely destitute of an enthusiasm for humanity. When Christians talked of saving the world, they did so as a condition of benefiting themselves. Souls were saved as a miser invests his gold, only for it to bring him a handsome return by and by; or as a fanatical servant of a king annexes new lands, so that he may stand high in the estimation of his master. And beginning with St. Paul, who laid down the rule that if there be no future life, then it doesn't matter what the devil a man does, Christians have been fairly consistent—with a few splendid exceptions—in arguing that if there is no reward in another life for good deeds done in this, then the reason for performing good actions no longer exists. I have never wondered why, in Christianity's trailing cloud of glory there were so many "saved" blackguards. What I have wondered at is that so many blackguards have been able to resist its appeal.

A Parson at Sea.

Now I venture to find confirmation for this view of mine, in an article, published recently in the *Sunday Chronicle*, apropos of Easter. The article is written by the Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott, and it professes to deal with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I say professes to deal with it, because, save so far as he mentions the resurrection, he never comes within speaking distance of the reasons for not regarding it as a sober statement of historic fact. Mr. Morse-Boycott evidently takes it as such, and one cannot forbear congratulating him on his mental digestion. He believes it, among other reasons because "if the resurrection is a myth, then Christianity is a miracle." But if the resurrection did occur, then Christianity is a miracle already, and it is obviously no inducement to the unbeliever to reject it on one ground,, only to accept it on the same ground a moment after. The resurrection is of the very essence of Christianity; if it occurred, then Christianity is a miracle. So there is really only one miracle where Mr. Boycott appears to see two. Besides, asks Mr. Boycott, how, if it is a lie, has it endured for nigh two thousand years? It may surprise Mr. Boycott to learn—for he does not appear to have heard about it—that lies survive for a very considerable period. And if they are well subsidized they may exist quite comfortably. The belief in intercourse with the devil has existed much longer than has Christianity. Mohammedanism, which Mr. Boycott will not accept as the truth, looks like living for more than 2,000 years, and it may well be that in the end Jahveh and Allah will go over the edge together. It is quite pathetic to find a Christian minister believing that a lie cannot perpetuate itself. It looks as though he doubts the reality of the Christian ministry.

* * *

Religion and Crime.

Believe in the resurrection we must, according to Mr. Boycott, and this is the way he tries to drive us to it. He reminds us that some years ago a book was written that everybody read and "reacted accordingly." This was a book called *When it was Dark*, and it depicted what the world would be like without a belief in the truth of the resurrection.

The world was robbed of its empty tomb, and entered into an empty faith. Morality collapsed on a world-wide scale. Women were molested openly; men killed themselves. Suddenly the light of the world went out, and there was a great darkness which none could penetrate.

This is not merely the picture drawn by the man who was anxious to publish a book that would sell, and knew that if he played that tune he would get the clergy to advertise it, it is evidently Mr. Boy-

cott's opinion. If the resurrection is not accepted as true, then women will be molested openly, all sorts of indecency and brutality will be perpetrated. There is no resurrection from the dead, so what does it matter. I suppose it is useless to remind Mr. Boycott that there was a passable morality in the world before the resurrection of Jesus Christ was heard of; or that there are still a fair number of people in the world who do not believe in the empty tomb, leaving that to those who have empty heads, and who yet manage to get through life with a tolerable degree of decency. And people do kill themselves; women are molested; all sorts of sad things happen, committed by people who have not the slightest doubt as to the truth of the resurrection. If Mr. Boycott doubts this, let him go to some prison or other. Any prison will do, and he will find that nearly the whole of the population there believes in the resurrection quite as firmly as Mr. Boycott does himself, and also that every wife-beater and burglar there would give a fervent adherence to the statement that if the resurrection were not true, then no woman and no man's property would be safe. Somehow or the other things should be different *before* it is dark. It seems rather peculiar that prisons should be mostly needed in this country for those who have quite a strong faith in the resurrection of their Lord.

* * *

The Christian Mind.

Mr. Boycott's article is a revelation, but not quite of the kind he thinks it is. There is only one way of judging what a man will do if he is placed in an unusual situation, and that is by picturing yourself as being that man, and then judging how you would act. From that point of view Mr. Boycott's forecast is quite illuminating. He is plumbing the depths of the Christian mind, and the result is the conclusion that if there is no resurrection from the dead then, so far as the disillusioned Christian is concerned, no woman would be safe, morality and decency would be at an end. Non-Christians have no such fears, and may safely be trusted to behave themselves, even though they believe that the particular vegetation God figuring in the Christian myth did not actually rise from the dead. It is the Christian Mr. Boycott is fearful about; the Christian is the only person he appears to know with any intimacy, and he is afraid that if this poor thing loses his faith in the resurrection, he will murder his mother, starve his wife, ill-treat his neighbour, and end by killing himself—which, on consideration, is only to be complained of because he may do it at the end instead of at the beginning. I presume that Mr. Boycott has a Church somewhere or the other, and that week by week he is leading the minds of his congregation, young and old, along certain roads—that is if they are unfortunate enough to be in the habit of paying attention to what he says. And it is simply horrible to think of these people growing up in the belief that the love of man for woman, of parent for child, of friend for friend, the sense of duty, the feeling of attachment to a people or to an ideal, the love of truth or the admiration of the beautiful, have no foundation in the nature of things or in human nature, but will at once disappear if they give up believing in the resurrection of a Jewish peasant, who may or may not have lived some two thousand years ago. I would suggest that Mr. Boycott writes a sequel to that book of Mr. Guy Thorne's, and instead of taking for a title *When it was Dark*, let him take "When it is Dark," and his own church and his own conception of things should be enough to fill the picture.

Dying Gods.

There is a clear consensus of belief among the early Christians, says Mr. Boycott, that Christ had risen and had been seen. That is not quite the case, for there were theories even then that he had never been crucified, so could never have risen. But let it go. Does Mr. Boycott really imagine that people who believed this particular story wanted anything in the nature of evidence to make them believe, or that they examined the stories of the behaviour of a god with even the half-educated curiosity of a member of the Society for Psychical Research? Why should they ask for evidence? There had been scores of vegetation gods, every one of which was believed to have been slain about the same time of the year as Jesus, and raised from the grave again. The death and resurrection of a god never bothered people then. They were very common things. A God who could not get killed and raised again would be as little thought of as would a spiritual medium to-day without his Eastern guide. I can assure Mr. Boycott that at one stage of mental development people ask for no evidence whatever to believe in the miraculous. If they did the miraculous would never gain credence at all. People never asked for evidence to believe that old women went flying through the air on broomsticks. They never asked for evidence for the miracles of the saints. This kind of thing is believed in before it is uttered. Even Mr. Boycott does not ask for evidence that the world will sink into bestiality if it does not believe in the resurrection. He believes it, because his mind is attuned to such a belief. Other gods were slain, and were resurrected, Jesus Christ merely followed the fashion. The only distinction between then and now, is that nowadays when a God is once dead he stops dead. There is no resurrection of deities nowadays. It is very hard work to keep them alive. No believer can afford to run the risk of letting him die, even experimentally.

* * *

Is it for Christ's Sake?

Just one other word before we part with Mr. Desmond Morse-Boycott. He has a rather fine talent for inventing facts. Thus, if you do not believe in the resurrection, then "you cannot account for the moral revolution which evidently took place in their lives (the apostles) between Good Friday and Whit-Monday." But what was the revolution in their lives? Only Mr. Boycott appears to know about it. Or again, he thinks of the "empty tomb, with the grave clothes sunken down by the weight of the spices as if a body had passed from them; and on a little shelf the head-cloth unweighted by spices, and still retaining its shape." How does Mr. Boycott know all this? There is nothing about it in the New Testament. It simply says the grave was empty. It does not say that Jesus left the tomb naked, it says simply that he had gone. Besides, the first person that Jesus is said to have met was a lady, and when she saw him it was *not* dark. In the name of decency, of Christian decency even, I cannot pass this imaginative flight of Mr. Boycott's without protest.

It is really very funny, unconsciously funny. But, stay! I recall the fact that it was in these columns that Mr. Desmond Morse-Boycott explained that it was a very jolly thing to play the fool for Christ's sake. So I wonder—?

CHAPMAN COHEN.

War, superstition, mental inertia, and the worship of the past are the principal evils that keep the race back.
—*The Fighting Rationalist*. By W. Margrie.

"Elmer Gantry."

SUCH is the title of the latest novel by Mr. Sinclair Lewis (Jonathan Cape, 7s. 6d.), and it is also the name of the principal character in the story. The author is a thorough-going Freethinker, a deeply convinced Atheist, after the order of Bradlaugh or Ingersoll. Mr. William Allen White, in reviewing the present work, says: "Sinclair Lewis stood in the pulpit of a Kansas City Church last spring and defied God to strike him dead." That is an old tale told of almost every prominent Atheist in different countries and ages. Were it true, it would only show how perfectly safe it is so to challenge the Supreme Being. However, if Sinclair Lewis *did* defy God it should be borne in mind that the occasion was exceptional. He was denouncing those Fundamentalist preachers who proudly declared that Luther Burbank had been struck dead because of his Agnostic views, ignoring the fact that he was old and the victim of high blood-pressure. Now the Rev. Dr. Elmer Gantry was a Fundamentalist Baptist minister who won enormous prosperity and fame, though he was one of the most unscrupulous scoundrels that ever trod the earth. We are introduced to him in the following words:—

Elmer Gantry was drunk. He was eloquently drunk, lovingly and pugnaciously drunk. He leaned against the bar of the Old Home Sample Room, the most gilded and urbane saloon in Cato, Missouri, and requested the bartender to join him in "The Good Old Summer Time," the waltz of the day.

He was a student at Terwillinger College, "best known to his class-mates as Hell-cat," and "in the autumn of 1902, had been football captain," leading the best team the College had known for ten years. For which profession he was preparing he had not decided, but took it for granted that "he would pick up learnings of cash-value to a lawyer or doctor or insurance man." As a matter of fact, with all the force of his simple and valiant nature, "he detested piety and admired drunkenness and profanity." Erelong, as the result of attendance at certain religious gatherings, he became interested in religion, and underwent what is called conversion. It had always been his mother's fondest wish that he should enter the Baptist ministry, and being now a Christian he cherished that ambition himself.

At this point he realized that a grave difficulty stood in his way. Although all his Christian friends were solemnly urging him to become a preacher, and although he possessed in super-abundance all the natural qualifications for success in the profession, yet he lacked the consciousness of a Divine Call to it, which he had been taught to regard as an essential condition of an authoritative ministry. Dr. Quarles, President of the Seminary, invited him to meet a few pious friends at his house, when they would "take the matter to the Lord in prayer." So one "kindly spring evening, with a breeze fresh in the branches of the sycamores," the devout brethren "took turns in telling God what he ought to do in the case of our so ardently and earnestly seeking brother." Then President Quarles said: "Now will you lift your voice in prayer, Brother Elmer? Just let yourself go." But Elmer failed to let himself go on this occasion, all he was able to say being, "O blessed Lord, help me to—help me to—" Suddenly he sprang to his feet and cried: "Say, I think the Spirit is beginning to work and maybe if I just went out and took a short walk and kinda prayed by myself, while you stayed here and prayed for me, it might help." The holy brethren reluctantly agreed,

and out he went, but not to pray. What Elmer craved for was not Divine guidance but drink; but where and how could he get it? While thus perplexed he met his former bosom friend, Jim Lefferts, a Freethinker, who said to him, "You look sick, Hell-cat; you need a drink." "By God, I do," he answered; and they both repaired to Jim's room, where a quart of first-rate corn whiskey awaited them. Elmer got hilariously drunk, and while in that happy condition his Divine Call to the ministry of the Gospel arrived. He was supremely delighted, and returned to the praying company exclaiming, "It's come." In due course he was licensed to preach and ordained to the full work of the ministry. He had a mellifluous and extraordinarily rich vocabulary, and the soundness of his Fundamentalist faith was indisputable, with the result that he gained great popularity as a preacher. One of his first sermons was on Love and Hatred, and strangely enough, what he said about love was largely taken from Ingersoll's great lecture on *Orthodoxy*. Referring to the second part of this sermon the novelist says:—

He explained that hatred was low. However, for the benefit of the leathery and zealous deacons down front, he permitted them to hate all Catholics, all persons who failed to believe in hell and immersion, and all rich mortgage-holders, wantoning in the betraying smiles of scarlet women, each of whom wore silk, and in her jewelled hand held a ruby glass of perfidious wine.

Elmer was now about twenty-five years of age. It was Eastertide, it had been arranged that he should take the services on Easter Sunday at the Flowerdale Baptist Church, Monarch. From Mizpah College he was to travel thither by train, on which his seat-mate was a little man with a red nose, who was evidently a heavy drinker, and with whom he was soon in conversation. Elmer wore black clothes, as preachers generally did, from which the little man suspected that he might be a preacher, and he well knew that there was a "preaching factory" close by, but Elmer assured him that the black suit was in mourning for one very dear to him, and in a moment he was sharing with infinite delight the little man's abundant supply of whisky, and when they arrived at Monarch they were both in a most merry mood. Instead of calling on the Baptist deacon, Elmer accompanied the little man to a hotel, where, in company with several other fellow-drinkers they kept on carousing all the afternoon and evening, and at ten o'clock on Easter morning Elmer found himself, "with a perfectly strange young woman in a perfectly strange flat." In consequence of his not visiting the deacon on Saturday, as expected, a telegram to that effect was sent to the Seminary, and another preacher went down in time to officiate in his place, who after the morning service, "not only went to the police and to the hospitals, but began a round of the hotels, restaurants, and bars. Thus it came to pass that while Elmer was merrily washing lobster down with California claret, stooping now and then to kiss the blonde beside him . . . that evening he was being observed from the café door by the Reverend Mr. Hudkins in the enjoyable rôle of avenging angel."

Naturally the Reverend Mr. Hudkins never felt happier than he did when he reported Elmer Gantry's downfall to the faculty committee of Mizpah Theological Seminary, and when Elmer called on the dean he was angrily informed that he was fired from Mizpah, but the dean added: "Of course you remain an ordained Baptist minister. But if I ever hear of you in any Baptist pulpit, I'll expose you." Well, by the help of the little man with the red nose,

within a week Elmer was appointed travelling salesman in the Pequot Farm Implement Company, in which capacity, with his wonderful gift of speech, he experienced an enormous success, but after two years he grew sick and tired of business and yearned to return to the pulpit. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Communion, and eventually became the pastor of a large city church. His popularity knew no bounds, his eloquence increased and matured, and his orthodoxy underwent no change. In public he praised and advocated righteousness, purity, sincerity, and truth, but in private he practised the most abominable vices. In the pulpit he denounced drunkenness and drink in the most scathing terms at his command, but in private, or in the company he loved best, he could drink like a fish. In his city church "he found a Young Married Set, who were nearly as cheerful as though they did not belong to a church." Among them he drank, smoked, danced, and without shocking them, said "Damn."

Worse things still are recorded concerning the Rev. Dr. Gantry in this book, and the question that faces us is, can the story be true, or did such a consummate hypocrite ever live? Mr. Ellis Roberts, reviewer of books in the *Guardian, the Church Newspaper*, criticized *Elmer Gantry* most severely, describing it as "obviously a caricature," and claiming that he "knows more of human nature, of normal human motives, and much more of what religion means to men who try to practise it and fail," than Mr. Lewis does, thus posing as a superior person. The *Christian World* expresses practically the same estimate of the book, charging Mr. Lewis "with having allowed his temper to spoil his logic and his hatred to poison his art," while admitting "that he works with laborious and painstaking thoroughness, and spent months in collecting his material." "Watchman," of the *British Weekly*, wrote a much saner review and saw a subtle connection between *Elmer Gantry* and the *Scarlet Letter*, thus showing that "Watchman" is at once widely and deeply versed in literature. But the truest and fairest analysis of *Elmer Gantry* is that by "Greenjade" in the *Sunday Express* of March 27, which is as follows:—

Elmer Gantry is as great as *Babbalanza*. That is to say, it is the product of a great imaginative artist, whose creative power works at high pressure throughout the whole story, pitilessly, mercilessly, ruthlessly, and truthfully. The realism of the book is staggering. It takes a great slimy slab of American life and exposes it to a searchlight of satire that is thoroughly wholesome and healthy in its daring savagery.

We agree. The Rev. Dr. Gantry is a purely fictitious creation, but he is a type of which many illustrations are to be met with in modern religious life. Revivalism is often but a commercialized method of producing conversion. Elmer Gantry was a firm and enthusiastic believer in revivals, and it was as an emotional evangelist that he always worked, and he often dreamed of becoming a peripatetic revivalist, and such, indeed, he had been for a while when he acted as assistant to the woman evangelist, Sharon Falconer.

J. T. LLOYD.

Character develops in company and intellect in retirement.—*Goethe*.

The world I hate is the rule-of-thumb world.—*H. G. Wells*.

Irony and Pity are both of good counsel.—*Anatole France*.

"Old Fritz" and Voltaire.

"Not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light.
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly!
But westward, look, the land is bright."—*Clough*.

"The kind wise words that fall from years that fall
Hope thou not much, and fear thou not at all."
—*Swinburne*.

THE publication of a new translation of *The Letters of Voltaire and Frederick the Great*, by the house of Routledge, draws attention once more to two eighteenth-century figures, who are of real interest to twentieth-century readers. The interest is heightened by the circumstances that both Voltaire and Frederick are here exhibited in somewhat unfamiliar roles. The incomparable writer sighs for the triumphs of a diplomatic career, and the great soldier, forgetting his campaigns for a space, dabbles in literature. The book forms a delightful commentary on the vagaries of human nature, and lends human interest to two great men who were in no small danger of becoming legendary figures.

Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, was a man of sufficient importance to induce Thomas Carlyle to write his biography. And the irascible Sage of Chelsea was not as easily pleased as the young ladies who purchase picture postcards of matinée idols. Apart altogether from his kingly wrappings, "Old Fritz" was a notable man, and he deserved Carlyle's panegyric. Frederick would have lifted his eyebrows at the theological opinions of his unworthy descendant, William the Second, and thrown the Imperial sermons, so often reported by Reuter's young men, into the waste-paper basket. For Frederick was a Freethinker, and he had a liking for French ideals. William the Second weeded out of the German language, out of the bills of fare, and out of the military text books, all Gallic syllables, but "Old Fritz" spoke no more German than served him to order a sentry or instruct a servant. He talked French at table; he wrote French verses, which, in the innocence of his heart, he thought bore some resemblance to real poetry; he loved to have Voltaire and other witty and wicked French "intellectuals" at his supper parties. What must it have been to have been present at those festal nights at Frederick's palace, when the nimble wit of Voltaire challenged the choicest brains of Europe? It must have been a rich memory and an abiding delight, like those ever-memorable nights at the "Mermaid," when Ben Jonson exchanged quips and cranks with the smiling Will Shakespeare.

The ex-Kaiser was not only pious, but he subscribed heavily to religious institutions. Before the World-War, he was a patron of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and used to be held up as a model worthy of imitation, alongside other Royal persons. William, characteristically, had a hazy idea of history, even of his own country. Forgetful of the real character of his illustrious ancestor, the ex-Kaiser, in swearing in some raw recruits at Potsdam, told them, "only good Christians could be good soldiers." The chief German comic paper published immediately a saucy cartoon representing Satan fetching from heaven Leonides, Alexander, Cæsar, Hannibal, Napoleon, and Frederick, as he had been reminded that they had no right there. It was a palpable hit, and the audacious editor was laid by the heels and imprisoned for two months.

Unlike the ex-Kaiser, "Old Fritz" was very popular in England. Britons like a bonny fighter, and, artlessly regarded him as a champion of Protestantism. They paid him the greatest of all compliments, for they named public houses after him. At

one time there were almost as many hostleries named "The King of Prussia," as there were to the memory of Nelson and Wellington. There is no denying Frederick's qualities. "Bring it down lower," he called out on coming across a crowd reading a libellous poster on himself. He also told the Lutheran hymn-writers that they might sing what nonsense they liked. The old warrior, unlike the ex-Kaiser, was a real, and not a feather-bed soldier. Owing to his constant campaigning, his uniform was always shabby, and he was one of the worst dressed men in his army. A soldier on the heroic scale, he would have made a fine figure in the pages of Plutarch, and what warrior would wish greater praise. The Prussia of his day was a four-foot-by-six country, with a population smaller than that of modern London, and yet he pulled it triumphantly through the Seven Years' War, a single-handed fight against Europe. England, for a time, helped him with supplies, but afterwards backed out. Frederick played a bold game boldly. He carried poison-pills in case the worse came to the worst, for he had no mind to be dragged captive to a conqueror's chariot. He had other solaces, for he played the flute and wrote verses; and, once, when one of his armies seemed to be entangled in irreparable disaster, his faithful servant found him coolly writing a parody on "Ecclesiastes." Such a personality will always arouse a living interest, not a dumb and dull assent as is too customary with historic figures.

Voltaire was as supreme as a writer as Frederick was as a soldier. A master of words, he wrote always with wit and pleasantry which survive the winnowing-fan of time. The soundness of Voltaire's judgment was only equalled by his felicity of expression. Writing in the hide-bound eighteenth century, he accepted the view of man's savage origin. He derived the belief in ghosts from dreams, and discerned the magical nature of early religion. He anticipated many of the social and political problems of our time. A pioneer among pioneers, he stated the population question before Malthus, and he cleared the way for modern science. In the eighty volumes of his collected works, he proved his genius in so many branches of literature, from historical writing to tale-telling. So strong is his appeal to literary men, that Macaulay, one of the most omniverous of readers, and a most acute critic, selected Voltaire's works for his reading on a lengthy sea-voyage to India. Writing *Œdipus*, at seventeen, *Irene*, at eighty-three, Voltaire crowded between these two masterpieces the talents and accomplishments of half a dozen men. Carlyle well says, "He gave the death-stab to modern superstition." It was a most weighty service.

MIMNERMUS.

To an Imitator of Wordsworth's Sonnets.

Two voices!—H'm!—Occasionally one
Has heard the Afric lion loud in rage;
And then, at safe eloignement from his cage,
A poodle answer; and one laughs in fun.
Yes; but when poodle, noisy from conceit
That he can match the lion in his roar,
Keeps yap-yap-yapping (blast it!)—won't give o'er,
One puts a foot sharp to the poodle's seat.
Thus, Lamb, we feel when, week on week, we see
Your sonnets—written, one might think, to damn
The magazine that prints them. Prithce, pause!
These vapid imitations serve no cause,
Nor honour him you ape. Let Wordsworth be!
And, for your own fair name, cease bleating, Lamb!

H. BARBER.

Life's Little Incidents.

WHEN I contributed some "Reminiscences" to the *Freethinker* a short while ago, I sent, at the same time, some "Notes" of interest to Novacastrians, to a local newspaper. These dealt, among other things, with the early efforts of two young men and myself to establish a weekly half-holiday for the shop assistants in our neighbourhood. We carried the movement to a successful issue, and for ten years before the Government made it compulsory, we enjoyed our weekly holiday. It is to the credit of many of the employers that they aided us, financially and otherwise, to secure this boon. The greatest obstacle we had to contend with was the pigheadedness of the Mayor of the town, a prominent Presbyterian elder, who had a branch establishment in the district. But we succeeded in convincing him (I'm afraid against his will) of the justness of our cause. I remember, when we first began canvassing, we approached one of the oldest tradesmen in something like fear and trembling, and dubious of our reception. But, after listening to us, the old man looked at us rather wistfully, and in tones of sadness, said: "Young men, I wish to God you had come twenty years ago." The long hours of servitude common to those days had made a wreck of his health. Thus encouraged, we continued our campaign; and I believe that our movement during those years was more loyally maintained and adhered to than the Government law has ever been, notwithstanding their huge army of inspectors. So, perhaps, when I shuffle off this mortal coil, if the Burial Board refuses to sanction the use of the word "Atheist" in my epitaph, it may permit it to be recorded that I was one of the pioneers of the half-holiday movement.

After sending the "Notes," I was surprised a day or two later to find them occupying a prominent position in the front page of the paper. The editor seemed to have lost no time in giving them to his public. Going into the branch post office later in the day, a copy of the paper was lying on the counter, so folded that only my article was visible. "That your article?" said the postmaster. I nodded assent. "Dear me, one never knows what talent there is knocking about." The next morning, I called at the stationer's where I get the *Freethinker*, and asked for a copy of the "Weekly." "I am sorry, Mr. Bryce," said the girl, "but we are sold out; there has been a great run on the paper this week-end. Is that your article in the front?" "You young besom"; I said, "you know it is my article. (I had seen her prying into the pages of the *Freethinker* when I called for it.) And I hope," I added, "that you are not insinuating that it was my article that was responsible for the paper being sold out so quickly." I called at another stationer's, and was greeted with the same question: "Is that your article in the paper?" "Betty," I said, "whatever put it into your head to connect me with a newspaper article?" "Well," she said, "the name is the same." Then I had a visit from the postmaster's good lady, also seeking confirmation of the authorship. "How very interesting," she said, "to be able to write like that. Do you know, when you first came into our district, I used to look at you, and think to myself: That man has more in his head than soap and candles. So you see, my intuitive faculty has justified itself. But you must often have written articles before?" "Never," I said, "this is my first attempt." I am sorry to confess it, but lately, during the bad times, owing to having to dodge the creditors so frequently, I

have developed into an expert liar. Now, so much kindly curiosity rather puzzled me. After writing reams and reams of Freethought literature over a period of twenty years, and to have a stray individual or two during all that time say they had noted something from your pen; and then to be bombarded with questions relative to an outside article—well, it made me wonder whether the bumps of inquisitiveness and appreciation in the Freethought world were undeveloped, or whether they were atrophied.

Then I had another surprise. A few days later, I had a note from the editor saying he begged to enclose a P.O. for ten shillings, and would I send along some more contributions. It was the first time my pen had ever earned a brass farthing, and I was puzzled as to what to do with it. If I put it into the banking account the Income Tax man would want to know the source of the acquisition of so much sudden wealth. And if he found out that I had been contributing articles to the *Freethinker* for twenty years, he would want me to account for all the money I had never received. These Income Tax people are so inquisitive. They wrote and asked me some time ago if my wife paid for her groceries! When I told her she nearly went hairless, and if that Income Tax man had been around, I'm afraid there would have been a funeral. So, as I have said, I was puzzled. Then, I remembered an incident of my childhood. Running along the village street, I had bumped into a lady emerging from a gateway, carrying a lately-born infant. And before I had time to recover my balance, she had thrust into my hands a threepenny-bit, wrapped in paper, and two other articles, which I forget. It appears that this was an old custom which had something to do either with babies coming into the world, or first coming out into the open. So I put my hat on and went into the street; and the first thing I spied was an urchin coming racing along at the rate of about a mile a minute. I held up my hands as an indication that he was to slow down, and then unfolded the ten-shilling note, and held it out to him. Whether he thought it had anything to do with babies, I don't know, but he seized it and flew back the way he had come at the rate of *two* miles a minute. Whether it went to reduce the landlord's arrears of rent, or pay off part of the grocer's bill, or whether it all went into the coffers of the "Blue Man," I am unable to say; I haven't seen the urchin since. But, I had got rid of it. Speaking of the "Blue Man," I have just had the barman in for two pounds of lump sugar for the whiskey-toddies.

The other evening, I went to hear a lecture upon Psychology, at the Friend's meeting house. One might have been listening to an Oxford professor. I was so intent following the discourse, that I took little note of the person of the speaker. When it was finished, and I had time to look round, my eye wandered to the occupants of the platform, and rested on the fine Greek profile of the lecturer. . . Good heavens! I thought, if that isn't the barman of the "Blue Man!" And so it was . . . Glasses, gentlemen, please! and drink with me the health of the barman of the "Blue Man."

I was sorry afterwards that I had so recklessly parted with that half-sovereign, as I came across a really needful case where it might have been helpful. I was staying with a friend for a few days in a Northern town near the Border. We had been up on the top of the hill where, it is said, the Percy fought the Douglas. Who the Percy was, and who the Douglas; why they fought, and who was the victor, and who the vanquished, I haven't the faintest idea, but you are expected by the inhabitants to make a show of interest in these historic incidents.

However, the climb was worth it on account of the magnificent view you get of the surrounding country. We came leisurely down into the town at the foot, and on into the market-place; and who should I come across, standing beside an old ramshackle motor-car, that should have been on the scrap-heap long ago, but my old friend, Jenkins. He had been round the district soliciting orders for trouser buttons and things; although, when I had last seen him, his card described him as a "clothier and draper." My acquaintance with Jenkins dated back some twenty years. At that time he was the organizing secretary and lecturer for the I.L.P., and a fluent and able speaker. Jenkins was one of those speakers who could make his audience see the social-millennium approaching with all the definiteness of a Scotch mist. He was also the editor of a local Socialist Weekly, and when he was short of matter he used to come and solicit my help. I was looking at some of the articles I wrote for him the other day, and if the social millennium has not arrived, it is certainly not the fault of these articles. Also, when he was disappointed of a speaker for any of his branch meetings, he would come and ask me to step into the breach. And I would take the tram and go down to the various places, and tell them the tale of the wicked capitalist and the oppressed worker, and give them a glorious picture of the land of hope and glory, which was their rightful heritage. And then Jenkins stood as a Socialist candidate, and got into Parliament. In his earlier days he had been a miner; but whether in securing his four hundred pounds a year he had benefited financially seems open to doubt. At the local courts here recently, a miner, who was the witness in an accident case, claimed twenty-six shillings for the day's expenses. "Where do you work?" asked the magistrate. The man told him. "And can you make twenty-six shillings a day?" "Quite easily," said the miner. "Twenty-six shillings a day works out at about four hundred pounds a year: and I am wondering whether my friend Jenkins would not now have been better off hewing coal. It is very certain he will not make four hundred a year selling trouser buttons. More likely, he will find himself own brother to that gentleman who was passing rich on "forty pounds" a year. After Jenkins got into Parliament I saw very little of him for a long time. His Parliamentary honours did not last long; and after "Ichabod" was written over the portals of the I.L.P. he seems to have fallen on evil days. Many years after, I saw him standing at a passage doorway, upon which his card was nailed, which described him as a "clothier and draper." "How's business," I said. "Damn'd bad," he replied. "But, I suppose, you get a good deal of support from all the old Socialist 'comrades'?" "Damn them," he said, "they won't even pay for the suits they've had." "But," I said, "what about all those beautiful phrases we used to feed them upon: The Solidarity of the Workers, the Rights of the Proletariat, the Glorious Fellowship, the Brotherhood of Man, the Coming of the Social Millennium, and the Dawn of Hope and Glory" . . . He was silent for a second. . . "Damn them," he said. But whether, in this instance, he was referring to the phrases or the "comrades," I am not quite sure.

And so, as I said, I met him again in the market-place of a Border town. It was the last day of my visit. "I would give you a lift in, Bryce," he said, "but I have to call for two ladies on the way." I was debating with myself as to whether I should make the eighty miles journey by train, or take a motor-bus, which was standing not far off. I chose the 'bus, which was leaving later. We had only

gone a few miles when we passed Jenkins on the roadside, in trouble with his machine. I had made an examination of it in the market-place, and calculated, as the Americans say, that he would probably arrive home in about three weeks.

As I have said, I was sorry that I had parted with that ten shillings. But, if any generously-disposed reader feels inclined to assess the literary and artistic merits of this humble effort of mine at the same monetary value that the editor of the local *Weekly* assigned as the market price of my "Notes," I would have great pleasure in forwarding the same to my old friend, Jenkins.

JOSEPH BRYCE.

Acid Drops.

A prominent lady politician commends the new move of votes for women at 21 years of age, on the ground that it will make women think. We wonder where on earth the lady has got the notion from, that voting makes people think! It simply cannot be from studying the male portion of the population. We have a rather strong suspicion that that portion of the population given to thinking *with* the vote, will be also given to thinking *without* it. The fact that a professional politician thinks otherwise would rather support the proposition that even political leadership does not involve an abnormal quantity of informed thinking. Anyway, if exercising the vote leads to any useful kind of thinking, we advise giving two votes to every regular attendant at church or chapel, and a dozen to the Bishop of London.

Rear-Admiral Harper has written a book, *The Truth about Jutland*. Everyone knows that the battle of Jutland did not take place two thousand years ago, but it will be gathered by impartial and disinterested readers that there is anything but agreement on the facts of the fight. If data is unreliable concerning the event of a few years ago, what standing has the foundations of Christianity, the beginning of which is buried in dispute, hearsay, and vested interest, with the mistake of making feeling a substitute for fact.

The Sunday evening crowd wandering about the streets of our cities deeply concerns the Rev. Herbert M. Nield. He doesn't approve of the Sunday Cabaret method of dealing with the problem. "Our problem is," he says, "not to entertain young folk and keep them off the streets. It is to bring them to God." Exactly. If the parsons can't drag the bored young people into the churches, then the young can go to the devil. The reverent pins his faith on the Social Hour plus sacred song and prayer. "There's no magnet," he says, "like the Gospel tastefully presented." But this has been tried at Wolverhampton, and the young folk ignore it. Therefore, all that remains for the parsons to do—if they really want to solve the problem created by themselves—is to allow rational amusements on Sunday. There is no other solution.

The average expectation of life is longer, infant mortality is lowered, people are better clothed, fed, paid, and housed. These are some of the beneficent results achieved by science in a comparatively few years. The Government religion, as embodied in the Church of England, has eclipsed all this. It has prayed the nation to victory in a large war, and has produced a Composite Prayer Book. A materialistic thing like science must, however, expect to take second place. For the Church has had the help of the Lord; and with such a combination miracles are quite common-place.

It is really very selfish of the organizers of a Tennis Tournament, at Scarborough, to study merely their own business interests on Good Friday, when planning to open the Tournament on that day. The Churches gave the nation Good Friday as a day for cessation of work,

and they naturally expect to get a little return in hard cash for this act of kindness. And now comes these tennis people attempting to take away some lawful Christian business. This will never do; and some Scarborough clergy have quite rightly protested. They feel sure the all-conquering religion of Christ will be unable to compete with a Tennis Tournament.

Gambling and betting, says the Bishop of Southwark, are more prevalent than usual in South London. Young children sit on the doorsteps playing for halfpennies. The source of the evil, he says, is to be found in the desire to escape from a dull and monotonous life. We are surprised to learn this. In our innocence, we had always thought that "Original Sin" was the cause of the evil. And now comes the Bishop disturbing one of our cherished notions with a new theory. Well, well, we live and learn. May be the Bishop will be telling us next that the dreary English Sabbath encourages gambling and betting and all kinds of mischief.

The London Public Morality Council (self-appointed) has presented to the Lord Chamberlain a memorial protesting against the use on the stage of improper language and profanity, which, the Council state, is now rife. The Council has a wonderful eye for such things. Nevertheless, it believes in forcing upon the notice of school children that bundle of obscenities, the Christian Bible. But perhaps the Council thinks sacred obscenity less reprehensible than the secular brand.

Prophetic News for April is a special Easter number containing articles by various exponents of primitive thinking. It is to be commended to those of our readers who desire to understand just what kind of mentality our ancestors had two or three thousand years ago.

A certain political party has been accused of having adopted an organized and definite policy of preventing its opponents from stating their case at election meetings. The brave *Christian Herald* comes out with the statement: "Without free speech democracy is an unsafe thing." It is a pity our pious contemporary thinks so only spasmodically. If it thought so consistently, it might be making its trumpet heard against the Blasphemy Laws and the ridiculous Blasphemy and Seditious Teachings Bill. Our pious friend should get a new trumpet—one that is guaranteed to sound forth every time free speech is endangered.

We have just been reading a small pamphlet by Mr. W. A. Campbell, on the subject of *Did the Jews Kill Jesus?* The author has little trouble in proving that there is no evidence whatever for believing that such a trial and execution ever took place. But he properly points out that if the Christian theory be correct, what else could the Jews do? It was all part of the plan of salvation, and the Jews were God's appointed instruments. On the Christian theory, the Jews were the great benefactors of the race. Without them there would have been no glorious gospel, no salvation for the human family. If the Jews had entertained Jesus instead of killing him, Christianity would never have been born. And what would the world have done then?

Instead of thanking the Jews for killing Jesus the Christians persecuted them. It may have been because they killed Jesus, it may have been for the reason that the existence of the Jews gave the game away. The very people who are supposed to have known him best, placed no faith in him. They ought to have been convinced first of all. They have never been convinced yet. On the other hand, assuming the truth of the story, the Christian persecution may have been an act of retaliation. The Christian might have said, if he had had sense enough to say it, that the Jews made the first assault on Christians by giving them their God. And personally, we think that act justified all that the Christians did to the Jews afterwards. The only consolation there is in the whole story is that it is not true.

Sir Oliver Lodge once assured everybody interested that unquestionably God possessed a sense of humour. An occurrence at a village church, near Genoa, seems to bear out the contention. During a service lightning entered a Church, ripped open the organ, and wounded a priest. Then it zig-zagged down the church, destroyed the ceiling of a side chapel, knocked a couple of columns off the altar, and wounded three priests. Finally, it went through the church knocking over members of the congregation right and left. Quite evidently God was exhibiting his humour. He was in quite a playful mood. Immediately after this a thanksgiving service was held among the congregation because none was killed. We are in some doubt as to whether that was humour or sarcasm.

According to a cleric, in Liverpool alone, £10,000 a week is spent on football coupon betting. This may be silly, but is it any sillier than people spending thousands of pounds insuring themselves against the purely fictitious risk of hell-fire?

Miss Christabel Pankhurst, of Second Advent fame, recently addressed at the Guildhall, Portsmouth, an audience of some two thousand persons. The fact will serve to remind Freethinkers that the primitive type of mentality to which the kind of religion favoured by Miss Pankhurst appeals, is still abundant, and a menace to such rights and justice Freethinkers have so far wrested from Christians. The moral is that Freethought still needs to be militant and to go on consolidating its position. Readers can help best to do this by continuing to make Freethinkers and by striving their utmost to secure as many Freethinker readers as possible.

For the home-coming of Gipsy Smith, a great meeting is being arranged to take place at the Guildhall, Cambridge, on May 5, when Sir Robert Perks will preside, and the town and the University will be represented. The University and Gipsy Smith—what a combination! Learning and ignorance in fond embrace. To complete the joke, the Gipsy should be turned into an honorary Doctor. The title would be worth hundreds of pounds as an advertising asset to the ex-caravan dweller.

Things in the religious world are depressing and discouraging enough just now, and it is necessary that Christian folk should face the facts, instead of trying to blind themselves to the condition of things. This is the burden of the song of a Methodist parson, who appears to have been using, none too discreetly, Jeremiah as his bedside book. Or perhaps he is merely depressed because the newspapers' comic efforts to boom religion haven't produced a glut of clients for the Churches. That wonderful spiritual revival seems an unconscionable long time materialising.

A photo showing monks in baby-frightening hoods and holding aloft lanterns and a cross during Lenten observances in Rome, appears in a daily paper. The sub-editor responsible for captions puts under the photo: "An awe-inspiring procession through streets of Rome." "Awe-inspiring" no doubt, for half wits, who would panic at the sight of a village ghost made of a turnip and a lighted candle.

Canon Holland, a former Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, collapsed in Church whilst reading the lesson at Coventry. The newspapers merely record the fact. They reserve their chinese-cracker headings for occasions when similar things happen to well-known Agnostics. Public opinion has to be educated.

The writer of *T.P.'s* "Table Talk" indulges in over three columns of reflections on the late Rev. Smyth Piggott, in which he manages to express everything about that gentleman, which would not offend the stupidity of the average Christian believer. Dealing with Smyth Piggott and his predecessor Prince, he talks of the founder of this sect as having died without showing any signs of penitence or dropping his mask. But

is it quite certain that he had a mask, or that he had anything to be consciously penitent about? The combination of lechery and religion is quite a common feature in the history of Christianity, and it is simply begging the whole question to assume that there was conscious sexuality behind it all. The close connection between sexual and religious fervour is well known to all students of the pathological side of religion, and if we take the former element away, there is often little of the other left. The point is that whereas in early times there was little difficulty in making the one do duty for the other, nowadays there are lots of people who wish to separate the two. But only in the case of those who try to establish a new cult. So far as the old one is concerned they accept it as written.

The writer of the article says it is an example of human stupidity to see people accepting as a successor of the Messiah, one who had gone through the experiences of an able-bodied seaman. But why? If the gospel story is to be believed the Christian Messiah went through the experience of an able-bodied carpenter, and in what sense is the one more ridiculous than the other? Here again, it is simply a question of looking at the old story through modern eyes. In reality the claim of Piggott, or Prince to be the Messiah is not a bit more ridiculous than a similar claim on behalf of a Judean carpenter. The fact that the one is accepted simply raises the question of what would have happened to Jesus Christ had he made his appearance in a modern Society. Unquestionably he would have been treated just as the papers treat the claim of Smyth Piggott. The only interesting thing about these criticisms of pretended Messiahs by those who either do not see what the truth is, or are afraid to state it, is that they serve to show what a hollow sham a great deal of modern religion is.

The *New Zealand Herald* reports a speaker at a Methodist Conference, held at Auckland, as lamenting that the attention of the Maori had been drawn away from the gospel by moving pictures, wireless, gramophones, etc. It is really hard on a Christian preacher that there should be anything in the world save his church and the gospel. Then he would stand something like a chance of holding the people. How on earth can one expect that all conquering gospel to stand up against the movies?

A Church attendance census has recently been taken at Aberdeen. The figures disclose the fact that at the morning service alone, the decreases, when compared with ten years ago, range from 18 per cent. among the Baptists to 43 per cent. among the Congregationalists. Generally, about one third of the sittings provided appear to be occupied. No wonder the parsons are digging their noses into subjects other than religion. Otherwise they would soon be out of business altogether.

Notes from Last Week.

By FLAUTIST.

We are told that people do not want Sunday games and entertainments. Who does not want them? Clearly those who do not want them.

Views and Opinions.

Sincerity in holding a view is no test whatever of its truth.—*The Cross*. J. T. LLOYD.

As Keats grew in mental power, he consigned religion to the limbo of forgotten things, and his poetic confession of faith in his prime was:—

Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

MIMNERMUS.

Surely it is an amazing thing to discover a law in Ontario that permits the courts to come to the defense of God.—Rev. W. A. CAMERON, of Toronto.

To Correspondents.

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

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT TRUST.—W. Collins (4th sub.) 10s.; E. Wilkinson, 10s.

W. COLLINS.—We note your resignation of the Secretaryship of the Manchester Branch, but glad to know that you still remain a member of the Committee. We are quite sure that none have a keener interest in the Cause than yourself, and the Branch will still feel the benefit of your activities. We shall be glad to welcome the Manchester representatives at the Conference.

J. STRANGER.—Yours is not an uncommon experience with papers, where the subject of religion is concerned. A newspaper's profession of impartiality usually amounts to keeping the field clear for religionists..

T. A. W.—We cannot say whether the story of David Livingstone is true or not. We do not remember hearing of it.

F. W. H. BROWN.—We have handed your form of membership to the General Secretary. Glad you have found the *Freethinker* so helpful.

J. STEVENSON.—Thanks. See "Acid Drops."

T. MARSH.—The Canadian law of blasphemy is not quite identical with the English law, so far as the mere reading goes, but it is the same in substance. Sorry we cannot give you any idea when the Bill before the House of Commons makes a step forward. At a guess we should say when Freethinkers all over the country become more insistent and pay less attention to what Christians think about them.

L. MORETON.—We contradicted the report published in the *Star*, as to someone having left a legacy to Mr. Cohen, so soon as we were informed of it. The contradiction was published in the *Star* of April 5.

H. IRVING.—Am very much overloaded with copy at present, but will get it in as soon as possible.

H. L.—Mr. Cohen hopes to be able to issue shortly a new volume of Essays in Freethinking, and also a book on the subject of Materialism. Both should have appeared before, but he has to get these "extras" in as his other work will permit.

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 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

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.

Owing to the holidays, the closing of the *Freethinker* Office on Good Friday and Bank Holiday, we are unable to deal with many letters received in this issue. Some will be replied to through the post, others must wait until next week.

We hope that members and Branches of the N.S.S. have not lost sight of the announcement made a fortnight ago, that the Conference this year will be held at Glas-

gow. It is a good opportunity of Freethinkers all over the country combining business and pleasure, and our purpose now is to remind those who intend going, that they should send in their names as early as possible. There will be long week-end excursions and also excursions for a longer period. But if the Executive is to make all possible arrangements for the comfort of visitors, these arrangements should soon be in hand. On the business side, resolutions, from either individual members or Branches, that are to go on the Agenda should be sent in as soon as possible.

After considerable trouble the new Liverpool Branch of the N.S.S. has managed to secure a regular meeting place. The hall is in the Royal Buildings, 18, Colquitt Street, off Bold Street. This is very central, and the first meeting will be held there on May 1. The Secretary, Mr. A. Jackson, 7, Kirk Street, Bootle, is looking forward to enrolling a number of new members, and we hope that he will not be disappointed.

Mr. F. J. Gould has re-issued a new, fifth, edition of his handy little pamphlet *The Building of the Bible* (Watts & Co., 1s.). The pamphlet puts the various parts of the Bible in the order in which modern criticism believes it came into existence, and the accounts are illustrated by notes on contemporary events. The only fault we have to find with it, is its brevity. One could do with a much larger work written on the same lines.

We are asked to announce that a meeting of members and friends, of the South Shields Branch, will be held at 6, Wenlock Road, Simonside, at 7 o'clock to-day (April 2), for the purpose of considering the future work of the Branch. Tyneside has been rather quiet of late, and we hope the meeting will be the prelude to some active work in the district.

To-day (April 24), the North London Branch brings its winter's work to a close, with a lecture from Mr. F. A. Hornibrook, on "Religion and Health." The meeting will be held in the St. Pancras Labour Party's Rooms, 298, Kentish Town Road (entrance in Holmes Road), at 7.30. Mr. Hornibrook's addresses are always greatly appreciated, and the place should be crowded on this occasion.

We regret that owing to the miscarriage of a letter, several misprints occurred in W. W. Strickland's article on "Tell-Tale Prague," in last week's issue. In most cases these were quite obvious, but we have to express our regrets, all the same, as marring an interesting philological essay.

We hope readers will pay special attention to the advertisement in this week's issue of Mr. Mann's pamphlet on *China and the Missionary Question*. The present offers a golden opportunity for Freethinkers to bring the facts before their Christian friends, and this is the only pamphlet in existence that will do it.

We are glad to say that the demand for Draper's *History of the Conflict Between Science and Religion*, is sending us again to the binders. If there is any delay in fulfilling orders, the reason will be that we are waiting for delivery. But all orders will be dispatched as early as possible.

We are very sorry to report that the health of Mr. J. Neate, who for many years has been the moving spirit in the work of the Bethnal Green Branch of the N.S.S., will prevent him, for the present, looking after the lectures in Victoria Park. For the time being arrangements are being made through the Executive, and Miss Vance will be very glad to hear from anyone living in the East of London, who is prepared to give assistance in carrying on the work. It has also been found advisable to arrange the lectures for May to take place at 3.30, instead of in the evening.

Fundamentalism in Excelsis.

(Concluded from page 246.)

AFTER the congregation had been worked up to a pious frenzy by the preacher—whose collar by this time hung limp about his neck, owing to his violent exertions—the Brothers and Sisters scattered about the church, whose duty it was to seek out the penitent and bring them to the fold, set about their work. These deputies, says Mr. Asbury, had been converted before: “and were O.K. with the Lord. ‘Oh, Brother!’ they pleaded. ‘Come to Glory! Give your heart to Jesus! Jesus died that you might be saved! He died on the cross for you! Brother come to Jesus!’”

There was no attempt at any rational argument. No effort to show the superiority of Christianity compared with other religions. Nothing but a continual repetition of Jesus and glory, glory and Jesus, and exhortations to march down the aisle and see God:—

There was nothing but a continual hammering at emotional weaknesses. And finally the bewildered brains of victims sagged under the strain, and they stumbled down the aisles and were hauled and shoved and pushed down to the mourners’ bench, and presumably into the presence of God as embodied in His earthly representative, Brother Lincoln McConnell.

I was fair game for them. There was hardly anybody in the church who did not know how emotional and how excitable I was, and how music affected me.

The boy was marked down from the commencement. Several of the deputies were only waiting the proper moment to pounce upon him, and when the call for converts came they surrounded him: “They painted horrible pictures of Hell; they told me that unless I went down the aisle and confessed my sins and asked God to forgive me, I would sizzle and burn and scorch for evermore.” One old woman, her face working with fanatical fury, screamed that Satan was waiting outside to lead him into the depths of Hell.

And upon the platform McConnell was rampaging to and fro, shouting “Jesus wants you!” and above the roar of the workers, and the moans of the victims, rose the thunder of the organ, the wailing of the violins, and the emotion-filled voices of the choir singing, “Rock of Ages cleft for me.” The appeal was terrific:—

By this time I was crying; I did not want to go to Hell, and I was horribly afraid of the Devil, and I was not old enough to realize what was being done to me. Yet something kept telling me that I should not do this thing; that it was all a mockery and a fraud. I know now, and I knew soon after that night, that the music was what was the matter with me, not religion. I did not see Jesus, and I never have. It was that slow music; that doleful, wailing, chant of the hymns. I couldn’t withstand it, I never could. In the army I used to go to all the funerals because I got such a terrific kick out of the funeral march, and the sliding tramp of troops marching at half-step.

But I was doomed. It was in the cards that my self-respect was to be stripped from me, and that I was to be emotionally butchered to make a religious holiday. They dragged and hauled at me until I was in the aisle, and then they got behind me and urged me forward. One old woman leaped ahead of us and performed a war dance that would have done credit to a frenzied worshipper of Voodoo. And as she pranced and cavorted she screamed: “A bad boy is coming to Jesus!” (H. Asbury. *Up from Methodism*, pp. 110-111.)

The boy tried to hang back, but the band started playing again, and from the organ pealed forth the

cadences of “Nearer, My God, to Thee,” and he was torn to pieces emotionally, and the Brothers and Sisters shouted ecstatically that God had him; he says: “it was obvious that I was suffering, and suffering has always been accepted as a true sign of holiness. But it was not God and it was not religion. It was the music.”

Eventually the boy was shepherded down the aisle to McConnell, who received him with a clammy handshake, and seated him at the mourner’s bench; where a Brother immediately flopped down beside him; an old man, who he knew perfectly well to be a hypocrite, a skinflint, and a Sunday Christian. This old humbug put his arms round the boy’s shoulders, cried down his neck, and shouted that another soul was saved, calling on the Lord to witness the good work he was doing. All the time the boy’s nerves were being shattered by the rhythm and beat of the music, and wishing to God it would stop. And at last it did stop, and the service came to an end and he was able to pull himself together. He says: “With no music to upset me I began to think, and the more I thought, the angrier I got. I was ashamed; I boiled with fury, and I wanted to smash the Brothers and Sisters in their smug faces. But I was just a boy and I was afraid.” But that was the end of religion for him. That very night he obtained a bottle of whisky, took his first drink of alcohol, and arrived home drunk. The revulsion was so great that he, with some chosen companions, used to meet together to sing vulgar songs and parodies of hymns, of which he gives several examples; one of which, a parody of the hymn, “At the Cross, At the Cross,” ran as follows:—

At the bar, at the bar,
Where I smoked my first cigar,
And the nickels and the dimes rolled away;
It was there, by chance
That I ripped my Sunday pants,
And now I can wear them every day.

The version that I remember—and at which I was greatly shocked—ran:—

At the Cross, at the Cross,
Where I met the old horse;

But I forgot the remainder of it. Another parody of Asbury’s was that of “Hark, the Herald angel’s sing.” It ran:—

Hark the herald Angel’s sing,
Beecham’s pills are just the thing.
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
Two for man and one for child.

After this ebullition of youth had subsided, young Asbury settled down to a more peaceful, contented, and happier frame of mind, and concludes:—

On all sides, we hear that religion is the greatest thing in the world, and that mankind’s chief need is more of it. But it is my conviction that mankind would be infinitely better off with less of it, and probably best off with none of it. Nothing has ever caused more trouble. The whole history of religion is a record of war, murder, torture, rape, massacre, distrust, hypocrisy, anguish, persecution and continual and unseemly bickering; it is a rare church that has not been the scene of disorderly brawls. It has divided towns and nations into bitter factions; it has turned brother against sister and father against son; it has blighted romances; it is a prime cause of insanity; there is hardly anything harmful to the human race that it has not done as it pursued its meddlesome, intolerant way down the ages. Its followers proclaim loudly that their belief is synonymous with love, and bawl threats and epithets against anyone who denies it; but in truth, religion comes more nearly to being synonymous with hatred and revenge, with each sect praying to God to grant its special privileges and to damn the others.

I have never, at any time, regretted my complete withdrawal from all forms of religion and churchly ceremony. During many years of my childhood, while mental and physical habits were forming, these things kept me in constant terror; I was horrified by the thought of the awful things that God was preparing to do to me; I was fearful and miserable lest I give birth to an idea that was not perfectly righteous and in keeping with His commands, as laid down by his agents. The Bible, which I necessarily interpreted in the light of what I had been taught, caused me more nightmares than any other book I have ever read, and I was vastly more alarmed by the tales of the Fires of Hell, related to me by the preachers and the Brothers and Sisters, than I was in later life by the thunder of German artillery or the crackle of machine-gun bullets. (H. Asbury. *Up from Methodism*, pp. 169-170.)

We are often admonished that our attacks upon the Bible are a work of superogation; flogging a dead horse. That there are very few people, to-day, who believe the Bible to be the revealed word of God; or that it is an authority in science, history, or morals. Therefore, we are wasting our time in exposing its errors and abominations.

The people who make this fantastic statement are judging the mass of the people by the opinions held among the circle of their own friends and acquaintances, and are completely mistaken. In reply to the question, in the *Daily News* questionnaire, last September:—

Do you regard the Bible as inspired in a sense in which the literature of your own country could not be said to be inspired?

Out of 14,043 replies, 8,950 replied "Yes." The *Daily News* is a Liberal paper, a conservative paper like the *Daily Mail* would probably give a still larger proportion; and a plebiscite of the rural and agricultural districts of this country would probably reveal it as the belief of a still greater number. In imitation of the *Daily News*, two hundred papers in the United States, issued a questionnaire, to which they received 50,000 answers, eighty per cent. of which affirmed their belief in the inspiration of the Bible! Against our own record of 63.8 per cent. Which show the old horse is very much alive yet, and capable of many a hearty kick.

W. MANN.

Strange Tales.

PRIOR to broadcasting recently the record of Israel's departure from Egypt, the announcer was careful to explain that God never really hardened Pharaoh's heart. It was only the old Hebrew method of informing us that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. This is very ingenious, and exculpates Jahveh from quite a number of sordid crimes. It was only the literary method of the Pentateuchal Scribe.

Heads I win—tails you lose! The drowning Egyptians would view the matter from a different angle.

When Mark Twain accompanied "The Innocents Abroad" to Rome, he was careful to explain there were four circumstances which confirmed a miracle said to have occurred in the sixth century. A pestilence had been raging and a procession was arranged to visit St. Peter's. As it passed the Castle of St. Angelo, heavenly voices were heard singing, and an angel was seen to put his sword into his scabbard. This must have been the destroying Angel, about to cease operations. In any case the pestilence was stayed, and Mark Twain says there are four facts which confirm the event. The annual procession which still takes place; the Statue of St. Michael;

the antiphon "Regina Coeli," which the Church sings during Paschal time; and the inscription in the Church.

So easy it is to prove a miracle!

In the same way, Jacob, one of the early progenitors of the Jewish race, had several indubitable proofs of his close dealing with the Almighty. He wrestled with him one night till the small hours of the morning, and was lame next day. One of the sinews in his thigh had shrunk, and the Jews, ever since have fought shy of that sinew. What better proof can be desired?

Perhaps the sinew shrank, because he was to meet Esau in the morning. He had good reason to fear his brother, for he had swindled him on several occasions. He would remember that birthright business, and the clever ruse by which he hoodwinked old Isaac. Rebekkah—the crafty old dame—helped him in that. Esau was swindled, because he went too far for his venison.

However, Esau played a forgiving part. Jacob tried to bribe him into receiving gifts of camels and goats, but his brother refused. In the end they fell on each other's necks, and lifted up their voices and wept. It ended happily.

Jacob had swindled his uncle Laban too, out of a considerable portion of his stock. That ingenious trick of peeling the wands, and breeding speckled cattle was worthy of a captain of industry. What Jacob didn't know in the art of stock-breeding, was hardly worth mentioning. He could give points to the modern eugenist. The sturdy cattle he kept for himself. The weakly went to Laban.

No wonder Laban's face was not "towards him" as before. Laban smelt a rat.

On the whole Jacob did very well at Padan-Aran. Laban supplied him with wives and handmaidens, and the nephew became the proud progenitor of the twelve tribes of Israel. This was largely because he had made a bargain with Jehovah at Bethel, when he ran away from home.

That was the interesting occasion when the famous ladder was stretched up to heaven, and angels performed upon it. Another proof of Jacob's friendship with the Deity.

Jacob knew how to drive a bargain. He had a keen scent for a profitable deal. We must not judge him too harshly, for as a young man he had to make way in the world. When he woke up, after seeing the ladder, he made this commonsense vow:—"If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God."

You see Jacob was particularly careful in his part of the contract. He wanted some kind of security. He preferred a safe deal.

The meeting between Jacob and Rachel was very affecting. Quite a rural picture when the cousins met. She must have been a winsome wench for the Don Juan fell in love with her at first sight. The record says:—"And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept."

Whenever he wanted to move to a fresh place, or marry a new wife, or fraternize with Bilhah or Zilpah, or indeed, any critical decision, he always pretended to be acting under the behest of omnipotence. This was an easy way out of all difficulties. Jacob worked it for all it was worth.

Near the end of his life that is a pleasant story about sending to Egypt for corn. His loss of Joseph. His love for little Ben. It is a capital short story. But I think he might have smelt a rat, when the price of the corn was returned. Just suit Jacob.

ALAN TYNDAL.

In Quest of the Beautiful.

(Continued from page 204.)

II.—PHYSICAL BEAUTY.

THE birth of consciousness meant to me a clear understanding of external objects. Not to be hypercritical it meant the earliest and clearest impression of the many forms of objects in the outside world. One day, whilst walking near a hedgerow in our meadow with my grandfather, the first startled cry of the blackbird fell on my ears. In a honeysuckle bush to which I could walk now after a wandering of thirty-nine years, I was shown its nest containing four eggs.

Near this spot, in Spring, I picked the first lady-smock; but now, lady-smocks, rare, sweet and welcome, do not appear to me as the first. Then there was the first meadow-boot, in which the sun had poured his gold, and from which a perfume came as distinct as that of the wallflower, the honeysuckle, or the dog-rose. Perfume seems to be the hammer that strikes the bell of the memory; and, in a flash, it will bridge old age with youth.

Farewell, then, to those beautiful objects that first made their entrance into consciousness; but farewell, only, to the clarity and intensity of the first glimpsing—and, with these, were such homely products of the garden, sage, thyme, marjoram and basil. It would not be an excess of gratitude to be in debt to life for such gifts of experience that afterwards, in their common acceptance, make life an interwoven pattern of diversity.

I now came to the beauty of appearances—the "maia," or illusion of things. The outside world appeared to be telling me, although I could not hear it, that I was thrown into an eternal process of change.

Rachel was the daughter of a farmer. In my visits to her home, where I would ride bareback on a Shetland pony, I often saw her. Her type of beauty still haunts me. With a pale, clear complexion, with cheeks ever so slightly tinged with the faintest red, with fine glossy, dark hair—she appeared to me as a Goddess. In her presence I was always shy. She would be about twenty years of age, whilst I was but ten; and somehow, I would always connect her with her biblical namesake. She died suddenly. At a later time, I met the same type; and, in my childish ignorance, I thought that she had not died—the type had possession of my mind. With the greatest effort it is impossible to recall the details of Rachel's dress; but I still remember her face as a dream of beauty; an outward sign of loveliness that penetrated my mind, leaving its mark to this day.

We only stand on the fringe of that country where the mystery of affinity will disappear. Our loves and hatreds are, in many cases, merely superficial—in many cases they rest on appearances only; and we do not explain them by the word "instinct." The Tower of Babel may be the symbol of more than is implied in the diversity of tongues. Good and bad spirits walk abroad in the bodily vesture of beauty and ugliness; we must not allow our judgment to be seduced by sirens nor our prejudices to be led by appearances.

Nature-beauty of form, colour, or, perfume is objective. No one would fight over the beauty of a landscape or the scent of a dog-rose. It is this quality of beauty that makes an irresistible appeal; it is this disinterested interest in beauty that separates nature-beauty from the individual physical form

of beauty. Into physical beauty enters the ego of conquest or possession; but this fact, although creating a difference, is finally cancelled by old age and dissolution.

Not for long did I rest in the illusion of physical beauty. Although, by training and hardship, my body was toughened to rough usage, this afforded me little satisfaction. Although the skin of my body had the appearance of white satin, and my muscles were so well developed that I could allow an average person to stand on my chest or abdomen, this afforded no satisfaction. In a fight with a brick-layer and a gypsy I felt sorry that I had drawn blood in each case. Of what use, then, was a well-strengthened body, a strong instrument, when even conquest was no satisfaction? In the world of physical beauty I wandered in the quest of the absolute; not knowing that, by my exertions, I had only rendered the physical life bearable—I had only, as it were, cleansed the rust off the metal of life.

Here, I pay a tribute to the ideal of the late Eugene Sandow, his worship of the body, for life without health is like food without salt. He encouraged me to persevere in perfecting the body; and, gradually, I came to see the object of my quest in well-developed arms, legs and body—but there was no halt at this point. A battered volume of Byron fell into my hands; and, for good or evil, the emotional side of my life was developed, exploited; and it became a master for a time.

The worship of Jupiter was the love of order, and a rebellion against the ravages of chaos. In the history of the ages, form has been a discipline of mankind. The Hogarth line of beauty; the cæsura, as used by Milton in his blank verse; the repugnance felt, through the eye looking on a flat surface; these are all mute witnesses to the fact of a love of form. The physical form, male and female, wherein the straight line is banished, is the last word in the world of physical beauty. We reach, as it were, the uttermost limit of human significance on the physical side of life.

And here the quest ends, for many who dare not leave their native shore, geographically marked out by the gratification of the senses. And to here, it may be noted, many travellers return after their adventures in pursuit of a meaning to life. Here, also, is a temple set up to the God of eating and drinking, of comfort and ease; after being wearied of long and lonely quests; when prudence has uttered a warning to turn back; when the hardships of fighting have brought no recompense; and when the adventurous knight, tired of assaulting the castle, perilous retires to his haven of rest. They pay their tribute to the earth spirit in the only coin that is accepted; and ratify that truth of Wilde's, when he wrote, "Nothing is more evident than that Nature hates Mind."

Keats has invested the physical life with all the beauty that an artist could bring to glorify human existence; painters have attempted to utter the last word in loveliness of form, of outline, of colour; but to all these modes of interpreting the beautiful, I say, with Cleopatra, when she saw the sea, "Is this all?"

TRISTRAM.

The initiation of all wise or noble things comes, and must come, from individuals.—*J. S. Mill.*

Only the knowledge we seek has any influence upon us.—*J. D. Beresford.*

The bond of society consists of reason and speech.—*Cicero.*

Evergreen.

He was a simple soul. Simple, yet philosopher enough to know that it is in the simple things of life that happiness is found. And in his simple way he wooed and won, although greatly his junior, the maiden of his heart. They were married in the early Springtime, and the eternal marvel of Nature's awakening was made doubly wondrous in his eyes by the love he inspired and returned.

Perfect happiness, however, was marred by a secret anxiety: for he had another love—or, rather, loves. No sordid intrigues, these, but loves as pure and devoted as that which he offered his young wife. His great doubt was whether she could or would share them. As yet he had not dared to disclose the objects of his devotion.

She was too kind, too anxious to please, too appreciative of his small abilities, he knew, to ridicule or despise anything that he might love; but would she understand? Better still, infinitely, if she could but participate in his enthusiasm. Yet he shrank from the ordeal of the test. He dreaded to think that one friend in particular, who had received his lifelong devotion, should be received with contempt or regarded with indifference.

In his bachelor days his reading had been voracious and comprehensive, and he had formed many old and tried friendships, from Shakespeare to Shaw. Judiciously, these treasures were taken from their shelves and recommended, and their reception was varied. Some, he found, had already become mutual friends; others were received with unalloyed delight. One or two of his particular cronies—hard nuts to crack, he admitted—were given the cold shoulder. Still, he was reluctant to introduce to her that row of large volumes on the bottom shelf. Many times, in his hearing, had the Master been pronounced "dry" and "dated" by people who, he thought, should know better. If his old friend had failed in his appeal there, might he not do so again? He still, generation after generation, wove his spell in people's hearts, but his genius failed sometimes to touch many in these more strenuous, though perhaps, superficial times. His whole nature revolted at the thought that, should he take his wife to what he regarded as a joyous country, she should pronounce it a barren wilderness. And he refrained from making the test.

Then, one day on returning home he made the great discovery. A Columbus finding a new land, a Newton discovering the laws of gravitation or a Laplace's discovery of a new planet—none of these could equal this thrill of his. He found her devouring, with manifest delight, the pages of *Pickwick Papers*: he knew then that she had fallen under the Master's thrall. The inimitable Boz had saved yet another soul from becoming the victim of the Modernist cult.

Together they explored the old, yet ever new, country created by Dickens, and his characters, themes, and scenes tickled his palate like old wine—but with a new savour. For was he not sharing his love with his love? The scent of old lavender was giving place to that of Spring flowers. Rejuvenescence had begun. First his young wife—then the children?—and, who knows, perhaps the grandchildren, too?

And he rejoiced to think that the Master's own genius would keep his memory ever green.

W. THOMPSON.

As to the deeds of the gods, it seems holier and more reverent to believe than to know.—*Tacitus*.

Correspondence.

THE CAUSE OF THERESA HIGGINSON.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In the *Liverpool Post and Mercury* of April 12, there appeared an article, which states that a court of inquiry has been opened by Archbishop Keating, with the Rev. Dr. Dobson as Judge, to examine witnesses in "The Cause of Theresa Higginson."

This, in plain language, means that Paradise, in the near future, will have yet another Saint upon its payroll.

Miss Higginson, who is alleged to have died only 22 years ago, was buried at Neston, in Cheshire, and pursued her vocation of school teacher in and around that district.

Here are some of the alleged performances of this feminine St. Francis.

First, of course, she led a life of peculiar sanctity. At times, she was in actual communion with her crucified Saviour, and afterwards bore bloody marks on her forehead (caused by a spiritual crown of thorns), and carried the Sacred Stigma on her hands. When she was unable to attend Communion, The Sacred Host appeared miraculously on her tongue, placed there, apparently, by a considerate and graceful deity. She came into physical conflict with the devil, and finally, she had the gift of bi-location, or being seen in two places at once.

Septics and others, who imagined that miracles only happened hundreds of years ago, will please note these occurrences. May I congratulate the present generation on its transition to that happy period of enlightenment when asses talked, and kings communicated with deceased prophets.

I am disappointed, however, that I have missed this intellectual treat by a period of 22 years. The precious fruit, which I had at first thought to be within my grasp has, after all, been hoisted just out of reach where I may look but not touch.

It is most unfortunate that the chief witness in the case, Dr. O'Reilly, who was the deceased lady's bishop, should have thoughtlessly departed this life shortly after making the statement, "If this is the work of God, it will prosper in spite of opposition." What a pity he did not start the ball rolling well and truly, during her lifetime, when I could have shared his transportations.

However, as she herself was, apparently, remarkably reticent, and owes her present exaltation mainly to her correspondence with her two confessors (both of whom are dead), perhaps I should not have profited much in any case.

I doubt if I can even identify her grave for, it seems, no one thought while to record on her tombstone the name of one who could have set all Christendom ringing with joy.

Ah well, life is full of these disappointments, and I must hope for better luck next time. B. S. W.

THE GLACIAL EPOCH.

SIR,—Ona Melton seems to suggest a theory, or scientific guess would perhaps be a better expression, whoever may be responsible for it, that the piling up of ice and snow on the land would lower the sea level.

But, surely, considering the proportion between sea and land, the lowering of the sea level would be almost imperceptible.

On the other hand, would not the weight of the snow and ice tend to weigh down the land they accumulated on and thus raise the sea level instead of lowering it. (1)

Is it quite exact to say that "until quite recently it was believed that the sun did not move."? This may be true of the savages of Northern Europe, but is it of the ancient Egyptians who represented the Universe as a vast serpent or Dragon, for ever creeping forward, and of which the heavenly bodies, the sun included, were the scales? (2)

How do we know that the sun is travelling round an enormous ellipse? and not a *vine*, its central sun, if it

has one, also travelling through space? (3)

Can the exact precision of the universal clockwork be determined to a nicety? (4)

Can the elliptical orbit of the earth be enormously elongated to produce an ice age? At present it is hardly distinguishable from a circle.

The fact is everything in the Universe is in motion.

Again, until or unless, we can know for certain what kind of space we live in, how can the astronomical measurements on the assumption that we live in Euclidian space be regarded as reliable?

Yours truly,

Prague.

W. W. STRICKLAND.

Society News.

MANCHESTER BRANCH.

The Tenth Annual Meeting was held on Saturday, April 9, in the Engineers' Hall, with Mr. Monks (President) in the chair.

The Secretary read the minutes of the last meeting, which were passed as a correct record.

The President, Secretary and Literature Secretary presented reports of the year's work, and the Auditor presented the Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet—the reports and Balance Sheet were adopted.

The following were elected as Officers and Committee for the ensuing year:—*President*, Mr. Rosetti; *Vice-Presidents*, Messrs. Bayford, Black, Copor, Crompton, Mapp and Monks; *Secretary and Treasurer*, Mr. Monks; *Literature Secretary*, Mr. Greenall; *Committee*, Messrs. Bayford, Bentley, Cohen, Collins, Mapp, Sefman, Smith and Mrs. Rosetti; *Auditor*, Mr. Turner; Messrs. Cohen and Monks were elected Conference Delegates.—W. C.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc

Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday and be marked "Lecture Notice," if not sent on postcard.

LONDON. INDOOR.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (293, Kentish Town Road, Entrance in Holmes Road); 7.30, Mr. F. Hornibrook, "Religion and Health."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (30 Brixton Road, S.W.): 7.0, Social. All welcome. Variety Entertainment with refreshments.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2); 11.0, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., D.Lit., "Spiritualism and Religion."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (101, Tottenham Court Road): 7.30, Annual General Meeting.

OUTDOOR.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Lecture by Mr. George Newton.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Hyde Park): Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7.0; Sunday, 11.30, 3.0 and 6.0, Speakers, Messrs. Saphin, Batting, Hart, etc.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.30, H. Cutner. 6.0, Messrs. Campbell-Everden, Darby and Jackson.

COUNTRY. INDOOR.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH (Assembly Rooms, Front Street); open daily for Reading, etc., from 10.0. All Freethinkers and enquirers welcome.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S. (No. 2 Room, City Hall, "A" Door, Albion Street): 6.30, Annual Business Meeting. All members please attend.

YOU WANT ONE.



N.S.S. BADGE.—A single Pansy flower, size as shown; artistic and neat design in enamel and silver. This emblem has been the silent means of introducing many kindred spirits. Brooch or Stud Fastening. Price 9d., post free.—From THE GENERAL SECRETARY, N.S.S., 62 Farringdon St., E.C.4.

EVERY FREETHINKER should attend The GREAT PUBLIC DEBATE

AT THE
ST. ANDREW'S (GRAND) HALL,
CHARING CROSS, GLASGOW,
ON

TUESDAY, APRIL 26.

SUBJECT:—

"IS CHRISTIANITY OF USE TO THE
WORKING CLASS?"

AFFIRM.—

FATHER VINCENT McNABB, O.P.

NEG.—

GUY A. ALDRED.

Councillor JAMES DUNLOP, M.B., Ch. B. (Shettleston.) has consented to take the Chair.

Doors Open 6.30 p.m.

Chair taken 7.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS TO BOTH SPEAKERS.

Tickets, 6d. each, from Debate Secretary.

A few special subscription and Platform Tickets have been printed to guarantee expenses.

BAKUNIN HOUSE, 13 BURNBANK GARDENS,
GLASGOW.

TO-DAY, SUNDAY, APRIL 24.

FRIARS' HALL.

237, BLACKFRIARS ROAD, S.E.1.

AFFIRM.—

GUY A. ALDRED.

NEG.—

FATHER VINCENT McNABB, O.P.

Debate the Question:

"IS COMMUNISM THE ONLY SOLUTION OF
THE SOCIAL PROBLEM?"

Chair taken at 7 p.m.

Questions to Both Speakers.

Please be early as the Debate must begin at 7 p.m.

Tickets will be on sale at the doors at 6.30 p.m.

IN BEING CLOTHED there is much. In being beautifully clad in garments supplied by Freethinkers there is just everything sartorially excellent. We will unfailingly do the clothes part if you will write now for any of the following:—*Gents' A to D Patterns, suits from 55s.; Gents' E Patterns, suits all at 67s. 6d.; Gents' F to H Patterns, suits from 75s.; Gents' I to M Patterns, suits from 98s.; or Ladies' Fashion and Pattern Sets, costumes from 60s.; frocks from 47s.*—MACCONNELL & MABB, New Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire.

UNWANTED CHILDREN

In a Civilized Community there should be no
UNWANTED Children.

For List of Birth-Control Requisites send 1½d. stamp to

J. B. HOLMES, East Hanney, Wantage, Berkshire

(Established nearly Forty Years.)

THE "FREETHINKER."

THE *Freethinker* may be ordered from any newsagent in the United Kingdom, and is supplied by all the wholesale agents. It will be sent direct from the publishing office, post free, to any part of the world on the following terms:—

One Year, 15s.; Six Months, 7s. 6d.

Three Months, 3s. 9d.

Those who experience any difficulty in obtaining copies of the paper will confer a favour if they will write us, giving full particulars.

Breaking All Records !!

A Freethought Classic at
less than Secondhand
Price :

"HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE"

BY

Prof. J. W. Draper.

THERE is little need to praise Draper's well-known work. It has always occupied a front rank place in the controversy with Christians, and has served as an armoury for all Freethinkers. The writer speaks with authority, and his position prevented the Christian world from altogether ignoring him. There have been many replies to this work, but no answers.

The standard price of this book is 7s. 6d. Some time ago the Secular Society Limited, by special arrangements with the holders of the copyright, arranged to publish an edition at the price of 3s. 6d. It was printed not for profit, but purely for propaganda.

Now the Society is taking a further step. It has reduced the price to

TWO SHILLINGS

This is an unabridged edition ; it runs to 396 pages, and even in the days of cheapest printing would have been regarded as a marvel. To-day it is only the price of a good-sized pamphlet.

Every Freethinker should possess a copy of Draper's great work. He should, in

fact, have two copies—one for his own use and one for the benefit of his Christian friends and neighbours. There is no other work that displays in quite the same way the real influence of the Christian Church on the course of civilization.

Cloth bound. 396 pp. Price 2/- Postage 4½d.

A Work for the Time . . .

Christianity in China:

AN EXPOSURE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

Contains Chapters on: THE JESUITS IN CHINA—THE GREAT TAI-PING REBELLION—EXTRA-TERRITORIALITY—THE BOXER REBELLION—ANCESTOR WORSHIP—BROADCASTING THE BIBLE—DIFFICULTIES IN CHINA.

By WALTER MANN

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

“CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA” is a pamphlet that should be in the hands of every Freethinker, for the purpose of putting some of its contents into the head of every Christian.

There is no publication that so clearly exposes the trickery, the false pretences, the dangers of the foreign missionary movement, as does this one. Every reader of the *Freethinker* should have at least one copy in his or her possession.

Price Sixpence

Postage One Penny. Two copies sent post free.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4

The New Psychology Taboo and Genetics

Four Authoritative Works
All as New

The Psychoanalytic Method

By Dr. OSKAR PFISTER

With Introduction by PROFESSOR FREUD and PROFESSOR G. S. STANLEY HALL.

A Comprehensive Introduction to the Subject, with special reference to Education. 591 pages and 3 plates.

Published at 25s. net. Price 6s. 6d.
(Postage 9d.)

The Psychology of Self-Consciousness

By JULIA TURNER, B.A. (Lond.)

Published at 6s. 6d. net. Price 3s. 6d.
(Postage 4d.)

Our Phantastic Emotions

By T. KENRICK SLADE, B.Sc.

Published at 6s. 6d. net. Price 3s. 6d.
(Postage 4d.)

A Study of the Biological, Sociological, and Psychological Foundation of the Family; a Treatise showing the previous Unscientific Treatment of the Sex Problem in Social Relationships.

By M. M. KNIGHT, Ph.D.;
IVA LOWTHER PETERS, Ph.D.; and
PHYLLIS BLANCHARD, Ph.D.

Part I.—The New Biology and the Sex Problem in Society
Part II.—The Institutionalized Sex Taboo
Part III.—The Sex Problem in the Light of Modern Psychology

Published at 10s. 6d. net. Price 4s.
(Postage 5½d.)

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 Farringdon Street, B.C.4.

PIONEER LEAFLETS.

WHAT WILL YOU PUT IN ITS PLACE? By CHAPMAN COHEN.

WHAT IS THE USE OF THE CLERGY? By CHAPMAN COHEN.

PECULIAR CHRISTIANS. By CHAPMAN COHEN.

RELIGION AND SCIENCE. By A. D. McLAREN.

DOES GOD CARE? By W. MANN.

DO YOU WANT THE TRUTH?

Price 1s. 6d. per 100, postage 3d.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 Farringdon Street, B.C.4.