

# HONESTY IN THE PULPIT.

The

# FREETHINKER

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## Views and Opinions.

### Honesty in the Pulpit.

ONE often wonders what would happen if the whole of the Christian clergy were suddenly smitten with an epidemic of clear thinking and honest speaking. That there would be a gigantic exodus from the ministry there can be no doubt. As it is, the exodus is of far greater dimensions than most people imagine. Putting on one side the number of prominent men in the world of science and of letters, who were destined for the Church, but who sought some other walk in life because they found themselves unable to believe, there are a very large number of men who quietly drop away from the priesthood of the various churches, Established, Roman Catholic, or Dissenting, and about whom little is heard. Often these are unwilling, for various reasons, to trumpet abroad the fact that they have given up all belief in Christianity, and the Churches themselves take care to say as little about it as is possible. And to this there is to be added the much greater number who would leave the churches if they were only in a position to do so. But many of them, when they have reached, say, middle-age, find themselves with family responsibilities; they are unfitted for commercial life; in the Freethought world the financial side offers no attractions whatever—it is a case of soldier's rations at best, and not always that—so they remain where they are. I am not speaking in the dark, or at random. I have had many letters from men in the various churches, who would be only too glad to come out, if a fair living could be guaranteed them; my predecessor, G. W. Foote, also received similar communications; and I have no doubt but that his predecessor, Charles Bradlaugh, had the same experience. The writers of these letters find their positions intellectually intolerable, but they cannot, for various reasons, some domestic, some temperamental, face the hardships that a life devoted to Freethought involves.

### A Living Lie.

How do most of these men manage to stay where they are? A few of the bolder ones face the position with courage, and go on preaching what they know all the time to be a lie. And that does take courage, of a sort. Very many men can tell a lie while persuading themselves that if it is not the truth, it is at least a justifiable lie. But it does take some boldness for a man to stand up in public and deliberately state what he knows to be an unvarnished falsehood. The vast majority of these unbelieving clerics play an easier game. In one direction they cease altogether to preach Christianity. They give discourses on social and other subjects, that have no real, certainly no necessary connexion, with the religion they are paid to preach. There must be thousands of the clergy who never preach religious doctrines for the simple reason that they no longer believe in them. They satisfy themselves with the reflection that they are doing good to those who listen, although the good they do is easily nullified by the fact that their congregations are not really being enlightened in the direction in which enlightenment is most needed. The vast majority, however, remain in the church and proceed to give to Christian doctrines and beliefs an interpretation which they have never borne, and never can honestly bear. God becomes a mere universal force. Christ is presented as merely a good man filled with the desire for social reform. Prayer is an inspiration which does a man good, not because there is any objective answer to his prayers, but because he feels better after he has prayed. The Bible is held up and its inspiration insinuated, not because it is "inspired," but because it throws some light on the early beliefs of the race. In this way they manage to retain their posts, but they also sow deep and wide the seeds of intellectual cowardice and untrustworthiness.

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### A Human Document.

A friend sends me a copy of an American paper, *Atlantic Life*, which well illustrates what has been above said. Father James A. Horton, who is described as one of the foremost Catholic clergymen and educators of America, left the Catholic Church, and the Marist College, of which he was the head. It was reported that he left the Roman Church in order to join the Baptists, which, if true, would only prove that Mr. Horton had a taste for variegated stupidity. But in a letter to a Protestant friend, which the paper named reprints, with Mr. Horton's permission, he says this is not true. He left the Church for the simple and sufficient reason that he had ceased to believe in its teachings. He was honest in his belief, and he remained honest in his disbelief. In this respect he stands out in contrast to thousands of other parsons

who may have been honest in their belief, but are decidedly not honest in their disbelief. Mr. Horton says that he had ceased to believe in the teachings of the Church—of any Church. And he says quite plainly that many clergymen are with him in his disbelief. But:—

the difficulty comes in when they try to decide what they shall do about it. Are they obliged in conscience to leave the Church that teaches these things, or should they continue to give an outward adherence? Many considerations of family, of feeling for others, the shock that leaving might cause to many, urge them to remain and make mental reservations in their worship.

Thousands find themselves obliged to do that thing to-day. Hundreds of priests and many ministers do it. For the past twenty years I have been pondering over this problem and studying it from every angle. I tried every compromise and makeshift I knew. But I could never get mental peace from any of them. It seemed to me dishonest, a sort of mental hypocrisy, to live one life and believe another. It got worse as I grew older. I finally had to make a decision one way or another; to forget the problem altogether, to close my mind to what I am convinced is the truth, or to leave the whole business. I chose the latter because my conscience dictated it as the only self-respecting course to follow. . . . I had rather beg than feel like a hypocrite. There is the whole matter in a paragraph.

Yes, that is the whole matter in a paragraph. But what a paragraph! For nearly twenty years Mr. Horton was wrestling with his doubts, treating as suggestions from the devil, promptings and thoughts which he should have taken as quite normal, to be investigated easily and freely. I am quite ready to believe that during those years Mr. Horton must have passed many hours of mental anguish. Other men in similar positions have described their travail to us, and I am quite willing to accept their stories at their full face value. But all this makes the history of the Christian Church the more damnable, the indictment against it the more deadly. For it should not be the case that any man or woman finds the doubts concerning any teaching matters of anguish or mental suffering. Still less should it have taken years to decide what to do in a case where a teaching is found to be false. All these attempts to square the new truth with the old falsehood, all the mental suffering experienced on the road to truth, only occur because of the influence of Christianity on the human mind. It is Christianity that labels these doubts sins, and makes the unbiassed search for truth the road of suffering and torment. It is so common for us to find it so, that we take it as a matter of course. We do not realize that it would not be so, that men might welcome truth, from whatever quarter it comes, if Christianity had not for centuries made the search for truth as dangerous as possible, the expression of what one believed to be true, whenever it ran counter to established religious beliefs, the most costly practice in which one could indulge. It took Mr. Horton fifteen years to make up his mind what to do. It should not have taken him fifteen minutes. And he is one of the rarer specimens! What must the effect of Christianity be on weaker characters? Perhaps, of such are bishops made.

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#### Towards a Better World.

Mr. Horton's case is not an uncommon one. It could easily be duplicated in the ministry of every one of the Christian Churches. It would receive still more numerous illustrations in the world of laymen. Thanks to Christianity, very many thousands of men and women are afraid to be honest where religion is

concerned. They dare not speak out what they believe, they live a lie in the name of Christian morality. And they tell us in their autobiographies of the mental torture they endured in giving up Christianity and following the truth as they saw it. And all this without the slightest realization that a religion which produces this effect on the minds of men is one that should be ostracized from decent human society. There should be no more compunction in giving up belief about God or heaven, or hell, than there should be about changing one's opinion concerning the causes of an eclipse. I do not doubt the truth of these stories of mental tribulation; I know they are true; I also know it is disgraceful that they should be true. It is not at all uncommon for Christians to ask us what Freethought has done, and what is Freethought doing? That question could be answered in various ways, but I should be quite content to justify the Freethought crusade, by the simple reply that it has made the world easier for honest men to live, and it is creating a world in which men may call a lie a lie when they see it to be such, and to tell the truth when they believe they know what the truth is. It is a disgrace to civilization that men should be called brave because they dare to tell the truth and to act honestly. It should be a disgrace for men to do otherwise. We have had plenty of talk during this past ten years about making a land fit for heroes. It would be something if we could make this country a land fit for truth-loving men and women to live in. Given that, and very many of our ills might quickly die out. We should at least cease to read of men—and these among the better type of Christians—who take fifteen years to decide whether they ought to tell the truth about their religion or not. Mr. Horton's confession is—unintentionally—one of the most terrible impeachments of the influence of the Christian religion that I have read for some time.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

#### Bruno.

Flout God?

As if a microcosm on a microcosm  
Could bring to blush Omniscience  
By affirmation of Its universal laws.  
Give pause;

A mockery of God indeed to state,  
As do the lying priesthoods of the world,  
That in stupid myth and still more stupid  
miracle

Is Deity's revelation.

Damnation?

I fear no more your theological hell,  
That has made bitter to the very core  
The lives of thousands, than do I  
These sticks you kindle.

Dwindle

Your congregations as the power  
Of knowledge, truth and justice  
O'ercome vile ignorance and intolerance.  
For the rest . . .

I rest.

W. THOMPSON.

#### MR. HOOVER'S IDEAL.

We should strive that there shall be no child in America that has not been born under proper conditions, that does not live in hygienic surroundings, that does not have prompt medical attention and inspection, that does not receive instruction in the elements of health; that there shall be no child who has not the complete birthright of a sound mind in a sound body and the encouragement to express in fullest measure the spirit within which is the final endowment of every human being.—Mr. Hoover.

### "What is the Catholic Faith?"

It is beyond all controversy that Catholicism is the only version of Christianity that really matters, even for Freethinkers, being the version accepted by an overwhelming majority of Christians to-day. Roman Catholicism is only another name for the largest and most powerful Church in Christendom; but Catholicism is by no means confined to the Roman Catholic Church. Independent Churches may be Catholic both in doctrine and ritual, without being in any official relation to the Papacy. Such is the case with the King's Weigh House, under the ministry of the Rev. Dr. Orchard. Then there is a large party in the Anglican Church which calls itself Anglo-Catholic, and which is equally independent of the Church of Rome as is Dr. Orchard's Communion. On Trinity Sunday, an Anglo-Catholic priest, the Rev. A. E. Cornibeer, Vicar of St. Matthew's, Westminster, preached a sermon, entitled, "What is the Catholic Faith?" which appeared in the *Church Times* of June 17. The first sentence in this exceptionally challenging discourse is a fair sample of the blindly and offensively dogmatic attitude of the Anglo-Catholic Pulpit: "To-day, Trinity Sunday, we keep the festival of the Eternal God Himself—God as He is in Himself; God as He is in relation to us His unworthy creatures." We venture to assert, with the utmost certitude, that Mr. Cornibeer does not know God as he is in himself. He does not even know that a being he names God exists at all. When St. Paul met the Greeks at Athens, he accused them of being "somewhat superstitious," as if he himself were the very opposite. Now listen to the extraordinary manner in which he proceeds to demonstrate his innocence of the vice of superstition:—

For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this set I forth unto you. The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, and he made of one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons and the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us, for in him we live and move and have our being (Acts xvii, 22-28).

Such was the doctrine of God, which the apostle Paul is reported to have proclaimed to the Athenians in the midst of the Areopagus, and naturally the sermon closed with an earnest presentation of the belief in Christ's resurrection and his final judgment of the world. The peculiarity of Paul's Gospel was that he claimed to have received it by a direct revelation from heaven; and so certain was he of the truth of his claim that he did not hesitate to denounce every other Gospel, if it ever so slightly differed from or contradicted his own, as absolutely false. In his own sight he was, as a preacher, absolutely infallible, confidently assuring the Galatians that though he, "or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any Gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema." The author of the sermon in the *Church Times*, now under criticism, does not formally claim infallibility, like Paul or a Pope, yet he has the audacity to say:—

On Trinity Sunday, in a special sense, "a door is opened in heaven," and lifting up the eyes of our hearts, dulled by sin and so shrinking from the vision of perfect holiness, perfect purity, and yet longing to see, we gaze through the door opened in

heaven. The glory dazzles us. We behold a Throne, and on the Throne a Lamb, as it had been slain. Before the Throne a sea of glass like unto crystal; round about the Throne a rainbow like unto an emerald. Seven lamps of fire burn before the Throne. Elders clothed in white raiment and wearing crowns of gold are round about the Throne.

We can honestly assure Mr. Cornibeer that no genuine Materialist would ever dream of indulging in such a grossly *materialistic* vision as the one he has fragmentarily copied from the Book of Revelation.

Let us now examine the Catholic Faith itself as defined in the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds. What, then, is the Catholic Faith? The answer given is as follows:—

The Catholic Faith is this: that we worship One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity. The Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not Three Gods, but One God.

The first General Council of the Church, held at Nicaea, in the year 325, was called by the Emperor Constantine, in the hope of bringing healing peace to the body of Christ, which was being torn to pieces by the altogether brutal controversy between the Athanasians and the Arians. Some 350 bishops, out of a total number of nearly 2,000, responded to the imperial summons. From various testimonies it appears that the majority of those who attended were bigoted fanatics, whose ignorance and incapacity were abysmal. Dean Milman tells us that according to one ecclesiastical historian, "it was a battle in the night, in which neither party could see the meaning of the other." Socrates, Rufinus, and Sozomen relate interesting stories illustrating the truth of that statement. One of them gives an account of a distinguished Pagan philosopher, a perfect master of argument, who, while making contemptuous allusions to Christians, met more than his match in an aged bishop, who was generally regarded as a notoriously unskilled defender of the faith. All the bishop did was to recite what afterwards came to be known as the Nicene Creed, ending by addressing the great philosopher thus: "Cease therefore the vain labour of seeking proofs for or against what is established by faith, and the manner in which these things may be or may not be; but, if thou believest, answer at once to me as I put my questions to you." According to the story the philosopher was struck dumb by this new mode of argument, and both he and the friends with him immediately became Christian converts. Such a tale is positively incredible. These disputes occurred at preliminary meetings before the Council was officially opened. Another story, or possibly the same story differently told, is described as follows by Dean Stanley in his *Eastern Church*, p. 143.

The tradition which identified the simple disputant with Spyridion (the aged bishop) grew in later times into the form which it bears in all the pictures of the Council, and which is commemorated in the services of the Greek Church. Aware of his incapacity of argument, he took a brick and said, "You deny that Three can be One. Look at this: it is one, and yet it is composed of the three elements of fire, earth, and water." As he spoke, the brick resolved itself into its component parts; the fire flew upward, the clay remained in Spyridion's hand, and the water fell to the ground. The philosopher, or (according to some accounts) Arius himself, was so confounded as to declare himself converted on the spot.

These and other similar tales recorded by ecclesi-

astical writers of the fourth century illustrate the temper and intellectual status of a large portion of the Nicene Council, and prepare us for the results of the bitter wrangling and spiteful personalities which characterized their controversies.

J. T. LLOYD.

(To be concluded.)

## The State Church and the Labour Movement.

"There is no good in arguing against the inevitable. The only argument against an east wind is to put on your overcoat."—Lowell.

"The chief difference between a theatre and a church is that you pay to go in one, and pay to get out of the other."—Mark Twain.

It used to be said in Ancient Rome that two soothsayers could not meet in the street without smiling. Our modern augurs, the priests, should be as complacent, for they have weathered the storm of Democracy, and hoodwinked the innocent Labour leaders. At the present moment, for example, when the Conservative Government's plans for the reform of the House of Lords have just been announced, it will be seen that the Bench of Bishops is to be included in a reformed house, without any reduction in influence or number. Amid all the changes of the political kaleidoscope the bishops are to be preserved like a fly in amber, but possessed of enormous potentialities for reaction.

It is proposed that the reformed House of Lords should number 350, and the present Bench of Bishops numbers no less than 40. As attendances in the Upper Chamber are notoriously small, this two-score of priestly votes is generally sufficient to maintain the balance of power in favour of reaction. As the leopard does not readily part with his spots, the Episcopal Bench may be relied upon to resist any effort made by the working classes to secure better social conditions. The Bishops have always done this, and there seems no reason for their improvement in this respect.

Glance back over history's page and see the record of the Right-reverend Fathers-in-God. For the Luddites breaking machinery in the despair of starvation the law then provided the hangman. The Bishops showed no pity. Attempt after attempt was made by social reformers to get a Royal Commission to inquire into the then serious condition of the English people. The attempt was snuffed out, the Bishops lending a willing hand. Robert Owen arises with his co-operative ideas, and dreams of a federation of trade-unions, and a new moral world, and the Bishops call upon God and the Government of the day to put down these pestilential heretics. Chartists and trade-unionists endeavoured to better the condition of the working people, and the bishops only showed alarm and amazement. When Joseph Arch voiced the grievances of the poor agricultural labourers the Bishop of Gloucester had a fit of divine inspiration, and suggested at a public dinner, that the horse-pond was the most fitting place for a rural agitator.

As legislators in the Upper Chamber, the Bishops have been the despair, not only of politicians, but of the plain citizen. These Right-reverend Fathers-in-God could not be got to see that it was wrong in a civilized country to hang starving people for stealing a few shillingsworth of drapery, and unwise to exclude from all political power, millions of law-abiding people keenly interested in politics. A caste apart from their fellows, they always held that people who rejected their priestly ministrations did not deserve

to sit in Parliament, to vote, or to enjoy the educational advantages of our ancient universities.

These successors of the Apostles get their positions in a very commonplace way. Nominated by the Prime Minister, who may be an heretical Nonconformist, they usually support their patron, and are always fearful of challenging the existing order. History has proved that the Bench of Bishops as legislators were commonly behind and against the best spirit of the age, blindly suspicious of aspirations and desires which posterity has approved. The humane legislation of the entire nineteenth century, resulting in the saner treatment of criminals and lunatics, the abolition of the pillory, the stocks, and the branding of prisoners, the suppression of bear-baiting, bull-baiting, duelling, workhouse reform; and the prevention of cruelty to children and animals, was never initiated by the Bishops, nor supported with any spirit by the Episcopal Bench. The flogging of women in prison provoked no protest from these Fathers-in-God. When humanitarians pressed Parliament to make an end of flogging in the army and navy, and though soldiers and sailors died under the lash, and petitions were presented and debates raised, the Bishops sat speechless in their robes in the House of Lords.

With the large landowners the Bishops always ranged themselves on the question of the game laws, the monstrous severity of which is one of the worst blots on our legal system. The Bishops never stood forward, as men like Romilly, Mackintosh, Plimsoll and Bradlaugh did, in the House of Commons, and as Shaftesbury did in the House of Lords, as the champion of unpopular causes and of uncared-for people.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century death was the legal punishment in England for a number of petty crimes. To steal over five shillingsworth of goods, to pick a pocket, to kill a sheep—death was the penalty. The struggle for the amendment of the criminal laws was a struggle for the recognition of human life as a thing more precious than the goods in a draper's shop, than the life of a sheep, and it was also a battle for civilization. The part that the Bishops played in the campaign against the savagery of the law is such as to make the name of a bishop a hiss and a byword. Not many votes were given by the Bishops during the nineteenth century for the Bills for the saving of life, and for the removal from the Statute Book for bloodthirsty laws hateful to decent, honest men. Indeed, the loyalty of the Bench of Bishops to the altar and the throne was not more conspicuous than their loyalty to the gallows and the hangman.

Maybe this deep devotion to the rights of property is partly owing to the fact that the Church of England is a millionaire property-owner. Not only is the Church one of the very largest landlords in this country of ours, but the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are among the most usurious and tyrannical of landlords. The Church's property includes coal royalties imposed upon the collieries of Durham and other counties, and other royalties upon water-borne coal entering London. So that whatever criticisms may be levelled at landlords and royalty-owners applies as much to the Church, which is supposed to be the Church of the people of England, but which is one of the biggest enemies that the people of this country has had to contend against in their fight for freedom.

There are many paradoxes and inconsistencies in connexion with the Christian Religion, but few more striking than this matter of coal royalties. Think of it for a moment! For millenniums the geological changes of the earth took place according to rigid

natural law. Primeval forests flowered, matured, decayed, and were slowly pressed down according to Nature's gigantic plan. And what do you imagine that these thousands of years of evolution were intended to do? It was precisely that the Commissioners of the Anglican Church should be enabled to extract two shillings per ton royalty from this coal, and that the rector of Little Sloppington should pass his comfortable days "basking in the sunshine of the countenance of God," to adapt a phrase used by one of the biggest clerical charlatans of the nineteenth century.

One of the troubles of present-day social conditions is that educated people are too "high-brow," and uneducated persons so very commonplace and practical. Mr. Arnold Bennett said, the other day, that incomprehension of the relativity theory was perhaps the most widespread human characteristic of the age. That reminds us of the story of the sick countryman who was in deep conversation with the vicar. "You say, vicar, that folks in heaven wear wings and fly about?" "Um—um—well!" was the parson's non-committal reply. "If it is," went on the patient eagerly, "I'll fly you for a quid when we get there."

MIMNERMUS.

### The Heavens Declare the Glory—

As it is now thirty-six years since I first wrote lines in the *Freethinker* (1891), it may not seem out of place if I ask for a slight favour, namely, to be allowed to dedicate a page to the ideas of a French philosopher, who has had more sway over my mind than anybody else in the realm of social wisdom. I may say at once that this admirable man, Auguste Comte, has had to stand for many years (if I may so speak of the dead) on the doorstep of English Freethought, with doubtful chance of entry, because he expressed his prime ideal in the phrase "Religion of Humanity." The eyes of all the Freethought congregation are fastened upon me when I utter this word "religion," and, being only a young citizen of 71 years, I tremble. I will simply say that Comte and I employ the word in the fine sense of the Service of Man. Nor do I intend raising a discussion on the point.

Comte was born at Montpellier, in the South of France, January 19, 1798. Even when he was a pupil at the Polytechnic School, in Paris, he conceived an immense objection to Napoleon and Napoleonic methods; and he likewise definitely and finally abandoned Catholicism and Theism. In his last Will and Testament (1855), he wrote:—

From the age of thirteen I have been, by a natural process, entirely freed from all supernatural belief . . . I could not really give systematic form to the worship of humanity till I had completely got rid of God.

It would be out of place here to describe this "form," which occupied his heart and mind, and all his time, from 1848 till his death. I will refer to but one element in it, in order to show that it was far from being solely a plan of ceremonial and aspiration. I speak of his Historical Calendar, which allots a name, and often two names, to each day of the year for commemoration; the list extending from Early Civilization (represented by Greek and other myths of Prometheus, Numa, etc.) to the inventors, scientists, philosophers and statesmen up to the mid-nineteenth century. The Calendar omits all the Catholic and Protestant festivals (Easter, Whitsun, etc.), treats 1789, the date of the very Humanist French Revolution, as the Year One, and divides the year into 13 months of four weeks each (364 days,

with one over, or two in Leap Year). Each year, and each month begins on a Monday. It is the most rational almanac I know, and I trust that, some day, the League of Nations will adopt it, and commend it for the acceptance of mankind. It is, of course, modifiable in details.

A few weeks ago, I compiled a pamphlet of *Golden Words*\* from Comte's writings, and I mark a few quotations for comment, particularly stressing this one to begin with:—

The heavens tell the glory of Hipparchus, Kepler and Newton, and of all who helped to state their laws.

This remark is, of course, a re-pointing of the Hebrew Psalmist's exclamation: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." To the Psalmist, as was natural enough in the Fifth or Fourth Century B.C., the starry sky appeared as a kind of illuminating machine, or candelabra, fashioned by the hand of the divine craftworker, Yahweh of Mount Horeb, in Arabia. To Comte, it suggested the astronomical labours and patient research of Greek and later scientists. They slowly sketched and framed the statements of regular and calculable action which governs our calendars, our seasons, our time-pieces, and our daily plans on land or sea, and which typifies the general body of "laws" of science. When Comte further intimates that "there is no freedom of conscience in astronomy," he is shrewdly reminding us that the Bible myth of Joshua's staying the sun's course is displaced by the modern conception of the Copernican system. In an age of scientific education (not yet reached!) youth will universally learn obedience to the "laws" of nature in their latest exact terms. But these "laws" are the best formulations that human patience and observation and experiment and reflexion can arrive at. Their discovery in all the sciences—astronomy, physics, chemistry, and biology—flashes a splendour upon the heavens, the earth, the waters "under the earth," and all that is therein.

The grand quest passes beyond electricity, radiology, bacteriology, anatomy, and the rest. As Comte says:—

Civilization, at first, in a vast and increasing measure, directs man's action to the external world, and seems to concentrate attention on our material existence alone; but this development continually strengthens the noblest faculties of human nature.

That is to say (and we seem to touch Karl Marx's doctrine at this point) man's exercise of wit, courage, perseverance and co-operation in the conquest of nature gradually unfolds the qualities we call moral. It was well observed by "Stepniak," that certain fine attributes of the Russian peasant, such as kindly simplicity and honest directness, arose from the man's practical industry in earth culture. The virtues associated with the family, social order and intercourse political improvement, etc., are the slow production of the ages. Codes of justice and good manners came neither from the God of Sinai nor the Gods of Babylon, Greece, Rome, Egypt, or India. They came from man's heart and intelligence, and were beaten into shape, and re-beaten, and again formed and reformed in the tremendous movement that we call civilization. I have often stopped to watch children at play; first, of course, in the sheer glad sympathy with the leap and mirth of lissome youth, but also because I see, in the children's obedience to the "laws" of the game (hop-scotch, marbles, ball) the signs of a wondrous passion which has mapped the

\* Which anybody can have free by sending me a penny stamp (Armored, Woodfield Avenue, Ealing, London). It covers 16 pages.

knowledge of Galileo, Darwin, Faraday, Kelvin, Curie and Marconi. The same idea is put in other terms by Comte: "Science, in all respects, is but a special extension of the general social reason." I hope, as years elapse, this thought will become truly popular. Ordinary citizens too often regard "science" as a dry, bony, and forbidding mass of facts that half-chill the visitor to the halls of geology, magnetism, anatomy, or medicine. But Science, rightly presented and aided by art and poetry, will appeal to the people of the whole earth, just as a lovely strain of Beethoven appeals to a spellbound audience. They will feel that these "revelations" of the laws of nature are created by the same simple good sense—highly elaborated—that rules households, villages, cities and the daily occasions of social life.

It is in the same mode of historical reflexion that Comte affirms: "The great creation of the Gods constituted the first purely speculative effort of our intelligence." We know too well, to-day, what vexatious and tedious arguments and quarrels arise, or have arisen in the past, over questions of the existence, nature and history of Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Ormuzd, Marduk, Yahweh (Jehovah of the Fire-bush), Osiris, Zeus, Jupiter, or the God of Bishop Butler, or of Mrs. Eddy. We are still in the dust and roar, and the ambulances are yet busy, carrying away the wounded priests, or the corpses of commentators. The time will come when such battles will be records, and nothing more. And then it will be an instructive part of education to display to youth the varied attempts of mankind, in creating the Gods, to work out a sort of primitive model of nature—processes of divine wills directing wind, weather, growth, flowering, fruitage, birth, health, and the expansion of arts and crafts. Youth will not be asked to "believe" in any of these Divine Wills, any more than the children who visit the British Museum to-day with their teachers are invited to "believe" in the Venus or Dionysus or Mithra, whose sculptured figures they see in the galleries.

It is worthy of note, that while Comte enthusiastically lauds science, and even allots the seven years of adolescence (ages 14 to 21) to science in the shape of popular lectures as part of civic education, he is for ever insisting upon the subordination of science to service. He would have us "Reason in order to act"; but his complete maxim runs: "Act from affection, and think in order to act." That is to say, the prime impulse in social conduct must be fraternal; but simple kindness or generosity by no means suffices; we must reflect on the issues of experience. Comte puts the same idea in another guise, when he remarks that "love, when real, ever desires light in order to attain its ends"; that is, the light of actualities and reason.

It is a pleasure to see, on the wall of the house in Paris where Comte died, September 5, 1857, a memorial tablet to the great Humanist, affixed by the Municipality.

F. J. GOULD.

Humanism is as wide as the human spirit; and in education it means the awakening and liberation of this spirit in the individual child by cleansing the channels and increasing the flow of self-expression, by making him conscious of his heritage and of his true function in society, and lastly, by teaching him to take flight upon the wings of imagination. It embraces, in other words, all those subjects which deal with man as man; man as an individual soul dedicated to the pursuit of Beauty, Truth and Goodness; man as a social being with obligations to his immediate society, his nation and the whole human race. . . . The essential subjects of Humanism are those which begin with man, among which Art, Literature . . . are clearly of greatest immediate importance.

## Acid Drops.

Those who are interested in the power of suggestion and in mass psychology may find instructive material in the mania that has been growing of recent years of the gathering of masses of people to welcome, or rather to enthuse, over any kind of celebrity that comes before the public. When Mary Pickford came to England there were huge crowds to "welcome" her. Since then we have had similar scenes with all sorts of people including airmen, and latest of all, a prize-fighter. Any one does apparently, from a member of the Royal family down to a performer in the prize ring. To say that there is any solid sentiment or any genuine appreciation behind these scenes is to talk nonsense. The programme is suggested to the public, and the public in its unintelligent way lives up to it.

On the occasion of the return of the Duke and Duchess of York, the newspaper press described, in gushing terms, the affecting scenes witnessed in the fact that the King and Queen kissed their daughter-in-law and the Prince of Wales kissed his sister-in-law. The Duchess appears to be a very charming lady, but why on earth it should be chronicled because the ordinary affections exist between members of the Royal family is rather more than we can tell. For our own part we should have felt surprised had the Duchess been welcomed in any other way by those near to her. Is this kind of thing in the public press—columns of it—due to a lack of intelligence, or because we are a hopelessly sentimental people?

One other specimen of current journalism. Mr. James Douglas comments on the eclipse thus:—

What a shock the world would get if the sun stood still at totality! It is unthinkable, of course, but why? Because we pin our faith to the regular habits of the earth, the moon and the sun. But no scientist can tell us why the universe is a vast clock that never runs down or goes out of order.

The inanity of this almost defies comment. But Mr. Douglas, as editor of the *Sunday Express* is fond of the religious pose, and so must live up to it. And he is as well aware as the next, that to please religionists there is nothing like slinging together a number of words, and at the same time to point out what science cannot tell us. But we should like to know the scientist who thinks of the universe as like a clock that is wound up, and rewound whenever occasion demands. That appears to be the function of Mr. Douglas's deity—an eternal clockmaker, who having made a clock, it is his eternal job to wind it up whenever it threatens to run down.

We don't know what Mr. Douglas understands by the universe never getting out of order. Probably he means nothing at all; it may be just a phrase thrown in to fill up space. But if "order" means that like conditions always eventuate in like consequences, we may point out to him that this is a statement of sheer Determinism, and does not require any deity to account for it. If, on the other hand, "order" means that things never go awry, this, from the human point of view, is what is constantly happening. An earthquake, an epidemic, the failure of a food crop, the play of human passion, constantly upsets things, and disturbs an ideal order. In fact, a large part of the energies of mankind is spent in attempting to readjust the works of the Almighty clockmaker. We admit it is perhaps unfair to criticize Mr. Douglas in this way. He might urge in extenuation that he is not writing for readers who analyse what he has to say.

Judge Baristow, at Clerkenwell County Court, said that the prisons would be full if he had to send to gaol everyone who did not speak the truth. The Christian fetish-book, on which witnesses swear to speak the truth, "s'welp me God," would appear to be a bit of a joke. But though all our Judges know that to be the case, none of them have the courage publicly to say so.

Prof. A. M. Low declares that many traditions are ridiculous, and few more so than the top hat, which commemorates an age when neither morals, education, nor art was particularly pleasant. We gather that the Professor would not, if pressed, give a favourable opinion as to the rest of the Episcopal attire, and for similar reasons. Still, that tradition is not the most ridiculous nor most harmful. The palm for this we award to the tradition that regards the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God, and dog-collared medicine-men as divinely appointed leaders.

Says the Superintendent of Education, Cape Providence, South Africa, secondary education is provided for all in Cape Providence, and not for selected pupils only. Perhaps the same state of affairs may be possible in England, so soon as our intelligent politicians can get into their heads the fact that international disputes can be settled other than by war, and that, therefore, super-dreadnoughts and giant bombing-planes are unnecessary and costly luxuries.

South Africa is a land of promise for those who can work and laugh, says the Chief Scout. It is obviously no place for killjoy Calvinistic pastors.

Talking of health, a singer advises people to Sing and be Safe. Our hymn-bawling Salvationists go one better. They advocate Sing and be Saved. If their Lord hears all the noise they make, we fancy he must ejaculate at times, "Save me from my friends!"

The Navy is to have a museum of its own. We like to think we are helping to bring nearer the time when the place for navies and armies is in a museum.

The Public Health (Smoke Abatement) Act came into force on July 1. The purpose of the Act is the preventing of smoke fogs. The Intellectual Health (Fog Abatement) Act came into force in 1881, when the *Freethinker* was founded; its purpose being the dispelling of mental fog emitted from Christian pulpits.

The Secretary of the Lord's Day Observance Society says the Society has had a year of successes in preventing Sunday cinemas, concerts, opening of theatres and music-halls, and other attempted desecration of the Lord's Day. The Society hasn't been quite so successful as it likes to think. The result of its activities is that people having been debarred from taking their pleasures in certain ways, have found other means of satisfying themselves. And those other means are increasing in variety, despite what the Society is able to do in its self-appointed task of interfering with the liberty of others. One thing is certain about the Lord's Dayers' activities—they don't secure any clients for the Churches. They merely antagonize the average indifferent man-in-the-street.

Lord Dawson of Penn, the King's Physician, in debate on the Liquor Popular Control Bill, the other week, said that there are good reasons for the great improvement in the temperance of the people of this country. Our people are steadily becoming more sober, and it is really an outrage to call this country a non-sober country. This improvement, he said, is due to better housing and to a widening of popular taste. Men and women today have wider interests than ever before. They have a greater love of fresh air. There is better companionship between men and women. Young people show a strong desire to keep fit and go in for games; and the more sensible dress of women helps them in that. The way to further improvement in sobriety is by the encouragement of games, the provision of open spaces, and the encouragement of the tendencies he had mentioned. On these lines great results could be achieved in the next ten years. Lord Dawson is right. We notice he doesn't give any credit for the change to the pious temperance fanatics. Perhaps he thinks about

them as we do, they have done more harm than good. They have given strong liquors an attraction to certain types of minds through their fanatic condemnations and exaggerations.

At a Conference of Boys' Clubs connected with the Chapels, some speakers pointed out that the lads of today were no longer satisfied with draughts and billiards—and, we suppose, with prayers and hymns as a supplement. They want dances, boxing and various games. The clubs, said the speakers, had somehow to be made as alluring as the dance-hall and the street corner. The *Sunday School Chronicle* appears not to favour the notion of making the clubs pleasurable. It says: "We have more confidence in a virile Christianity which makes Christ central and winsome." Well, the blunt truth is that these client-catching clubs will not get the boys to support them if the winsome Christ is to be the only attraction. Modern lads want something a little more wholesome to occupy their leisure moments with.

Major Harding Cox, the specialist in letters "To the Editor," says there is undoubtedly a widespread opinion that the hereditary principle in regard to legislative matters is an anachronism. Its restriction, he says, has become a necessity. One would have thought that its abolition, not mere restriction, is the necessity. Major Cox adds:—

Even more to be desired is the total elimination of the Episcopal Bench, the bigoted and narrow-minded ethics of which proved a drag on long-overdue and greatly needed social and domestic reforms.

This is indeed plain speaking, and the gallant writer earns our gratitude for passing on to a wider public what we said to the *Freethought* reader the other week.

You expect other people to listen to you and respect your views, says a writer; well, listen to other people and respect their views. That is a piece of good advice Christians might do well to pin in their hats. The average *Freethinker* is willing to listen to the Christian's views, but the average Christian thinks it his duty to refuse to listen to the *Freethinker*, and believes it is a virtue to lie about the *Freethinker's* opinions.

Where shall we find truth, asks Sir Phillip Gibbs, if the novelists give up working? There is no need to worry about that. Have we not some first-class romancers attached to societies specializing in Protestant or Catholic Truth? These may cancel out each other's "truth," but that enables one to discover a piece of real truth; namely, that one must need look for the truth outside the camps of these Christian warriors, and outside the heavenly inspired book from which each gets his information and inspiration.

A pious contemporary says that the public protest against the persecution of Rumanian Baptists is receiving widespread attention. It adds: "Some Baptists are evidently still alive to their historic task of advocating and defending religious freedom." Yes; and that is about all they are interested in defending. They are active enough when their own particular brand of freedom is threatened. But when the larger freedom—freedom of speech for all and any opinion—has to be advocated and defended, the freedom-loving Baptists are as dumb as an oyster. And naturally so. Their noble Exemplar was, in this respect, as dumb as they.

We shall have to cease criticizing that worthy gentleman, Gipsy Smith. At a meeting to celebrate his jubilee as an evangelist he received gracious messages from the Archbishop of Melbourne, the Bishop of London, Sir Arthur Yapp of the Y.M.C.A., Dr. T. R. Glover, and the Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George. When such exalted personages think the Gipsy a fit object to hurl bouquets at, it can hardly be right for us to throw brickbats. Perhaps after all he is not really so sloppy as he appears to be.

Describing the recent discoveries at Ur, a lecturer at the Guildhouse, London, mentioned the surprisingly high standard of housing and craftsmanship that existed among the advanced civilization in Mesopotamia. People of 4,000 years ago were living in houses better than some places in Westminster to-day; and, we may add, considerably better than the houses to be found when the Christian Churches of Europe were at the height of their power and glory. The Christian Churches didn't mind if the majority of people were living in hovels, so long as their dupes were spiritually-minded enough to find the money to build elaborate houses for God.

The President of the Denbigh, Flint, and Merioneth Baptist Association, says that three things remain unshaken—"the Bible as a means of enlightening the world, the Church as a means of saving the world, and Christianity as a means of saving the world." We note this gentleman does not say they are doing these things, only that they can do it. And pigs can fly, provided . . . !

A very lengthy article appears in the *Church Times* for July 1, on the subject of The Revival of Religious Cannibalism in England. That is really the subject of the article, although the writer gives it the title of "The Revival of The Eucharistic Life in England." But it would never do for religious folk to properly understand the nature of their own beliefs, and the origin of their religious practises. "The Adoration of the Real Presence in the Eucharist" sounds much better than would an actual description of what it all implies.

Captain Davies, Secretary of the National Union of Seamen, says that he has never met an Atheist in his experience among the men of the sea. We have no doubt but that some of our many readers in both the Navy and the mercantile service may take the opportunity of enlightening Captain Davies. But we sincerely hope that the statement is not a true indication of the powers of observation possessed by the Captain, or an indication of his knowledge of the men with whom he has to deal.

It is not so long ago that we can have forgotten the horror with which we appeared to regard the dropping of bombs during times of war on civilian centres. We note that during the Aeroplane Pageant at Hendon, on July 2, one of the exhibits consisted in aeroplanes dropping bombs "on a native village in revolt." The description is from the *Daily Express*, which publishes a picture of the "gallant" airmen with evident admiration. Those who appreciate the strongly entrenched character of a native village, will appreciate how far we have advanced since we were horrified at the Germans bombarding unfortified towns. Which leaves us wondering which was nearer the truth—the clergy, who during the whole of the war orated on the "moral uplift" the nation was getting from the war, or the *Freethinker* which stood almost alone among the papers in this country, in publicly insisting that the ultimate result of war is always individual and mass deterioration, and that whether the war was inevitable, or the lesser of two evils?

The European Motion Picture Company invited a number of clergymen to see the film of the Walker—Milligan fight, in order to get their opinion as to whether it is brutal or not. That seems a good idea, and leads one to suppose that these film men are rather better educated in matters of history than one would have supposed. For when it was the custom to burn a dozen or so of heretics at the stake, the clergy were always present, and pronounced the proceedings good and edifying. During the tortures of heretics they were also present, and their verdict ran in the same form. Execution of witches, with numerous other forms of "sport" during the Christian ages, were always carried on under clerical auspices, and bull-fighting in Spain to-day receives their blessing. The notion of the Picture Company is quite a good one—particularly as they know what the verdict will be beforehand.

The ordinary man will be tempted to question the advantages of Cambridge University after reading Dr. T. R. Glover's weekly articles in the *Daily News*. The heading of a paragraph is sufficient for our case:—"The Mind of God." Now this will catch many fish that gobble theological food, but what can one make of it who has any respect for the use and meaning of words? Our theological word-spinners tell us in effect that labour spent on clarification through the medium of language has been time wasted. We agree that ecclesiastical jargon proves the case, and for the true progress achieved by the human race there are no thanks due to Dr. T. R. Glover and his colleagues who are gifted by being able to use language peculiar to their kind. As parents do not usually give a razor to children to play with, so the same sort of care should be extended to those who cannot be trusted with language. They might amuse themselves for a few centuries with "the cat is on the mat" style in order to qualify for the language of precise definition.

A Mrs. C. A. Hogg says the devil addressed the first slogan to woman, "Eat more fruit." This good lady is not quite accurate. It was God who gave the first slogan to man and woman—"Be fruitful and multiply." His second slogan was, "Eat only certain fruit." But Eve thought she would sample the best in the Garden. From that one little greedy act has come all the blessings mankind has since enjoyed, including a Saviour hawking around everlasting bliss in a Hereafter, and a Christian Church snatching clients from the Devil.

From an advertisement in a newspaper, we notice that hens can be induced to each lay six eggs weekly. One day rest in seven therefore proves them to be religious hens, and, although five archbishops and nineteen bishops may be busy wrangling over the particular form nonsense shall take, here at least is matter for consolation. The continental Sunday, the introduction of which means utter demoralization, has not, as it were, thoroughly reached the poultry domain.

We said recently that the clerical opposition to Sinclair Lewis's book *Elmer Gantry*, was due to the fact that it let a little light in on the character and the methods of the professional evangelist. Parsons know the truth about this class of "worker in God's vineyard" as well, or even better than we do. But they help to bring grist to the clerical mill, and everything else is put on one side. In the circumstances, we are glad to see Mr. David Steele, an American Episcopal clergyman, stating of the revelations in *Elmer Gantry*: "I have known all this at first-hand. I have seen it from the inside. I have been forced for my sins to live among these people, and I loathe them." That is emphatic enough, and there are few clergymen who could not make a similar confession if they would. But if one wishes to give full play to the lower side of one's nature, with a good measure of safety, professional evangelism is the surest way. You may be so much of a rascal that even the evangelical platform cannot stand you, but you will be guarded from a public exposure for the sake of "true" religion.

Commissioner Lamb, of the Salvation Army, is enthusiastic over a new scheme for emigrating British workers to Australia. His enthusiasm is understandable. Business is business; the Army makes the usual agent's commission; and the Commissioner might lose his job if business was to get slack.

"Girls and boys come out to play," is the heading to an article by Mr. Arthur Mee, praising the movement to provide playing-fields. Knowing Mr. Mee's pious tendencies, we are not surprised that he omits to advocate that the girls and boys should be allowed to come out to play on Sundays as well as week-days. And yet if the movement is, as he says, a "national health insurance," the logical conclusion should be that the larger the number of opportunities for using the playing-fields the greater the gain to the children's health, and hence to the nation.



## National Secular Society.

THE Funds of the National Secular Society are now legally controlled by Trust Deed, and those who wish to benefit the Society by gift or bequest may do so with complete confidence that any money so received will be properly administered and expended.

The following form of bequest is sufficient for anyone who desires to benefit the Society by will:—

I hereby give and bequeath (*Here insert particulars of legacy*), free of all death duties, to the Trustees of the National Secular Society for all or any of the purposes of the Trust Deed of the said Society, and I direct that a receipt signed by two of the trustees of the said Society shall be a good discharge to my executors for the said legacy.

Any information concerning the Trust Deed and its administration may be had on application.

### 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.—T. O. Thomas (New Hebrides), £50; Ajax, £2 10s.; J. O'Connor, £1; W. Kerslake (2nd Quarterly Sub.), £1; E. L. Bishop, 1s.

MISS VANCE acknowledges, with many thanks, a gift of books for the Society from H. J. Hewer.

II. IRVING.—It will be interesting, as you say, to watch results. But we expect that a great many will take it quite seriously. However, it is well done, and should have some effect.

A. E. THOMAS.—Sorry we cannot give you any information on the matter. We have heard nothing; but it is probable that not enough encouragement was received to go on with whatever was in contemplation.

S. AMERY.—There was very little in the *Express* series that called for comment. Some were asked to give their views on life for no other reason, apparently, than that they had been successful in making money. That appears to be one of the standards of supreme ability in this Christian country.

G. ELIOT.—The *Freethinker* is always posted in a quite plain wrapper. The nature of the contents of the wrapper cannot be seen unless it is opened. We note your remark that public libraries have a great many works on religion which Freethinkers should read. Still, that does not apply to such Freethinking publications as are not stocked in public libraries. We send the *Freethinker* to many public libraries quite free, and shall continue to do so.

A. JACKSON.—Mr. Foote's *Infidel Death-Beds* is out of print. There is a section of Mr. Mann's *Science and the Soul*, which deals with the death-beds of a number of famous Freethinkers. We are dealing with the other matter, as you will probably learn.

E. L. BISHOP.—Thanks. Will be used later. Stories of the same kind, without the slightest regard for truth are manufactured by the hundred by evangelists. It is part of their training.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Sugar Plums.

Concerning our "Views and Opinions" dealing with Methods of Controversy, and the discussion thereon, the Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott writes us a letter, in which he says:—

Without wishing to be again involved in a dispute in your columns, I would like to say that I have been deterred from continuing the Easter discussion, because I felt it was impossible to do so, on account of the extraordinary attitude of the *Freethinker* in being rude to those with whom it does not agree.

"It gets curioler and curioler." Mr. Boycott writes an article in a paper, where he knows that no complete reply will be permitted, in which he asserts that a disbelief in the Resurrection implies a tendency to the neglect of all the decencies of life, and that is quite courteous controversy. When he is met with the retort that when Atheists are so common, it is not easy to believe that a man can be quite so unintelligent as the statement would make him appear to be, and that the ultimate choice, therefore lies between either the stupidity or the lack of truthfulness of the writer, he replies that he cannot submit to such rudeness. It is not rude for the Christian to accuse the Atheist of all kinds of potential villiany; it is irexcusable for the Atheist to retort that to stoop to such methods of controversy implies either ignorance, or lack of truthfulness on the part of the one who makes the charges.

We venture to pursue our policy of "rudeness" still further, and to say that this remark of Mr. Boycott's is in the nature of a pose. Scores and scores of Christians have engaged in controversy in the pages of the *Freethinker*, including Canon Lyttleton. None of them have ever complained, so long as they conducted their arguments in a gentlemanly manner, of the treatment they received. Canon Lyttleton, indeed, went out of his way to express his appreciation of the treatment he received and the hospitality given him in these columns. Mr. Morse-Boycott does not really care to argue in a paper which is never afraid to characterize an argument in the way it deserves. But it would have been better to have remained silent, rather than to venture an apology, which to anyone familiar with the nature of mental processes discloses far more than its author knows.

The West London Branch is commencing work at a new place to-day (July 10). Ravenscourt Park is the place selected for the new venture, and the first meeting will be held at 3.30. Mr. Campbell-Everden will be the speaker, and as a good start is everything in such matters, we hope that our West London readers will do their best to be present. Ravenscourt Park, we are informed, is a hot-bed of Roman Catholicism.

O youth, whose hope is high,  
Who dost to Truth aspire,  
Whether thou live or die,  
O look not back nor tire.—Robert Bridges.

## Unreality.

(Concluded from page 427.)

HAVING slain the Materialist again—for the thousandth time—and restored the Bible God to his pedestal, Canon Streeter, flushed with victory, goes on to deal with the problem of pain and evil. Those twin rocks, against which every attempt to establish the existence of an all-wise, all-benevolent, and all-mighty Creator has been shattered.

No one can live long in the world before learning the sad truth, that virtue and goodness are not always rewarded. That innocence is not a perfect shield. Neither do the wicked always receive their deserts, sometimes they prosper exceedingly. There is no law of justice in Nature. As Matthew Arnold noted:—

Nature with equal mind,  
Sees all her sons at play;  
Sees man control the wind,  
The wind sweep man away.

Even Canon Streeter admits that: "Pain is the fundamental fact in life. In the evolution of living organisms the capacity for pain, we are told, develops earlier than that for pleasure."<sup>1</sup> And further: "the doctrine that in this world the individual gets exactly his deserts is not one which experience bears out." (p. 61.) Our readers will conclude that the author of this scheme of things is neither just or benevolent! But Canon Streeter will show them that they have not reflected deeply enough. He observes:—

Deeper reflection stirs a doubt; is Justice the supreme good? The Law-court, like the steam-engine, is an invention of man, and to me, at any rate, the theologian who envisages the power behind the Universe as an infinite Lord Chief Justice seems to be guilty of an anthropomorphism as naive as that of the materialist who thinks of It as an infinite Machine. (p. 59).

If Justice could be shown to be a Law of Nature, then Canon Streeter would have cited that as certain proof of a benevolent Creator. But as there is no justice to be seen in Nature, the Canon loftily waives the lack of Justice on one side as an Anthropomorphism. God may be unjust so far as he is concerned, it doesn't matter, the idea of Justice may be ranked along with the mechanical ideas of the Materialists. But if justice is not one of the attributes of God, then he may be an unjust God! And if he is an unjust God why should we trust and worship, to say nothing of loving him, at all?

From the last quotation, one would think that Canon Streeter was a stern opponent of Anthropomorphism, or the making of God in the image of man; but in the chapter dealing with God he positively advocates it. After remarking that he expects many of his readers: "will be conscious of a growing misgiving that they are being stealthily decoyed into an untenable Anthropomorphism"—a misgiving, he says: "I may say that I have lived through and lived down." He proceeds: "In olden days a crude Anthropomorphism was a danger to be feared; in our age, what the philosopher wants is the courage to advance further, and to advance more confidently towards what, abandoning all shamefacedness, I will style the Higher Anthropomorphism." (pp. 133-134.) And further: "any philosophy which does not conceive the Infinite as in some sense concretely personal is intellectually blind at one essential point," concluding that it is more philosophical to use: "a proper name like Allah or Jehova," than an impersonal term like the Absolute.

So it comes to this. If you regard Justice as one

of the attributes of God, then you are thinking of him in terms of the Lower Anthropomorphism. If, on the other hand, you visualize God as the old Jehovah of the Bible, who walked "in the garden in the cool of the day": Being, apparently, unable to stand the heat of the Sun he had just created—then you are thinking of him in terms of the Higher Anthropomorphism! Isn't it wonderful! I wonder what Dean Inge thinks of it?

But, to return to the problem of pain. Canon Streeter admits: "Nature is not the Garden of Eden we should like to find it," but thinks that a good deal of the pain is due to imagination, that wild life is not so sensitive to pain as the domesticated horse and dog, and that death comes quickly in the end. This is all beside the point. The question is this: Would a wise and kind-hearted man have devised a scheme of life whereby a large proportion of the animal world could only exist by hunting and killing the weaker and less offensive animals? Where is the creative benevolence exhibited in the boa-constrictor, so-called because it constricts its victim in its folds, and so crushes every bone in its body? Where is the creative benevolence to be seen in those hideous nightmare monsters, the crocodile and the alligator? At a recent meeting of the Zoological Society, Mr. Swynnerton, the game warden of Tanganyika, exhibited the contents of the stomach of a large African crocodile he had shot. Besides the horny remains of some large animals, it contained "a large number of metal bangles such as are worn as bracelets and anklets by the native women, beads, and a long strand of metal cord"<sup>2</sup> known to have belonged to a boy who disappeared. If a man invented such a horror and turned it loose, he would stand no chance of a trial, he would be promptly lynched. What about the shark and the octopus? Did the Intelligence that produced these things, give an evil smile when he loosed them in the Sea?

Moreover, wild animal life is not the pleasant existence, ended by a quick and comparatively easy death, it is often represented to be by religious apologists. The life of wild animals is an exceedingly uneasy and anxious one. Sir Francis Galton, the great scientist, from his study of wild life in South Africa, estimated that "every antelope in South Africa has literally to run for its life once in every one or two days upon an average, and that he starts or gallops under the influence of a false alarm many times in a day."<sup>3</sup>

Yet Canon Streeter believes that the Infinite has a purpose, and that purpose is good. He observes, "All round us are death and disease, cruelty and injustice, ugliness and stupidity. But death could not exist unless there were life, nor disease if there were no such thing as health." (p. 221.) Yes, but life could exist if there were no death, for, according to the teachings of Christianity, in the life to come there will be no death; and most certainly there can be health without disease, for some people enjoy it now, and modern science aims at eliminating disease altogether. Upon the problem of Evil, we get the following:—

Evil would not be what it is save in contrast to, or distinction from, the good. The world is full of evil, but it is also full of good, and the nature of things is such that the good is the more fundamental of the two. Good might exist without evil, evil could not exist without good, for evil is either a parody of, or an obstacle to, good. Evil is parasitic. On that fact I take my stand. On this, in the last resort, I base my belief in God. . . Here, as it

<sup>1</sup> E. G. Boulenger. *A Naturalist at the Zoo*, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Cited by Lubbock. *Prehistoric Times* (1872), p. 595.

<sup>1</sup> B. H. Streeter. *Reality*, p. 57.

seems to me, is the point where any form of atheism breaks down. The Atheist has an explanation of evil in the world, but he has no sufficient explanation of the good. (*Reality*, p. 222.)

It is quite evident that Canon Streeter is completely ignorant of what Atheists have said upon this subject. What we call good, are those conditions which enable us to exist and enjoy life. What we call evil are those conditions which tend to destroy life, or make it hard and painful. For instance, we enjoy, and feel the benefit of, a fine sunny day; but we get no benefit from a hurricane which wrecks ships, uproots trees, and unroofs houses. Yet neither occur either for our benefit or our disadvantage. In the process of evolution, good conditions must predominate over bad, or we could not exist at all, neither could sharks, or alligators. We can only exist by adjusting ourselves to our environment. Some day, through absence of sunlight, and the absence of air and water, we shall cease to be adapted to our environment, the bad conditions will predominate over the good, and we shall cease to exist. What becomes of Canon Streeter's argument then?

Then we are told that: "A world, in which there was no conflict and no risk, would be a world in which the heroic quality in man could never be called forth. A world, from which suffering or failure were completely absent would be one in which compassion and mutual aid were absent also . . . A world in which pain was impossible would be a world morally impoverished. (pp. 223-224.) Then what about that future eternal life, in which, we are assured there will be no suffering? Will that life be "morally impoverished"? And if God could create a perfect condition of society in heaven, without pain and suffering, why did he not do the same on earth? If Canon Streeter is right, then we are all on the wrong track. In working for the ideal of a perfect society, by the elimination of pain, disease, and suffering, it seems we are working for a world "morally impoverished." According to his theory, we should desire an increase of pain and suffering; an idea not unlike that of the early Christians—which has persisted down to our own times—that the more suffering in this life, the greater the reward in the future.

Another dozen articles could be written dealing with the childish arguments of this puerile book. Who is it written for? Canon Streeter says he did not write it for philosophers or scientists. It was certainly not written for the masses, for they do not buy ten-and-sixpenny books. The book is really intended for the well-to-do Middle Class, who attend Church because it is the respectable thing to do; who wish to believe, and wish to be furnished with plausible arguments to bolster up beliefs which they feel have been undermined by the progress of Science. If they are satisfied that they have received the value of their outlay then they are easily pleased.

W. MANN.

Whence comes solace? Not from seeing  
 What is doing, suffering, being;  
 Not from noting life's conditions,  
 Not from heeding Time's monitions,  
 But in cleaving to the Dream  
 And in gazing at the gleam  
 Whereby grey things golden seem.

Thomas Hardy.

We think that we help ourselves, provide for ourselves and teach ourselves. No! it is not so! We are members one of another, and especially members and children of Humanity.—*Frederic Harrison.*

## Happiness.

It is always stimulating to have one's accepted ideas challenged. It is not always pleasant at first; one naturally resents the suggestion that one's fundamental thinking has been awry; but there is this about the world of ideas: however much we may splutter and protest in public against new thoughts and new values, if they have in them the ring of truth the mind has to capitulate eventually. But before one finally abandons old concepts one naturally likes to make sure that the new ones approximate nearer to the truth. And now I want to introduce Mr. Albert Luc.

Mr. Albert Luc is the author of a little work entitled, *Elysia: A New Philosophy of Happiness* (Watts; 3s. 6d.). Let me say at once that I have not read the book. I have merely read an article by Mr. Luc of which the book is an elaboration. Perhaps I ought, in justice to the author, to have purchased the larger work; but if his thesis be true I should experience no permanent increase of felicity by reason of possessing it; I might, indeed, come ultimately to regard it with disfavour. And yet I have a desire to possess the book; like the baby in the advertisement, I feel that I shall not be happy until I get it. Now a short time ago I should have deemed that an all-sufficient reason for spending three-and-sixpence. But now I am hesitant. My action would clearly be dictated by the desire for pleasure; happiness would be my aim—and according to Mr. Luc that's all wrong. Hence his book, his article, and this friendly criticism of the article.

Put briefly, this is Mr. Luc's argument: "The fundamental principle of modern ethics is," he says, "that happiness is the greatest good, and that actions are moral or immoral in accordance with their tendency to increase or diminish the felicity of humanity. It is claimed that the increase of happiness is the only final sanction of good conduct." To this he replies that happiness is not something that can be measured; it is a variant, not a constant; there is no method under the sun for determining whether the general happiness of a community—or an individual even—is being added to. Hence, he concludes that, "The idea of increasing human happiness is illogical and useless as a sanction for morals, and when we come to realize that it cannot be increased or diminished by any mode of conduct, we shall abolish this false ethical principle and seek another and more scientific basis for our systems of morality."

What interested me most in Mr. Luc's article was his illustration of the transient nature of happiness. It is all so obviously true. My mind leaped to assent. "How does one set to work to increase happiness?" he asks. And answers:—

The usual methods are to abolish evils and to add to our pleasures. We speak of the inventors of soap, glass and printing as benefactors of the human race; but does any one really think that man has become a little happier with the addition of these improvements, and a little happier still each time when overcoats, railway trains, gramophones, and patent medicines were added? . . . So far as we can observe, civilized man is no happier than the savage or the wild beasts, and by the very nature of that generalization of the feelings which we call happiness he could not be happier. Happiness is a consciousness of improvement on the normal; and the norm is not fixed: it changes with every change in our condition. The normal state is the state of things which we have got used to.

Mr. Luc goes on to observe that any improvement on the normal induces happiness and any deterioration misery. But the feelings induced are only temporary and conditions tend to become normalities once more.

He truly points out that a man is not happy because he is not a cripple, or miserable because he is not an earl; and a cripple is not always miserable because of his lameness, or an earl continually happy because of his title. "If the cripple recovered from his lameness and the earl became a duke, each would be happy until the novelty wore off and he became normal again; and the normality of the one would exactly equal the normality of the other so far as any effects on the emotions was concerned." And so our author contends: "If we could realize our wildest dreams of Utopia, we should find the new state quite normal after a few months, and be no happier than before." [The answer to this is: We never shall!]

As I have said, it is all so obviously true. And yet, for the purpose of Mr. Luc's argument, it is all so obviously irrelevant. We can accept all Mr. Luc's facts without in the least affecting the truth of the general principle of happiness as the Supreme Good. Granted that happiness as a permanent condition is an impossibility—whoever suggested that it was not? Certainly no utilitarian moralist. Those moralists who have advanced the idea of happiness—here and now—as the supreme good, have been the most ardent opponents of the theological conception of a heaven where we are to be happy for ever and ever. In making happiness the basis of their moral systems, moralists of all kinds and all ages have shown a true instinct, for the simple reason that man always acts from desire, and because he has a psychological reaction in favour of agreeable feelings and a reaction against painful ones. If half-a-dozen men are living in a group, there has to be a working agreement whereby they refrain from treading on one another's toes. (This, of course, is subject to their being a democracy; if two of the six have claims to social superiority, there may be a little toe-treading on their part so long as they don't carry it to a point that threatens the mobility of the group!) The most complex moral systems are but an elaboration of this simple principle, for moral systems are determined by the development of society, although never quite keeping pace with it—hence moral systems tend to be obstructive, and the moralist as well as the religionist is usually found in the pathway of the reformer.

One of the affirmations of the National Secular Society is: "That happiness is man's proper aim; utility his moral guide." Now I think a more pertinent criticism of this would be that probably the one way fatal to happiness is to consciously seek it. True happiness, as Mr. C. E. Montague has pointed out, seems to prefer to come as a thief in the night, and not at the hours you specially fix for its entertainment; it is only caught by hunting something else; it is rather like trees that you grow on the chance that a bird may sing, some day, on one of them. On analysis it may be found that happiness is but one of life's bye-products after all. However, when all is said and done, my criticism—like that of Mr. Luc's—leaves the matter much as it was. Neither of us has made an epoch-making discovery; the facts presented have been well-known for thousands of years, they are part of life's disillusionment.

The most gratifying feature of the present age is the evergrowing insistence of the masses on a little happiness here and now; the waning interest in religious problems and the growing enthusiasm for social idealism. The utilitarian ethic, "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" is the inspirer of all contemporary reform. As Mr. Norman Angell says:—

More and more is religious effort being subjected to this test: Does it make for the improvement of Society? If not, it stands condemned. . . . To all

political ideals, the final test will be applied: Does it, or does it not, make for the widest interests of the mass of the people involved?

This process is likely to continue in spite of the moralists. Mankind will continue to seek pleasurable experiences and endeavour to avoid painful ones—there is really nothing illogical in that. The happiness they seek may be illusory, but it is the dynamic of human life; the driving force of all endeavour; if it is transient—so is life itself. It is perhaps better that the light of life be "caught in broken gleams through visionary forests, than blaze away like the lamps on common lodging-house stairs."

VINCENT J. HANDS.

### A Talk with a Minister in a Train.

It was the 10.30 train for Manchester out of Euston: I had settled down for a quiet read and rest.

The attendant came along with lunch tickets. I took a ticket for second lunch.

I was shown to my seat, and as I was alone I had a single seat in the luncheon car. The opposite seat was taken by a well known and eloquent Free Church Minister. "Saint and Sinner," thought I to myself, not deciding which was which.

"Good morning, Doctor," said I, wishing to be polite, at which he shook hands quite cordially.

"So you know me," exclaimed he. At which I replied: "Yes, I have heard you preach, but not in your own church, but at Glasgow, some years ago. Your own church is a very beautiful building. I have admired it, but never inside, in fact I have never been there on Sunday, but only in the week. I heard you at Rev. Dr. P's church, Glasgow. I admired him very much, he has great ability, but I feel so sorry for him."

"Why are you sorry?" said my companion. "Oh it is terrible for a brilliant man to be tied up to such a congregation, dare not speak the truth freely, for fear of offending. Of course, ministers cannot," I added. His face dropped and he said, "Well, I am not afraid to speak the truth." I saw that I touched tender ground, so I said, "Oh, present company is always excepted," and feeling I must not sail under false colours: "But, I don't stand where you stand at all."

"Where do you stand?" he asked. "I think I am Agnostic."

"Have you read *Reality*, by Canon Streeter?" "No, I have not read it. I have seen several reviews of it. I think I know what the Canon is trying to do—to make the impossible appear possible; to make the "alleged" truth appear reasonable to minds like mine own. But, of course, it cannot be done."

"Oh," he answered me, "do you know what the Christian Church stands for?" "Yes, it is stated in the Bible, God was angry with the world, he sent his only begotten Son to die to save us from sin. If we believe that we shall be saved, and if not we shall be damned. I was to be trained for the ministry, and not believing that, I went out into the wilderness for truth, but it seems there are no Christians to-day, except the Plymouth Brethren and the Roman Catholics."

"Ah," he replied, "it was the Brethren view of Christianity that sent you off. You ought to have been in the ministry; get back if you can."

I said: "Doctor, the Crucifixion of Jesus was a mistake morally and historically. If I, the man talking to you, had been present I would have protested, for in a way I could love the Jesus of the first twelve verses of St. Matthew's Gospel." "On that statement I could admit you into my church membership," was his comment.

I smiled, while saying: "No doubt it was tolerant, and must be very distressing to him, to have to preach a Gospel, that sent me to Hell. Did the Doctor ever see the *Freethinker*? Mr. Cohen was a very able man."

"Is that the paper of Foote's? It is very indecent," said he. "Oh no Doctor, you may disagree with the *Freethinker*—indecent it certainly is not."

He tried to qualify his remark. I asked if he knew J. T. Lloyd, one of its brilliant writers, who left the ministry rather than eat dishonest bread.

Thus we talked during our luncheon. The well-known parson and worker in social and moral reform.

I fear the Great man was a little uncomfortable with me.

I was perfectly easy with him. I had suffered for my principles.

He had been well paid in one church for thirty years for his.

Perhaps he felt I was the better man. The King had given him some honour. The King did not know of me. What odds. I was captain of my own soul.

"Read *Reality*," said the Doctor.

I will read it. I doubt if it can ever answer the moral objections to the Christian teaching, that a man, God, died on a cross to save me and all others from spending an eternity in a Lake of Fire. Oh, the moral infamy of certain teaching of Christianity. I feel inclined to add: Thank God it is not true.

A SEEKER FOR TRUTH.

### Our Glorious Clergy Once More.

SPEAKING at Southport recently, Archdeacon Spooner instanced yet another case of the astonishing mentality or rather lack of mentality of the clergy. He prefaced his address by calmly remarking that religion was the true source of any nation's prosperity. Having pronounced this untruth as an axiom, I suppose he mentally sat back in his arm-chair, stuck his fingers into the arm pits of his waistcoat and beamed benevolently on his receptive flock. I can imagine it very clearly having seen so many similar scenes before I rejected the Church, and embraced Truth, its arch-enemy, in its stead. As one of the leading salesmen of the Church he then started in to complain of his firm's competitor—the Sunday Cinema. He said there were three types of persons who visited the Sunday Cinema: (a) Those who were churchgoers, and who as a result of a visit to the cinema had their beliefs destroyed; (b) Those who professed no special belief, but were not averse to the appeals of religion, and who had their convictions lessened by the cinema; (c) Those who were openly antagonistic to all formulated religion, and who lived without God and were content.

Dealing with A and B, common sense suggests that if the amount of good absorbed through religion is all to be destroyed by a visit to a cinema on a day which has been set aside by a certain section of the community for special worship, then that amount of good is infinitesimal, and they have lost nothing. But in C we come right up against the intolerable arrogance of the Church. First of all, who is this man that he is able so clearly to define the mystic and inexplicable God that he can tell whether God's unseen influence is at work or not in certain people? Secondly, if his God is so vital and necessary, can it be possible that mere mortals can live without Him and still be content? Mr. Spooner tells us that this is so!! Looking at the whole matter from an unbiased point of view, it appears to me that because Mr. Spooner's conception of God happens to differ from that of another section of the community, that is surely no reason why he should deny them the patronage of God in such a public manner.

Perhaps it is only fair to remember that the Archdeacon is an old man, and no doubt his mentality has aged also. Shakespeare would appear to have known what he was talking about when he referred to the seventh age of man.

ROBERT P. DAVIE.

To have read the greatest works of any poet, to have beheld or heard the greatest works of any great painter or musician, is a possession added to the best things of life.—*Swinburne*.

Our virtues lie in the interpretation of the time.—*Shakespeare*.

## Correspondence.

### HOW NOT TO DO IT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Your contributor to the June 19 issue of the *Freethinker*, Mr. Stanley Lloyd, has favoured us with an account of how he tried to "dish" Judge Coatsworth, who so conspicuously displayed his bigotry in the recent Sterry trial. Judge Coatsworth deserves all he may suffer at Mr. Lloyd's hands. But I submit that neither the cause of Mr. Sterry nor that of Freethought is furthered by your contributor's illogical and ignorant polemic.

Mr. Lloyd falls foul of Judge Coatsworth, and of Christians generally, for saying that there is only one God. So to refute their alleged lack of knowledge he supplies them with a scrappy list of deities, the fruit of his ill-digested reading. The joke is that neither Mr. Lloyd nor his opponents believe in the existence of any of these beings, and no Christian ever denied that faith in many gods is both ancient and wide-spread. I have yet to meet the Christian who said that the names of all the gods ever worshipped were only synonyms for Jehovah. But the more liberal Christians have always argued that men in every age and creed have sought after the true God, whom they often ignorantly and superstitiously adore. The early Christians generally regarded the Pagan gods as demons.

I will not attempt to criticize Mr. Lloyd's list seriatim. But I should like to make a few comments. I have never heard of "Nu—Egyptian God (Creator of the Seas.)" But I have heard of Nut, an Egyptian goddess of the sky. Why does Mr. Lloyd regard Osiris as "modern Supreme Deity"? Does he equate Osiris with Jesus? True, they were both suffering, dying and resurrected gods. But so were Attis, Adonis and Dionysus, and several others, whose cults competed with primitive Catholicism. Why not lump them all together, on Mr. Lloyd's weird logical principles, as modern supreme deities? Who is "Christna"? I have heard of Krishna, who was not the son of Brahma, but the ninth incarnation of Vishnu, who cannot be called the son of Brahma, though he is generally placed second in the Hindu *Trimurti*. The Hindu *Trimurti* is by no means identical with the Christian Trinity, though the two have features in common. The *Upanishads* are metaphysical and religious treatises, composed not many centuries before the Christian era, and it is absurd to call them "the Hindoo's Bible." The *Bhagavad Gita*, a mystical religious poem of perhaps the second century A.D., is not included in the eighteen *Puranas* (Mr. Lloyd appears to have heard of only one), but is an addition to the *Mahabharate*, the great Hindu epic. The oldest of the *Puranas* is ascribed by Indianists to about the sixth century A.D. Mr. Lloyd has confused the *Bhagavad Gita* with the *Bhagavad Purana*. Ahura Mazda and Ormuzd are one and the same deity, and should not therefore be described as "Supreme Beings of the Persians." The modern Persians are nearly all Muhammadans. Mr. Lloyd calls Bacchus a Roman god. He was a Greek god, whom the Romans identified with their Liber. "Codom—God and crucified Christ of the Siamese," is a figment of Mr. Lloyd's brain. The Siamese are Buddhists, for whom the Indian Gautama (Codom) is the only Saviour, and they do not regard him as a god. The crucifixion of Devadatta, Gautama's treacherous disciple, does appear in very late Siamese or Burmese Buddhist lore (I forget which), and is obviously an anti-Christian myth. I know of no other crucifixion myth in Buddhism.

"The Brahman's version of the Fall of Man" is another mare's nest discovered by Mr. Lloyd. The story he cites is clearly a late adaptation from the Christian myth—a moral improvement, I admit—though possibly mediated through Muhammadanism. Mr. Lloyd professes to find it in the *Upanishads*. I only know the *Upanishads* from extracts. Will Mr. Lloyd give chapter and verse? "Adam" ("Man") and "Havvah" ("Life" or "Living"), the names of our first parents according to *Genesis*, are Hebrew words. "Adami" and "Heva" cannot be their original forms. No "Hindoo's Bible" existed 3,000 or 4,000 years before the Christian era, if we take sober scholarship for our guide. Indeed, we

have no grounds for believing that the Aryan invaders of India reached it until 1,000 to 2,000 years after the date when Mr. Lloyd says this Bible appeared. The title "Hindoo's Bible" may be fairly given to the *Vedas*. The *Rig-Veda*, the oldest part of the Vedic collection, may have been composed as early as 1000 to 1500 B.C.; but it was not put into writing until very much later. The first trace of an Indian script are the rock and pillar-edicts of the Buddhist King Asoka, in the third century B.C. Ceylon was a barbarous and unknown country at the time of the Aryan invasion of India, and no primitive Hindu mythographer would have placed the Garden of Eden there.

A. D. HOWELL SMITH.

#### MATERIALISM AND THE PRESS.

SIR,—I have to thank Mr. C. Elliot for pointing out that in the *Socialist Standard*, "the case for Materialism is upheld and defended against all comers." I am very pleased to know it. I can remember the time when the *Socialist Press* was quite as fierce against us as the *Religious Press*.

I hope the discussion will reach the Labour Party, at present dominated by the sickly sentimental piety exemplified by Macdonald, Henderson, and the Literary page of the *Daily Herald*.

W. MANN.

#### Obituary.

MR. WILLIAM HILL.

THE funeral of Mr. William Hill, aged 86 years, took place on Saturday, July 2, in the City of London Cemetery, Manor Park, E.

Mr. Hill was a life-long Freethinker, an ardent admirer, follower, and active supporter of the late Charles Bradlaugh. All who knew him testify to his ceaseless interest and zeal in the spread of Freethought.

In his last illness he expressed his great desire to ensure a Secular burial. The family honoured a promise given to him. A secular service was conducted at the graveside by the undersigned.

To the remaining members of the family we offer our sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

Besides members and friends of the family, a number of members of the West Ham Branch N.S.S. were present at the graveside.

R. H. ROSETTI.

#### Society News.

##### GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY.

A PARTY of members of the Society had the opportunity of seeing in operation the Glasgow Corporation Electric Power Station at Dalnarnock, on a recent evening. This is one of the great "super" stations under the National Electricity Scheme, and it well deserves its position. The talk about volts and amperes, shunts and resistances and earths had an eerie sound to the uninitiated, but it was all made very plain by the conductor, one of the station engineers. We were shown the filters where the cooling water is filtered on being drawn from the Clyde, which is only a few yards from the station. Then the handling and storing of the coal, the automatic stokers for the great batteries of boilers for raising the steam for the huge turbines driving the generators. Kilo-watts were talked of by the hundreds of thousands, but all and much more in very lucid fashion.

The outstanding feature was the elimination of the human element. Emerson says somewhere "Man is as lazy as he dare be," and he might have said "as careless." The result is seen here in the number of devices which were described as "fool-proof." The fool ye have always with you," is apparently a live part of the electricians' creed.

The application of science to the service of man is worthy of more and more of our attention, and should inspire the hope that man will moralize industry so that the fruits of man's inventions and discoveries will be used to lighten the labours of the men and women of to-day and to-morrow.

The party was indebted to the engineer for his clear statement, and to our Assistant Secretary for having arranged the visit.—E. H.

#### Mr. Whitehead's Mission at Leeds.

SEVEN meetings were addressed by Mr. Whitehead at Leeds, and in spite of somewhat unfavourable weather all of them passed off successfully. The crowds at Leeds are always attentive and well behaved, this year being no exception to the rule.

On the Wednesday evening part of an audience which had been listening to Annie Besant in the Town Hall swelled our congregation. Efforts were made to entice two clergymen on our platform, but these gentlemen, instead, allowed a lay brother to make Christianity ridiculous, while they kept a discreet silence.

We have to thank Messrs. Hurst, Davis and our good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Brown, who as usual helped at practically all the meetings, for their assistance. Mr. Whitehead commences a week's mission at Chapel Street, Nelson, on July 9.

#### SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

##### LONDON.

###### INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe, "Asia's Challenge to the West."

###### OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. F. P. Corrigan, A Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6.0, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, A Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Brockwell Park, 6.0: Lectures by Mr. S. Hanson. Wednesday, July 13, at 8 p.m.: Peckham Rye, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Clapham Old Town, Mr. S. Hanson.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Outside Municipal College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Lecture by Mr. F. C. Warner.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.0, Messrs. Darby and Jackson. 6.0, Messrs. Le Maine, Hyatt and Campbell-Everden. Wednesday, July 14, and Friday, July 16, from 7.30, various Lecturers. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): Sunday, July 10, at 3.30, Lecturer, Mr. W. P. Campbell-Everden.

##### COUNTRY.

###### INDOOR.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH (Assembly Rooms, Front Street): Open daily for reading, etc., from 10 a.m. All Freethinkers and enquirers welcome.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. Monday evening meetings, at 8, Islington Square, Speaker, Mr. P. Sherwin.

###### OUTDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. Meetings held in the Bull Ring Monday, Wednesday and Friday, at 7.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Hall Steps): Mr. Geo. Whitehead will lecture every evening, at 7.30 p.m., from Saturday, July 16 to Saturday, July 30th. All Saints are expected to assist and attend as often as possible.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S. (Alexandra Park): 7.30, Mr. Fred Mann, "Religion and Sex." (West Regent Street): Thursday, July 14, at 7.30, Mr. Fred Mann, "Blasphemy and Sedition."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S.—Ramble to Blairskath Muir. Meet at Bishopbriggs car terminus at 12 noon.

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