

The
FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

EDITED BY CHAPMAN COHEN · · · EDITOR · 1881-1915 · G·W·FOOTE

Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper

VOL. XLVII.—No. 30

SUNDAY, JULY 24, 1927

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
Joanna Southcott.—The Editor - - - - -	465
"The Passing World."—J. T. Lloyd - - - - -	466
A Bishop of Half Europe.—Mimnermus - - - - -	467
Social Democrat and Not Christian.—F. J. Gould - - - - -	469
In Quest of the Beautiful.—Tristram - - - - -	470
The Illusions of Mankind.—George R. Scott - - - - -	474
The Ship.—A. R. Williams - - - - -	475
A Sainly Example.—E. S. Wilcox - - - - -	477
The Helpful Clergy - - - - -	477
<i>Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc.</i>	

Views and Opinions.

Joanna Southcott.

WHEN the Jews were in the wilderness, and, under the guidance of the Lord, taking forty years to do a forty days journey, they carried round a box, or ark, in which was contained some very holy things, and upon the safe custody of which the welfare of the people depended. It has been suggested that the contents of the ark were no more or less than certain phallic symbols. The contents of the ark is certainly described as of stone, the *Encyclopædia Biblica* says they must have been very ancient stone objects, and we know that stone phalli are very common things with primitive religion. At any rate the ark was a box in which the god, or a god, was carried about with his worshippers. This served a dual purpose. It enabled the worshippers to keep an eye on their God, and it enabled the God to keep an eye on his worshippers. From what we know of both, neither would be any the worse for that precaution being taken. The ark, again, was a very powerful piece of ju-ju. Its presence secured victory in battle, and its absence brought defeat. To the Israelites its magic was as powerful as is a page of Mrs. Eddy's wonderful book to one of her devotees. What was in the box no one can be quite certain of, because no ordinary person was allowed to see. The touch of unauthorized hands brought death, or plague, much as a tabooed object amongst savages brings death or disease to those who handle it. The priests knew what was there, but they were privileged persons, and kept their knowledge to themselves. The priests of those days knew their business, and the times allowed them to practice it in a safe way.

* * *

The Holy Box.

The British public has just been treated to the unveiling of another sacred box. It is true that this box was not supposed to contain a god, but it was

believed to contain a message from a god—via Joanna Southcott—a Devonshire lady, who died in 1814. The box was supposed to contain some wonderful revelations that would save Britain from disaster when its danger was most acute. Joanna had placed therein her message, derived, she said, direct from God, and it was to be opened in the presence of twenty-four bishops who were to be there, not by arrangement, but by inspiration. The box was opened, and instead of a number of more or less foolish prophecies, such as one might expect to have found, it contained nothing but rubbish, including a medal, some common jewellery, a night-cap, and some cheap novels, under such titles as *Surprises of Love; or an Adventure in Greenwich Park*. Until the box was opened, we must confess that we expected to find some message from Joanna of the kind that religious ravings have made us familiar with. The contents being what they were makes us wonder whether Miss Southcott was quite so demented as she appeared. It would seem there was a deal of Elmer Gantry in her disposition, and Mr. Sinclair Lewis, had he known her might have found material for another—although not a vastly different book. It is probable that Joanna trusted to the twenty-four bishops never being simultaneously inspired to meet and open the box, or trusted to its being lost like the Israelitish Ark altogether.

* * *

A Modern Miracle.

Joanna Southcott was born of Devonshire farm folk in 1750, and in 1792 declared herself to be "The Lamb's Wife," and worried a number of men of position, including some bishops, to get herself officially recognized. She did manage to get some clergymen, between then and 1804, to recognize her as the "Bride of Christ," and to sign a declaration that her writings mainly contained in a work entitled *The Strange Effects of Faith*, were drawn "wholly and entirely from the Spirit of the Living Lord." But her trump card was that of taking the "Bride of the Lord" in the most literal sense. She was visited by Jesus, and in 1813 it was announced by her, "If the visitation of the Lord does not produce a son this year, then Jesus Christ was not the son of God, born in the manner spoken to the Virgin Mary, but if I have a son this year, then in like manner our Saviour was born." There are many descriptions of the visit of the Lord, some couched in the amorous wording familiar to those who have read the lives of the various saints, who have experienced the "spiritual" embraces of Jesus, and one lengthy description, rather too free for publication here. The most elaborate preparations were made for the rebirth of Jesus. The *Morning Chronicle* of September 22 of that year contains an advertisement for a large furnished house in which the birth might take place,

Joanna was "overwhelmed" with presents. She is said to have received over £30,000 in presents. There was built an elaborate cot, for the expected child, with cups, embroidered bibs, etc. In the end she was found to be suffering from dropsy. But the swollen body was enough to buoy up the faith of her dupes, and even her death, without the rebirth of Jesus, did not undeceive them all. Religious faith is much too tough a thing to be seriously disturbed by such a small item as that.

* * *

An Ancient Parallel.

Some of the newspapers, after the opening of the Southcottian ark, dwelt at large upon the credulity displayed by the followers of Joanna. One wonders if the writers ever read the following:—

The angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth. To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the House of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women . . . And, behold, thou shalt . . . bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus . . . Then Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

The book from which I have quoted concerning Joanna Southcott was published in 1814, and professes to give an account of the events which was to lead to "Her Miraculous conception, the coming of Shiloh and of the numerous presents sent to her preparatory to her accouchement." The other account is taken from the Gospel of St. Luke. The newspapers write of the vulgar credulity which could place any reliance upon the story of 1814. Wherein does it differ from the credulity which can swallow the story written centuries before? Is a miraculous conception more reasonable in Judea in the year 1 of this era, than it is in the year 1814? Surely what God has done once he can do again! Surely London is as worthy of a miracle as Judea! Will someone please tell us why an event that is inherently incredible to-day is credible if it is said to occur yesterday?

* * *

A Social Dead-Weight.

The Christian may reply that the visions of Joanna, how, when alone in her room, she "felt the hand of the Lord upon her," how he came and "put out one of his legs to me," etc., were obviously based upon the accounts given in the New Testament. Unquestionably; and Joanna would have been the last to deny it. She believed in her own experiences because she first of all believed in the New Testament. And one is tempted to say that present-day Christians laugh at the inherent absurdity of Joanna's story, because they perceive the inherent absurdity of their own authorized tale. Joanna believed she was the woman foretold in Revelation, she believed that "the Lord" would come again, and held that he would come in the same way as on the previous occasion. And whether he comes again by a process of rebirth as a little child, or walking on the waters of Sydney Harbour, for which performance seats have already been booked, or whether he comes through the air, trailing clouds of glory, all these things are surely matters of detail! One thing is not more wonderful than the other. A few years ago the followers of Joanna were said to number half-a-million—and they

all have votes. But the spectacle of half-a-million people believing in the delusions of a half-crazed woman, is not in itself more pitiable than several millions wrangling over whether a little dough and cheap wine becomes the actual flesh and blood of a god or not. The real lesson of the life of Joanna Southcott, is not whether she was a fraud, or suffering from a sheer delusion, or a genuine messenger from the "Lord," but the evil done by the saturation of the social atmosphere with the Christian superstition. It is this that enables all sorts of frauds and follies to flourish—here a Pastor Jeffries working upon the overstrained imaginations of hysterical patients, there an Elmer Gantry veiling intense salacity and greed under zeal for the conversion of sinners, elsewhere the elevation of mediocrities to positions of public importance because of their power to pander to the religious ignorance of masses of the people. The fact of large numbers of people believing in the Judean Virgin birth, or the possibility of its recurrence in London, would make no more than an item in an interesting study in popular delusions; it is the reaction of this type of mind on social life that is of profound consequences. For, I repeat, *these people have votes*. There are two places in which the fool and the philosopher meet upon absolute equality. One is in the field of theology, the other is the polling booth, and the rogues know it.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

"The Passing World."

SUCH is the title of a sermon by the Rev. T. N. Tattersall, D.S.O., preached in Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, Swansea, and published in the *Christian World Pulpit* of July 7. Naturally the text is 1 John ii. 15-17, which opens thus: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." Mr. Tattersall is a modern thinker, who does not regard the world we live in as a legitimate object of hatred. He rather looks upon and treats it as a legitimate object of love. Until quite lately, however, it was the custom of preachers to warn their hearers of the danger of falling in love with the present world. Parents were forbidden to bestow too much affection even on their children, the only wholly legitimate objects of love being God and the spiritual world, and for such a prohibition our forefathers found ample warrant in the New Testament. Paul enjoins us to set our "affection on things above, not on things on the earth." In Philippians iii. 20, we read: "Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." In the apostle Paul's estimation, people "who mind earthly things" are "enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose end is perdition." In the Epistle to the Hebrews ix. 13-16, we are informed that the Old Testament saints had "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth," their home being on the other side of the river of death in the city of God. We are not surprised, therefore, to find the following words in the *Imitation of Christ* (page 172):—

O most Blessed mansion of the city which is above! O most clear day of eternity which night darkeneth not, but the Lord of truth is ever the light of it! O day ever joyful, ever secure, and never changing into contrary state. The heavenly citizens do know how joyful that day is; but the banished children of Eve bewail the bitterness and tediousness of this. The days of this life are short and evil, full of sorrow and straightnesses.

As a consequence of such teaching, to be found in thousands of books, other than this immortal one by Thomas A. Kempis, Christians in the past fell into

the habit of considering the present life and its affairs as being utterly unworthy of their attention. The belief in their heavenly citizenship blinded them to the fact that they were under a moral obligation to discharge their respective duties as citizens of the earth. They took it for granted that they were infinitely above the world, being merely pilgrims just passing through it from one eternity to another. It would not have been worth their while to take any active part in any work of social reform here, for the next day they might die and be forever with the Lord, which was the ideal ever held up as a shining lamp, in their minds. Their song had a depressing lament as well as an inspiring hope in it :—

Here in the body pent,
Absent from Him I roam.
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent
A day's march nearer home.

Thus the Christian attitude towards the world was and is both unwholesome and positively injurious. St. John was entirely mistaken when he said that the world was passing away. It is we that are passing away, not the world.

We are convinced that Mr. Tattersall is entirely wrong in supposing that the apostle John had a different kind of world in his mind's eye. He says :—

It is not of the world of men that St. John writes, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." There is another world—of evil; a world that has been created by selfish aims and low ideals, temporal satisfactions and sinful pleasures; a world bounded by sensual gratifications which degrade the soul; a world that is anti-spiritual, the enemy of the noble, the friend of the base, with nothing beautiful in it, that satiates but does not satisfy, and upon which has been written the unalterable decree: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

There is much truth in what the reverend gentleman says; but we feel quite sure that John did not use the term "world" in that sense. He was thinking of the world not as wicked but as transitory; not as sinful and corrupt, but as passing away, and of the love of it, not as being in itself wrong and hurtful, but as making it impossible for believers to concentrate their minds and hearts upon God. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," which is perfectly true.

Mr. Tattersall interprets his text as a warning against worldliness. In considering the question, What is worldliness? he indulges in a few highly amusing statements. He says :—

We do not ask: What is worldly? for too often men label things according to their prejudices, and sometimes the labels are libellous. A rose would smell as sweet by any other name. It is interesting to notice some of the changes time has wrought among our social conventions. The censor has had a long innings, in spite of his many absurdities. He interfered with our games; passed draughts, but was doubtful about dominoes; a bagatelle board wore an innocent look, but a billiard table had guilt written all over it, and cards were the Devil's. He interfered with the cook: in the 18th century she might not prepare potatoes for dinner because they were not mentioned in the Bible, and the delectable mince pie, which has now a ritual all its own, was disagreeable to the Puritans. He interfered with the milliner and dressmaker. Madame must wear a bonnet and not a hat if she would keep her reputation, and her garments must be of sombre colour and severe cut if she would not be mistaken for "a woman of the world." He interfered with the reader; there was a Puritan as well as a Catholic Index Expurgatorius; there was a day when nearly all novels were naughty. He interfered with the musician: when Sunday dawned the piano was shut down, though the harmonium might remain open.

All that is both interesting and true, and we congratulate Mr. Tattersall on his liberal-mindedness when dealing with social questions.

On the subject of religion, we totally disagree with him. For example, what sense is there in the saying, "Love cannot die, but the world is dying"? Love is not an entity, existing independently, somewhere in space; love is an emotion of the heart, and the moment the heart ceases to beat it can no longer love. It is perfectly silly to say that love cannot die, fully as nonsensical as it would be to aver that men and women cannot die. Love there cannot be apart from lovers, and all lovers die. Here is another absurd utterance: "The man of God is neither foolish nor melancholy because the world passeth away; it leaves him untouched." It certainly does not leave him untouched, for he, too, like every other man, is under the law of death. Immortality is an object of belief and speculation, not of knowledge; but of the existence of the world we are now in there can be absolutely no doubt. It is here, and we can make the best or the worst of it. By plain living and high thinking it becomes our most precious possession. It is our clear duty to love the world,

For love we Earth, then serve we all;
Her mystic secret then is ours:
We fall, or view our treasures fall,
Unclouded.

J. T. LLOYD.

A Bishop of Half Europe.

"A good laugh is a mighty good thing."—*Herman Melville.*

John P.
Robinson, He
Sez they didn't know everything down in Judee.
Lowell.

A REVEREND gentleman has been contributing to the newspaper Press. This is, in itself, by no means an exceptional circumstance. The clergy as a class are by no means averse to the limelight of publicity. From the gloomy Dean Inge, who is a thoughtful and suggestive writer, to the light-hearted and light-headed editors of parish magazines, they are for ever rushing into print. The particular cleric who has aroused our attention rejoices in the title of "Anglican Bishop of North and Central Europe," and thereby hangs a tale. For his contribution to the newspaper press contains an account of his diocese, which, if it does not add to the gaiety of the nation, should induce merriment amongst quite a large number of people.

The Anglican Church, be it remembered, is the State Church of England, and, from the continental point of view, quite an insular affair and of little theological importance. It is even of less consequence to-day than it was a few years since, for two of its branches, in Ireland and Wales, have already been disestablished. Yet the "Anglican Bishop of North and Central Europe" claims a diocese which covers the countries north of a line drawn from Bordeaux in France, right across Europe to Moscow in Soviet Russia. In one respect it must be unique, as the diocese covers a dozen different countries, and near a score of languages are spoken in it. This huge diocese has eighty-one permanent Anglican chaplains, and a number of temporary assistants, who officiate, probably, during the pleasant tourist seasons. For the plain truth is that this particular diocese only comprises the British colonies in each country, and the bulk of the European inhabitants are as blissfully unaware of the activities of the Anglican Church as they are of the high-sounding title of the right-

reverend Father-in-God who tours around periodically in a first-class railway carriage.

Since the fishing-nets of the original disciples were sold as old lumber, there has never been a religious farce compared to this one. The cleric, who controls a diocese which stretches from "infidel France" to Soviet Russia, which has abolished official religion, is also Bishop of Fulham, which is a highly respectable London suburb. And Fulham itself boasts of a fine palace, which is one of the residences of the Bishop of London, who draws the modest sum of £10,000 yearly for fathering the faithful in a district which already has a Bishop of its own, and, who, in his turn, is father-in-God to half of the Continent of Europe. Pluralism is often a comedy, but in this case it is the wildest of farces, and beside which "Charley's Aunt" is the most pathetic of tragedies.

Nor is this all, for a glance at the map reveals the unpalatable truth that a few years back the male members of the Bishop's extensive European diocese were engaged in the pleasant pastime of cutting each other throats. Even respectable suburban Fulham sent its quota of fighting men. And, at that time, the Bishop of London, forgetting for a space the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount, actually straddled across the plinth of the Nelson Column and usurped the functions of a recruiting sergeant. For the principles of the Christian Religion are of one complexion, and the practices of those who call themselves Christians quite another. A Moslem acts up to the tenets of Mohammedanism; a Hindu is as honest as he is fanatical; even a Mormon plods slowly along the lines laid down by Joe Smith; but in Christendom, where are the Christians? In the next war of any magnitude there will not be armies fighting armies, but whole nations mobilized against nations. The combatants will, in the vast majority of cases, be believers in a "God of Love," and the standards of murder will be blessed by the priests of the "Prince of Peace." To that level of hypocrisy has the Christian world sunk, and the spectacle of a priest turned playboy for a brief period makes but little difference to the final result.

Throughout the Continent of Europe the Anglican Church is but a "fancy religion," and bulks no more in the public eye than the spectacle of a coloured gentleman worshipping a stuffed snake in his own back garden. The two Christian Churches which count are the Greek Church and the Roman Catholic hierarchy, which are as alike as two ancient camels, the former, perhaps, being more moth-eaten than its rival. Protestantism is at the ebb tide, and it is obviously losing ground. No addition has been made to Protestant territory in Europe since the Reformation. Even in America the Puritans are faced with the huge Roman Catholic populations in Canada, the United States, and further south from Panama to Peru. To put the matter briefly, the Latin peoples dislike compromise, and they regard Protestantism as a half-way house, or as a feather-bed to catch a falling Christian. When a Frenchman, for example, finds himself out of harmony with the Roman Catholic Church, he does not buy a big family Bible and attend the tin-tabernacle round the corner. On the contrary, he leaves off going to church altogether, and, if of a humorous type, buys *Le Petit Journal Jour Rire*, and leaves works of devotion to the ladies of his family. Protestantism is an unfamiliar thing in France. Some years ago one of the Scottish prelates stayed at a Continental hotel with his devoted wife. All priests are celibate in Catholic countries, and the hotel proprietor was scandalized. He rushed to the bishop's room for an explanation. "I am on holiday," explained His Reverence. "It is so easy to see monseigneur is on holiday, but what becomes

of my poor little hotel. Is it to be converted into a cabaret?"

This ecclesiastical pleasantry of describing a priest as "Bishop of North and Central Europe," when he is, in reality, but an organizer of English chaplains on the Continent, is a good advertising idea, but it does not alter the constituent element of things. Priests always exaggerate, and describe every country in Europe as being "Christian," when they know full well that an influential minority in each country is as much opposed to the Christian Religion as the priests themselves are opposed to progressive ideas. Even in England only one person in nineteen of the population attends a place of worship, and most churches and chapels can show a beggarly array of empty benches. In spite of its 50,000 priests, this country is in a parlous state, from a religious point of view. The rising generation is so much more irreligious than its immediate predecessor. The State Church, moreover, is not only faced with the problem of depleted membership, but the faithful are divided into the two bitterly hostile camps of Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals. The oldest of the Nonconformist bodies, the Congregationalists, is in a terrible condition. Even the Wesleyans, the most live organization in Nonconformity, have only saved themselves by uniting with the Methodists, a spectacular piece of strategy more apparent than real. The only religious organization which is making actual headway is that of the Spiritualists, who are not Christians at all, and who are hated by all the other churches.

In truth, religion is in the melting-pot, and it is not to be wondered at. Science does not stand still, but is indeed constantly taking a step forward in the aid of humanity. We are living in an age of transition. Things that seemed marvellous only a year or two ago are commonplace to-day, and things that seem marvellous to-day will be ordinary in a few years hence. Is it to be wondered at that in a two-thousand years' old superstition, such as the Christian Religion, should no longer make the appeal that it did?

"The sea of faith

Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled;
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night wind, down the vast edges drear,
And naked shingles of the World."

MIMNERMUS.

The Reason.

The sceptre and the sacerdotal stole,
Th' imperial murder and the holy lie,
The hired assassin's patriotic dye,
The boundary 'twixt white and coloured soul,
A God-appointed Destiny and goal,
The Heaven of bliss for those who grieve and
sigh,
The impotence that can no more defy,
But roots for Privilege to gain control:—
All this we're done with.

We behold the shroud
Of what we cherished most; we see the light
Amid Destruction shining through the cloud:
'Tis not in vain we struggle in the fight;
And with a Faith that flatters not the crowd
We too rejoice:—and this is why I write.

WM. J. LAMB.

The great thing about life is the going out of friendliness from being to being.—John Galsworthy.

Social Democrat and Not Christian.

THE title of this present solemn meditation seems to point to the perilous ground of politics. I trust, however, that a few simple words at the outset may ward off either the fear or wrath of any reader. In my time, I have had, in stronger or fainter measure, many contacts with politicians, of whom I may select a little medley of examples:—Sir Charles Russell, George Howell, Charles Bradlaugh, George Lansbury, Tom Mann, Ben Tillett, Will Thorne, Harry Quelch, Keir Hardie, Bruce Glasier, Allanson Picton, J. M. Robertson, Saklatvala, Gokhale, J. R. Macdonald (since about 1896), and so on. I abandoned the Christian creed (but not friendship with Christians) about 1879, and, in the same period, kindled into a political enthusiasm which was destined to go through a variety of phases. Following on these events, I have always been particularly interested in the connexion between people's attitude to politics and attitude to theology. The Socialist and Labour movement is the newest factor in the political world. It has travelled from weakness to strength in the space represented by 1881-1927. Its relation to the God-doctrine is, therefore, of vital importance to both opponents and supporters. Broadly speaking, the Continental movement is mainly associated with Freethought, and the British movement with extremely mixed motives and persons, ranging from Roman Catholic (Wheatley, Scurr and others), Anglican (Canon Donaldson, Slessor, Bishop of Manchester and others), Nonconformity (Dunnico, Barr, Henderson and others), down or up to J. R. Macdonald, who is a distinguished member of the Lord-knows-what denomination, and such emphatic Rationalists as my late friend, Henry M. Hyndman.

It is of Hyndman that I would ask to be allowed to say a few memorial and appreciative words. I first saw and heard him in his platform vigour in 1883, and I knew him with a certain fraternal closeness from 1908 to his death in 1921; and I may add that I have read practically all his essential writings, and heaps of his private correspondence. Now, Hyndman was the undoubted founder of the Social-democratic movement in Great Britain; and his relations with such European figures as Clemenceau, Marx, Bebel, Singer, Liebknecht, Mazzini, Kropotkin, Nicolas Tchaikovsky, Jaurès, Masaryk, and others such, marked him out as a personality of eminence in the agitation aiming (to use Hyndman's frequent expression) at the establishment of a Co-operative Commonwealth, in which wealth would be, for all citizens, as plentiful as water. In view of these circumstances, I think it stands to reason that Hyndman's ideas of religion possess public interest, whether among citizens who accept his national and international programme, or dissent from it, or partly oppose and partly dissent.

Born in 1842, and dying in 1921, he never was a Christian, never professed to be a Christian, and was never taken for a Christian by friends or foes. His rich father endowed a considerable number of Church of England pulpits which preached the unwholesome gospel ("blood of the Lamb," etc.) of Charles Simcon of Cambridge. But, in 1911, Hyndman wrote in his autobiography:—

I was brought up in an atmosphere of the sincerest devotion, and was surrounded by prayer and praise to God and his Christ. Moreover, I believe in my way I am not devoid of religious feeling of a kind. Yet, somehow, even my mother, who was greatly disturbed at this peculiarity, was quite unable to get me to pray; and, from then till now, though not, I hope, lacking in respect towards those who are

worthy of it, I have never been able to accept the view that appeals to a personal deity could be anything more than a personal gratification of individual sentiment.

In 1881, he issued a book of essays, *England for All*, which in effect opened the history of British Socialism. He examined the economic misery of the working-class, and detected a rising rebellion against the old notion that a Happy Heaven is a good business set-off against a Dismal Earth:—

Hitherto, many have found consolation in religion, which held out to them the prospect of happiness hereafter in return for sorrow and misery here. That resource is now failing, and the bolder spirits—it is useless to blink plain truths—openly deride those "drafts on eternity," which they say are issued solely in the interest of employers and rich men.

See his scorn for the church-going egoism which sniffed at the naughty poor:—

Between the middle-class, who lived in respectable fashion—between the capitalists, who prided themselves on their philanthropy to all human beings save the women, children and men out of whom they ground the wealth wherewith to endow churches and chapels, and to subscribe to the missionary societies for the heathen—between these most honourable persons and the wage-slave class there was a great gulf fixed. (*Historical Basis of Socialism*, 1883).

From this date, 1883, onwards to his final speeches, articles and books, Hyndman carried on the war against poverty, insanitation and educational restrictions. He fought with the Messianic zeal of a Judas Maccabeus, and the generous ardour of a Garibaldi. I have studied the records of many Oriental and Western saints and sages—Buddha, Mohammed, Benedict, Francis of Assisi, and the rest—and I assert that none of these surpassed the single-heartedness and courageous self-dedication of Hyndman. And Hyndman never prayed, never touched holy water, never crossed himself, never feared Hell, never hoped for Heaven, never accepted the Bible as the Word of God, never believed in the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ. In his mid-career, he saw, in the International Congress at Paris, in 1900, the promise of a vast impulse of emancipation of the wage-workers of the world. In his last book, the *Evolution of Revolution* (November, 1920), he thus recorded:—

The year 1900, the beginning of the Twentieth Century, may be regarded as the date when Socialism or Social Democracy really took its place as the coming material religion of the universal brotherhood, first, of the workers of all nations, and then of world-wide humanity, in its various stages of class struggle and national and social development.

My old friend, Belfort Bax, used to maintain that Socialism necessarily cancelled out the theological and Christian motives. Hyndman never put the case as drastically as Bax. His position in practice, however, implied no more negotiation with theology than did Bax's position. A note of his judgment on this issue was made by Rosalind Hyndman:—

Efforts are continually made, within and without our body [Social Democratic Federation] to harness Social Democracy to the car of Secularism, or vice versa, in a sort of antagonist imitation, I suppose, of the alliance between the I.L.P. and various religious bodies. Social Democracy, Hyndman maintained, is a material and economic creed, a theory of the social cosmos, which has simply no relation to any hypothesis about man's place in the Universe, about deities or a future life. The ethics of Social Democracy, communal or individual, and the clear, unshaken, magnificent idealism, which is its driving force, might be practised by men of all theologies, or of none.

"Or of none"! Those three words are an ex-

ecutioner's axe. If you can build a new social world without theology, theology cannot claim to govern that new world.

I consider it a privilege to be able to frame this definite and clear account of Hyndman's political basis.* He had a vision of a great reconstruction of society, first economic, and then intellectual and artistic; and the vision was supremely free from the crowds of gods that hovered over the daily life of our ancestors, and even from the One Omnipotent Solitary of the Moslem and Unitarian. The minor prophets and calculating little captains of the democracy may, for a while, tack the Labour programme as an appendix to the Revised Prayer-Book, or tell chapels that Christ is an invisible member of every Trade Union. But, as the years of evolution pass, and especially when Asia makes its influence more significantly felt, the genius of the world-republic will become completely humanist.

F. J. GOULD.

In Quest of the Beautiful.

IV.—MUSIC.

At the age of twenty the vampire-like music of Tannhauser rode roughshod over my emotions in the quest that I was consciously and unconsciously a pilgrim, a knight, a beggar and a thief. Tristan and Isolde, a long-drawn-out seductive and depressing opera, told me that I was knocking at the wrong door. Tschaikowsky, with his Symphony Pathetique and his Valse Autumne did not scarify me to the same extent; his setting of the Volga Boatmen's Song told me to persevere—to take up my staff again for my home did not lie in the city of seven hills. Then came the wedding of Mendelssohn's music with the play of "The Midsummer Night's Dream," with its healing and soothing blessedness, with the refreshing wine of harmony and lightness that seemed to invite the very brain itself—to dance. I could feel the rain in his "Spring Song"; it was nearer to the commonsense of the intellect than the heavy-footed implication in the "Pilgrim's Chorus" in Tannhauser—what appears now to be original sin set to music. Farewell Wagner! Hail! to all the artistic that shall have in it, laughter, joy, and the invigorating tonic of inspiration. And did I not steal the saying of Nietzsche—although he had written it, I snatched it as my own: "What is good is easy; everything divine runs with light feet—the first proposition of my Aesthetics." And after that, the quest was continued and my direction more clearly defined. There was more bravery in the defiant blare of an ex-service men's band in the early hours of a chilly November morning—than in the music with its head in the noose of Theology. Prometheus, who stole fire from heaven had a kindred spirit in Tubal Cain. An insignificant mortal lifting a brass instrument to his lips is a gesture, an attitude, a defiance for one brief moment in eternity.

Schumann and Beethoven were lesser loves. Verdi has more sunshine. Donizetti, Bizet, Berlioz, have a strange invigorating effect without any reaction. The simplicity of Beethoven's Minuet in G is like the perfection of a snowdrop—but the passion flowers of Verdi had no significance and no attraction. My pilgrimage in the world of sound had brought me compensation. Some power of discrimination had brought me towards the fountain of harmony that was creative, life-furthering, and helpful. The robin's song in Autumn was a natural requiem to the toiling earth—beautiful, but without sadness, for the terrestrial resting was but an interlude for the Spring that would come again.

In youth there is a premonition, shown by a feigned air of melancholy, of the underlying sadness in life.

* It was a labour of love for me, during the winter of 1926-7, to prepare a biography of my friend. It is now in the Press, and particulars of the publication can be had from the Secretary, Hyndman Literary Committee, 54, Colebrooke Row, Islington, London.

Youth trifles with a shadow that turns, at a later period, into a reality, and this reality is a Gordian knot that many philosophers cannot even cut, much less untie. In *Lara The Giaour*, *Manfred*, and *Childe Harold*, as I knew through Byron appearing to me early in life, there was the undertone of sorrow, and the sensing of it was emphasized by first hearing Schubert's Unfinished Symphony. The emotions, when whipped into subjection do not play tricks now when listening to this epic of reality. How wonderful, through the medium of harmony, is this titanic struggle with a real problem by a master of his methods. And what a glorious failure! The massive and impressive theme given out by the bass states in universal terms human perplexity; that it is stated by related sounds was another aspect of the quality that had led me as a Fata Morgana to invite me to hold the impossible. For a little space the gloom of Schubert lifts, yet it concludes almost as the play of King Lear, leaving in the background only a faint flicker of hopeful fire on the horizon. The Beautiful at this point appeared to have forsaken me, and rightly so, for had I not thrown the reins on the neck of emotions letting them take me in any direction they pleased? It was necessary therefore, to take up command again, to direct these metaphysical horses or destruction would come; in this task, the same chance that had flung the romantic Byron at me, now had another gift, but it was less doubtful. It was the company of good men, and, by wearing out the doorstep of their dwelling, I began to see Beauty in another form.

At a later date, I had cause to feel grateful even to chance. Swinburne, who has no peer in the art of praising, in his essay on Byron confirmed my debt to chance. The unseen strings of Beauty were pulling me, and it is a joy to register one poet's praise of another. If Johnson liked a good hater, he would have loved Byron, of whom Swinburne wrote:—

His glorious courage, his excellent contempt for things contemptible, and hatred for hateful men, are enough of themselves to embalm and endear his memory in the eyes of all who are worthy to pass judgment upon him.

Beauty cannot be pursued without opposition in the same way that a good life, in the best sense of the word, cannot be lived without stirring up strife.

To the period of enchantment by sound I bade *adieu* only; who can bid adieu to the harmony that makes time stand still in the same manner as pictures? The coquetry in Eugene Goossen's "Four Conceits" reminded me ironically of the time when emotions were the master. There was always chance at work, bursting in and slamming the doors of intellect. At twilight by the sea shore, when one could sit and be lost in the glories of a departing sunset, there would be the singing of songs by French girls, who were returning to school. There would be, in London streets, the wandering minstrels—in rags, at tavern doors, reminding me of the first introduction to the subtle art of harmony. There would be a poorly dressed woman singing with unmistakable beauty to a theatre queue; even in the ramshackle world of café and restaurant amid painted lips, cheap finery and vulgarity, the pure strains of music held out no uncertain hope. Such dissimilar minds as Voltaire and Gissing were agreed on the constructional and mental healing power of music. But this would seem to be as yet, an untouched source of power on the malleability of the human race that is in a hurry to go anywhere in no time.

Music is a picture maker in the mind. Faster than the hand can paint or set down in words it creates rapidly changing scenes that must re-act on the life of the listener. Russian music is nearly all sad or fierce; Italian is languorous, sensuous and sunny, German is everything, whilst the method of handling English music has made it neither select nor communal. Where English songs and music touch English life with any certainty is in taverns and village orchestras; the drawing together of an audience at Albert Hall only holds the listeners in unity for the whole or part of the performance. At the finish there is the falling apart of the units and forgetfulness; for the Englishman takes his music as he takes his beer, in the separate compartments

divided by wooden partitions and not as the French in an open café.

Since the time when some inquisitive girl found a shell on the shore and placed it to her ear, and then stretched strings across the opening of the shell, this subject of music and beauty has, with gentle insistence, been with the human race. Charmides, in "The Banquet," delivers himself on the matter:—"What Socrates just now offered about the effects of wine may, in my opinion, with little difference, be applied to music and beauty, especially when they are found together; for I begin, in good earnest, to be sensible that the fine mixture buries sorrow, and is at the same time the parent of love." What ravages the Puritans made in the national drink of England, and with their own dolorous hymns may be found in Ludovici's "Indictment of Aristocracy"; what friends and foes of natural spontaneous and healthy life may be found in history. An attack on beauty in any form may be described as blasphemy, but we have no courts at present for the trial.

Above the weary circle of eating, drinking, and sleeping, beauty in harmony, beauty in colour, beauty in form will bring the individual. Movement then becomes spiral. He is fitted for the great adventure in the infinite world of experience. He has been given his first pair of wings, and perdition follows if they are not used. The secret traps of black magic beset his course, but there is always the alternative of white magic. There is no mystery about these two terms; any glance at the lives of gifted individuals will serve as an example of the two paths which are written about by esoteric writers who seek to make a mountain out of a mole-hill. When once this spiral movement begins in the search, progression becomes easier—plodding gives place to radiant walking, the distant hills of beauty become more enchanting, and beauty now is more responsive and is less elusive.

TRISTRAM.

Acid Drops.

Our Home Secretary is too much of a Christian for us to take his word, where religion is concerned, without some misgivings; but he recently told a meeting of the Catholic Prisoner's Aid Society that when a clergyman applied to the governor of a jail for permission to visit one of his own parishioners, the Governor told him, "I must warn you not to talk religion." We hardly believe this to be the case, unless the prisoner had expressed a wish not to have religion thrust down his throat if the governor was a gentleman, he might well have spoken as reported. And we see no reason whatever why a prisoner should have religion thrust down his throat if he does not desire it.

It is worth noting that there are enough Christian inhabitants of prisons for the different sects to have Aid Societies to look after their own members. It is a pity that they cannot keep their members out of prison altogether. If they could only do that nearly all the prisons could be closed, and considerable economies effected.

At the I.M.S. Layman's Missionary Luncheon, Sir George Hume testified to the remarkable way in which Christianity is making headway to-day in Russia "despite persecution and bitter opposition." When one church is destroyed or taken for secular purposes, said Sir George, the peasants immediately set to work to build another. Now the Soviet authorities are alleged to have some curious ways of looking at and doing things, but surely their way of "persecution and oppression" to Christianity must be the most curious of all, if Sir George may be believed. They either destroy a church or else put it to a socially better use, but they do not prevent the peasants from erecting another in its place, nor, we presume, from worshipping it. This be very queer bitter opposition. It reminds one of "Alice in Wonderland."

Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, of New York, who specializes in answering questions, was asked if the Rotary Movement and its influence was telling on the side of Christianity in the United States, or the reverse. The Doctor replied that Rotary was very useful in bridging barriers between Jews and Gentiles, Roman Catholics and Protestants. "It is not an intellectual triumph but a weekly lunch." It has taught the leaders of the Churches a lesson in toleration. It was also very humanitarian, and business men escaped from the everlasting dollar. He recommended the movement. Dr. Cadman appears not to realize that in praising Rotary for "bridging barriers," he is virtually accusing the Churches of the various religious sects of erecting those barriers. If the Churches went out of business, the particular part of Rotary alleged to be useful wouldn't be necessary. As for Rotary being very humanitarian, it is a queer kind of humanitarianism that gets awake only when the worthy Rotarians have well plied their stomachs with good food and wine at their weekly Rotarian luncheon.

Dr. Cadman had something to say about "the evils of secular education" in America. The secular system was due, he said, to the fact that Americans differed so much about religion, that it would not be taught in any of the State schools. And secular education would remain until the various religious bodies were able to come to some definite agreement among themselves. Secular education had been largely responsible for the neglect and ignorance of the Bible. But in spite of that, the Bible was immovably fixed in the affections and esteem of the nation. It seems rather queer to us that while the American, because of his secular education, is ignorant of and neglects the Bible, he has an immovably fixed affection and esteem for it. And we cannot quite understand why, if the Bible is so highly esteemed, the Doctor and his friends in the clerical trade should deplore the fact that the dirty old book cannot be forced on the child in the schools. But perhaps the alleged affection and esteem is only a pleasant fiction with which the reverend gentleman hopes to cheer his rather doleful English brothers.

An old Methodist recently related (in the *Methodist Recorder*) what led to his "conversion." When he was attending Sunday-school, every year the roll of those connected with the school who had died during the year, was solemnly read out. In 1857 the roll contained the names of several of his companions, and so he asked himself: "What if my name should be on the roll next year?" A little later he attended some special services—no doubt of the "repent, or simmer in Hell" kind. And these did the conversion trick. He walked up to the penitent form and "found peace." All this throws an interesting light on the psychology of conversion. First the young lad is taught the usual fear of Hell. This naturally comes to mind when he hears the names of his dead companions read out, and brings home to him what sort of treatment he is doomed for if he dies during the year. The dread of this gives him no peace, and the parson's sermons deepen the dread, so that he gets no peace until he professes conversion. In short, the parsons create the dread, and their dupes are grateful to them for removing this artificially induced dread by a promise of a seat in Heaven.

The Bishop of Hull doesn't look kindly on religious teaching in Council Schools; this, says he, is religious only in name, and indefinite to a tragic degree. We sympathize deeply with our Christian brother. We quite appreciate the fact that the half-and-half Christians produced by the Council-school system are useless to the Churches. What the schools ought to be compelled to turn out are thoroughly well-bred little Anglicans or Wesleyans or Baptists. The rate-payers, who are, of course, people of all religions beliefs and of none, might not like that. But we shall never get the Kingdom of God on earth if the feelings or sentiments of a mob of ratepayers are to be pandered to.

A religious weekly says of the new Prayer Book, that when it goes before Parliament it will probably become law. But, adds this weekly, whether it will provide a way of peace and unity for the Anglican Church is doubtful. Now if one Christian denomination cannot achieve peace and unity within itself, what exactly is its chance worth of bringing peace and unity to the nation, leave alone the world? There is no prize offered for the answer to this conundrum. But we suggest some of our daily contemporaries could include the query in their "What do you know?" column.

The Bishop of Colchester says he has seen missionaries at work, heard them preach and pray, stood shoulder to shoulder with them, and he is certain there is no better body of men doing God's work in Colchester or any other city. Seeing that Bishops and missionaries are both of one trade, his Lordship appears to be indulging in a little oblique self-praise.

The Pope has, we learn, decided to dispense with horses at the Vatican, and has bought a motor-car. This decision is said to have followed an accident, when two horses attached to his carriage bolted and crashed into a marble column. The Pope thinks "safety first" a good motto, when Providence, which looks after sparrows, appears not to be keeping its eye on Popes also.

John Henry Livingstone, of Southsea, has been awarded three years' penal servitude for flinging an iron shoemaker's last at his wife, and striking her with a buckled belt a day or two before she gave birth to a still-born child. John declared himself, in court, to be a Gospel missionary, and refused to take the oath because his conscience urged him not to do so on account of the Biblical injunction against swearing. There is no doubt about John being pious, and none about his being a brute. His religion appears to have given him an alert kind of conscience, but it appears not to have been of much benefit to his wife.

For the most part, says a Wesleyan scribe, amusements are closed down in Southport on Sunday. The authorities have more moral courage than those at Brighton. The scribe could more accurately have said "more intellectual cowardice," and "more bigotry."

The home, says Canon Whincup, is the touchstone of the nation's strength. Celibate Roman Catholic priests, monks, and nuns think the Canon is misinformed.

In an address to the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, the Rev. C. C. Lefroy protested against the common notion that the aborigines of Australia were "the lowest of the low," and told some stories of their high qualities. In one instance a number of blacks had been arrested—wrongly, by the way—and were being taken for trial heavily handcuffed and chained to each other. They had a long distance to travel, and at one point they reached a swollen river. After awaiting two or three days for the water to subside, the trooper in charge loosened the chains sufficiently and then ordered the men to make their way across as best they could. The natives all crossed over safely, but the trooper's horse lost its footing in the strong current, the trooper was thrown into the water, and a kick from the horse rendered him unconscious. Seeing this, a native wound the heavy chain from which he could not free himself round his body, jumped into the surging river, and brought the trooper safely to land. Mr. Lefroy heard of the incident and succeeded in getting the Royal Albert medal awarded to the rescuer. Mr. Lefroy thought a great deal of the incident and made use of it to further his campaign on behalf of the natives. One day he had a visitor, who came from some people

in North Australia to say that they considered he was making far too much fuss of the incident. "After all," added the man, "it is nothing—blacks always act like that." From all this it should be apparent that a race naturally possessing the splendid qualities revealed by this incident, doesn't require the officious attentions of the Christian missionary to "improve" it.

The Sub-Committee of the League of Nations recently issued a Report on the extension of instruction of children and young people in international affairs, and made several suggestions by which the instruction might be given. The Committee regards the revision of history text-books, although desirable, as a very difficult problem. It suggests that all possible steps should be taken to eliminate from the text-books every incitement to hatred of other nations. Now that is a useful suggestion. What is very odd is that, although the Christian Churches have always professed to be trying to bring about universal brotherhood, yet they have never thought of making this suggestion. Perhaps they have been too busy keeping their superstition in the schools, and blessing war banners and ships, for the suggestion to occur to them.

The Wesleyan Conference, at Bradford, passed a resolution asking for all propaganda meetings to be stopped on Sunday. All we can say is that we should like to see the powers that be try to do it. There are things that even the British public would not stand, and this, we are sure is one of them. It will submit to being told at what time it must refrain from buying a packet of chocolate, but this would be the last straw. Of course this would not involve the stopping of Salvation Army meetings, or street corner meetings. It means all propaganda that is not religious.

At Eastbourne, for instance, we note that a man has been fined for having a gramophone playing in the street, because it annoyed some of the inhabitants. But the Salvation Army may blare away with a full-sized band and no amount of protest would stop that. Religion in this country is a licensed libertine. And it is one of the delusions that obsess the Englishman that he is not priest-ridden. All it means is that the priest in this country is not so honestly intolerant as he is elsewhere.

Some Members of Parliament are upset because the new Prayer Book does not make prayers for the King compulsory. At present the prayer for the King comes among "Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings," and this is very shocking. How can God Almighty be expected to pay attention to them if they are only lumped in as occasional items? The trouble is that Parliament cannot alter the Prayer Book, it must either pass it or reject it. A mixture of Atheists, Agnostics, and all kinds of odds and ends have to say what sort of prayer shall or shall not be legal in the Church of England. And once this kind of conglomeration has decided, "loyal sons of the Church" will obey. Again, the Christian conscience is one of the most curious things in existence.

What Mr. Locker Sampson, M.P., would like to see is "a League of the whole Press, having for its object the encouragement of international goodwill." Mr. Sampson fails to realize that there is no money in his suggestion. The big newspaper lords know that huge circulations are attained and retained only by pandering to narrow national prejudice.

A scheme is on foot to erect a statue in Gloucester as a national memorial to Robert Raikes, the pioneer of the Sunday-school devoted to religious education. As depicting the true result of Raikes' activities, the statue should, we suggest, show the good man tying a bandage over a child's eyes. Underneath might read a Shakespearean quotation: "The evil that men do lives after them . . ."

To Correspondents.

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

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT TRUST.—W. J. Lamb, £1 ios.; J. Staunton, 2s. 6d.

D. MATTHEWS.—Thanks for appreciation. We are afraid there is little chance of a move in the direction named. There is small chance of Mr. Cohen ever being able to find time to visit South Africa. We know there are many Freethinkers there, and we should like to see them organized. We do not publish names and addresses of subscribers to this paper, for obvious reasons.

Mr. J. BARR.—A friend writes protesting against the provision of the Tithes Act of 1925, which provides that a stamp is not required on a receipt for payment. He asks why this should be so? The only reason we can see, is that the clergy are a privileged body, and that parsons have usually a keen eye to the main chance.

J. STAUNTON.—Thanks for cutting from *Referee*. We have dealt with this subject often, and it would take up too much space to deal effectively with what is written. The writer is curiously ignorant if he does not realize that the question of the simian or other animal origin of man in nowise affects the belief in the evolution of man from the lower animal world.

G. J. BARTRAM.—Mr. Cohen is to visit Chester-le-Street on November 6.

F. MANN.—If it can be arranged Mr. Cohen will be quite willing to visit Edinburgh at an early date.

A. B. MOSS.—Hope you will have an enjoyable holiday. The lack of sunshine is, of course, a drawback to holiday makers, but personally we much prefer the weather to remain cool. We shall get plenty of heat later.

J. DAVIES.—The address of the Secretary of the Swansea Branch is W. Moore, 6 Devon View Terrace, Danycraig, Swansea. Write us a little nearer the time for subjects.

H. STONE.—Of course the fact of there being bad Christians does not prove Christian doctrines to be untrue; but it does dispose of the Christian claim that belief in Christianity makes good men and women. Some Christians are good, but so are some of every other opinion. The claim is almost too stupid for serious argument.

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.

We are continually calling attention to the want of knowledge displayed by those concerned, concerning the working of the Oaths Amendment Act of 1888. The latest instance occurred at Bristol, with Mr. Justice Avory presiding. In a case for damages, in which Mr. Raphael Neft was plaintiff, the following occurred, according to the report in the *Western Mercury*:—

When plaintiff was called to the witness box he objected to taking the oath. The Judge asked why, and plaintiff said that he thought his word was sufficient.

The Judge: You must give me some reason.

Plaintiff: That is my reason, my lord.

The Judge: That is not enough. Have you any religious beliefs?

Plaintiff: That is my religion—that a man's word is enough.

The Judge: Are you prepared to say that it is contrary to your religious beliefs to take the oath?

Plaintiff: No, my lord.

The Judge: Then you must be sworn.

Plaintiff then took the oath.

Mr. Justice Avory was within his rights in asking for a reason why the oath was declined, although as affirmation is quite legal, the questioning might easily have been dispensed with. And seeing that Mr. Neft was apparently ignorant of the wording of the Act, beyond the fact that affirmation was allowable, it would not have been out of place for a judge who wished a man to avail himself of his legal rights, to have explained the Act to him. The Act gives the judge the right to ask on what grounds, and the ground may be one of two—either because it is contrary to one's religious belief, or because one has no religious belief. If Mr. Neft had replied quite plainly to the first question, "Have you any religious beliefs?" with a straightforward negative, the judge would have had no alternative but to have ordered the affirmation to be taken.

We hardly think that in this particular case the judge had the power to order the man to take the oath. Certainly, if the reply to the question asked had been, "I have no religious belief," such an order could not have been given. The result illustrates the danger of playing with such words as "religion." We suspect that Mr. Neft was afraid to prejudice his case with the jury by admitting, in so many words, the absence of a religious belief. And that is one more reason for doing away with religious formulas in all civil proceedings. It is a pity that everyone does not understand quite clearly that a judge must take an atheist's evidence on his word of honour to speak the truth. It is a religionist whose word of honour is not legally sufficient.

We note the following from the *Scarborough Mercury* of July 8:—

A ratepayer has written the Watch Committee about the holding of meetings upon the sands by the Salvation Army, but the committee has declined to make any order thereon. There is no doubt whatever that these meetings are a nuisance in the general sense of the word, and if it were not for the fact that they are of a religious nature they would not be tolerated for a moment. The religious side of the question should not be taken into consideration at all. If noise is injurious to a person in the ordinary sense of the word it is equally capable of inflicting harm upon people when it is associated with religious services. The Corporation went so far as to remove the Salvation Army from the Aquarium Top, but the transference of pitch has only removed the nuisance from one place to another. The Watch Committee apparently considers that the carrying out of religious exercises comes before the general comfort of those who do not wish to hear the noise associated with such exercises, but who cannot avoid doing so because of their close proximity to the cause.

Of course, we are not a priest-ridden country—that is, we are not ridden by one sort of priest. But any kind of a priest occupies a privileged position, even the ignorant representatives of the Salvation Army. We suggest that some Scarborough folk should hold other meetings on the sands, and decline to move until the Salvation Army is moved also.

Mr. F. Mann writes:—

I had a most successful meeting at the Mound, on Sunday, July 17. Local Secularists labour under the disadvantage of being in a particularly "respectable" city, but enough Application for Membership forms were filled up on Sunday to enable the branch to be formed at once. If the meeting on Sunday is anything to go upon, there is great possibilities in Edinburgh. I sold considerably more than double the quantity of literature I have sold at my best meeting in Glasgow, and the large audience was apparently very much interested in Secularism. Mr. J. Donaldson, of 16 Portland Place, Leith, has consented to act as Secretary, and invites all those interested to write to him. I have to gratefully acknowledge the assistance given me by the Shotts Secularists at the meeting on Sunday.

Mr. Mann is paying Edinburgh another visit on Saturday, July 23, when another successful meeting is anticipated.

Mr. Franklin Steiner, Secretary of the American Rationalist Association sends us congratulations of the National Secular Society's Conference, and wishing us all success in our work. He also says that the first sight of the *Freethinker* by a friend brought a subscription, which he forwards to our shop-manager. There are many thousands of similar likely subscribers about, both in this country and elsewhere, if only our friends could get into touch with them. We may do it ourselves when we are in a position to embark on that long-needed advertising campaign. There is only one *Freethinker*.

The Illusions of Mankind.

IF there is one trait more than another common to every variety of the animal species called man, it is his Gargantuan and vastly developed aptitude for chasing illusions. He was busy at the job in the days of Moses, he worked as assiduously at the very self-same task when Julius Cæsar was conquering known Europe; at this precise moment he is through the incidence of additions to the anamorphosistic stock working overtime with terrific industry. It is precisely here in fact that the only difference lies, for whereas the Ancient Briton had only a matter of half-a-dozen definite and distinct illusions for the chasing, the twentieth century Englishman has all of a hundred on which to ring the changes.

It must not be supposed that any one man is swamped with the whole gamut of known botcheries at the same time. He isn't. Apart from such stock and universal illusions as that one can have liberty and democracy at the same time; that sexual love necessarily implies procreation; that children tell the truth; that women and dogs possess intuitive faculties denied to man; that sailors are healthier than landsmen; that all men are born equal: apart from these falsities that have been deluding the world for a matter of centuries, it is conceivable that the individual Englishman or American does not actually embrace more than a round half dozen of the current delusions in circulation at any one particular time. His stock in the main is an ever-changing one. His illusions at twenty are, with a few exceptions, entirely different from his illusions at sixty. The popular idea, of course, is that at sixty the false ideas of twenty have been replaced by the wisdom of maturity. Nothing could be more erroneous. They have simply been replaced by another set of illusions equally as silly, jejune and nonsensical as those paraded in younger days.

Of the universal type of illusion no better example can be selected than that of liberty. To suggest to the average patriotic Englishman that he is not blessed with liberty is to ask to be knocked down. And yet the truth is that of real liberty he has precious little. He can only get his booze at certain times of the day, he cannot buy a cigarette for him-

self, or a box of chocolates for his best girl after a stipulated hour, he cannot purchase in a respectable shop devoted to the sale of books a copy of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, he is bound under severe pains and penalties to give an exact and detailed account of every penny he earns, he can't put up a dog kennel without a miniature army of officials camping in his back-yard. Liberty forsooth! Equally universal is the fallacy that woman's love of dress is inherent and natural, like a hen's taste for worms or a dog's fondness for bones. In strict fact it is nothing of the kind. Women dress in costly and extravagant silks, furs and feathers with the sole idea of outshining their competing sisters in the eternal quest for the admiration of the male. They don their gaudy finery for precisely the same reason that young men strut and prance and lubricate their hair and make frantic efforts to appear as "knights bold" or adventure-story heroes before the damsels of their choice; for precisely the same reason, that in the throes of love, old men with the aid of fancy socks, ties and hair-dyes, make ridiculous asses of themselves in their efforts to ape the young bloods.

Were it not for man's persistency in chasing illusions the game of politics could not continue. One would think it sufficiently obvious even to the most befogged intellect that every professional politician, like every other sane mortal being on this planet, is out to secure for himself as big a slice of fame, of cash, and of comfort as is possible. His altruism is wholly eyewash, his patriotism mainly trumpetry. His profession from first to last is a game of bunkum, brag and grab. And yet the farmers, shop-keepers, clerks, manufacturers, street sweepers, yell themselves hoarse in chaotic enthusiasm every time one of these parliamentary ecstasy pedlars mounts a platform or a soap box.

But all illusions are not generic. Indeed the overwhelming majority are confined to respective groups or societies. Many are parochial, many environmental, a huge number frankly patriotic. Some are imbibed with the mother's milk; some, such as the American's idea that the great and glorious U.S.A. is the home of liberty, and the Englishman's notion that he will never be a slave, are hammered in at school with the Lord's prayer and the alphabet. Such elementary fooleries as the belief in the chastity of women, that truth will out, are swallowed with one's first strong drink. But other more personal or individual delusions come later. The man who smirks his superior intelligence at the illusions of Socialists, Theosophists, Christian Scientists, is probably a Freemason, or an Oddfellow, or a member of the Y.M.C.A.; the man who froths indignation at the absurdities of African sun worshippers, polygamous Mormons, Egyptian Phallicism, is as likely as not a Wesleyan deacon, or a Sunday-school superintendent, or possibly a bishop.

The attitude which manifests itself in crude disbelief always appears to me an utterly senseless one. In addition, it is extravagantly stupid. And more and further, it is very essentially an attitude, which, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, foreshadows and culminates in equally senseless credulity. Up to, at any rate, the closing years of the last dead century, the vast majority of Englishmen looked upon Darwin as a heathen, just as does the average clergyman today. But as one leader of thought after another substantiated Darwin's thesis, materialism swept the country to such an extent that even a professional soul-keeper hardly had the face to attempt to justify the idea of an anthropomorphic god. The truth is that the public, which collects its thoughts and opinions ready-made from the daily press, has lost, if indeed it ever possessed, the capacity for accurate thinking and logical judgment. For this precise

reason it views with much distrust and suspicion every seemingly new idea; it creeps and crawls and tentatively approaches every unfamiliar thing much in the way that a dog would approach a bone drolled up with a decoration of pink tissue paper. Due in part is this to the inherent cowardliness so abundantly proved by the gregariousness of man. In addition, its effects are manifestly heightened and intensified by man's monumental fear of ridicule, by his frantic efforts to do the right thing. The average Englishman or American, without the example of such a national hero as Lloyd George or President Coolidge, would as soon think of embracing a new idea as he would think of walking down Regent Street or Broadway in his birthday suit. Were a hedonistic god, in search of amusement at the expense of civilized society, to reincarnate an iguanodon, the moment of its appearance would be the signal for a hasty retirement of the local population to the nearest gazebos.

There are, however, always available for the seeking a few iconoclasts, pioneers, lewd fellows, who are ready to investigate, to destroy, or even on occasion to stick up for possible veneration ideas of their own. They bear the same relation to the herd of men and women that the leader of a flock of sheep, of cattle or of horses does to the majority of its species. In each case the leader investigates tentatively, and one by one the members of the herd join their leader. It is purely a question of time before the whole crowd is bouncing about with noisy courage and vehemence. Once having overmastered the first timidity there is no question on the matter.

Politicians, Theologians, Utopians, and the whole band of enthusiasm broadcasters know all this. They are perfectly well aware that once the difficult initial steps have been taken, once the newspaper reading public has been convinced that it is not going to lose social caste by giving an attentive ear to the new movement, success is assured. The job of these leaders is not too easy. It calls for the impudence of a school-boy, and although the essential degree of intelligence rarely transcends that brandished by the average clerk, the persuasive powers and eloquence of a huckster auctioneer are prime necessities.

To a very big extent, the difficulty of the task depends not so much on the nature of the idea as on the status of its progenitor. Thus a practising emotion pedlar of the standing of Lloyd George could ensure the acceptance by mankind in the mass of almost any new brand of sociology or ochlocracy. The Fourteen Points of President Wilson would have been received with suspicion from any less adroit manipulator of mob emotion.

It is for this compelling reason that the unknown reformer makes hectic efforts to get his ideas hall-marked with the name of one known to and esteemed by the public. Otherwise his task is plainly an impossible one. For the public is not anxious to throw over its time-honoured illusions. Its members, like so many cats deprived of their eyesight, squeak, grope, and, left to themselves, it is supremely doubtful if they would ever get over their incipient suspicion of every new and hitherto unknown thing. They naturally and instinctively look for a leader. Above and beyond all, they want definiteness. Mankind in the aggregate has so long been unaccustomed to thinking for itself that the brain, relatively speaking, has ceased to function. But let an individual of more mental sophistication, granted the possession of the crowd's confidence, stick himself in the van and the whole gang will follow much in the manner that a flock of cattle follow each other to the slaughter.

GEORGE R. SCOTT.

(To be Concluded.)

The Ship.

I.

FROM the top of the high hill whereon I stood I was able to see an immeasurable distance across a great ocean. Many ships of all sizes, from tiny boats to huge vessels sailed upon it. Their construction was as diverse as their variations in size, ranging from simple raft-like structures with single mast and sail and crew of less than half-a-dozen up to enormous ships carrying great areas of canvas, and whose crews seemed uncountable, so many were they.

Nor were the builders' conceptions of what constituted seaworthiness any less varied. Some ships stood high out of the water, others rode low. Narrow beam with tapering bows and long-drawn lines were favoured by one designer; another had built broad and squarely as though to provide ample accommodation and safety.

In height of masts, length of spars, cut of sails, set of rigging, gear and spacing and deckhouses, shape of fore-castle and elevation of poop, trim of rudder: in no respect were two ships alike.

They flew flags and pennons equally individual, and no ship could I see hail another or admit to being fellow seafarers. Rather there seemed enmity amongst all this armada, so that one ship was more willing to hinder another than help, to impede in preference to assisting as one expects mariners on an unknown and uncharted ocean to do.

More than once I saw a ship sail across the bows of another so as to take all the wind out of its sails, or come so near as to deflect it out of its course. Several smaller craft I perceived borne down by larger ones. Though I could not be sure at the distance, it seemed that some of these misadventures were deliberate and purposive, not accidental, unless they were caused by the ignorance and unskilfulness of they who sailed the offending ships.

All these strange and mysterious ships moved in one direction, at differing speeds and with many minor variations in course. I could see them come out of the east an enormous space away, whilst the western horizon was infinitely distant.

I realized that I was being permitted to witness the lapse of time. Ships that came from eastward new and clean and shining, with perfectness became dingy and dilapidated, till they drifted away utter derelicts, some abandoned, others with the remnants of miserable crews clinging to the wreckage.

Few ships sank whole into the depths. More broke up and floated away in fragments, and many were lost by the overbearing navigation of the larger vessels. Members of crews saved themselves by jumping on to other ships from the flotsam, or by swimming to them and clambering aboard, but these were a minority.

At intervals great storms of wind blew over the ocean, raising mountainous waves, when I could dimly descry the flotilla struggling with the adverse elements. When calm and clearness came again the numbers were reduced and the condition of the survivors sadly altered.

II.

On the eastern horizon I saw a tiny speck appear. For a while it remained apparently the same original dot. At length it was visibly larger, till big enough for shape to be discerned.

It was a ship. At first a bare boatlike form, with mast and sail so indistinct against the glittering restless waves as to make me uncertain whether it had any such or not. Its early motion was sluggish and irregular, as though her sailors were ill-adept at their task, and they who directed them possessed little knowledge of navigation or any idea what to do or where to go.

Time came when I could distinguish details of the new voyager. Her build was different from all others that had passed or yet sailed on the ocean. There was a lack of unity in her design and construction. Parts of her hull were new, some rawly new, whilst older timbers had been incorporated into her, old stuff that had weathered many a storm. The ancient elements consorted ill with the new mood, some of it shapely, but other quite unseasoned. It was clear that unfit material had been built into this ship, antique, and even so poor as to arouse suspicion of its being rotten.

Valiant efforts had obviously been made to co-ordinate the many grades and ages of material so that the ship should preserve its entity. It seemed the crew were yet patching what the builders had left unfinished, for she continually changed in detail.

Yet this ship was an impressive sight as she came along. She was now carrying an enormous spread of sail, as incongruous as her bodywork, but increasing, both canvas and rigging.

Patching and mending of her sails went on continuously, as did shifting of them, so that her course was zigzag and laboured at many varied speeds. She flew numerous banners at the tops, and gave the impression of being under divided command.

Later this appearance of uncertainty and doubt lessened, so that the vessel forged more steadily ahead on an even keel and at greater speed, while her presentment took on boldness, as though her mingled timbers and works and crew were getting seasoned and unified.

Now she was coming to dominate the ocean. In size she out-topped most, except some older hulks launched long before her and showing in many ways the ravages of time. She outvied the majority in style, in her well-kept handsomeness, though her mongrel comingling of architecture and materials could not be completely hidden. She was now being navigated in a manner superior to other craft. They were beginning to acknowledge it, how grudgingly none but themselves knew.

This pre-eminent vessel was overhauling ships hitherto speedy. Some turned aside from her, others lost headway owing to her overwhelming presence. More than one smaller ship she sank, ramming them directly, or crushing them by her bulk, or overturning them in her wash as she breasted the waves or engulfing them in her troubled wake.

Sailors jumped from other ships on to her as she passed. Others swam to her. Some clambered up on to her deck from wreckage or rafts, or whole boat-loads rowed to her and were taken aboard. Now she was the predominant ship on the ocean; at the moment not the largest, but the stateliest, the most imposing; the one that spread widest canvas to the wind, flew the broadest colours, and made the biggest demonstration of pride.

Under a blue sky and brilliant sun she looked magnificent, albeit a little garish. And methought a trifle uncertain of herself, as though her officers and crew were surprised at what a mighty venturer she had become. It intoxicated them like heady wine, till even the argosy herself staggered as she footed the waves proudly under her as seeking more support for the clouds of sail that she spread and the increased numbers she carried on decks and in cabins.

III.

Now came strong winds, and with them rolling waves. Sometimes they caught the great ship bows on, so that she made no headway, burying her prow in the waters till the waves swept along her decks. With a mighty rearing motion she would right herself, but revealing sad damage done to her.

At other times the vessel fled before the storms, yawing and pitching, lifting her stern high then plunging it deep in foam, a constant huge rocking motion that shook the masts as though struck by giant hands. The ropes and shrouds twanged like bowstrings or cracked like whips as the wind whistled and howled through them. Sails rent with noises of thunder and the tatters streamed flapping in the tempest, or spars snapped entailing bewildering entanglement of gear.

When worst buffeted, with huge breakers booming down on her from the broadside, the ship rolled till her yardarms dipped and she threatened to heel over completely.

Again she righted herself. When the storms abated her crew made valiant efforts to restore her to condition, so that she moved forward, but less gallantly than before.

After each period of calm or favouring breezes, recurring storms smote upon the ship with increasing disastrous effect, so that she was less and less able to preserve the noble bearing and straightforward course to which she had formerly approximated.

Each gale left her more damaged in spite of every effort to repair the ravages, till I expected to see her disappear in the next hurricane.

She did not. She drifted slowly on, apparently unsinkable. Instead of going under she seemed to be breaking-up, except for the main body of her hull, disintegrating into the diverse elements out of which she was constructed.

When the storms subsided I saw these pieces floating, each making some sort of haphazard course of its own. Spars, damaged boats, planks, barrels and boxes, the sea was strewn with them.

Most amazingly many of the fragments had people on them. Some had collected bits together and made rough rafts, in cases equipped with a rag of sail. Insecure boats had been made to remain afloat. Men in them were rowing desperately on some course of their own. Erratic and various as these courses were it was unmistakable that the sectional voyagers were attempting to do what the great ship herself had been unable to do: make headway or an ordered course to the distant haven that they could not see, if indeed they knew where it was.

Many of these dissident sailors shouted and waved and made unintelligible signals, and hoisted tattered banners of undecipherable blazonry.

Nevertheless the original though bereft hulk laboured on and weathered more storms, as did many of the offbreaks from her; others went under.

IV.

I marvelled greatly at it all, unable to understand the import of this strange scene.

Although there was none to answer I asked aloud, "What is that great and gallant though so curiously constructed ship that sheds parts of herself to make independent craft, yet continues to struggle on through all adversities?"

In the changeable winds and eddying currents of air that played around me I heard many voices, but not one definite or conclusive.

Such as I could distinguish at all seemed to whisper confusedly: humanity; civilization; religion; empire; government; and one softer but more insistent repeated: Christianity.

A. R. WILLIAMS.

Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain;
O folly! for to bear all naked truths,
And to envisage circumstance, all calm,
That is the top of sovereignty.—Keats.

A Saintly Example.

WE are very pleased to be able to place before our readers a sure method of Salvation. It is a method which has been approved by all the best authorities, and its originator at present dwells in the very innermost circle in Paradise.

Let us explain how we came to hear of this system. There was a report in a local paper the other day stating that during excavations at Finchdale Priory, near Durham, a stone coffin had been unearthed, which is believed to contain the remains of St. Godric. The account proceeds thus:—

St. Godric, we are told, would stand whole nights up to his neck in the river Wear nearby. He slept on the ground with stones for his pillow, and he would mix ashes with the flour for his bread, and keep it three or four months before eating it. By these penances he obtained great renown and was admitted into the calendar of saints.

Now then, gentlemen, you know precisely what to do in order to inherit Eternal Life. Who will be first for the midnight bathing? We can guarantee, in the name of the Lord, that you will not suffer from pneumonia in consequence of outraging every law of commonsense and Nature. You are all born in sin. The Lord has seen to that; you cannot evade the penalty of being perverse enough to get yourselves brought into this world of sin and woe, except by living on filth, and generally behaving in the most irrational manner you can possibly think of.

Our indignation at this tomfoolery causes us to drop this tone of easy banter. Let our opinion be expressed in straightforward and suitable terms.

It is absolutely scandalous that so-called leaders of the people should be allowed to hold up this kind of idiocy as an example to be followed. We have no doubt that friend Godric beams in fatuous self-complacency from many a stained-glass window. Daily, hundreds of men and women who are deemed capable of exercising a political vote with discretion, beseech this deluded denizen of an unenlightened past to intercede for them at some impossible Court of the Heavens. Such a state of affairs is monstrous. Surely it is not too much to expect of a twentieth-century government that they will prevent the attempted suicide of a large proportion of the population. We have heard of inmates of Homes for the Mentally Deficient wheeling wheel-barrow up-side down, and, while pitying their weakness, we are at least assured that they are not injuring their health, and that they are looked after by competent authorities. It is unfortunate that such institutions are necessary; we hope that the time will come when we can dispense with them. But that time would seem to be very far off indeed if religious systems, accredited by the government, are to be allowed to continue to foster ideas which one would naturally consider as unsuitable for the citizens of a civilized community.

Freethinkers believe whole-heartedly that everyone has the right to express his own opinion on any subject, and to act according to the dictates of his own conscience; but surely, while maintaining this attitude, we cannot include suicidal maniacs in the category of responsible persons. And anyone who encourages others to behave in a manner which is detrimental to the life of the community, especially when they are in a position of authority, should receive the same treatment as would be meted out to a spreader of disease germs.

Such organs as the *Freethinker* are striving their utmost to eradicate this malignant cancer which saps the moral growth and progress of the nation. We are, unfortunately, handicapped by every obstruction which prejudice and hypocrisy can throw in our path. But slowly and steadily we gain ground in the battle of common-sense.

Let us hope that our advance will grow swifter and ever swifter, till the powers of darkness are swept from the earth and sky.

B. S. WILCOX.

Knowledge, in truth, is the great sun in the firmament. Life and power are scattered with all its beams.—*Daniel Webster.*

The Helpful Clergy.

THE fame of the Dumfriesshire village, Gretna Green, on the Solway Firth, eight miles north of Carlisle, is known far and wide, and its title to fame is the fact that for nearly a century it was the goal of runaway lovers who contracted lawful (though irregular) marriages by the simple process of declaring themselves man and wife before witnesses. Pen and brush have depicted the wild race of post-chaise against post-chaise, the fugitive lovers straining every nerve to beat the pursuing parent or guardian; but is it so generally known that at any rate until practically the middle of the seventeenth century, somewhat similar marriages were celebrated in London?

These unlicensed marriages were said to have originated with the incumbents of certain parishes who claimed to be outside the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London—Trinity, Minorics, Duke's Place and others—and performed marriages without the usual formalities of banns or license until a rector was suspended in 1616.

The trade was then taken up by clerical prisoners in the Fleet, who, bankrupt alike in funds, character and position, were just the sort of men to take up the traffic. Most of them were stout jolly fellows, rogues all, vagabonds most, and guilty of various offences, many of a very gross character. A certain Mr. Burn, who has made a study of the subject, names some eighty or ninety of these "Fleet parsons" as they were termed, so that one may assume that competition was not unknown.

They openly plied their trade, as witness the following announcement: "G.R. At the true chapel, at the old 'Red Hand and Mitre,' three doors up Fleet Lane, and next door to the 'White Swan,' marriages are performed by authority by the Rev. Mr. Symison, educated at the University of Cambridge, and late chaplain to the Earle of Rothes, N.B., without imposition"; or this: "J. Lilley, at 'Ye Hand and Pen,' next door to the China Shop, Fleet Bridge, London, will be performed the solemnization of marriages by a gentleman regularly bred at one of our Universities and lawfully ordained according to the institutions of the Church of England, and is ready to wait upon any person in town or country."

"Weddings performed cheap here," might be seen in one window.

"The Old and True Register," announced another notice, and every few yards along the Ditch and up Fleet Street might be seen like notices. But the "marriage houses" kept by tavern keepers did the "big business." The "Swan and Lamb," the "Horseshoe and Magpie," the "Bishop Blaize" were places of this description.

The warders of the Fleet Prison took a hand in the game, and the "Bull and Garter" and the "King's Head" were owned or run by prison warders.

The parson and the landlord (the latter usually acted as clerk) divided the fee between them after paying a shilling to the tout who brought in the customer.

The marriage was entered in the parson's pocket-book, and on payment of a small fee, entered in the regular register of the house, unless the parties to the contract desired no such publicity, which presumably was often the case. Before 1754, marriages were performed in the chapel of the Fleet Prison.

The *Grub Street Journal* of January, 1735, thus describes these gentry: "They are a set of drunken, swearing parsons, with their myrmidons, who wear black coats and pretend to be clerks and registers of the Fleet, and who fly about Ludgate Hill pulling and forcing people to some peddling ale-house or brandy-shop to be married; even on a Sunday stopping them as they go to church, and almost tearing their cloths off their backs."

From the *Quarterly Review*, Midsummer, 1927.

The great prophets, poets, artists, the men who have most moved the world, are those who have never relinquished the ideal, who lived discontent and died unsatisfied.—*Stopford Brooke.*

Obituary.

MR. RICHARD HIGH.

ONE of the "Old Guard" was laid to rest on Saturday, July 16, in West Ham Cemetery, when we said farewell to Richard High, aged 83 years. A valiant soldier of Freethought, and member of the National Secular Society for over 50 years, "The Cause" was foremost in his mind. He was proud of the Generals under whom he served, and his certificate of membership, signed by Charles Bradlaugh in 1877, hung in company with the portraits of the first president of the N.S.S. and his successors, G. W. Foote and Mr. Chapman Cohen, in a cherished corner of his sitting room. A striking feature was the respect and esteem in which our late comrade was held by all who came in contact with him, and a wealth of floral tributes accompanied farewells from numerous quarters.

A large number of relatives, friends, business colleagues and members of the West Ham Branch N.S.S., of which Richard High was one of the oldest members, assembled at the graveside, where a Secular Service was conducted by the undersigned.

To Mrs. High and family we offer sincere sympathy in their bereavement, and whilst in the West Ham Branch we shall miss our cheerful veteran, our consolation is that the High family is still well represented on our membership roll.

R. H. ROSETTI.

Mr. Whitehead's Mission at Nelson.

NELSON provided a very lively week with the aid of a shopkeeper, who asked the police to remove us, and some excitable opponents. If Mr. Whitehead had been struck every time he was threatened he would be exhorting the multitudes decorated with three black eyes for the next few weeks, but luckily these exponents of muscular Christianity were more vocal than active, and all is well.

Usually, at Nelson, the crowds listen quite stolidly to attacks on Christianity, reserving their indignation for a defence of Spiritualism. This week, however, a reply to R. Blatchford's latest views on Spiritualism failed to win one squeek of protest while fervour for Christianity was at times quite intense. A preacher who gave his surname, but said he would not reveal the initials either before or after his name (this being his modest way of informing the world he had won a degree—by the way, can one have "initials" after a name?) promised to debate the question on the Thursday. Accordingly a big crowd assembled, but neither the much initialled one nor the "brother ministers" he also promised to bring, turned up. This incident seemed to discourage the opposition, which then turned to purchasing considerable literature, perhaps as a protest against the gentlemen who had let them down. The moral for Christians is: If you can't keep sober, at all events keep your promise. I desire to thank Mr. Metcalfe and Mr. Clayton for help rendered. The latter made some excellent speeches as chairman, and has undertaken to hold weekly meeting at Nelson in future.

Mr. Whitehead will be at Bolton until Friday, July 31.

YOU WANT ONE.



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

UNWANTED CHILDREN

In a Civilized Community there should be no UNWANTED Children.

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

J. R. HOLMES, East Hanney, Wantage, Berkshire
(Established nearly Forty Years.)

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, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., D.Lit., "The Psychology of Hero Worship."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Lecture by Mr. James Hart.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6.0, Lecture by Mr. James Hart.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, A Lecture. (Brockwell Park): 6.0, A Lecture. Wednesday, July 27, at 8 p.m.: Peckham Rye, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Clapham Old Town, Mr. S. Hanson.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Hyde Park): 11.0, 3.0 and 6.30, Speakers, Messrs. Saphin, Hart, Baker, Botting and Hanson. Thursday: 7.30, Speakers—Messrs. Saphin and Botting.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Outside Municipal College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Lecture by Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.0, Messrs. Carter and Jackson; 6.0, Messrs. Campbell-Everden, Hyatt and Le Maine. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith) 3.0, Lecture by Mr. W. P. Campbell-Everden. Freethought lectures in Hyde Park every Wednesday and Friday at 7.30. Various lecturers.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

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

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.

EDINBURGH (The Mound): Saturday, July 23, at 7, Mr. Fred Mann, "Religion and Labour."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Dalmeny Street, opposite Park Lane, Aigburth): Wednesday, July 27 at 8 p.m., A Lecture. Will friends please attend.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S. (West Regent Street): every Thursday at 7.30, Mr. Fred Mann. July 21, "Socialism and Religion." July 28, "Comrade Christ." (Alexandra Park): Sunday, July 24, at 7.30, Mr. Fred Mann, "The Challenge of Unbelief."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S.—Ramble from Milngavie. Bus fare 10d. return. Meet corner of Renfrew Street and Cambridge Street 12 noon.

FOUR GREAT FREETHINKERS:

GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE

By JOSEPH McCABE.

The Life and Work of one of the Pioneers of the Secular and Co-operative movements in Great Britain. With four plates. In Paper Covers, 1s. 6d. (postage 2d.). Cloth Bound, 2s. 6d. (postage 3d.).

CHARLES BRADLAUGH

By THE RIGHT HON. J. M. ROBERTSON.

An Authoritative Life of one of the greatest Reformers of the Nineteenth Century, and the only one now obtainable. With four portraits. Cloth Bound, 2s. 6d. (postage 3d.).

VOLTAIRE

By THE RIGHT HON. J. M. ROBERTSON.

In Paper Covers 1s. 6d. (postage 2d.). Cloth Bound, 2s. 6d. (postage 3d.).

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

By C. T. GORHAM.

A Biographical Sketch of America's greatest Freethought Advocate. With four plates. In Paper Covers, 1s. 6d. (postage 2d.). Cloth Bound, 2s. 6d. (postage 3d.).

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGDON STREET, E.C.4.

A Work for the Time

Christianity in China:

AN EXPOSURE OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

Contains Chapters on: The Jesuits in China—The Great Tai-Ping Rebellion—Extra-Territoriality—The Boxer Rebellion—Ancestor Worship—Broadcasting the Bible—Difficulties in China.

By WALTER MANN

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

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

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

PRICE SIXPENCE

Postage One Penny. Two copies sent post free.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.4.

THE "FREETHINKER" ENDOWMENT TRUST.

A Great Scheme for a Great Purpose.

THE *Freethinker* Endowment Trust was registered on the 25th of August, 1925, its object being to raise a sum of not less than £8,000, which, by investment, would yield sufficient to cover the estimated annual loss incurred in the maintenance of the *Freethinker*. The Trust is controlled and administered by five trustees, of which number the Editor of the *Freethinker* is one in virtue of his office. By the terms of the Trust Deed the trustees are prohibited from deriving anything from the Trust in the shape of profit, emoluments, or payment, and in the event of the position of the *Freethinker* at any time, in the opinion of the Trustees, rendering the Fund unnecessary, it may be brought to an end, and the capital sum handed over to the National Secular Society.

The Trust has been before the public since October, 1925, and up to date over £5,000 has been subscribed. A sum of £1,000 has been promised conditional on the amount being made up to £7,000 by December 31, 1927, £450 by other friends to make up the £7,000. There is thus left about £1,500 yet to be raised. That should be well within the compass of the friends of the *Freethinker* at home and abroad.

The importance of the *Freethinker* to the Freethought movement cannot well be over emphasized. For over forty years it has been the mouthpiece of militant Freethought in this country, it has never failed to champion the cause of mental liberty in and out of the Courts, and its fight on behalf of the Secular Society, Limited, in which the right of an anti-Christian Society to receive bequests was triumphantly vindicated by a House of Lords' decision, was of first-rate importance to Freethinkers all over the English-speaking world.

The Trust may be benefited by donation or bequests. Donations may be sent to either the Secretary, Mr. H. Jessop, Hollyshaw, Whitkirk, Leeds, or to the Editor of the *Freethinker*, from whom any further information concerning the Trust will be given on request.

All sums received are acknowledged in the *Freethinker*.

BERNARD SHAW EXPLAINED

By GEORGE WHITEHEAD

A critical exposition of the Shavian Religion.

Cloth Bound, 156 Pages, 3/6.

Paper Covers, 2/6.

Postage 3½d.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.4.



"Churches on their Tombs"

Obviously, Draper means here *crusaders* on their tombs; but, for our part, we had rather see churches entombed than crusaders buried. For crusaders there will always be an objective; even as we have ours, which is the abolition of remeasuring and try-ons. With these are coupled unnecessary journeys to a tailor's shop (*inconvenience for you*), unnecessary labour costs (*higher prices for you*), and continuation of obsolete methods (*a violation of your principles*). Our crusade has for its end saving you inconvenience, saving you money, and protection of your principles by seeing your clothes are made by methods as progressive as your thoughts. It is a triumph of science that, wherever you are, you can respond to this advertisement in full confidence that any clothing you buy from us will fit at least as well as any you have ever had. Write at once for any of the following:—

Gents' A to D Patterns, Suits from 55/-; Gents' E Patterns, Suits all at 67/6; Gents' F to H Patterns, Suits from 75/-; Gents' I to M Patterns, Suits from 98/-; or Ladies' Fashion & Pattern Sets, Costumes from 60/-; Frocks from 47/-.

All Pattern Sets accompanied by Price List, Measurement Form, Measuring Tape, Style Book, and stamped addresses for their return. Samples cannot be sent abroad except upon your promise to faithfully return them.

MACCONNELL & MABE
(DAVID MACCONNELL PROPRIETOR.)
TAILORS AND COSTUMIERS
NEW ST. BAKEWELL
DERBYSHIRE

THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

Five Authoritative Works
All as New

What is Psychoanalysis ?

By ISADOR H. CORIAT, M.D.
Author of *Abnormal Psychology*, etc.

A clear and concise explanation of the aims and purposes of psychoanalysis, in the form of answers to questions that are constantly being put to all interested in this science.

Price 1s. 9d.

Published at 3s. 6d. net. Postage 3d.

Freud's Theories of the Neuroses

By Dr. H. HITSCHMANN

With an Introduction by
ERNEST JONES, M.D., M.R.C.P.

An English edition of this well-known book, which heretofore has been obtainable only in the imported American edition. It provides a summary and a sympathetic presentation of the Freudian theory, by one who is himself an expert in Psychoanalysis and in close personal touch with Professor Freud.

Price 3s. 6d.

Published at 10s. 6d. net. Postage 5d.

The Psychology of Self-Consciousness

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

Price 3s. 6d.

Published at 6s. 6d. net. Postage 4d.

Our Phantastic Emotions

By T. KENRICK SLADE, B.Sc.

Price 3s. 6d.

Published at 6s. 6d. net. Postage 4d.

Taboo and Genetics

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

BY

M. M. KNIGHT, Ph.D.

IVA LOWTHER PETERS, Ph.D.

AND

PHYLLIS BLANCHARD, Ph.D.

PART I.—The New Biology and the Sex Problem in Society.

PART II.—The Institutionalized Sex Taboo.

PART III.—The Sex Problem in the Light of Modern Psychology.

Price 4s.

Published at 10s. 6d. net. Postage 5½d.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.4.

Religion and Sex

A Study of Religious Belief, and of the play of Suppressed Sexualism in Religious Manifestations.

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

Price - SIX SHILLINGS

Postage 6d.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.4.

Two Hundred and Twenty Pages
of Wit and Wisdom . . .

Bible Romances

BY

G. W. FOOTE

NO man carried his learning with greater ease than did the late G. W. Foote, and no Freethought writer was ever able to put his conclusions with greater force and wit. The *Bible Romances* is an illustration of him at his best. It is profound without being dull, witty without being shallow. It is as indispensable to the Freethinker in his controversies with Christians, as is the Bible Handbook. It examines the Biblical legends thoroughly, and in a style that the writer had made peculiarly his own.

Well printed and well bound.

Price 2/6 Post. 3d.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.4.