

THE

FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

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

VOL. XLVIII.—No. 25

SUNDAY, JUNE 17, 1928

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>On Toleration.—The Editor</i> - - - - -	385
<i>The Plaints of the Prophets.—Mimnermus</i> - - - - -	387
<i>The Last of the Aztecs.—E. J. Lamel</i> - - - - -	388
<i>About Thoreau.—H. B. Dodds</i> - - - - -	389
<i>Peter.—William Repton</i> - - - - -	390
<i>Death and Life.—C. Carmichael</i> - - - - -	394
<i>How I Became an Atheist.—W. Mann</i> - - - - -	395
<i>In Quest of the Beautiful.—Tristram</i> - - - - -	396
<i>American Notes.—George Bedborough</i> - - - - -	397

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

Views and Opinions.

On Toleration.

A LEADING article in a recent issue of the *Universe*, the chief Roman Catholic organ in this country, discusses the question of toleration. It is not an easy subject for a Catholic to deal with, representing as he does a Church which has become a byword for intolerance all over the civilized world. In this country, at least, a Catholic apologist must not avow himself against toleration—public opinion would be against him; on the other hand, he must not favour it lest he brings from his opponents a reply in the shape of a reference to the practice and theory of the Church he represents, and from his religious superiors a reprimand for placing all religious opinions upon the same level. At the same time, I agree with the *Universe* that it does not lie well with Protestants to charge the Roman Church with either intolerance or persecution. If it has persecuted over a longer period than Protestantism, it is because it has had a longer history. If the Roman Church has persecuted on a larger scale it is because it has wielded greater power. There is not an instance of a Protestant Church having the power to persecute and not availing itself of the opportunity to do so. And we owe to Protestantism the establishment on the statute books of Europe and America of the principle of persecution for religious opinions. It was Protestantism that gave Europe a legally established State Church, and which made religion an essential part of the State. The Protestant Church was a department of the State. The Roman Church aimed at making the State a department of the Church. Until Protestantism appeared, there was no law in Europe which compelled a man to be a Christian, much as the State might help the Church to enforce uniformity of belief.

* * *

The Church and the Other Man.

It is well to have before us the Roman Catholic theory of toleration and persecution, as prepared for the consumption of a non-Catholic audience, and I take this opportunity of summarizing it. Toleration implies two things, says the *Universe*:—

One is that a man has every right to choose any religion he wishes. The other is that while some religions may, for various reasons, be preferable to others, all are in reality equally lawful. A moment's consideration suffices to show that these are principles to which no Catholic can possibly assent. . . Catholics know that God has revealed a religion to man. That being so we have no right to reject it, although we have the power to do so. It follows from this that the Church must be doctrinally intolerant. She cannot admit other religions on an equal footing with herself. She alone has the right to teach mankind.

The writer adds that the Church has no power to compel assent to her teaching or to convert mankind by force. Conversion must always be the result of conviction. On that an apt comment is, that persecution seldom arises because a man refuses to give assent to certain teachings, but more commonly because he desires to say what he thinks about them. No one has ever been quite stupid enough to think that one can change a man's opinions by force, but the question of persecution turns upon whether one is justified in punishing a man who will say that a thing is false when he believes it to be so. It is only when a man has been charged with rejecting a teaching that he has been called upon to justify himself by professing belief in it. And one would like to know how a Church which will not admit it to be lawful for a man to accept or reject any religion he pleases can, given the power, refrain from some kind of persecution.

* * *

Toleration under Protest.

It is admitted that in an "ideal State" in which the citizens are practically all Catholics, the government would foster the Church by all means in its power, and that in such a State heresy might well take the form of a "civil crime," "and be punished accordingly." In some Catholic countries, it is pointed out, "restrictions are made, and rightly, against Protestant propaganda as such."

In other countries, where the State is indifferent to all religions, complete religious toleration is the order of the day, and this would remain so, even if Catholics came into power, unless and until the nation as a whole, of its own free will, embraced Catholicism, and thus became a Catholic State.

When, of course, the State would at once proceed to decree that heresy was a "civil crime," to be punished accordingly. So far, we do not seem to have advanced a long way from the position that a Christian will tolerate religious disbelief so long as he is unable to suppress it; but so soon as he can he will extirpate it because the Church "must of necessity be doctrinally intolerant," and has alone the right to teach mankind. It hardly needed a special article to tell us that while Catholics are not strong enough to sup-

press heresy they will put up with it, but so soon as the State is substantially Catholic they will feel justified in suppressing the noxious doctrine that "a man has every right to choose any religion he pleases." The writer is correct in saying that "no Catholic can possibly assent" to such a teaching. No Catholic ever has. No Christian Church has—once it had the power to act on the opposite assumption.

* * *

The Gentle Church.

All the time there is the ugly fact that the Catholic Church has always persecuted, and has regarded the rooting out—by force—of heresy as one of its principal duties. This fact is met, and glossed over, in a characteristically Catholic and Christian manner, thus:—

In the Middle Ages, heresy was a civil crime as well as an ecclesiastical one; hence the State had the right to punish it. The Church of the time certainly condoned such civil punishment, but she never put anyone to death.

The poor gentle Church! It was because the State made heresy a civil crime that it was punishable by the State and the heretic subjected to ecclesiastical discipline. The Church mistakenly condoned it. It was in the Middle Ages, and the times were rude (one wonders how many centuries it is since Francesco Ferrer was put to death, in Spain, at the instigation of the Church). But she never put anyone to death. Neither, we may say, did any judge on the English bench—he merely handed the criminal over to the sheriff of the county to be dealt with. So the Church and the condemned heretic. It did not condemn him to death, but merely pronounced him to be one of whom no hope of conversion was entertained; it cut him off from the Church, and "relaxed" him to the civil power for punishment. And the Church thought the burning of the heretic so meritorious that in some cases it gave an "indulgence" to anyone who would contribute wood to the pile. As a matter of fact, the secular power had no choice in the matter. The State that refused to punish the heretic would have been excommunicated. It is, perhaps, unkind to mention it, but the *Universe* has conveniently forgotten that Luther's argument that the burning of heretics was contrary to the will of the Spirit was specifically condemned by Leo X, who was certainly not the most illiberal of the Popes. And St. Thomas Aquinas, who may be taken to have been as well informed as to the mind of the Medieval Church as is the editor of the *Universe*, lays it down very clearly that while the "tenderness of the Church" permits two warnings to be given heretics, if they are pertinacious they are to be abandoned to the secular power and removed by death. One must assume that it was the tenderness of the Church which caused the burning of heretics to take the form of a public holiday, or used to round off the festivities of a royal marriage or a coronation. I have often protested against the word "Christian" prefacing ordinary human virtues, but I really do think the phrase "*Christian truth*" is quite necessary. It is quite unlike all other kinds of truth, and calculated to make a professional liar turn green with envy.

* * *

Religion and the State.

But in the Middle Ages, heresy was a civil crime, and the State had the right to punish it. Well, but how did it become a civil crime? The Roman Church, as Hobbes well said, was the ghost of the old Roman Empire. It inherited a deal from the pagan Empire, but not laws against heresy. Any of the Roman

Emperors would have looked with amazement at a judge who suggested that a man should be burnt to death because he had different ideas from his neighbour concerning the gods. The laws against heresy in the Medieval world were wholly of Christian origin, and owed their being directly to the bigotry of the Church. The readers of the *Universe* are probably not aware of this, and religious intolerance is so much of a commonplace to the Christian mind, and so common a thing in Christian history, that the average Christian mind finds it difficult to conceive a Society in which they did not exist. For some centuries the Church managed to deal with such heresy as existed, for once having used the secular power to establish itself, it could maintain its position in virtue of its hold over the grossly superstitious minds of the people. It was not until the twelfth century that the Church forced the secular rulers of Europe to undertake the suppression of heresy, and to create laws for its detection and suppression. Princes were commanded to take the oath before their bishops that they would enforce the ecclesiastical laws against heresy, and any default was met with the terrible penalty of excommunication. Church Council after Church Council laid down rules for the detection of heresy, and for its punishment. Says Henry C. Lea, in his classical *History of the Inquisition*:—

From the emperor to the meanest peasant, the duty of persecution was enforced with all the sanctions, spiritual and temporal, which the Church could command. Not only must the ruler enact rigorous laws to punish heretics, but he and his subjects must see them strenuously executed, for any slackness of persecution was, in the canon law, construed as favourship or heresy, putting a man on his purgation.

Unquestionably, in the Middle Ages, heresy was a civil crime. The statement is quite correct. But the *Universe* has omitted to tell its readers how it became so. It has omitted to inform its dupes that punishment for heresy came into the civil law of Europe, because the Church insisted on it being there, and has fought for it being kept there right through the centuries. I have previously said that there is no instance of any Christian Church having the power to persecute, and refraining from doing so. I add one other point. Is there an example of any Christian Church standing forward demanding from the civil power the abolition of *all* laws against heresy? I do not know of any such instance. Perhaps the *Universe*, perhaps Mr. Belloc, who so often figures in the pages of the *Universe*, can give us the required information. What a wonderful thing is Christian truth! There is nothing like it in the world—for which we all ought to be forever thankful.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

(To be concluded.)

Yoke-fellows.

DOOM spake, and slowly said, addressing Man,
Behold my gift.
You have short shrift;
From Death you shall not 'scape, try as you can:
Not all your gods shall save you from this sting,
Poor, puny thing.

And I, I listened for Man's reply;
Right soon it came,
As sudden flame
At dawn lights up the darkling eastern sky.
Hear, Doom, my answer: Death and I are friends;
We serve like ends:
Between us two there is no cause for strife,
For Death and Man both serve the aim of Life.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

The Complaints of the Prophets.

"Thus do I make my fool my purse."—*Shakespeare.*

"Some for the glories of this world, and some
Sigh for the prophet's paradise to come;
Oh! take the cash and let the credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant drum."

Fitzgerald's "Omar."

"Since it is reason which shapes and regulates all other things, it ought not itself to be left in disorder."
Epictetus.

NEWSPAPER editors are fond of sensational items, with which to tickle the ears of the groundlings. These astute men of business consider that such stories help to increase the circulation of their papers. Perhaps this was the prime cause of the prominence given recently to a silly rumour that the end of the world was at hand, and would be ushered in by a tremendous tidal wave at Weymouth, on Tuesday, May 29. Well, that Tuesday passed, and the old world kept going as usual.

Prophecy, according to George Eliot, is the most gratuitous form of error. It must, however, be a paying game, for the prophets are always with us. Some of these seers were busy in Charles the Second's time, and Samuel Pepys noted in his diary that "some of the fanatiques do say that the end of the world is at hand, and that next Tuesday is to be the day." A great many Tuesdays have passed since then, but, undeterred, present-day prophets are still predicting disaster, and reaping golden rewards.

Civilized dupes appear to be more greedily credulous than savages. Rain-doctors and prophets of uncivilized people are kept to their contracts. They are expected to bring rain when required, and if they do not the consequences are summary and unpleasant. Civilized folks are vastly more complacent. If the prophet is unsuccessful they ignore the mistake; if he is correct they put it to his credit. A glance at some nineteenth century prophets reveals some of the extent of the association of faith and foolishness.

In the early years of that century, Joanna Southcott was a popular prophetess in the time when the first Napoleon was identified as "Satan." Joanna was a whole-hogger, and she predicted that she would be the mother of a new Messiah. A costly cradle was actually prepared by her dupes, and the seer's death from the mundane disease of dropsy stemmed their enthusiasm only for a season.

Another nineteenth-century Messiah was Lieutenant Richard Brothers, a half-pay naval officer, who had his portrait painted with rays of light descending on his crazed head. Dick was puffed up in another sense than Joanna. He imagined that he was to be revealed as the King of Jerusalem and Ruler of the World. There was method in Dick's madness, too, for he invited George the Fourth to deliver up his crown, and ordered the Houses of Parliament to receive his sacred message. This was far too good to last, and this particular Messiah was led away to that house of bondage where so many sons and daughters of Heaven have suffered restraint at the hands of sceptical keepers and unbelieving doctors.

The Rev. Dr. Cumming appealed to a later generation. He was the William Whiteley of the prophetic business, and was remarkably successful. He contended that the Pope of Rome was "Anti-Christ," and that the French people were the naughty persons aimed at in "Revelation." He demonstrated that the Biblical prophecy of the locusts, whose sting is in their tail, was fulfilled by a Turkish general having used a horse's tail as a standard. This modern Jeremiah preached before Queen Victoria, and the avenues of his church were as crowded as the approaches to a

theatre. But Nemesis came at last, as he fell from his pinnacle of prosperity. Intoxicated with his own verbosity, he named the year 1861 as that in which most awful events were to take place. The year was not uneventful, but it failed to fill the prophet's programme, and from that time his fame declined. His dupes, however, subscribed handsomely to place him above difficulty and want, and he passed his last years in comfort, "basking in the sunshine of the countenance of God." Truly, a flowery ending to a highly-coloured career.

There was still money in the prophetic business, and Cumming's mantle was soon on the shoulders of another man. For many years the Rev. W. Baxter's name was a household word in religious circles, and a cause of merriment in Fleet Street. To large multitudes he was a heaven-sent seer, commissioned by a benevolent deity to receive the light of prophecy and throw it over a saucy world. That quintessence of nonsense, *Forty Coming Wonders*, was purchased with unabated credulity, although the error of Baxter's pretensions was proved again and again by the logic of facts to the satisfaction of all reasonable people.

Few prophets would find it easy to go on year after year delivering a succession of silly prophecies destined to utter failure. But Baxter's dupes were as credulous as little children. The prophet gravely announced the ascension of 144,000 Christians, without dying, in 1896, and the great Persecution from 1896 to 1901. The Second Advent of Christ was fixed for the same year. The prophet once had an amusing adventure with the City Corporation. He applied for the lease of a site for a newspaper office, and it was pointed out to him that he had asked for a lease extending a quarter of a century beyond that he had fixed in his prophecies for the end of the world. But nothing daunted the prophet, business was business. If he didn't care for principle he did care for interest.

These are notorious cases. Cumming and Baxter found fortune-telling a pleasant and profitable profession. They did not advise women how to find husbands, or furnish any of their congregations with the names of "winners." They made bolder dashes into futurity, and their courage met with its golden reward. But they were as much imposters as race-course fortune-tellers. They pretended to possess that which neither they nor other people possess. So do thought-readers, clairvoyants, mediums and the whole troublous tribe of dabblers in the alleged "super" natural. But, whereas an ordinary person who tells fortunes is fined or sent to prison, the same fraud may be practised with impunity if one uses the jargon of the Christian Religion. The Vagrancy Act provides that all persons professing to tell fortunes shall be liable to a fine or imprisonment. Such is the modern and merciful form of the Divine commandment, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Selden, in his *Table Talk*, says that the old laws against witchcraft do not prove witchcraft to have existed. That is so, for it never did exist. As a fact, tens of thousands of women, perfectly harmless and innocent, were legally murdered on fantastic evidence, which ought to have been incredible, for doing what was physically impossible, in supposed obedience to a legendary command of a doubtful deity. Fortune-telling to-day means fines and imprisonment for poor vagrants, but the careers of these portentous prophets show how it may be turned to the best account by Christians who remember the soothing fact that a very large number of their co-religionists are half-educated and foolish, sheep to the shearers.

MIMNERMUS.

The Last of the Aztecs.

THE Roman Catholic Church owns sixty per cent of the wealth of Mexico that is not under foreign control. It is protesting vigorously because the Civil Government demands that this shall become State property, and that the priests shall conform to certain regulations. The priests, of course, raise the cry of "persecution," as they always do, except when they themselves are the persecutors.

It is a matter of interest, therefore, to consider how the Church became possessed of its property, and the manner in which it dealt with the original and rightful owners, not in the far-distant past only, but within the last thirty-five years.

History relates how the strange and intensely interesting civilization of ancient Mexico was utterly wiped out by the Spaniards, under the direct patronage of the Romish Church. Records which might have thrown light upon the history of that part of the world, and perhaps of civilization, were thus completely destroyed by an ignorant and rapacious priestcraft, far more cruel than that which it overthrew. This destruction was carried out in a determined and ruthless fashion, accompanied by cruelty and oppression such as the world has known only in association with Christianity.

How great the Mexican civilization was in its prime, there still remain many monuments to prove. There are found pyramids equal in size and skill of construction to those of Egypt. The pyramid of Cholula has a base of nearly 1,500 feet square, and it rose to a height of over 200 feet. At Atumba, Mitlan, Tlascala, Palinque, and elsewhere, are remnants of temples, palaces, causeways, aqueducts and quays, attesting the splendid civilization which was stamped into oblivion by the Roman Catholic Church and the State dominated by that Church. At Mitlan are the ruins of a large palace of stately beauty. The roof of its portico is supported by a series of delicately turned columns of marble. The façade of the palace is enriched by a beautiful basket scroll, such as is found in Egyptian sepulchres. The gentle and peaceful race (far superior in culture to their savage conquerors) which achieved these works, was utterly exterminated in the name of Christianity, its last remnant in comparatively recent years.

It is said that human sacrifice and ceremonial cannibalism were characteristics of the Aztec religion. So they are of Roman Catholicism. The Aztecs are credited with having offered holocausts of human victims to appease their gods. The Christians did the same. But it is doubtful whether the blood-guiltiness of the Aztec religion was nearly equal to that of the Romish Church. Certainly it was not accompanied with such fiendish cruelty as distinguished the religion of the Spaniards. The Aztec priests did not subject their victims to months of vile torture such as would have horrified the Apaches of North America, nor did they end their lives by the atrocious agony of burning at the stake.

From the moment that Hernando Cortez landed on Mexican soil, in 1519, religious persecution began, accompanied by massacre and destruction, and it continued until the latter years of the last century. The Church, in every case, took the lion's share of the plunder.

When Cortez, by the vilest treachery, made the great and wise Montezuma prisoner, he used every means of persuasion, to the extent of torture, to compel the Aztec emperor to the "true faith." Enraged by Montezuma's resistance, Cortez ordered his soldiers to throw down the images in the great temple, and to subject them to every sign of disrespect. This

was done, but the Aztecs replaced the images, and invoked the gods whom they represented to send disease upon the invaders.

Curiously enough, pestilence did seize upon the followers of Cortez. Montezuma and his people turned upon them, but were unable to withstand the superior arms and discipline of the Spaniards. There followed three centuries of Spanish ignorance, bigotry and massacre, which decimated the population of the country. Here and there a few scattered tribes, in mountain fastnesses or remote plateaus, maintained the traditions and the ancient purity of their race. By degrees, these small communities were worn down by the relentless and unending pursuit and persecution of the Catholic rulers of the country. At last, a small remnant of a tribe called the Tomocniens, were all that were left of a people, once great, wealthy and civilized.

The Tomocniens were established at a place called Tomocnio, in the province of Chihuahua. In the year 1893, President Porfirio Diaz sent orders to them that they were required to adopt the religious belief and forms of worship of the Roman Catholic Church. To this the Indians replied that, though they had borne the outrageous and grinding taxation, specially imposed upon them on account of their religion, they would maintain their ancient beliefs.

Accordingly President Diaz sent General Ranjel with orders to bring the Aztecs under subjection in this respect, *or to destroy them utterly*. This latter alternative was the open boast of Ranjel and his troops when they marched off, with the blessing of the Church, upon their mission of murder.

When the soldiers reached Tomocnio, they found the Indians gathered together in their temples. This was regarded as an act of defiance. Taking up a position commanding the temple, General Ranjel ordered his troops to attack, *and to show no quarter*. Thus the unarmed Tomocniens, men, women and children, were slaughtered without mercy, not one being left alive.

General Ranjel and his troops marched back with the proud tidings that they had exterminated the last remnant of the pure Aztec race. They were received with ovations by the Catholic laity and the further blessing of the clergy. Special services were held in all the churches to celebrate the foul crime. It happened, not in the black "Age of Faith," but at the end of the nineteenth century within the memory of the present generation. No word of protest was forthcoming from any part of Christendom. This is Christianity in practice when it has the power. This is the Church that whines persecution when called upon to render account of its ill-gotten plunder.

It is the Church's boast that it never changes. It never does. It would pursue the same persecutions, perpetrate the same cruelties and outrages for which its history is infamous, to-day. It is pledged to treachery, and to rebellion whenever the opportunity occurs, against every State that will not recognize its predominance. The Mexican Government is justified in any measures it may take against the Catholic Church and its priests, for they are a menace to the security of any State that tolerates them.

It is, indeed, time that this savage Church, which is guilty of deeds that would have scandalized Dahomey and Benin at their worst, was called upon to answer at the bar of outraged humanity for its crimes.

E. J. LAMEL.

We reap what we sow, but Nature has love over and above that justice, and gives us shadow and blossom and fruit that spring from no planting of ours.

George Eliot.

About Thoreau.

Is there anywhere in the realm of literature another such book of travel as Thoreau's *Week on the Concord*? He and his brother launch a home-made punt on the Concord river, and meander, rather than row, from one point to another, speculating on things human and earthy most of the time, sleeping the sleep of healthy children under their tent on shore at night, and arriving back on their native heath, like the same children after a particularly happy outing, healthily tired. Thoreau was one of the Concord group—"where the embattled farmers stood and fired the shot heard round the world"—and in depth of thinking easily the first of them. And, in view of that, he was tolerant to a degree. He recognized that the man out of step with the rest of his kith and kin might very well be marching to the beat of a different drummer, and in defence of the right to march as conscience dictated, he was ready to suffer, in a way shocking to the one or two very respectable members of the group. When John Brown forced the hands of the slavery advocates at Harper's Ferry and went down in consequence, Thoreau came forward in his defence with a courage, cool in its undemonstrative fashion, but unflinching. As he was physically brave, so he was mentally. He was intellectually honest, he followed the light wherever it led, and had no eye lifting, as there is reason to believe some of his colleagues had, for signs of disapproval among the more orthodox of his townsmen. He lived all his time in a way widely apart from mere existence, and what may be called his time of dying was of the same courageous pattern as his life. He was one of the few men who, at the Judgment Day, will save the States of America from being bundled into hell-fire by an outraged Deity.

Thoreau was a voluminous writer, although only two of his books were published during his life-time. Some seven hundred of the edition of the *Week on the Concord* were thrown on his hands, and he was wont to say that he had a library of nine hundred volumes, seven hundred of which he had written himself. Nor, to this day, does the reading world buy his books, despite the fact that "Walden" makes an appeal to the large class of readers whose love of "nature" is more of a fad than an inspiration. They are even left out of the popular series, making a demand on the reader that never comes from a Belloc or any of the smart word-slingers who fill up this or that publisher's venture. That limits their usefulness, but leaves their value intact. For to a reader whose range goes beyond the merely superficial, Thoreau is a tonic like unto a west wind blowing across a Northumbrian moor; freshening, purging away the dross of life and bringing one up against the kindly element in nature.

In one of Nunquam's early books there is a comparison set up between White of Selbourne and Thoreau. Nunquam, if I remember rightly, thought that the Englishman was far the better naturalist, the better philosopher, and stressed the superiority of his command of the mother-tongue. I sometimes think that no one would be more surprised than Gilbert White, could he come back and find his letters ranking as one of the great English classics. Thoreau made no great discoveries in natural history, but he never perpetrated anything like the blunders that distinguish the *Natural History of Selbourne*. As a thinker, Thoreau stands alongside the great European philosophers—his cast of thought approaches that of Nietzsche—whereas the amiable Hampshire parson, wasn't really a thinker at all. He produced the kind of work that is common to the bird lovers of every country, and which is surpassed over and over again

in these days of intensive investigation, just as that other classic, *The Complete Angler*, is left behind by the acquisition of knowledge which never came within the ken of Walton. Thoreau was what G. W. Foote was wont to call a seminal thinker, and his command of English reflected the vigour and depth of his mental processes.

His philosophy was not elaborated into a system; it was not even consistent, if examined rigidly, but it was simple and practicable, as befitting the man and his surroundings. He was a wise man, and met the problems that impinge on humanity with clear vision, and an experience ripened by close contact with elemental things. Much philosophy is born in the midst of books, a pale-faced progeny of coddled parents; that of Thoreau had its origin in the fields around Concord, in the Maine woods, and in the salt tang of the sea breezes at Cape Cod. It was a natural product, free from mustiness or vice. Moored at Newcastle quayside, at the present time, is a small two-masted schooner, about twenty-five feet over all, fore and aft rigged, and anything but well found. Old discarded motor-car tyres serve as fenders, her running gear is ragged and her deck in need of caulking and tarring down. She is the "Pilgrim" of Seattle; her skipper, Captain Drake—good name for a sea rover—is somewhere in the region of seventy, with a game leg and lots of courage. Blessed, or cursed, anything you choose, with a wanderlust, he has nosed his way along all the ocean paths and visited many places off the track of ships. And alone. Very few men are good company for themselves, but this old adventurer goes questing down the sea-ways in his own company, trusting to himself, with faith in his ability to bring his pilgrimage to a just ending. And so did Thoreau sail into seas of thought with lonely courage. "Physical" courage, common to men and mongrel terriers, pinnacled high in the estimation of novelists and super-patriots, is as dust compared with the courage of the pioneers of new thought. Not that Thoreau despised physical bravery, but that he admired the rarer quality of mental courage. He suggested once that maybe Atheism would be popular with God, but Thoreau was then attributing to the Deity traits of his own. Captain Drake's achievement of making harbour, the logical attainment, so to speak, the mastery of man over circumstance, was also Thoreau's.

Thoreau foregathered with Walt Whitman once upon a time, and clashed with the singer of democracy. They were alike in many ways, but, fundamentally, different. Walt, in the course of the conversation, spoke of the young fellows he knew, the "O divine average," and said they were the deciding factor in American politics. Thoreau bluntly denied it; democracy, to him, connoted mob, the rabble, the unthinking crowd who, sheeplike, are swayed with every passing breeze of suggestion. And Whitman retired into his cave; the narrow-chested, receding-chinned Concordian didn't understand; his contact with fields and woods and sea had warped his ideas of men, and given them a Carlylean contempt of mankind. Thoreau, of course, could—and did—appreciate the human qualities that lifted man above the brute creation, but paeans of haphazard praise of democracy did not prevent him seeing that spreading the governing power over the mass of the people had as many, or more, disadvantages as benefits. With the argumentative encounter in mind, perhaps, Whitman asked Sanborn, who later became Thoreau's biographer, whom among the Concord group he thought would live longest in his work. Whitman was expecting that Emerson would stand highest in Sanborn's estimation, but was taken aback by his deliberative opinion that Thoreau was the one destined

for comparative immortality. Too much has been made of Thoreau's scorn for the mass of mankind. It is true that he did not conceal his contempt for the primitive folly of man; when he visited Quebec and went into the Church of Notre Dame, he was impressed by the beauty and solemnity of the place, but the worshippers who came in to kneel at the altar came under the lash of his tongue. They reminded him, he said, of cattle preparing to lie down, which, while seemingly harsh, is a none too severe description of that particular type of Christian. However, Thoreau's active participation in smuggling runaway slaves to Canada, and his efforts to enlighten the white serfs around him, who did not know they were enslaved, is evidence sufficient of a regard for humanity, above and beyond a mere concern for its so-called immortal soul.

H. B. DODDS.

Peter.

IN a world nearly full of rascality it is fortunate that there is still room for the virtues to grow; I have even met men who read the books they review. On a somewhat higher level, on the level of a tightrope that makes the onlookers strain the ligatures of Adam's Apple, I know a man who attempts to live in accordance with what he writes. This is impossible! you say—my answer is, behold Peter! But you don't know Peter, and I must tell you candidly that he exists in the flesh, and by his life, he attempts to make the word become flesh—and now you are going to preach a sermon—I can hear you say. Away with such melancholy thoughts—of the nasal drone, of dusty hassocks, of memories of playing marbles on the pew seats to pass the time away whilst the preacher talked over your childish head, and talked older members to sleep.

I first met him not many yards from the spot where William Blake was "cut" by an R.A. as the immortal poet was seen carrying a pot of porter in his hand. I lost my knife in the same place. Steadily through a fat volume of Gilchrist's *Life of William Blake* I had cut the leaves, and forgetfully placed the knife on the seat. Three months later I called at the same house, gave a description of it, and the property was restored to me. You will see that I indicate coincidence—why should I worry you with this rigmarole about the meeting of Peter? I have an object, having picked up a few tricks of the trade that subsidises spectacle makers, creates enemies, makes friends, robs you of your peace of mind, but makes you richer than a king. Items—William Blake, Porter, R.A., Fountain Court, *Life of Gilchrist*, Lost Knife coincidences, Peter, to whom say "Blake," and the last man he will think of is the famous admiral—even Sexton would take preference.

My stage is now set, but I must pull aside the heavy golden coloured curtains of memory. "You are flying in the face of providence to speak of memory in such terms," I can hear you say. And that is where you make a mistake; you thought I was going to evoke something dismal—something tragic when I spoke of memory. I have made my memory like a sieve; many horrible fantasies slip through it, but on the meshes are preserved the fine gold that, at the finish, I shall show the old man with the scythe—and he will say, "Not so bad, old lad," and some of the gold will be memories of Peter.

Our first meeting was at a place where the right hand holds the produce of the fruitful grape, and in this manner, as with all good Pantagruelists, it signifies that you have nothing up your sleeve. Your pardon—I did not mean to write anything so clever. The board of the feast is plain oak, and over the centre, swinging in divine rhythm are invisible roses, where—underneath human frailty may be confessed, human achievement recorded, and bright dreams of the future have their birth;—"You keep wandering from the point; tell us about Peter," I can hear you say; but that is my strategy. You will remember that Molière does not hit you in the eye in the first act with *Tartuffe*—he only

suggests him. My point is that the finest book a man can write is his life, and that is why I keep opening the concertina of construction to show you that there is not much in it.

According to Gorki, Danilov, the founder of Russian sect, came to the conclusion that neither old nor new books were necessary, and he put them all in a sack and threw them in the water. And, if men, in their highest frenzy of noble aspiration would live what they say, Danilov may be right, but, for some time, individual life would become hard and less would be spoken. As a consequence, language would have weight, and a writer's words would be pure gold.

Having lifted the wheel of my chariot out of the rut of impertinent philosophising, I must now continue my panegyric of Peter. He has large emotional eyes, and with these he saw a trombone player with his instrument that cannot be played or described without moving the hands. There is an esoteric affinity between a trombone and a spiral staircase—the latter also cannot be described by a speaker if his hands are tied. The majority of trombone players are bald, and Peter's object of compassion on a foggy night in a miserable side-street in London was no exception to the rule, "Land of Hope and Glory," said Peter, walking up to him, and unconsciously uttering the title of the solo, "it doesn't fit!" The player was stopped—and a shilling changed hands, and he unloaded his burden on to the shoulders of Peter. I ventured to suggest that we should never get the world put right if we stayed too long with each case, and so we rested in at an inn. Looking intently into clairvoyant glasses the little bubbles at the bottom from nowhere came up to the top, winked and disappeared to nowhere. "How have you found writing for unpopular causes?" I asked. "It's very hard—very hard—but, I wouldn't change jobs with anyone," he replied, and in his answer there were truck-loads of slings and arrows running through his mind. We agreed that the easy jobs were all given out before we came on the scene, and that our compensation must be, not to be boiled again in this pudding that flies round the sun. For a long time we had both been park attendants to it, had held its hand, had threatened to give it a good hiding, and on rare occasions had taken a running kick at it—all to no purpose. Imperceptibly we had both peeled the onion with Peer Gynt, and now there was nothing left in our hands. Lucky for us that we do not think with our hands, for, with nothing in them we had narrowed the issue to admiration and pity, as it is no use having too many virtues buzzing in your bonnet.

Some day when I have tired of bread and cheese, I intend to eat Freud, Adler, and Jung, after using a few thousand of their expositions as *hors-d'œuvre*, and then I shall dissect Peter. Whilst waiting on appetite I shall look on him as one of the best books ever written—one of the most difficult, one of the most profound. The love-making of sparrows in a May tree, the gorgeous purple and mauve of the iris inviting a sulphur butterfly to stay a while, are gold on the meshes of my sieve, but not a little of this metal is Peter's—the man who struggles in a storm of perplexity to suit his action to uncommon words because they are words of common-sense. You try it, while I go to attend to Peter; he is endeavouring to get a drunken man to go home quietly who has mistaken the paving stones for a bed, but in the eyes of Multatuli, Peter and myself, he was only resting.

WILLIAM REPTON.

Ashes in the Wind.

ISIS is dead: her fame is hid
Under the dust of centuries,
As sand piles o'er a pyramid
Choking the well's encircling trees.

Helen is dead, and windy Troy's
But heaped stone and tufted grass,
Where singing shrilly Arab boys
Trudging beside their camels pass.

JOHN H. HEWITT.

Acid Drops.

By the time this copy of the *Freethinker* is in the hands of its readers, the new prayer book will have come before Parliament for consideration, and the mixed grill of all sorts of religious and non-religious opinions will decide what form the prayer book of the Established Church shall take. Meanwhile, it is worth noting there are two organized prayer meetings being carried on. One is praying to the Lord to get the book passed, the other is equally emphatic in asking him to throw it out. What in the name of all that is reasonable is a poor devil of a deity to do in such circumstances? If he pleases one lot, he offends the other. We think it about time he gave a new revelation to the effect that he is not going to interfere in the matter, but would be glad of a little peace and quietness. And what will happen when these two opposing crowds get to heaven? If they behave there like they do here, harps and haloes will be flying about, and the more peaceful denizens will seek cover as quickly as possible.

Truth crushed to earth will rise again. Writing a defence of the new prayer book in the *Sunday Express*, the Bishop of Winchester says:—

It may pertinently be asked whether this is a suitable moment to strike a blow at the authority of that society, in which the very idea of authority finds its most permanent and potent sanction.

That is a truth we have often emphasized, and one worth remembering. The Christian Church is the very incarnation of the domination of the human mind by authority. That is why every reformer in politics, in sociology, in science, in morals, in religion, has always had to fight the Established Church. And its power is evidenced by the fear that so many public men, particularly those who live by the favour of the votes of the crowd, have of saying anything that will give offence to the Churches.

A third revised Prayer Book is, we learn, being planned by opponents of the present amended Book, should the Prayer Book measure again be rejected by Parliament. Assuming that the Lord inspires these revisions, the Lord would appear to be weirdly prodigal in dispensing inspiration. But perhaps he is experimenting. Maybe a lucky guess will get his servants fixed up with the right and proper way to address and petition him.

As a good example of letting stupidity have full rein in the knowledge that, being of the theological kind, it will not be allowed to be challenged, we commend the article in the *Morning Post* by the Vicar of Hitchin. The effusion is entitled "A Plain Man's Sermon," and it is a regular feature—a newspaper pulpit—proving in Hibernian fashion, the hunger and thirst of the public for religion. One sample from bulk and we finish:—

There is no common concern, no matter of food or clothing, no mere detail of the ordinary round of common life and duty but God knows all about it and is interested in it.

This method of writing is a gift; the very fact that a society exists for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is a direct and conclusive proof that a sloppy statement contained in this extract shows the height and depth of thought uttered six feet above contradiction—for the newspaper is no different from the pulpit. We are surprised at the *Morning Post*, for it seems about the only daily newspaper possessing a vestige of independence, and not tied up in knots about the location of the dead and other stupid subjects for stupid people.

In our fearsome contemporary, the *Christian Herald*, a writer complains that many preachers say in their discourse little about essential matters, such as being "born again," the need for conversion, etc. People are assured that "God is too loving to denounce sin, or to punish the sinner." A literal Gospel is set forth in which all men, however sinful, will ultimately be saved, somehow. This, says the writer, is very far from the idea

and conception set forth in the New Testament. "Except ye spent ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." Many preachers ignore such startling statements. Taken to task, such preachers reply that the doctrines are out-of-date. The writer then pertinently asks: "Since when did they discover that Christ did not mean what he so plainly said?" The answer, we presume, is—since Freethinkers made them ashamed of the barbarity of the teaching with which Christ is credited. Such preachers wish to retain their modern-minded clients. So they preach what Christ ought to have said when he said something quite different. But what matters a little mental thimble-rigging when 'tis done to the glory of God and the Church, and to the safeguarding of an important industry?

The Industrial Christian Fellowship is to start a "crusade" in South Wales. The Bishop of Lichfield told the Fellowship that they who knew the conditions to be found in the mining valleys would understand that the missionaries had many difficulties to meet. The missionaries had no cut-and-dried remedy for all the economic difficulties at present concerning the coal trade. But they would show the miners that the Church sympathized with them in their quite undeserved calamity which had fallen upon them, that the Gospel of Jesus would help them, and that the motive of the missionaries was devotion to Christ and his cause. Love of Christ, he said, meant inspiration, courage and strength. How typical of the Church all that is! The miners are in a desperate state, and a Bishop thinks the time is ripe to preach religion to them. The miners want food, clothing, and work, and a bishop offers them sympathy, and the blessed consolation of religion to enable them to draw in their belts a bit tighter.

The Archdeacon of Monmouth told the Industrial Christian Fellowship that the South Wales crusade was out to show the miners that the members "belonged to one fellowship in Our Lord Jesus Christ." This ought to impress the miners, if they can manage to forget how "fellowshipy" are the relations between the various sects, as shown by Kensitites and Roman Catholics, Wycliffe crusaders and Anglo-Catholic stalwarts, hard-shell Baptists and Anglican Bishops.

Says the Bishop of Norwich: "I see no advantages in regarding everything as an open question." Of course not; a "Thus saith the Lord" settles everything for all time.

Addressing a headmasters' conference, Mr. A. Saywell pointed out that in recent years modern traffic has robbed town children of their playground, the street; and the high-spirited children, if robbed of space to play in, are apt to become hooligans. True; that is why we ask for all open spaces and all playing-fields now available to be open for games on Sunday. When public recreation grounds are freed from Sabbatarian prohibitions, the children will have fifty-two extra opportunities a year for enabling them to avoid becoming hooligans.

Shakespeare's birthplace and Anne Hathaway's cottage are to be open on Sunday afternoons during the summer. They will not be open on Sunday mornings and evenings during Church hours, of course, because all visitors to Stratford will be in church or ought to be in church. The parsons have spoken, and the gates will be locked at the appointed time. That is very curious, because everyone knows Protestant countries are not priest-ridden.

There is not the least doubt that Germany is a Christian country, as the following quotation from a newspaper will demonstrate:—

Six men were killed and seven injured in a German naval accident during practice mine-laying operations in the Baltic, off the Schleswig coast, last night.

Experience appears to be in the wrong; a burnt child does not dread the fire.

The Rev. T. R. Spray declares the nation is in danger of becoming pleasure mad. There are worse dangers. For instance, the danger of becoming religious mad, which would resurrect the unlovely persecutions and bloody conflicts of the happily buried Age of Faith.

A protest is made in the *Morning Post* against the building of the Liverpool Cathedral, by E. E. Skuse, Braywood Vicarage, Windsor. We agree with him that, for the spending of £250,000 there are many more commendable methods than building a Cathedral, but he very adroitly begs the question in supposing that parsons supply a national need when he complains about the inadequacy of their salaries. After all, if the clergy are dissatisfied, why not declare a strike?

Phyllis Mégroz has a somewhat medieval conception of freedom for women. She writes of the Trooping of the Colours in the *Morning Post* :—

Women may not know it, but the freedom of womanhood was built up behind those bayonets.

This is romantic nonsense; freedom for women has been achieved by women who have had little or no use for the preachings of the Church, but have rather used their efforts to overthrow the valuation of their sex that was lumped in with the ox and the ass.

The vicar of Willenhall declares that the Church has a real contribution to make towards the settlement of industrial problems. For all problems facing the world to-day have a moral issue at their base, and therefore cannot be solved without religion. To judge by the incessant squabbling and disputing going on in religious quarters, one would imagine the parsons had plenty of problems (with, doubtless, a moral issue at their base) of their own, without needing to proffer assistance in secular problems. As the parsons so patently fail to solve their own difficulties, we shall be pardoned for doubting the parsons' ability to solve other people's.

In an Australian religious weekly the Rev. F. C. Spurr writes that the evangelical forces of the Anglican Church will be compelled to make common cause with the Free Churches "to save the nation from the peril of the priest." The peril may be a serious one, but we are not enamoured of the antidote.

In Warwickshire, the county surveyor has discovered that landowners have appropriated land alongside roads. This is now being required to be given back. It would be interesting to know if the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who are great landowners, have been guilty of any unlawful appropriation.

If ever a book was summed up accurately in a few lines, it is done in the *Church Times* review of Emil Ludwig's life of Christ, *The Son of Man*. The reviewer says: "The whole book is logically, critically, historically, and psychologically unsound, and will have a large sale among the uninformed members of the educated public." Every life of Christ is bound to be more or less of a romance, but that of Ludwig's is neither a romance nor a history. The truth is that so soon as one drops the theological Jesus, there is no justification at all for writing a life of Christ. If you accept the theology, you may have some excuse for presenting the world with a so-called "life," which in effect is a system of theology draped round a name. Without this, one might as reasonably attempt to give an historical sketch of the life of the Man in the Moon.

One thing must always be borne in mind, says the *Church Times*, which is that the Christian religion can only be taught by Christian teachers, and if Church-schools are to be maintained, the supply of Church teachers must be maintained." We have no fault to find with the logic of the statement. So far it is impeccable. But it must be borne in mind that most of these Church schools are in receipt of help from the rates, which means that only Churchmen and Churchwomen will get appointed to responsible, or even minor, positions therein. And even in the Council schools, so long as religion is there, there will be obstacles to (a) non-Christian

teachers receiving promotion, and (b) teachers saying outright what they believe about religion. There are thousands of teachers in the schools who are afraid to let their opinions on religion be known for fear of jeopardizing their prospects. And that is hardly an atmosphere in which to train the highest type of citizens.

The Salvation Army Emigration Department selects boys from fourteen to nineteen years of age, gives them a short agricultural training on the "Army's" farms, and then sends them overseas. On the authority of a religious journal, we are able to state that the average cost of training each boy, providing him with an outfit and passage, and placing him in Australia, is about £50. Of that sum £40 is refunded by the Government, and the boy usually pays back £3. And, we may add, the "Army" takes a commission from the steamboat companies on every boy's ticket. And there are, of course, the donations that come in as the result of advertising this form of charity. The "Army's" charity is quite a good business proposition.

The respected Secretary of the Christian Colportage Association, Mr. A. S. Maggs, wishes to "put the wind up" us all. If there is one thing more than another, he says, by which 1927 will be remembered, it is the extraordinary number of earthquakes that have been noted in various parts of the world. He thinks of Our Lord's words in Matt. xxiv, and is reminded that one of the signs of the closing of this dispensation is "earthquakes in divers places." The meaning of this is, of course, that Jesus is just about to try an acroplanic flight to earth. And all nose-powdering ladies, mixed bathers, and Sabbath desecrators are hereby warned to turn from their wickedness and live. "Prepare to meet thy Gawd!" Early doors this way!

We have felt compelled to say some adverse things about the Scout Movement, but we are not blind to its better aspects. For instance, a Scottish investigation committee has given its opinion that the Scout and Guide Movements have greatly reduced juvenile crime.

The Pembrokeshire Hunt has been abandoned because there are no more foxes to hunt. This is indeed sad news. All the Pembrokeshire full-blooded sporting parsons will have to turn to rat-hunting or croquet to keep themselves physically fit.

Bath has had a Book Week, with an exhibition to show the evolution of a book. What is wanted next is a Bible exhibition, to show the evolution of the Bible from folk-lore, primitive fears, imaginations and speculations. The result would be truly educational to many believers.

"A thrilling sense of adventure swept over the Council as it launched into a discussion of the subject on which, after all, the whole world process depends—that of religious education." Thus Mr. Basil Mathews commences a chapter on "The Road to Learning," in *Roads to the City of God: A World Outlook from Jerusalem*. Bravo, the gallant adventurers! Religious education meant a lot to them; unless it could be forced upon youth, they fully appreciated how poor would be their future prospects. But we are inclined to fancy that what the parsons really felt was a thrilling sense of apprehension at the thought of the difficulty of getting youthful clients in the near future.

A Thing Worth Knowing.

There are thousands of people who have never heard of the "Freethinker."

Every reader should make up his or her mind to reduce that number by at least one.

Try it, and note the result.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THOSE SUBSCRIBERS WHO RECEIVE THEIR COPY OF THE "FREETHINKER" IN A GREEN WRAPPER WILL PLEASE TAKE IT THAT A 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.—K. Kaule, 2s. 6d.; R. G. Forster, 2s. 6d.; K.N.K., 6d.; B. Thomas 9d.

J. FREEDING.—Your note will have done some good, even though nothing appears publicly. Freethinkers have submitted quietly for too long to the kind of treatment against which you protest.

J. G. BARTRAM.—*Determinism and Free Will* was originally published by Walter Scot. There have been two other editions since that one, and it is still in demand.

J. LANE.—We are obliged for copy of letter. Keep it up, and get as many as you can to join in. We must let the "enemy" know we are alive.

R. J. BRANKERD.—The Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard is quite wrong in saying that the *Freethinker* believes all parsons to be humbugs. Some are, some really believe what they say, some are mentally keen enough to see through the religion they preach. The parsons represent a mixed lot, in character, and most of them are very much mixed—or muddled—mentally.

F. E. MONKS.—Pleased to know you think so highly of the three articles on the Keith controversy. Will consider the question of their republication, or a pamphlet on similar lines.

S. BERGMAN.—There are no facts against evolution. Some facts there are which are not easy to explain, but that is a different matter altogether.

MR. K. KAULE writes: "May I bring to the notice of my fellow readers of the *Freethinker*, who get their copies from their newsagent, that they save on postage about two shillings a year. If all such readers were to give the money thus saved to the Endowment Trust, it would become a large sum and the Movement would benefit." Mr. Kaule is as good as his word, and sends a postal order for 2s. 6d.

W.B.—The quotation is not at all in the style of Marcus Aurelius. Nor do we recall it in any part of the *Meditations*. We are obliged for cuttings, always useful.

A. HARVEY.—We are not surprised at the Churches making desperate attempts to capture children. They realize that adults are getting beyond them.

J. WILKINSON.—We saw the *Outline* article, but it is really too confused to be dealt with in a paragraph, and hardly worth treatment at greater length. Glad you like the articles on the survival controversy. We may issue a pamphlet on the subject when the *Daily News* series is brought to a close, but the whole subject of a future life is examined at length in Mr. Cohen's *The Other Side of Death*, including a scientific examination of Spiritualism.

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, Mr. F. Mann, 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 have had a number of requests to republish the three articles by Mr. Cohen, which appeared in these columns on the Keith controversy over human survival. It is probable that something of the kind will be issued when the present series of articles running through the *Daily News* has come to a close. If that is done we may have a plan whereby our readers may assist in its distribution.

For the present we are not dealing with the articles named, as it seems better to take them as a whole, but we may note, in passing, the curious fact that hardly a letter from anyone who has a plain straightforward disbelief in immortality has yet appeared. We do not desire to accuse those concerned of partiality; it is simply an act of Providence that none of these letters should have caught the eye of the editor. We know that many have been sent, but it is a case that "many are sent, but few are chosen."

But while refraining from dealing with the articles, we cannot resist the temptation to note the contribution of the Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard, which appeared on June 11. Mr. Sheppard sets out with the perfectly frank admission that "we do not believe in immortality because we have proved it, but we try to prove it because we believe in it." That is quite frank, and if a man sets out to prove that anything he wants to believe ought to be true, one might as well leave him alone.

Mr. Sheppard also says that he doubts whether, in the case of most of us there is much to be gained by our survival. We do not seem to have made so much of our lives that Eternity would suffer if we were snuffed out. But in the case of Francis of Assisi, there is a difference. Eternity would suffer if he disappeared. To use a colloquialism, Mr. Sheppard appears to think with his heart instead of with his head. It is quite clear that, admitting the fanciful pictures drawn of the life of St. Francis, his life is only of value to anyone on an environment such as the one in which we are now living. After that environment, its significance and its value becomes nil. A sympathetic nature which devotes itself to the bettering of those who are in trouble or stricken by disease, would be as useless in an environment in which suffering, injustice, and wrong did not exist, as common-sense would be in a wireless sermon. If only these popular parsons would, or could, put five minutes' clear, honest thinking into their sermons! But then they would not be popular parsons.

Finally, we wonder whether a time will ever come when parsons will recognize that a lie is a lie, whether told in the pulpit or out of it? Thus, Mr. Sheppard closes his article with a story of a man who was an "aggressive agnostic." Mr. Sheppard was called to his bedside when he was dying. And "just before he died, he opened his eyes, and looked at his son, who was standing by, and said one word, 'Resurgam.' I shall arise again. That answered my problem more easily than any book." Now we have not the slightest hesitation in saying that the incident never occurred. Mr. Sheppard never stood at the death-bed of such a man, and such a character never said any such thing. It belongs to the class of experiences which parsons are taught to invent, and whose training prevents their seeing that a lie is a lie, whether told in the service of religion or in that of politics. Next to a completely sensible parson we should like to see a completely honest one. But perhaps we are asking for a miracle, and in a Freethought journal that is absurd.

"Almost a miracle," is the way the *Daily News* describes *The Press*, by Sir Alfred Robbins, in Benn's six-penny series. We quite agree with the description, but from a different point of view. For a man to write a chapter on the liberty of the cheap newspaper press, and

never to mention the part played by Hetherington, Carlile, Southwell, Haslam, Holyoake, and Bradlaugh, is indeed a miracle—of either ignorance or bigotry. It is probably the former, and it is likely that Sir Arthur Robbins is simply ill-informed on these matters. We believe in cheap books, and small books, but they should be thorough so far as they can. Sir Arthur's book strikes us as the kind of thing that the ordinary journalist "mugs" up for a newspaper, and to have been compiled from popular histories of the press, and without any research on his own part.

On Sunday next, June 24, the Manchester Branch has arranged another one of its summer "Rambles." Members and friends will leave Todd Street, opposite Victoria Station, main entrance, by motor bus to Edenfield. There will then be a walk over the hills to Waugh's Well, with tea at Tillotson's Cafe, at 5.30. The fares for travelling will be 2s. 3d., with a reduction if a sufficient number is guaranteed. Those who wish to join should write Mr. T. F. Greenall, 34 Goulden Street, Pendleton.

Mr. Jack Clayton has been carrying the gospel of Freethought, on behalf of the N.S.S., with considerable success into a number of the Lancashire towns. He has visited Accrington, Padiham, Bolton, and other places, and, we believe, has arranged for return visits. Literature is being distributed, in addition to the lectures being given, and it will be strange if some good does not result.

Death and Life.

(Paper read at the Annual Conference of the National Secular Society.)

It comes as a frequent criticism, from the more moderate members of the clerical fraternity, that Freethought implies a pessimistic outlook upon life—pessimistic because the Freethinker can see before him only a journey towards death, which, for him, must always remain as the end of the road. His conception of life is thought to be the stereotyped one of a winding mountain path, to be ascended on the stout limbs of youth and ambition, but from whose summit he can discern the gloomy valley below, where the track he must needs follow loses itself gradually among the deepening shadows. There hangs the night, impenetrable and eternal, waiting to receive him into her infinite bosom.

Quite apart from the fact that, even were this a true impression for us to form, it would not represent life as a depressing prospect, nor supply the reason for making it a faint-hearted endeavour—quite apart, I say, from this—the conception will be found, on examination, to be more acceptable to poetic fancy than to philosophic reflection. And it is my object this afternoon to suggest, in a general way, some reasons why we not unnaturally fall into this way of thinking, and to indicate, also in a general way, some differences in outlook which result from a more logical arrangement of our ideas.

At the outset, let us observe that, when the average man speaks of life in the sense in which we are now dealing with it, he is not referring to a biological relationship, but to a personal experience. And when he is considering the phenomenon of death, he is not concerned with a biological condition, but with a personal contingency.

Now, if any of you wanted to form an idea of what it was like for some particular thing to happen to you, there would be two ways in which to do so. One would be to allow the thing to happen to you, and then you would know all about it. The other would be to allow it to happen to someone else, and then, by observing him, or hearing his account of it,

to imagine what you would have felt like had it occurred to yourself. Why is it that, when we wish to form an idea of something that has happened to someone else, we invariably imagine what we should have felt like in similar circumstances? It is because experience is a two-sided fact. It has an objective and a subjective aspect, and I do not believe we ever find them existing independently. Thus, whenever we experience an object or an event, we experience at the same time some nexus of feelings arising out of it. The psychological, if not the logical consequence of this is, that we cannot think of anything happening to us, without at the same time imagining our sentient ego as part of the event. So, in the case of others, we cannot perceive them as objects, without at the same time thinking of them as subjects. And this, not from the mere force of habit, but from the sheer incapacity to imagine an absolutely novel condition of things.

Consider, now, how these conditions of thinking will affect us when we come to reflect upon the subject of death. Paradoxical as it may sound, death is, in a sense, an incident in our lives. I say "in a sense," and that reservation is very important. It is only an incident in our lives, in so far as we observe it in other people. Let us express this by saying that it exists for us only in an objective way. We watch other people die. We see them when they are dead. We recognize that something has happened to them. That is the sum total of our experience of death. But we cannot get rid of the natural tendencies of thought. We cannot help imagining what we should feel like if the same thing happened to us. We cannot help trying to form an idea of death as a possible experience, with ourselves as subject. And that is where we go grievously astray, because we have no experience whatever upon which to base an analogy. At this point, it might occur to you to object that I have overlooked the very important condition of sleep, together with states of unconsciousness in general. This objection will serve to develop and illustrate our thesis. What is our experience of sleep? Surely no experience at all. What we, as subjects, experience is not sleeping but waking up. And the sense of having slept (apart from the refreshing effects) is produced by the discrepancy between the events just before sleep and just after, when considered as a continuous sequence. What gives us the feeling of a hiatus is not the gap itself, but the fact that the two sides of the gap do not fit together. In other words, the events before and after sleep do not form a perfect continuum. But you will easily see that in order to get this feeling, we must have both sides of the gap present to the mind. That is to say, we must wake up. The same principles, of course, apply to all states of suspended consciousness.

Now what will be the position of the man who attempts to study death along these lines; that is to say, who commences with ideas from life, as a personal experience, and hopes to understand death by applying them with the force of an analogy? He will inevitably obtain a confused notion of death as a condition comparable to sleep or unconsciousness. Vague ideas of his own personal identity will persist through his conceptions of decease. He will talk about what is to be done with him after he is dead, and what he would not like to think was being done with him. One man will say he would revolt at the idea of being underground. Another cannot tolerate the idea of being cremated. A lover of nature and the open spaces will tell us he would like to be buried on a mountain side, with his grave-stone beaten by the west winds. And so with them all.

To such men, death, illusive though it may be,

represents some sort of reality. And even though they may be Freethinkers, and are able to say, with Sir Arthur Keith, "death ends all," yet they retain, in their conception of it, the idea of a contingency which, if final, is still somehow positive; and life, to them, will be a journey towards this positive conclusion.

If this is not right, where have they gone wrong?

I suggest that they are studying the problem upside down; not in consideration of chronology, but in consideration of a clear understanding of their subject.

Commence, not with life, but with death. Understand from biological science the disorganization, the disappearance of psychological relations, which it implies, and what is left? A state which, considered as a biological abstraction, has a positive meaning; and an equally positive, if different, meaning, when considered as a contingency in the life of another person; but, considered in relation to an individual, and from the point of view of that individual, has no conceivable significance whatever. For what is the significance to me of a state of which I can never have an experience, and never form an idea? I say that, to me, that state is nothing. Admittedly, it appears to be something when I am found making arrangements or provisions which concern my decease. But really these measures are all from the point of view of other people, to whom alone my death is a reality. If I do make arrangements from my own point of view, such as directions for some form of burial I have a mind to, then I am looking at death as if I were to be present as a sentient being at the ceremonies of my own funeral. I am committing the very errors that we have just been discussing.

But what if I take my view-point from the direction of biological science? If you will permit me the use of a paradoxical, but therefore emphatic, illustration, I shall see death not as a gap analogous to the gap of sleep, but as a gap with one side missing. For, if we are to believe the findings of biology, once we are dead we do not expect to wake up. But what is a gap without one side? It serves me tolerably well for an idea of nothing.

To a personal being, then, death is simply nothing. It is no point on the journey of life. You cannot journey towards nothing. It is nowhere on the road, and from our point of view we cannot really feel that we are approaching it, because we can never get nearer to nowhere. Taking thus, as our subject for study, not "life and death," but "death and life," what effect has a right view of death upon our feelings about life? I say the effect is not to take anything away from us, but to give something to us. And that something is an enhanced and intensified sense of the reality of life. We are mortal only to others. In a sense we are immortal to ourselves. Life then seems not to be closing down upon us, but to be ever expanding before us in depth and richness. We never think of death, because we know that we cannot. And more important still, we cease to waste our energies in quest of some other and illusory existence. Having the unique and self-sufficient possession of life as a personal fact, we are able to turn, with undivided attention, to the task of life as a social fact. And with a philosophy of life, in place of a theology of death, we hope one day to raise society above that level of attenuated barbarism which at present passes under the name of civilization.

C. CARMICHAEL.

Fellowship is heaven, and lack of fellowship is hell . . . and the deeds that ye do upon the earth, it is for fellowship's sake that ye do them.—William Morris.

How I Became an Atheist.

SOME writers enjoy writing about themselves, Mr. Blatchford does, so does Mr. Bernard Shaw—who has confessed to some disgraceful things in his early life; but then one never knows when he is joking, and when he is serious in these autobiographical snippets.

Others, like Cardinal Newman in his *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, and the late Edmund Gosse in his *Father and Son*, are in deadly earnest, and in each case they are the chief works that the future will remember them by. Both were typical of their age. Newman retreated before the growing light of science and found refuge in the medieval Church of Rome. Edmund Gosse took the path to freedom and rejected the faith altogether.

To me, such personal revelation seems like divesting one's self of one's clothing in the street. However, if we all felt like that, there would not be any autobiography at all; and as my experience, if it does not "point a moral, and adorn a tale," may encourage others on the road to Freethought, I will set down the truth about my conversion from Christianity to Atheism. Not, of course, that my literary skill is in any way comparable with the great works mentioned above; my aim will be clearness and sincerity rather than fine writing.

I was nineteen years of age before I came in contact with Freethought. Born on the 9th of December, 1864, in a small provincial town at the mouth of the Thames, I was apprenticed in London to a branch of the engineering trade. My parents were chapel people—what we call Fundamentalists now. They believed the Bible to be the unadulterated word of God. We had family prayers and a reading of the Bible every day. I remember that the prayer always ended with "Jews, Infidels and Heathens," because of the relief of getting off my knees and knowing that the penance was over. Little did I imagine, at that time, that I should figure as one of the "Infidels," in the time to come.

All those who did not believe in the whole of the Bible, like the reprobates mentioned in the prayer, and even some—like the Roman Catholics—who did, were to be punished at the Judgment Day, along with the wicked and all those who "forgot God"; that is, I suppose, all those who did not attend the services on a Sunday. All these were to be punished by being shot into hell, to be tormented in flames by the Devil and his angels for all eternity.

We had an oil painting of the Judgment Day, in the drawing-room. The scene was a graveyard; the angel Gabriel, holding a tombstone to steady himself, was blowing a blast on a long trumpet; the tombs were opening, and the occupants coming forth. These, no doubt, represented "the dead in Christ (1 Thes. iv. 16) who "shall rise first," before the aforesaid "Jews, Infidels and Heathens." Ambrose Bierce ("Dod Grile") declared that this arrangement was to prevent fighting.

Facing this cheerful and inspiring picture was one of those enormous engravings beloved by the early Victorians, occupying nearly all the wall space, of Knox preaching to Mary Queen of Scots. Knox, in his black robe, with his lean hatchet face, long outstretched hands, and leaning perilously over the pulpit, looked like some great bird of prey about to fly down from the pulpit to rend the unhappy Queen. Not that I had any sympathy with the Queen, for I was told that she was an abandoned woman, who had murdered her husband, and had conspired to overthrow Queen Elizabeth and seat herself on the throne, so that she could restore the Roman Catholic faith.

The prejudice against Roman Catholics was much stronger sixty years ago than it is to-day. We looked upon Roman Catholics as foreigners who recognized no allegiance to our King and Government, but only to the Pope at Rome. Every fifth of November we burnt an effigy of the Pope—with great enthusiasm, tar-barrels, and an immense quantity of fireworks. A stranger coming to the town would have thought a battle was in progress, or at least a revolution.

As for my father, he had a greater contempt for the aristocracy, the Tories (especially "Dizzy"), and a more violent hatred of the Church of Rome than any man I ever knew. My father never argued. He knew

the truth and told you. If any one offered opposition he simply shouted them down. He felt so strongly upon these matters that it was impossible for him to argue calmly about them.

I remember upon one occasion, the newspapers were full of some religious crisis or another, as they periodically are when there is no war on; I fancy it was something to do with the growing ritualism in the Church. My father came home very angry and excited; he had been speaking with a neighbour, who had only lately arrived in the town, and holding forth to him upon the iniquity of the Jesuits in disguise—as he called the ritualistic clergy, who were introducing Romish practices into the English Church—when it appeared that the new neighbour was himself a Roman Catholic, and proceeded to argue the point. My father wasted no arguments on him; he simply said that he could not understand any man of sense believing in such tomfoolery, and walked away. There was no further communication between our family and theirs after that, but there was a rather curious sequel some years later. It happened like this.

I was apprenticed in London to a branch of the engineering trade, coming home every Saturday and returning every Monday morning. One Monday the train was overcrowded, owing to some excursion or other, and I walked a good way down the platform before finding a seat. I had no sooner done so than along comes the son of my father's former antagonist, there was just room for one, next to me, and as the train was about to start he had no option but to take it. Of course we ignored one another, as in duty bound in a feud between our parents, especially a religious feud. I looked out of the right-hand window, he looked out of the left, until our necks were stiff, with no prospect of relief for more than an hour when we reached London. It was a bit of a nuisance. If he had been ugly, it would not have been so bad; but he wasn't, and he had a more open and ingenuous countenance than any Roman Catholic had a right to have, if all that was said about them was true. Presently he produced a pipe and filled it, then discovered he had no matches. He applied to his neighbour, without result, most of the passengers were women, there was not a match to be had. I had some matches, but I knew he would sooner die at the stake than ask me for one. But how could I endure to see a fellow-being suffering for want of a smoke? Even a prisoner must be fed. But suppose he refused the offer, then the feud would be more exasperated than ever! However the call of chivalry must be obeyed, so, in the spirit of the wounded soldier who passes the water to his dying enemy. I lit my own pipe and offered the burning match to my enemy. Taken by surprise he hesitated for a moment and then graciously accepted it. Then he said: "That was awfully good of you to offer, you know." To which I replied that he would have done the same. Then we discussed Kent's chances in the cricket championship, and so became more and more confidential. It appeared that he had an uncle in the wine trade in France, who was over here on business, and was going to take my companion back with him to learn the business. As he had to travel up in the north, he deputed his nephew to travel to London to collect some money due to him, a considerable sum altogether. As we neared Charing Cross, he said, "Why not have a day off and come with me? I've been given two sovereigns to spend [worth much more than now] and don't know where to go or where to spend them." "Besides," he added as an afterthought, "the money will be safer with two of us than with one." So, as I was always glad of an excuse for a holiday, I placed my bag in the Booking Office, and we went forth together to collect the money. By the time we had finished it was pretty heavy, although a large amount was in notes. It was now about noon, so we took a cab and, after locking the bag deposited it along with mine. By this time we were ravenously hungry, so we dined sumptuously at a restaurant in the Strand, then to the British Museum, and after that, tea. How we found the "Elixir of Happiness," and swore eternal friendship you will learn next week, if you are not too bored.

W. MANN.

(To be continued.)

In Quest of the Beautiful.

X.—CONCLUSION.

It is more difficult to make an end than a beginning; it is more difficult to solve problems than create them, and the reader will find counsel in abundance in all directions, for a way of life. Pre-determined as all human beings are to fit their physical environment, they are at liberty, as individuals, to create their own ideals in the mental world, on condition that they are intellectually self-reliant. For intellectual slaves content to have their thinking done by others, there is a mass surrender to interests in which half-lights of truth are accepted for the full light of noon; on these the sure-footed follower of the Beautiful will have no desire to sit in judgment. The Beautiful does not make converts by the sword; it does not offer rewards, it does not threaten with punishments, nor does it create an undergrowth of metaphysical tangles beloved by Platonists who want to draw their sustenance from the earth and inhabit the skies. A way of life! Frankly, I know of none, but I have an important proviso to make to this confession—Beauty is a tracing over rough country that will bring to the wayfarer's elbow, justice, equity, and tolerance, and sympathy for one's fellow creatures. There are mistakes to be made even in the practical application of sympathy, and here the wisdom of the serpent will have to be used.

To be rewarded for having lived a good life is on a low ethical plane that has little appeal to those who regard the world as fertile in obstacles. An individual must be everybody before he could teach anyone the way; ultimately we are alone—a little separate world, or a cage. In a study of Vincent Van Gogh, by Julius Meier Graefe, the artist asks, "Do you know what takes away the cage? Every profound relationship, brotherhood, friendship, love. They open the cage like a magic key. If you lose the key, existence becomes a living death. He who creates sympathy creates life." And, in the beauty of this sentiment, we find that it has its source in what I have taken for a guiding star.

Maxim Gorki, whose writings have not yet found general acceptance by the world, records in simple and sincere language his affection and reverence for his Grandmother. She was a choice spirit, fortunate in a gifted grandson who would be the last to deny that other women as noble and good existed. This way of life, which can never be known but only imagined, is mentioned in Gorki's book *In the World*. Speaking to him, she says:—

"You are young yet, you don't know how to live."

"That is what they all say to one another: 'You don't know how to live'—peasants, sailors, Aunt Matrena to her son—but how does one learn?" She compressed her lips and shook her head. "I don't know myself."

"And yet you say the same as the others!"

"And why should I not say it?" replied Grandmother calmly. "You must not be offended. You are young, you are not expected to know. And who does know, after all? Only rogues."

There is, therefore, only a modest claim for the Beautiful, which unconsciously draws the individual to an appreciation of its protean form; it gives satisfaction, and confers a value on life that, throughout the ages, may be accepted as a standard without vague fears and hopes of its origin. In Helen of Troy, covered with myth in a thousand disguises, Beauty has been taken to the home of the human heart, and in this there was the typical precision of the Greek for marking a value. It has persisted, but to what uses it has been placed throughout history is not the subject of these, perhaps—imperfect studies, for Beauty needs no dogma for its defence. That the quest will lead to Beauty in all the varied manifestations of life is desirable; in the ultimate end it may be found in the wise and honeyed words of Montaigne: "The soul that feeds upon philosophy must, by its healthiness, impart to the body courage and strength; its internal peace and happiness must shine forth with that brilliancy in which noble pride is combined with an active and joyful nobility, with contentment and peace. The truest sign of wisdom is a constantly peaceful disposition of mind, a temperament

as clear and unclouded as the quiet starry heaven. Its mission is to calm the storms of the spirit with no lying sophisms, but by simple and tangible proof; its aim is that beneficence which dwells not upon the perpendicular mountain side, steep and unattainable, as the scholastics would have us believe." Here, then, we reach fair haven. Hail and farewell, ye pilgrims, knights, troubadours, men of law, scientists and students in your quest between the furrows and the stars; Chaucer and Blake knew you all, whatever outward bodily form you have; for mankind is the same throughout the ages, and types persist. From simple flower in the field to flowers of the mind is a journey—good fortune attend you all in the Quest of the Beautiful.

TRISTRAM.

American Notes.

MOTHERS' DAY.

This is a Christian country. Once a year, after a few weeks' extensive and intensive advertising, the Christian public can apparently be aroused to a timely recognition of the fact that Mothers exist. Actually a man sees everywhere these "Mothers' Day Proclamation" announcements, and then, once a year, may be goaded into thinking of his mother. Kaffirs, negroes, and the most primitive of peoples have no "Mothers' Day." They seem able to "honour their mother" without a commandment even, but twentieth century Christians, with a promise of "long days in the land which the Lord their God has given them," have to have a special "publicity stunt" as well as a divine command and a divine bribe to make them think of their mothers occasionally. This American Mothers' Day throws a new light on an old story. The Great Founder of Christianity set us an example. He said to HIS mother: "Woman, what have I to do with thee, MINE HOUR is not yet come." Of course, it was not yet "Mothers' Day"!

A FALSE ALARM.

How these newspaper headlines frighten us at times. It looks as if at long last "Truth will out, even in a"—newspaper. Our alarm is all in vain. Truth runs no risk of disclosure. It is only the editor's fun. Last Sunday, the orthodox *Chicago Herald* had a terrible headline, announcing the fact that Jesus Christ had no original ideas, but simply borrowed all his "gospel" from earlier sources. It was accompanied by an illustration of a highly ornate church, in the pulpit of which a congenital idiot was reading an evidently boring sermon to a congregation of lunatic capitalists. The "text" belied the promising heading and picture. It was an article by Mr. Harold Bell Wright, proclaiming his pet banal version of Christianity. He opens with the "daring paradox" that "Jesus taught nothing new." It looked as if Wright were "going some," but he soon explains that of course Truth is as old as the hills, and as Christ was God, he naturally knew all the truth all the time. The truths, he says, "which Jesus taught, He did not invent or evolve, He merely uncovered them." Quite so! Don't you see where we are getting? Jesus was only original in the same way that Newton, Columbus and Pasteur and every other "mere discoverer" can be called original. In other words, Wright gets money from writing a startling headline which prefaces the ordinary religious nonsense. There is no money to-day in writing tasteless orthodoxy or full-flavoured heterodoxy. The big pay-roll is for those who can serve up all the old dishes with a new sauce. Wright is full of sauce.

CLARENCE DARROW'S TESTIMONY.

In these days of clever (and other) trimmers, it is refreshing to see the straightforward words of America's foremost lawyer. He was asked by the *New York Times*, "What do you believe about personal immortality?" Here is his reply:—

The idea of immortality was born of the hopes and fears and longings of the human race. The personal identity of the individual began when a cell was fertilized. It ends in the destruction and decay of the cells.

No one can imagine memory reaching beyond death. In spite of the yearnings of man no one can produce a single fact or reason to support the belief in personal immortality. I am satisfied that as I had a beginning I shall have an end and the end is death.

WHAT PEOPLE BELIEVE.

A new edition of *The American Credo*, by G. J. Nathan and H. L. Mencken, gives opportunity to the study of a very remarkable collection of the common superstitions of ordinary people. Here are nearly a thousand of those commonplaces of belief, so prevalent that they pass as axioms. "The fundamental religious ideas of the lower orders of Christendom," says the preface, "have not changed materially in two thousand years, and they were old when they were first borrowed from the heathen of Northern Africa and Asia Minor. The Iowa Methodist of to-day, imagining him competent to understand them at all, would be able to accept the tenets of Augustine without changing more than a few accents and punctuation marks."

Some of these rank superstitions are amusingly ridiculous, like the following:—

- That French women use perfume instead of taking a bath.
- That the work of a detective calls for high sagacity.
- That all Swedes have very thick skulls.
- That it is difficult to decipher a time-table.
- That the jokes in *Punch* are never funny.
- That all Chinamen smoke opium.
- That all criminals get caught sooner or later.
- That the security of a bank can be measured by the solidity of its building.
- That night air is poisonous.
- That there is something peculiar about a man with a red tie.
- That appendicitis was invented by surgeons on the make.
- That an apple a day keeps the doctor away.
- That when a dog wags his tail it is a sign that he is happy.
- That oysters are an aphrodisiac.
- That Ingersoll is in hell.
- That an atheist has ever seriously contemplated the stars.
- That a Jew always outwits a Christian in a business deal.
- That since the war, all the French atheists have become Catholics.
- That anything good in theory "won't work in practice."

It is a marvellous collection, but most of us are daily familiar with people who believe far greater illogicalities . . . if only they are told in a pious book or a religious creed.

THE LAND OF FREEDOM.

This story is true. It is told without comment. A citizen of New York, a salesman who was "previously unknown to the police," was arrested without a warrant "on suspicion." His protests drew a crowd. At the police-station he was found to be innocent of the crime for which, presumably, he was arrested. But he was fined a dollar for causing an obstruction by protesting against his arrest. As he was leaving the court he referred in an audible voice to his "citizen rights." The judge called him back and fined him a further five dollars. The criminal thus brought to justice had mildly protested against being arrested without a warrant, and at being searched without a witness.

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

THE UNPARDONABLE OFFENCE.

There is nothing that revolts our moral sense so much as cruelty.

Every other offence we can pardon, but not cruelty. The reason is found in the fact that cruelty is the exact opposite of compassion—the direct participation in the sufferings of another, leading to sympathetic assistance in the effort to prevent or remove them. It is this compassion alone which is the real basis of all voluntary justice and all genuine loving-kindness.

Compassion for animals is intimately connected with goodness of character, and it may be confidently asserted that he who is cruel to living creatures cannot be a good man.—*Schopenhauer*.

Correspondence.

DRAMA AND DRAMATISTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Mr. William Repton aroused my curiosity in his article on "Drama and Dramatists," in your last issue, when he said that the manuscript of "The Lottery," by Henry Fielding, Esq., was discovered by Mr. Robert Barclay Wilson, who has arranged music for the presentation of the play. I wondered whether Mr. Repton meant that the play had not hitherto been printed. So I turned to an edition of Fielding's works published in 1771, and in the first volume the play appears; and on the title page it says the play was first acted at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in 1731, which is a year prior to the date Mr. Repton says the play was written. Now I am wondering whether there are two different plays, one acted in 1731, and the other written in 1732, and now acted for the first time. I shall be glad if Mr. Repton will follow this up.

H. IRVING.

Obituary.

MR. G. LAWRENCE.

WE deeply regret to record the death of Mr. G. Lawrence, of 26, Mayo Road, Willesden. Mr. Lawrence, who had suffered for many years with his heart, died suddenly on the morning of Thursday, May 31. He was buried at Willesden Cemetery, on Wednesday afternoon, June 6, the Secular Service being conducted by the N.S.S. Secretary. Mr. Lawrence had been a Freethinker for many years, and had, in fact been reading the *Freethinker* a few moments before his death. His friends will miss his wise advice and warm companionship. To his wife, we can only extend our most sincere sympathy in her sorrow.

Society News.

MR. GEORGE WHITEHEAD AT SWANSEA.

MR. WHITEHEAD'S first week at Swansea this year, in spite of the showery weather, provided eight successful meetings. The meetings held at Swansea were remarkable for the sympathetic attention of the large crowds which assembled, and the improvement in the type of questions. The concentration of questions upon the Bible absurdities in the first few visits, was displaced this year by curiosity regarding the various problems in evolution, morality and psychology, and the occasional heavy showers of rain left the audiences as keenly attentive as before. One meeting was held at Gorseinon, a mining village a few miles away from Swansea, where aboriginal superstition can be found at its worst. In the middle of the address, one hefty follower of Christ mounted the platform and bellowed out his convictions regarding the eventual fate of the lecturer, and his suggestions for an immediate practical policy for dealing with Atheist speakers. It was drastic, but failed to win sufficient backing. Firmness and tact eventually reduced the noisy ones to silence, and they had the mortification of being well laughed at by the crowd when question time revealed the lack of logic behind their bluster. This meeting was actually the best of the week in sales and genuine interest.

Mr. Whitehead is on Swansea Sands on June 14 and 15, and at Newcastle from June 17 to June 22.

MR. R. H. ROSETTI AT SOCIALIST INSTITUTE.

MR. R. H. ROSETTI, at the invitation of the Walthamstow Young Labour League, and at the request of the N.S.S. Executive, lectured on "Christianity and the Labour Movement," at the William Morris Socialist Institute, on Tuesday, June 4. The lecture was listened to with great attention by the members of the League, and afterwards there was a fine crop of good questions. It is with the young that the future lies, and such lectures should do much to counteract the attempts of clergymen to influence the minds of young people who desire to do what they can to improve themselves and the world in which they live.

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 (The London Institution Theatre, South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11.0, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., D.Lit.—"Is Life Becoming More Civilized?"

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. Fred Mann—"Jesus Christ."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6.0, Mr. Leonard Ebury—A Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, A Lecture. (Brockwell Park): 6.0, R. H. Rosetti. Wednesday—(Clapham Old Town): 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury. Thursday—(Cooks Road, Kennington): 8.0, Mr. F. P. Corrigan.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Hyde Park): Sunday at 3 and 7 p.m.; Thursday at 7 p.m. Speakers—Messrs. Botting, Hanson and Baker. Thursday, June 21, at 7.30 p.m.—Dance at 101 Tottenham Court Road. Admission 1s.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Outside Municipal College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. A. C. High—"C. Bradlaugh and the Oath."

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12 noon, Mr. James Hart—A Lecture. 3.30 p.m., Messrs. Hyatt and Le Maine. 6.30 p.m., Messrs. Campbell-Everden and Maurice Maubrey. Freethought meetings every Wednesday and Friday at 7.30 p.m. Lecturers—Messrs. Campbell-Everden, Hart, Darby, Le Maine and others.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.0, Mr. Campbell-Everden—A Lecture.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S.—Meetings held in the Bull Ring on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at 7 p.m.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S. (at Houghton-le-Spring): 7.15, Jno. T. Brighton—A Lecture.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. Geo. Whitehead will give addresses as follow: Sunday, June 17. Sandhill, 11 a.m. Subject: "Our Substitute for Christianity." Town Moor, 7 p.m. Subject: "Some Important Lessons from History." Monday to Friday, June 18 to 22, each evening at 7 p.m., at Big Market. Discussion invited.

FOR SALE—The late Mr. J. Lloyd's books: Lists on application. Apply: Miss PERKINS, 82a, Portsmouth Road, Maida Vale, W.9.

UNWANTED CHILDREN

In a Civilized Community there should be no UNWANTED Children.

For an Illustrated Descriptive List (68 pages) of Birth Control Requisites and Books, send a 1½d. stamp to:—

J. R. HOLMES, East Hanney, Wantage, Berks.

(Established nearly Forty Years.)

PIONEER LEAFLETS

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

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

PECULIAR CHRISTIANS. By CHAPMAN COHEN.

RELIGION AND SCIENCE. By A. D. McLAREN.

DOES GOD CARE? By W. MANN.

DO YOU WANT THE TRUTH?

Price 1/6 per 100, postage 3d.

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



A Freethinker's Fetish

WHEN is a line not a line? Out of our experience, we would answer, when it is a seam line; and, as our experience comes mostly from advertising here, we would add that it then becomes a Freethinker's fetish. Give you a measuring tape and show you a chalk line, a pencil line, or an ink line, and you would scorn the idea that you could not measure these; but equip you in the same way and show you a line of stitches joining two pieces of cloth and you would say: No, I cannot measure that; that is a tailor's job, and I am no tailor.

This line of thought about lines is quite the reverse of free; it is wedged deep down in the rut of convention and superstition. Tailors eat and drink, and can do their work only if they do so. You also eat and drink—these are anyone's job, and so is measuring, if you know where to measure. In measuring clothes you follow clearly defined lines—lines as distinct as this line of print—and we make it still more plain by telling how with pictures. Besides, isn't the fitting on which you have so far submitted to proof that there is much more in tailoring than measuring? There is—there is everything; and this everything begins precisely where measuring ends. Measuring yourself is a reasonable proposition; something you can do both easily and accurately. If measuring alone has stood between you and us, let us be friends from now forward.

Send a postcard to-day for any of the following patterns:

- B to E, suits from 57/-
- F to H, suits from 79/-
- I to M, suits from 105/-
- EBORAC One-quality, suits from 69/-
- B Serges, suits 63/- to 100/-

LADIES' Book, costumes from 62/-, frocks from 45/-

Patterns are sent out on the understanding that they will be returned to us. We pay postages both ways to all inland and North Irish addresses.

MACCONNELL & MABE, Ltd., New Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire.

MAZEEN

SUPER HAIR CREAM

is a refreshing and stimulating preparation which removes dandruff and keeps the scalp in a perfectly healthy condition. It is quite different from all other preparations both in composition and effect. Is neither oily nor sticky, yet forms a most effective dressing.

1/6 PER BOTTLE. 1/9 POST FREE.

SOLIDIFIED BRILLIANTINE

is a preparation of exceptional quality, purity and velvety smoothness.

1/- PER TIN. 1/2 POST FREE.

TOOTH BRUSHES

These brushes have four rows of best bristles, serrated and set in a curve; transparent coloured handles.

GENUINELY CHEAP, 1/- EACH, POST FREE.

All of the above are guaranteed, and in the event of your being dissatisfied please return the goods to us, when purchase money and postage will be refunded in full.

THE MAZEEN TOILET Co., 51a Bootle Street, Manchester.
Sole Proprietor: O. Z. SEFERIAN (Member of the Manchester Branch, N.S.S.)

SOME PIONEER PRESS PUBLICATIONS:

- MAN AND HIS GODS. By GEORGE WHITEHEAD. 2d., postage 1/4d.
- BIBLE ROMANCES. By G. W. FOOTE. 2s. 6d., postage 3d.
- REALISTIC APHORISMS AND PURPLE PATCHES. By ARTHUR FALLOWS. Paper Covers, 3s. 6d., postage 4 1/2d.
- WHAT IS IT WORTH? By Col. R. G. INGERSOLL. A Study of the Bible. 1d., postage 1/4d.

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

SOME PIONEER PRESS PUBLICATIONS:

- A GRAMMAR OF FREETHOUGHT, By CHAPMAN COHEN. A Statement of the Case for Freethought, including a Criticism of Fundamental Religious Doctrines. Cloth Bound, 5s., postage 3 1/2d.
- WHAT IS MORALITY? By GEORGE WHITEHEAD. A Careful Examination of the Basis of Morals from the Standpoint of Evolution. 4d., postage 1d.
- MODERN MATERIALISM. By W. MANN. A Candid Examination. Paper, 1s. 6d., postage 2d.
- SCIENCE AND THE SOUL. By W. MANN. With a Chapter on Infidel Death-Beds. 3d., postage 1d.
- THE HISTORICAL JESUS AND MYTHICAL CHRIST. By GERALD MASSEY. A Demonstration of the Origin of Christian Doctrines in the Egyptian Mythology. 6d., postage 1d.
- THE LIFE-WORSHIP OF RICHARD JEFFERIES. By A. F. THORN. Portrait. 3d., postage 1d.
- RUINS OF EMPIRES. By C. F. VOLNEY. With the Law of Nature. Revised Translation, with Portrait, Plates, and Preface by GEORGE UNDERWOOD. 5s., postage 3d.
- JESUS CHRIST: MAN, GOD, OR MYTH? By GEORGE WHITEHEAD. With a Chapter on "Was Jesus a Socialist?" Cloth, 3s., postage 2 1/2d.
- THE BIBLE HANDBOOK. By G. W. FOOTE. For Freethinkers and Inquiring Christians. (With W. P. BALL.) Seventh Edition. 2s. 6d., postage 2 1/2d.
- GOD AND EVOLUTION. By CHAPMAN COHEN. Can a Christian Believe in Evolution? A Straightforward Essay on the Question. 6d., postage 1d.
- THE RELIGION OF FAMOUS MEN. By W. MANN. 1d., postage 1/4d.

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

The Question of the Day—
DO THE DEAD LIVE?

For a full and careful examination of the whole subject, read—

THE OTHER SIDE OF DEATH

By **CHAPMAN COHEN**

Cloth Bound 3/6. Postage 2d.

Does Man Survive Death?

Verbatim Report of a public debate between

Mr. HORACE LEAF
AND
CHAPMAN COHEN

Price 4d. Postage halfpenny.

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

More Bargains in Books!

HUMAN BEHAVIOUR in relation to the Study of Educational, Social, and Ethical Problems. By STEWART PATON, M.D. (Lecturer in Neuro-Biology at Princeton University).

Published 1921 at 21/-. PRICE 7/-. Postage 9d.

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND HERESY IN THE MIDDLE AGES. By F. W. BUSSELL. Contains elaborate studies of Religion and Heresy in Hindustan and Further Asia, and Islam, its Sects and Philosophy. 873 pp.

Published 1918 at 21/-. PRICE 6/6.
Postage 9d. (home); 1/2 (abroad).

ROBERT BUCHANAN (The Poet of Revolt). Complete Poetical Works, Two Vols. Contains the author's remarkable and lengthy Freethinking poems, "The Devil's Case," "The Wandering Jew."

Published at 15/-. PRICE 6/6.
Postage 9d. (home); 1/2 (abroad).

MATTER MAN AND MIND. By W. F. F. SHEAR-CROFT. The A.B.C. of Evolution—The Origin of Life—The Structure of Matter—Heredity—Psycho-Analysis—The Ether—Relativity—Radio-Activity—Vitalism—and a host of other topics.

Published 1925 at 8/6. PRICE 4/6. Postage 5d.

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.

Published at 12/6. PRICE 3/6. Postage 5d.

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

Just Published . . .

RELIGION AND WOMAN

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

By **George Whitehead**

A psycho-analytic study of the influence of religious beliefs on the position of woman.

Price Sixpence. Postage 1d.

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

Essays in Freethinking

(Second Series)

By **CHAPMAN COHEN.**

Contains Chapters on: A Martyr of Science—Religion and Sex—The Happy Atheist—Vulgar Freethinkers—Religion and the Stage—The Clergy and Parliament—On Finding God—Vice and Virtue—The Gospel of Pain—War and War Memorials—Christian Pessimism—Why We Laugh, Etc., Etc.

CLOTH GILT, 2/6 POSTAGE 2½d.

Vols. I and II of *Essays in Freethinking* will be sent post free for 5/-.

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

The Case for Secular Education

(Issued by the Secular Education League.)

THIS booklet gives a concise history of the Secular Education controversy, with a clear and temperate statement of the arguments in favour of the abolition of religious teaching in all State-aided schools.

PRICE SEVENPENCE

Postage 1d.

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

Materialism Re-stated

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

A clear and concise statement of one of the most important issues in the history of science and philosophy.

Contains Chapters on:—A Question of Prejudice—Some Critics of Materialism—Materialism in History—What is Materialism?—Science and Pseudo-Science—On Cause and Effect—The Problem of Personality.

Cloth Bound, price 2/6. Postage 2½d.

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