

PROPAGANDA BY SLANDER.

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Views and Opinions.

Propaganda by Slander.

I HAVE paid educated Christians the compliment of thinking they had outgrown one peculiar form of Christian advocacy. It is a very old one, and is found expressed by St. Paul in the hideously low form that if there is no after-life, then it is of no consequence what a man does, so long as what he does makes for the enjoyment of the moment. This teaching is deeply imbedded in Christian preaching and in Christian apologetics. It is found expressed in a popular form as stories of the wickedness of men and women once they had given up belief in Jesus—which does not reflect much credit upon the moralizing tendency of their Christian training—and in the constant identification of the truth of a proposition with its alleged moral consequences. There was, of course, a certain method in this madness. To make vice and unbelief identical to the vulgar mind erected a wall of prejudice against heresy right away. In the early part of the nineteenth century, the Society which made itself most active in the forming of blasphemy prosecutions was one for the "Suppression of Vice," and the poor Freethinker, who often enough could not afford to indulge in vice, even in the cheap and easy forms provided and used by Christians, was suppressed in the interest of "morality," as well as in that of theology. In my youth I read piles of these stories of "wicked" infidels, and, curiously enough, they excited my sympathy for such as had had the misfortune to receive a Christian upbringing. Because I noticed it was always these who came to such a bad end. The one who had been brought up a non-Christian seemed all right, but all the infidels pilloried were such as had received a Christian training, and then their vices assumed such an imperative form that they simply had to throw Christianity up and go in for what the orthodox enviously called "a good time." It was their Christian training that seemed to be at the bottom of all their troubles, and the more I read the more thankful I felt that nothing of that kind had ever darkened my earlier years.

Materialism and Morals.

But it appears that I have been thinking too highly of even educated Christians; for a friend sends me a newspaper article (the title of the paper has been removed, so I am unable to say from which paper it comes) by Canon Hannay, better known as George A. Birmingham, which proves that the more ignorant presentation of the Christian case is not by any means so dead as I had believed. It appears that the new Archbishop of Canterbury, who was anxious to mark his promotion by killing something, decided that "Materialism" would serve well as a victim. So once more, for the 1,000,000,000,475th time, Materialism was declared to be "as dead as a door-nail." The originality of the discovery matches well the originality of the language used, and a man of so original a turn of mind seems fitted by nature for a high ecclesiastical position. It is on this point, however, that Canon Hannay and his Archbishop have disagreed. Curiously, most of those who tell us that Materialism is dead are careful to state that while it rules in science, it is dead in philosophy—philosophy in their opinion being above scientific methods, and consisting of statements that, like the orthodox deity, are without body, parts or passions. But Canon Hannay says that while it may be dead in other directions, it is not dead as "a philosophy of life." And he proves it—well, as Christians of a certain type have always proved it, by labelling everything they think bad as Materialism, and so managing to be characteristically dishonest in their religious advocacy. Here are the Canon's reasons for concluding that Materialism, as a philosophy of life, "is not dead":—

- Honour is willingly exchanged for wealth.
- Love is openly derided. It is not and it cannot be the greatest thing in life.
- Pain is regarded as an unmitigated evil, worse even than poverty.
- Sorrow is entirely bitterness, and there is no thought of any cleansing power behind or within it.
- Death is nothing but a horror before the face of which we fly in gibbering terror.
- This is materialism . . . We are driven to think that in the conduct of life it is the only philosophy which counts at all.

If one were to take Canon Hannay's statements at exactly their face value, and also as a true expression of facts, they would stand as a very complete indictment of Christian influences. For, after all, the society which is thus impeached by the Canon is one that has been under continuous Christian influence for very many generations. The influences at work have not, I admit, been wholly Christian, for in that case there might to-day have been no society existing worth talking about. But Christianity has been a very powerful influence; and to take merely the first of Canon Hannay's statements, it is precisely the Christian nations who have developed the worship of

wealth to the greatest extent. In our own country, wealth gives a man position which ability might easily fail to gain. It may buy seats in the House of Commons, or a title and a seat in the House of Lords. It gives to men like the Beaverbrooks or the Northcliffes a commanding voice in public affairs solely because they have had the capacity for making money. In religions even, it gives any sect a respectable position so long as it has money behind it. A rich heretic is treated with courtesy, a poor one with contempt. And even in the Church one might reasonably and justly ask: How many of the clergy themselves keep where they are because of the salaries attached to the position? Of course, they do not admit they are exchanging honour for wealth, they put it rather that by being where they are they are helping to protect the country from a deluge of Materialism.

* * *

Pain and Poverty.

Christian preachers slobber so much about "love," and mean so little by it, that one may pass the statement concerning it with the comment that all their devotion to the cult of "love" has never yet prevailed upon Christians to treat those with whom they disagreed with even ordinary decency. But the remaining clauses in the indictment of Materialism are characteristically untruthfully Christian. No Materialist has ever questioned that there is a certain "purificatory" quality about some kinds of pain, or that there are worse things in society, as at present constituted, than poverty. But that does not involve the stupid teaching that pain is sent for our benefit, or poverty for our salvation, and therefore we ought to submit to both gratefully, believing that "those whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." That was a teaching invented by rogues to impose upon fools. Decidedly, there are worse things than poverty; and one of them is when men sell themselves for service on behalf of established opinions, and proceed to earn their salaries by slandering men and teachings they either do not understand or wilfully misunderstand. To be paid for your services is one thing, and whether a man is in the pulpit or in the labour world, there is nothing disgraceful in so doing. But to *sell* your services is quite another thing, and no man can do that without being the loser by the transaction. But to say there are worse things than poverty does not involve the statement that poverty is a good thing, or that we ought not to do our level best to abolish it. The Christian teaching is that pain, as pain, is good; that poverty, as poverty, is a good thing; and these are two of the most damnably falsehoods that were ever foisted on human society. The Christian slobbers about "love" and leaves these evils sanctified. The Materialist talks more about justice, and aims at their steady diminution. I am delighted to hear from Canon Hannay that this view is gaining ground, and can understand the uneasiness of a Christian priest at the situation.

* * *

A Depressing Creed.

Canon Hannay appears to be so much of a Christian that he cannot even realize a thought that is not Christian. But there is no need for him to call it by any other name. It is historically true that to a Christian "death is nothing but a horror, before the face of which we fly in gibbering terror," but what has this to do with Materialists or Materialism? Death, to a Materialist, is obviously the cessation of life, and how can that make it a horror from which we fly in gibbering terror? It is not at all a bad description of the death-bed of a Christian whose egotism has not yet been developed to the point of believing that

he is valuable enough to be saved while the majority of his fellows may go to hell, and one may excuse some Christians being unable to conceive a man meeting death in a manly and a more dignified manner. That may, perhaps, be the most charitable view to take of Canon Hannay. We may take him as a specimen of those whose greatest drawback is their religious belief, and who carry round in their own make-up the clearest condemnation of the creed they profess.

But my main concern with Canon Hannay is as an exhibit of a type of mind that I had hoped had been eliminated from the ranks of educated Christians. His fundamental position is that without some form of supernaturalism, man is helpless and hopeless. Neither family nor friends, neither home nor country are enough by themselves to make man decent and happy. All these may be useful enough in their way, but without their enforcement by some kind of supernaturalism they are altogether inadequate. We are back with the old Christian denunciation of the "rags of mere natural morality," with the crude gospel of "No god, no morals"; it is the most ignorant, the most anti-social form of Christian teaching expressed in rather guarded language. Or is it the ravings of a preacher seeing the world slipping from his grasp, and venting his ill-humour accordingly? But one thing is quite clear—one must not be too sweeping in the compliments one pays to Christians, even in one's thoughts. There are plenty of Billy Sundays, and Gipsy Smiths, even in high places.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

The Joke of Jonah.

"Liberty, a word without which all other words are vain."—*Ingersoll*.

"The lie at the lips of the priest."—*Swinburne*.

"The moving finger writes, and having writ, moves on."—*Omar Khayyam*.

IN discussion concerning the Christian Religion, there is one subject about which the dear clergy show unusual embarrassment, and that is the story of "Jonah and the Whale." They will talk beautiful nonsense concerning the alleged Third Person of the Undivided Trinity; they will gush regarding the scientific evidence for the rib-story in "Genesis"; they will endeavour to explain that eternal punishment means everlasting happiness; but they run from "Jonah" like a welsker from Epsom race-course.

They recognize, probably, that on this subject they are skating on the thinnest of thin ice, and stand a rare chance of drowning. Yet their predecessors possessed more courage, and accepted "Jonah" as easily as they did the saline transformation of Madame Lot, or the oratorical outburst of Balaam's donkey. Indeed, in the generations of faith, these tales were regarded as being real records, as true as the reports in the newspapers. The old illustrated Bibles prove this up to the hilt, beyond cavil and dispute. The old copper-plate engravings are fascinating in their sincerity. They show Noah's ark like the wooden toys of our childhood, with the animals marching up a gangway in a solemn procession. They portray Christ walking the waves as if he were sauntering along the sweet, shady side of Pall Mall. And, *sancta simplicitas*, they image Jehovah as resembling a theatrical impressario, minus his opera hat and eternal cigar.

This was the golden age of faith; now it is the twilight of the gods. And the fifty thousand priests in this country know this perfectly well. It is this knowledge that makes them so shy of Jonah. Nothing but the tortures of the Inquisition, or the penal code of the Chinese, could make them speak. Where-

as a Christian artist, a generation or so ago, could portray "Jonah" calmly sitting on a chair in the whale's stomach, the very mention of the word "Jonah" is sufficient to cause shudders down the spines of tens of thousands of the professional descendants of the twelve disciples of their creed.

Poor old "Jonah" is nearly done for. Except a mere handful of Irish priests, almost as ignorant as their congregations, and a few dusky pastors in Carolina, U.S.A., there are none left to do him reverence. He is being sacrificed for a purely material consideration, just as poor employees are sacked in hundreds by business magnates when their dividends are falling. In commercialism there is unlimited greed, but no room for sentiment. So, in order to safeguard the soft jobs of the priests, poor old "Jonah" has to walk the plank.

But, "soft, awhile," as Shakespeare puts it. Just as the priests have abandoned "Jonah," some laymen rush to the rescue. They will not part with their beliefs so readily. Probably, they want something in the place of a whale, which, after all, is a good-sized creature, and not to be despised like an ordinary bloater. They are superstitious folk, like the man who, refusing to go to church, worshipped a stuffed snake in his own back garden, and nearly got locked up as a lunatic.

One of these innocents, outraged by the repudiation of poor old "Jonah" in Bishop Gore's *New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, which is fluttering the doves of orthodoxy, sobbed out his defence to the newspaper press. He was an authority on whales. Not a whaler, of course, but about a quarter of a century before he had seen the carcass of a whale displayed outside a Birmingham railway station. Its size so impressed him that he concluded that it would be quite a pastime for a whale of this kind to swallow a man, for its interior was like a fair-sized room.

Waxing enthusiastic, the innocent believer quoted a story from *Sixty-Three Years of Engineering Science and Social Work*, by the late Sir Francis Fox, which stated that a sailor off the Falkland Islands, in 1891, was swallowed by a whale, and later was found alive in the whale's stomach. As this is more solid evidence than the Birmingham railway station episode, it may be worth while to examine it more closely.

First, Sir Francis Fox knew nothing of this matter personally. The tale was told to him by the manager of a whaling station many years before. In 1906 the matter was investigated, and the owner of the vessel stated that he had never heard of the extraordinary incident. The captain of the vessel was then dead, but his widow denied any knowledge whatever of the matter, so we may safely assume that it was a sailor's yarn, with more "knobs" on it than are usual in such sober narratives.

There is a very facetious account of a man being swallowed by a whale in that amusing book *Baron Munchausen's Travels*. Some day, perhaps, some Christian innocent will quote the story in sober earnest in support of the Biblical yarn of "Jonah," thinking that "the Baron" might serve as a feather-bed for a falling Christian. Why not? Believers in the Christian Religion are most credulous folks. They preferred to believe their Bible from cover to cover, from the first error in "Genesis" to the final absurdity in "Revelation." Nothing is too "tough" for their palates. With filmy-eyed innocence they read of the talking snake in Eden, a lodging-house whale, or a pigeon co-respondent. The story of the feeding of five thousand people with two sardines and three Bath buns only excites their reverence. Even the additional eye-opener that the frag-

ments left over from the feast exceeded enormously the original amount of the repast does not rouse them from their stupor. When they rise from the perusal of their Bible some of them start reading the "Lives of the Saints," which is silly enough to arouse the critical faculties of patients of a Home for Incurables.

Of all the strange, frantic, and incomprehensible books which have issued from the brains of half-mad fanatics, this Christian Bible is one of the most remarkable. To class such a book as a work of ordered knowledge is the last word in absurdity. Even Martin Luther recognized its chaotic character when he declared that "the Bible is a nose of wax, and can be twisted in any direction." It is not British at all; it is an Oriental work, and is a Salmagundi of riotous, exuberant Eastern imagination. If people were only sufficiently educated to read the volume critically instead of worshipping it as a fetish-book, such absurd veneration would be impossible. The first stage in the religious road to ruin is to regard such a comedy of errors as the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The last stage is to be tyrannized over by fifty thousand priests, who live comfortably by perpetuating a mischievous superstition, alien in character, and hostile to the best interests of the age in which we live. In abusing themselves before petticoated priests, men are degrading their manhood, for by kneeling overmuch men may find themselves incapable of standing erect, a posture that distinguishes mankind from mere brutes.

MIMNERMUS.

Towards the Secret of Life.

THE discovery of the conditions necessary for the emergence of life is as inevitable as the forthcoming departure of the ether hypothesis into the limbo of legend. From all over the world the contributions of chemists, physicists and biologists daily reinforce the main stream of research directed towards the elucidation of the life problem. The end is not far distant.

Before the time of Wöhler there existed a gulf between inorganic and organic compounds, which the pious touchingly imagined and, perhaps, hoped to be unbridgable. The synthesis of urea from simple inorganic materials was a giant's step forward, but it was only one of the many mighty achievements of the organic chemists. Polypeptides, little brothers of the proteins and near relations of protoplasm itself, have been conjured from the test-tubes, and now colloid and photo-chemists have seized the torch.

Colloid chemistry—the chemistry of large molecules containing loosely combined aggregates of the single, simple molecule—is a lusty, growing brat. Some years, probably, will go by before clear, crystalloidal protoplasm is prepared, but when the colloid chemist is asked to convert it into the natural variety (which is colloidal) he will set about the job intelligently and with confidence.

But it is with the remarkable advances in the realm of photochemistry that we shall here attempt to deal. Instead of heat waves, the photo-chemist harnesses visible and ultra-violet light as sources of energy. Now, in the days of the palæozoic swamps, when life first originated, much ultra-violet light must have reached the earth (the atmosphere being composed almost entirely of carbon dioxide, there was then no intervening, ray-absorbing screen of oxygen or ozone) and it would appear likely that the ultra-violet radiation took some part in the life-creating experiment. Recent work harmonizes with this conclusion.

Professor E. C. C. Baly, of Liverpool University, President of the Chemical Section of the British Asso-

ciation, has been investigating the effect of light, under various conditions, on carbonic dioxide and on carbonic acid, the compound which it forms with water. He has also carried out an extensive series of experiments with nitrogen derivatives, such as ammonia, nitrates and nitrites, but as this work is still somewhat incomplete it will be ignored in this paper.

Baly has shown that when carbonic acid is exposed to ultra-violet light, traces of formaldehyde are formed, provided that a little oxidizable impurity is present to remove from the sphere of influence of the rays any oxygen evolved: and, further, that irradiation converts formaldehyde into sugars and other organic compounds. These photosynthetic reactions give a solution to one of the most stubborn and baffling mysteries which have exercised the minds of scientists throughout the ages. Formaldehyde is known to be extraordinarily reactive and is readily transformed by chemical means into sugars. It reacts with nitrogen-containing compounds to yield an enormous variety of complex products such as the alkaloids.

When investigations were made, in presence of ultra-violet light, at the surfaces of suitable insoluble materials capable of absorbing carbonic acid, it was found that increased yields of complex organic compounds were obtained.

Again, if instead of ultra-violet light, visible light were used, and coloured (that is, light absorbing) substances substituted for the colourless materials of the last experiments, a larger proportion still of carbohydrate was formed. Oxygen was evolved in appreciable quantities.

These researches point unerringly to the conclusion that sunlight and carbonic acid will play leading rôles when the stage is finally set for the synthesis of living matter.

A. H. CAMPBELL, B.SC., PH.D.

A Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity.

(Continued from page 842.)

THE ATONEMENT.

THE doctrine of the atonement is that upon which all churches and sects of Christendom would seem to be agreed, but even this is not quite certain. It is based upon the literal interpretation of the myth of the creation, the "fall" of man from a state of perfection (in which he never was) into "original sin," thus involving the wrath and damnation of the Israelitish tribal god (now elevated into a position of larger significance) against the whole human race.

He is the same old god whom we left raving and cursing his chosen people the Israelites, making them promises which he did not keep, and threatening them with all sorts of horrible consequences if they disobeyed him, which they constantly did. The voice, however, was always that of the priests. It is they who manipulate the megaphone of deity in all religions. If the Jews, and the Christians, could have realized, as we do to-day, that it is the priests who pull the strings to which the gods dance, they would have got rid of them all long ago, and the world would have been a better place to live in.

Once this actually happened in England where, in the sixteenth century, there was an image at St. Paul's Cross, in London. A priest stood inside the image, and, as the old chronicle quaintly puts it, "with an hundred wyres within made the image to goggle with the eies, to nod the head, to hang the lip, to move and shake his jawes . . . If it were a small piece of silver (offered to him) he would hang a

frowning lip; if it were a piece of gold, then would his jawes go merily." When the populace discovered this fraud, they pulled the idol to pieces. It is regrettable that they could not see that this image was symbolical of the whole Church, its god, its superstitions and its priestcraft. But the devotees cannot see it even yet, though there is reason to think that more and more people are beginning to get their eyes open.

The great, central doctrine of Christianity, however, is that of "original sin," which "naturally is ingendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil," and therefore every person born into this world "deserveth God's wrath and damnation," and gets it, too, but for one thing—the atonement, through crucifixion, of Jesus Christ, which was "a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men."

The god described in Genesis, having allowed man to "fall," when he might easily have prevented it, cannot be satisfied with anything less than more bloodshed and suffering. In this case it is a human sacrifice of a perfectly innocent person. This is the crowning outrage that offends the Heathen's sense of justice most of all. What would be thought of a human tyrant who, having a number of offenders before him, deliberately caused his own son, who had committed no offence, to be put to a lingering and a painful death in their stead? But, even then, it was only a partial expiation. Only a few persons get the benefit of it; the vast mass of humanity is damned as before, so that the god could not do the job properly even here! We must first of all believe certain peculiar things about the god's son if we are to get any benefit. When we come to inquire *what precisely* we must believe, we are deafened by the clamour of we know not how many rival sects. The Roman Catholics say that all we Heathen, some of whom have never heard anything about it, will certainly burn in hell for all eternity, and probably all, or nearly all, the Christians who do not belong to that particular Church along with us. The Protestants, according to their own particular sects, say that they are the only people to be "saved," and some of them are rude enough to call the Roman Church "the Whore of Babylon," and the Pope "Antichrist." Anyway, all we Heathen are out of it, and will go to hell in any case. Well, all I can say is that I would rather not go to the Christian heaven under these conditions, but would prefer to be in hell with my co-religionists. Particularly so, considering what the Christians made of this world when they had the power.

We know nothing about the "fall" of man into "original sin," and we do not believe it. We do not believe that a man, who was also in some peculiar way the tribal god of the Israelites, was born of a virgin, crucified, dead and buried, and then came to life again and rose up like a balloon into outer space, where he may be travelling yet for all we know. We regard the whole thing as a myth, a composite picture, made up out of details borrowed from the older religions, and put together into the form in which we see it now, by the priests, as, and when, they organized their Church.

Consider it. Christ was also the god, and was therefore his own father. When he prayed to his father, he was really addressing himself, and it was actually the god that was crucified and cried out, asking why he had forsaken himself! The more we investigate this religion, the more involved, ridiculous and incomprehensible it becomes. And when we examine its history, we realize what Frederick the Great meant when he said that the whole of Europe

was insane from the time of Constantine to the Reformation, and, we may add, it is not sane yet!

FORGERY AND FRAUD.

It was not until the Church Councils, beginning with that of Nicæa, in the year 325, when the Church of Rome had gained the support of the secular power, that the "fog" assumed some sort of definite texture, and we begin to see of what elements it is really composed. From what we read of their proceedings, these Councils often constituted what we should describe nowadays, as a "rough house." They had to settle all sorts of views, and this they did by drastically condemning what they finally rejected as "heresies."

It was the Council of Carthage, in the fourth century, that fixed the "canon" of the New Testament. There were then any number of documents circulating round about the Mediterranean countries, dealing with various aspects of the Christ legend. Some of these still exist in the form of an "Apocrypha" of the New Testament, from which we can get an idea of the nonsense contained in some of them. For example, Jesus is represented as playing with other children, when he made birds out of clay which came to life and flew away! In a way, this is not, in itself, more absurd than some of the other things related in the accepted Gospels. We do not know whether these Gospels were then exactly in the form that we have them now. It is quite sufficient that they were entirely in the hands of the priests at that time, and for a long period afterwards; and, in view of what we know the Church to be capable of in the way of forgery and falsification of documents, we are justified in regarding them with the greatest suspicion.

If there is any "inspiration" theory involved, it is here, that the Councils were so inspired that they should come to a correct decision. And this, I believe, is what the Roman Church actually asserts, and why the Church claims to come first in point of authority. In this it is more logical than the Protestants and "Bible Christians," who accept the Bible on the finding of these Councils. Why should they not also accept their authority in other directions?

But it is just exactly the authority of the priests that we Heathen call in question, not only in respect of the Bible, but of everything else. We say that it is a purely human authority and cannot be proved to be otherwise. We find, in the deliberations of these Councils, exhibitions of the grossest ignorance, and a fanatical hatred of all real knowledge concerning what we know to be facts about the universe, the world, and the nature of man.

In almost every case, when the Church has been called upon to decide any question concerning this world, that can be settled by observation, experiment or experience, she has been wrong. She was wrong about the creation and the age of the world, and the origin of the human race; she was wrong about the relation of this planet to the solar system; she was wrong about the antipodes; she was wrong about witchcraft and demoniac possession; she is wrong about the question of evolution; she is wrong in her psychology. How far may we suppose her to be right on matters that cannot be decided or proved at all, but are only capable of being discussed as questions of metaphysical speculation?

We are justified in suspecting the authenticity of any documents which have passed through this Church's hands. Let us consider this before examining the "jig-saw" puzzle which, being fitted together, gives us the figure of Jesus Christ.

We find that from the very beginning, the claims of the Roman Church, and of the popes, are based upon

systematic forgery without parallel in the world's history. All "profane," that is to say Heathen, records were systematically suppressed and destroyed wherever found. Thus the knowledge of the ancient world was lost, practically completely, until modern excavations and research brought some of it to light.

In place of these, the Church fabricated history in such a way that it is quite impossible to place any reliance upon its statements. Particularly flagrant was the forgery of the lives of alleged saints and martyrs, perpetrated on a large scale in the fourth century, and later. It is agreed by all non-Catholic, and by many Catholic, scholars that most of these stories are forgeries. What is more, they agree that the principal documents upon which the Roman Church bases its claims are also forgeries.

In the fifth century, a forged or falsified version of the sixth Council of Nicæa, and spurious copies of the decisions of the Eastern bishops, were sent by Pope Leo I to the Council of Chalcedon, in order to support his claims to supremacy.

In the eighth century a letter of St. Peter was forged in order to induce King Pepin, the father of Charlemagne, to drive the Lombards out of a part of Italy, and hand their lands over to the Pope. In the same century, the "Acts of St. Sylvester" and the "Donations of Constantine" were forged. These represented that the Emperor Constantine had handed over the greater part of Italy to the Papacy when he left Rome to found his Eastern Empire. Charlemagne was thus persuaded to win the Italian territory for the Popes, and the official Calendar, or "Pontifical Book," written in the Papal Chancellory itself, describes this "donation" in connexion with Pope Hadrian I, most of whose life was devoted to acquiring the lands mentioned in the forgeries. This involved the forcible expropriation of the rightful owners, involving much bloodshed.

In the ninth century, the Isidorian Decretals, or false Decretals as they are styled, were fabricated. The collection is divided into three parts. The first contains no less than seventy letters (forged) attributed to different Popes. The second contains a collection of councils, and the forged "Donation of Constantine" above mentioned. The third is a series of decretals from the Nicæan Council. Pope Nicholas I used them, but Pope Gregory VII did so to a greater extent. By their use the bishops were made subject to Rome, and the Pope was declared Pontiff and supreme authority over the clergy of the whole Christian world.

Next, a new system of church law was devised, partly based on the Isidorian forgeries and partly on new inventions. In order more completely to establish the supremacy of Rome, a new history had to be invented. Instances of the deposition and excommunication of kings were given, to show that they had always been subject to the Popes. The decretal letters of the Popes were placed on an equality with Scripture, and it was claimed that the Papal authority over the whole of Christendom had existed from the very beginning.

In the twelfth century, Gratian's Decretum was forged, in order to bring the whole Christian world under the Italian clergy, through the Papacy. It laid down the principle that it was lawful to constrain men to goodness (which meant no more than submission to the Church) by force, to torture and execute heretics, and to confiscate their property; that to kill an excommunicated person is not murder; and that the Pope, in his unlimited superiority to all law, stands on an equality with Christ!

It needed but one step more to place the Pope on an equality with God. This was taken in 1870. It

involved the condemnation of all toleration, liberty of conscience, and of the whole of modern knowledge and civilization. The outrage was perpetrated in a manner quite in accordance with Papal practice. Criticism was ignored, protest smothered, opposition suppressed. The Council was packed in order to secure a majority vote in favour of the dogma. The proceedings were conducted with the utmost secrecy; all who took part in them were bound by a solemn oath to observe silence. On July 13, 1870, the votes were taken. Of 601 votes, 451 were affirmative, and the measure was pronounced carried. Five days subsequently, the Pope proclaimed the dogma of his infallibility.

There is a list of 262 alleged Popes, beginning with Peter. That part of it which connects up Peter with Leo I (440-61) is as fictional as the saints and martyrs. These early Popes are all "saints," and all imaginary. According to the Roman Church, the pretension of the Pope to supremacy rests upon a bad pun attributed to Jesus Christ: "... thou art *Peter* (Greek, *petra*=rock), and upon this rock I will build my Church." Since Greek was not the language of Palestine, and since Jesus could have had no knowledge of it, we may dismiss it with the contempt it deserves.

These are facts which cannot be denied. Are we not, therefore, justified in questioning any documents which have passed through such hands? They are tainted at the source.

The history of Christendom ceases to be a record of mere folly, but becomes one of crime so foul and monstrous that the Heathen stands aghast at it. There is nothing like this in connexion with any other religion of which he has knowledge.

E. UPASAKA.

(To be continued.)

Christian Science in the Home.

"LOVELY wind, isn't it?" said Mrs. Macluny.

Mrs. Macluny is a Christian Scientist and, according to her philosophy of life, everything that is, is for the best, so whether it hails, rains, snows, or shines, it is always "lovely."

Mr. Goodson, her father, a young man of threescore and ten, hale of body and keen of intellect, but lacking his daughter's faith in the doctrines of Mrs. Eddy, countered her remark with a dubious, "I don't see anything particularly lovely about the wind. It's rough enough if that's anything."

"Of course it's lovely," repeated Mrs. Macluny. "Just look at the lawn, yesterday it was covered with dead leaves, and now it's as clear as though it had been swept; it must have saved the gardener at least a couple of hours' work."

The old gentleman did not trouble to answer, but went on reading his newspaper. Presently he looked up and said, "I see by the papers that the lovely wind has done a lot of damage—several people killed by falling trees, houses wrecked, and even a church blown down. Is that lovely?"

"You don't understand," replied his daughter, "I everyone had faith no wind would hurt them."

"I can't see how you make that out; what about the commercial traveller who was motoring during the gale, and had his neck broken by a tree which was blown on to his car? How could faith have saved him?"

"Oh yes it could. If he had had the right thoughts he would have been guided differently and wouldn't have been passing where the tree fell."

"How do you know that. Can you prove it?"

"I don't suppose I could prove it to you, but I know it is true, and I don't want to argue about it."

"Ah, well, I don't see how you can call a gale 'lovely' when it destroys no end of property and kills a score of people, even if it does sweep a few dead leaves off our lawn."

Mrs. Macluny did not answer, and soon after went out of the room leaving her father deep in thought.

Mr. Goodson's musings were interrupted by the entry of Mrs. Bumpus. Mrs. Bumpus is the lady who helps with the housework, and is a recent convert to Christian Science, having been cured of an incurable complaint. She was operated on by a doctor, and then sent home with the prospect of a succession of periodical operations for the rest of her life, snipping a bit off here and a bit there in the manner approved by certain medical men.

Then someone persuaded her to consult a Christian Science practitioner, who promptly told her that there was nothing at all a matter with her, it was all imagination, and she was to go about her work in the ordinary way. She did so, and up to the time of writing has apparently been quite well.

Mr. Goodson had been told about Mrs. Bumpus's wonderful cure, but thought he would like to hear of it from her own lips.

"Is it true," he asked, "that you used to have a growth, Mrs. Bumpus?"

"Yes! at least I didn't have a growth, but I thought I did, which is the same thing. I know now it was only my imagination."

"But you suffered a lot of pain, didn't you?"

"Not really; it was my wrong attitude to life which caused me to think I was in pain."

"I see! I remember some years ago I dropped a flatiron on my big toe, and I thought it caused me great pain, but it was evidently my imagination."

Mr. Goodson's eyes twinkled as he went to the cupboard, brought out a full-sized flatiron, and said to Mrs. Bumpus, "Here! you just put your foot out and let me drop this iron on your toe, and I will show you just how it happened, it can't possibly hurt you, then I shall know that it must have been my imagination, and it will prove that Christian Science is true."

Despite her faith, Mrs. Bumpus was not having any, and so another possible convert to the fold was lost.

FRED HODDAY.

Acid Drops.

A reader of the *Radio Times* protests against the recommendation as "a good book" of *Jude the Obscure*, *Madame Bovary*, and *Jew Süß*, without any indication being given as to the kind of book each is, apart from artistic or literary merits. The protestor adds:—

I read *Jew Süß* and was disgusted. The other two I have not touched, having understood from references to them in newspapers, etc., that they were repulsive and immoral in tendency. Yet you allow them to be recommended to your immense number of readers, simple and ignorant, young and old, of all classes and degrees of susceptibilities.

There are several ways of advertising whether one is "simple and ignorant." Our protesting friend appears to have chosen the best. He appears to be just the kind of pious person who will enjoy searching for the immoral in the books he is careful to say he has not read. If he needs help in this, he should write to Mr. James Douglas, who specializes muck-raking and searching for the obscene.

A reader of a pious weekly has been trying to discover what happens after death. He has been collecting and comparing Scripture passages in order to obtain a consistent view from statements in various parts of the Bible. A rev. gent warns him that the Bible, on this matter, presents the thoughts of people who had different points of view, and who were each of them fallible. The Bible, he is told, presents, through written records, the progressive revelation of God through Israel. The truth it contains is always mixed up with human opinions. Hence, everything read in the Bible should be tested by every means within one's powers. As regards the conditions of life after death, one may have an opinion based on what can be learned of the character of God as historically revealed, and one may be helped to form that opinion by what is written in the Bible. Well, if the Bible simply gives the opinions of fallible men, it is no different from any other

book. And the fallible men's assertion that they are recording God's revelation may be accepted also as merely a fallible opinion. What then happens to the Churches' claim to be divinely appointed revealers of his truth, and to be inspired leaders of mankind? That claim is only the opinion of fallible men based on fallible Bible writers. If not, why not?

An American minister, the Rev. Thos. Bond, writes to an English friend: "The result of the Presidential election gave much satisfaction to the moral element of the country, in the defeat of the liquor Democrats. Bishop Cannon, of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, led the fight in favour of Temperance and morals, and splendidly did the Baptist and Methodist Churches of the Southland respond to his appeal." It is just as well to have on record who was responsible for exciting hysterical sectarian hatred during the election. The language used by the "moral element" is particularly choice.

The Rev. F. J. Exley, Secretary of the Society for Propagation of the Gospel among the Jews, says that in these days there is a definite drift from the Synagogue by the younger Jews, but it is not a drift towards the Christian Church. But, says Mr. Exley, the one-time contempt of the Jew for Christianity is passing; and as a race many are coming to see the beauty and winsomeness of Jesus. Great numbers of Jews have now accepted Christ. We fancy Mr. Exley is exaggerating in this last statement. Many Jews may have embraced Christianity chiefly for commercial or social convenience. But the vast majority leaving the Synagogue are finishing with religion altogether, much the same as are their Christian friends leaving the Churches. Just to cheer Mr. Exley we may tell him that quite a number of Jews every year become Freethinkers.

Mr. Chas. Pearson, J.P., of Manby, writes to a Methodist paper thus; apropos of the demand now being made by Roman Catholics that the State should provide school buildings for them:—

The best answer to this demand is that given by the Liverpool Free Church Federation, who point out, in a pamphlet recently issued, that Protestant children do not, as Catholics assert, receive in provided schools the definite religious teaching that satisfies their parents. And accordingly these parents have to build at their own cost, and staff themselves, Sunday schools for this very purpose. Roman Catholics . . . do not build Sunday schools but give their definite religious teaching in their own day-schools by their own teachers, paid for, however, by the public at large!

From the *Schoolmistress* (December 27):—

THE "ANSON" BY-LAW.

The Parents' Rights and Church Schools' Emergency League have asked the L.C.C. to adopt this by-law in London. The by-law permits a parent to withdraw his child from the school premises during religious instruction. In other words, the school hours begin after daily religious instruction and not before. Other religious bodies supported the request. The Education Committee say, however, that the by-law is almost a dead letter in the thirteen areas which have adopted it, and that parents are generally indifferent about it. Fortunately, the London Diocesan Board of Education and some of the diocesan conferences are not prepared to support the request. Neither are the Education Committees.

Why "fortunately"?

General Lord Playfair does not think that Scout flags can be treated with the "sacred veneration accorded to regimental colours." This is terrible news for those who regard the Scout Movement as little more than a preparation for the Army. For, after all, if the boys are to be properly imbued with the military spirit, one cannot begin too early. General Lord Playfair might think it over.

The political enfranchisement of women, says the *Schoolmistress*, is the outward and visible sign of the advance of women to full citizen rights, of the improved education of women, and of a definite step forward to

a better and higher civilization." While our contemporary is exulting and is looking expectantly to the future, it might spare a thought or two for the past. One is, that it was the Christian Church which was mainly responsible in Europe for the subjection of women, and therefore for the retarding of a "better and higher civilization." What other result could be expected when for centuries a privileged institution was broadcasting, on the authority of the Bible, Eastern notions about women? A second thought is that what advances women have secured to-day are chiefly the outcome of pioneer work by execrated and persecuted Freethinkers. If the orthodox textbooks of the women's rights' party say nothing about it, they need making historically accurate in order that credit may be given where credit is due.

"Touchstone," in the *Morning Post*, is facetious in verse about the story of Noah's Ark. It is safe nowadays to have a little fun at the expense of things which were once held to be serious, but this is in no way due to the efforts or activities of the *Morning Post*. A Noah's Ark is a fine toy for a child; the story about it is only for children who refuse to grow up.

According to a report of a meeting of Southend Town Council, the Salvation Army refuses to sell the foreshore rights of Leigh Creek, and a reading of the case gives the opinion that there is a good business bargain to be struck by the Army. People with mansions in the skies are not averse to a good share of property on earth.

About 1820 the Roman Church permitted the earth to move round the sun. The Pope, at a meeting on December 16, praised General Nobile, and bestowed the Apostolic Benediction on the audience. Catholic encouragement to scientific investigation must therefore be acknowledged; if the North and South Poles can be found, and one can travel round the world, here is the Catholic Church admitting with an incredible recklessness that the earth is not flat.

The Rev. Arthur Hardinge, Christ Church, Aldershot, informs the *Daily Mail* that on Christmas Day, at 4.30 p.m., he witnessed one of the most glorious phenomena ever seen by human eyes. He saw a cross in the sky, and he shall have space in the *Freethinker* for his interpretation of it:—

I should be glad to know if others witnessed the great sign—surely the coming of the Head of the Triune Godhead, Three in One, the Hope, the Churches' forgotten Hope, and the Star of Righteousness coming with healing in His Wings for all who seek Him repentantly.

The Rev. Arthur Hardinge believes the Lord selected him for his work. We should not like to slander God Almighty by endorsing the statement.

Is Pantomime dead? asks Mr. Hannen Swaffer. Surely not. The leading Church of England performer gave a very successful show at Canterbury quite recently. All the old jokes were highly appreciated.

This week's sad thought comes from the Rev. A. Cuming: "Many boys are choked off religion before they leave school because of the grossly casual way the Scripture hour is spent." Regretfully we have to assure the rev. gent. that religion is unlikely to be taught in the State schools in any better way. The average teacher, like the average man, is indifferent to the Christian faith. Therefore he or she is quite incapable of inculcating that "fear of God" which is so very essential to the Churches and Chapels in manufacturing clients.

From *John Bull*:—

The Temperance Council of the Christian Churches is hard at work collecting facts concerning the attitude of sitting M.P.'s to the liquor question, and also confidential information about their personal habits. This data will be placed in the hands of local temperance cranks for use during the coming General Election.

We daresay the confidential information will include data concerning religious belief or lack of such beliefs.

Paul Prys would find it useful for working up a healthy religious bias among pious electors.

Lady Clare Annesley, speaking against blood sports, was recently howled down by hunting folk of Banbury district. Defenders of the faith of blood sport and defenders of the Religion of Blood appear to have one thing in common. They both have a marked liking for the practice of silencing "heresy" by howling it down. Hunting folk are fervent admirers of venerable customs.

The Rev. F. R. Bell believes it is the duty of his particular sect "to make luminous the great truths of the Christian Faith." As the "great truths" have succeeded merely in enveloping human intelligence in a thick fog, and the rev. gent's method of Modernist luminosity is by striking a match or two, those persons who wish to get out of the fog will be advised to seek more powerful illuminants—such as Freethought.

Miss Edith B. Joynes declares that "the only way to become a good citizen is to practise being a good citizen." The statement is a welcome change from the clap-trap popularized by the Churches. They would have one believe that a man can be a good citizen only by professing the Christian faith. Nowadays, however, there are so many good citizens who are unbelievers that the dog-cared pious fallacy gets greeted with a smile.

A wireless listener is not in favour of dance music on Sundays. He says: "Give us peace on Sundays. If you must make an innovation, let it take the form of light music at lunch time." We are afraid he will have to be satisfied with the light-headed nonsense at eight o'clock p.m.—when the service begins.

To a correspondent who speaks contemptuously of "Darwinism" and "Driverism," and who appears to be a Fundamentalist, the Rev. H. C. Carter replies: "You are likely to progress better in your knowledge of the truth if you do not read only what echoes your own opinions." This be a dangerous kind of reproof. It might startle some benighted Bible-worshipper into reading the *Freethinker*, and set him seeking for Truth rather than merely for religious truth.

The Rev. John Talbot (Wesleyan) says that though the last half century has been a period of much change, yet he rejoices in a changeless Christ for a changing world. After the Modernist interpreter of Christ's teachings has done with them, we guess the changeless Christ's apostles would have a job to recognize them.

Six hundred unemployed men recently gathered at Wesley's Chapel, Walsall, to listen to the inspired wisdom of the Rev. Douglas Moore. The preacher led off with a text: "No man hath hired us!" and then denounced as slander the describing of the unemployed as "shiftless, parasitic, and content to exist on the dole," because such expressions poison the atmosphere and vitiate the goodwill so necessary to a rightful conception and permanent solution of the problem. He next cheered his hearers by declaring that unemployment is not in accordance with the will of God, and that the one function of the Christian Church is to arouse the moral conscience of the nation to the existence of the evil, and to generate that spirit of goodwill without which a solution was impossible. His closing piece of cheer was that personal contact with Jesus would help each man to face more courageously and to maintain a high standard of moral and spiritual achievement. A small advertisement for the Old Firm had to come in somewhere!

What was evidently meant to be the most constructive part of Mr. Moore's address deserves a paragraph to itself. The unemployed in receipt of official relief of some sort, said he, should form a Volunteer League. And, bearing in mind the aspersion that they were content merely to live on the community, they should ask public bodies for work without payment, "to prove their good faith as capable and willing workers." Such a gesture,

they were assured, would inspire all citizens to greater effort towards obtaining remunerative employment for the men. After so gigantic a mental effort Mr. Moore must require a bigger-sized shovel hat. To give his brains a well-earned rest he should shelve theology for a while and study an elementary treatise on economics. After listening to his obviosities and religious assurances the workless no doubt departed uplifted with the thought that the Church had their problem well in hand and that an early solution was highly probable.

Writing about Sunday newspapers, a Methodist reporter says:—

As for the popular articles on prayer, immortality, the Bible, and such great themes in certain quarters, some of us have been pleased to see them, and many preachers have advertised them. But I find many ministers, studying the features in the same columns, begin to wonder whether they have not been too enthusiastic. Religion is not helped by stunt attacks on revivalism or a bolstering up of the wretched [liquor] "Trade," or a glorification of racing, or a stupid ignoring of really interesting religious news.

Our pious friend's cup would presumably be filled to overflowing, if only the Sunday newspapers would eliminate matters of popular interest, and fill up their columns with the aforesaid great themes. If that were done, nothing more would be heard about Sunday newspapers encouraging Sunday labour and Sunday trading.

The *Methodist Recorder*, apropos of the King's illness says:—

It is much satisfaction to know that whatever the highest skill of ancient experience or modern science can accomplish for his recovery will be done. And beyond all this is the ministry of prayer, which rises without ceasing to God the Father of all and the Great Physician, with unprecedented universality and affectionate fervour, that the life of our beloved monarch will be spared . . .

God, you will remember, came to the rescue of Mr. James Douglas at the bidding of merely a few individual prayers per crisis. That being the case, a few prayers from close relatives of King George would, one might think, secure God's attention. The *Methodist Recorder*, however, doesn't think so. God, it would seem, waits for millions of prayers to ascend—and unceasingly, too!—where a monarch is concerned. When God's aid is required at Buckingham Palace, nothing less than an avalanche of prayer is effective. What a very peculiar God! We thought he was supposed to make no distinction between any of his creatures. "All are alike in the sight of God." The *Methodist Recorder* doesn't believe it.

London Freethinkers'

32nd Annual Dinner

(Under the auspices of the N.S.S.)

AT THE

MIDLAND GRAND HOTEL

(ST. PANCRAS)

On Saturday, January 19th, 1929

Chairman: Mr. Chapman Cohen

RECEPTION at 6.30 p.m. DINNER at 7 p.m. prompt
EVENING DRESS OPTIONAL

Tickets 8/- each

Tickets may be obtained from either the office of the *Freethinker*, or from the National Secular Society, 62 Farringdon Street, E.C.4.

FREDERICK MANN, Secretary.

An Olla Podrida for the New Year.

FIRST, a Happy New Year to all *Freethinker* readers, and may their seasonal resolutions include that of doing a little extra work for the "Best of Causes." Those who have written me personal letters will please take this as an acknowledgement.

Second, in chronological order, the matter of the National Secular Society's Annual Dinner. This has been fixed for Saturday, January 19, and will be held, as in recent years, at the Midland Grand Hotel, St. Pancras. Those who have attended previous functions will not need assuring that the dinner itself will be an excellent one. There will be a first class instrumental and vocal entertainment—always of a very high order of excellence—and the usual speeches. I think the attendance this year ought to be a record one, in point of numbers, at least. The National Secular Society has made a large number of new friends during the year, and I hope to see and meet many of these on the 19th. Saturday evening will also permit many provincial friends paying London a week-end visit, and there are few enough occasions for their meeting with London Freethinkers to lead one to expect a goodly number attending.

Tickets are 8s. each, and I again express the hope that those who intend coming will apply for their tickets as early as possible. It is a terrible business when friends turn up at the last hour and expect to find a place in a room that has been set out for a definite number. It means needless trouble, and an inconvenience to those who have acted with greater consideration. The tickets are now on sale, and may be obtained from either these offices or from the General Secretary of the N.S.S.

Third, as President of the National Secular Society, I beg to remind all members that their subscriptions became due on January 1. The fixed subscription is a merely nominal one, and is obviously insufficient to enable the Society to "carry on." Expenses of propaganda are nowadays three times what they were in pre-war days, and I hope that members in renewing will bear in mind to make their subscriptions as large as is possible. Incidentally, I may mention that donations to the Society's funds by non-members are not refused.

While I am on that point, the present seems a suitable occasion for all those Freethinking readers of this paper to become members of the Society. There are some thousands who have not yet joined the Society, and there seems no justifiable reason for their not doing so. I suggest their doing so at the outset of a new year. Membership helps in many ways. The minimum subscription is 2s., but there is no maximum. There is complete liberty of expansion.

Fourth, a word on the "*Freethinker* Endowment Trust." For the first time for many years there has been no appeal for subscriptions to meet the inevit-

able deficit. This has been the case because the deficit has been almost met by the income from the Trust. I say almost, because nearly £3,000 was not available for investment until the end of December, 1927, and the beginning of January, 1928, and as the financial year ended in March, 1928, there was only three instead of twelve months' income available. The whole of the subscribed capital has now been invested, and this March we shall receive the full income from the investments. There is still short the amounts used to make good the Annual Sustentation Fund, now happily abolished, but that will be made as the years pass—perhaps after my funeral. It may be added that the accounts of the Trust are under the supervision of a Certificated Accountant.

It will be remembered that some of the larger subscribers to the Fund—all of them, as a matter of fact—expressed the hope that the Trust would be kept open till a clear £10,000 of capital had been subscribed. The Trustees formally decided to do this, although no special appeal has been made for this purpose. I am making no special appeal now, merely noting the fact, and leaving it there. But the trust is open to receive gifts or legacies from all who care to help; and I know, and the acknowledgements made from time to time proves, that very many do not intend to let their help for the paper stop where it is.

And there are plenty of useful ways in which the paper could be helped. I am not getting younger, and in the interests of the paper itself the time is coming when I ought to have a sub-editor in this office. For over thirteen years I have done what has never been done before in the history of our party—run a weekly paper single-handed. I am not worrying about continuing to do so, but I am looking ahead, and the getting of a sub-editor is almost entirely a question of finance. Also there is the matter of advertising the paper.

In a little over two years the *Freethinker* will have attained its Jubilee. It has had a longer history than any Freethinking journal in Europe has ever enjoyed, and none can beat it now. It is the premier European Freethinking journal in length of years, and I think I may say in point of the all round quality of its output. We ought to do something big by the time that Jubilee comes round, but I suggest that a start be made now by securing new subscribers. The increased interest in religious questions, the fact that the Churches have induced the newspapers to help stop the decay of religion by printing a number of articles impressing the need of some sort of a religion for the people, the concessions that numbers of clergymen are making, all offer opportunities for introducing this paper into new quarters. After all, there is only one *Freethinker*. There has never been more than one, and we are all proud of its quality.

So once again, a Happy New Year to everybody and increased success to the Cause of human freedom, dignity, and progress.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

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.—O. Underwood, £1; W. Mackee (per R. Hale), 10s.

W.P.B.—Thanks for cuttings.

W. R. McKAY.—There is no recent edition of the *System of Nature*. It can only be bought second-hand.

F. M. BLAKE.—Mr. Cohen has written you. Very many have sent in protests against the action of the B.B.C. We shall see with what results.

J. GLOSSOP.—Quite a good move. Hope others will follow suit.

R. BANKS.—We can only be held wholly responsible for statements made by ourself, or editorially responsible for statements made by our contributors. Your letter should be addressed to the *Daily News*, in which journal the statement appeared. Our own attitude is sufficiently clear in the articles appearing December 23 and 30, and in a more elaborate form in *The Other Side of Death*. That volume is there for Spiritualists and others to answer. Up to the present none have ventured to do so.

PETER BALL.—Will act as you suggest.

F. A. FALLOWS.—You appear to be making the same blunder as the *Daily News*. The question of the truth of Spiritualism does not at all turn upon the credibility of witnesses, but upon their capacity for understanding what is going on before them. The evidence on behalf of demonism as the cause of epilepsy rested upon the production of evidence in the shape of the testimony of witnesses. The demon theory was dispensed with when science was able to explain the true nature of what was going on. If you will consult such writings of ours as have dealt with the subject, you will find the true explanation is not very hard to get at.

J. HAYES.—Thanks for good wishes and promise to secure new subscribers.

J. J. WALKER.—Thanks for letter. We think, as we have often said, that those Freethinkers who attempt to disguise their opinions often invite persecution, and in any case make it much harder for those who act with greater courage. Thanks for New Year's greetings.

D. C. ELLIS.—The picture detailing the joys of the saved witnessing the tortures of the damned will be found in the closing passages of Tertulian's *De Spectaculis*. There is an English translation, too lengthy for quoting here, in the Anti-Nicene Library (Vol. II). The same kind of thing has been done by other writers of a later date.

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.

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.

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

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

Sugar Plums.

We are very appreciative of the many kind letters we have received, by way of New Year's greetings, thanking us for our work on the *Freethinker*. But we would like from all our readers a New Year's gift, if they would take the trouble to present it. It can be done, if the will to do it is present. We suggest, as a spur, that each one should take an extra copy until the task is accomplished. That would mean a fine of threepence for each week's delay.

We have long been complaining that in all orthodox histories of Freethought, little or no attention is paid to the important work done by avowed anti-Christians whose propaganda was directed to the education of the people. Emphasis was laid upon really late-comers on the field, and whose work was mainly of a timid and "respectable" character, and was done chiefly because these others—the neglected ones—had made it possible for them to say what they did. The consequence of this is, that when the newcomer tries to trace the history of Freethought in current writings, he learns plenty about the work of such men as Mill or Huxley, or, on the Christian side, of men like Maurice, or Robertson, but nothing whatever of men who actually faced imprisonment and poverty, from Paine to Foote, and who between them made it possible for these others to say what they did say.

In *A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century*, a complete description of which will be found on the last page of this issue of the *Freethinker*, this omission looks like being made good. The work has obviously involved an enormous amount of research of the most laborious kind, and Mr. Robertson has placed all Freethinkers under an obligation for the work and time that has gone to the writing of the history. The first two numbers—the work will be completed in 12 or 13 parts—will at least help to make those who are not familiar with the history of Freethought appreciate how much has been suppressed by orthodox historians, of even the liberal school, and how much the present generation owes to the labours of men and women of whose names they will now read for the first time. The history covers Freethought on the Continent and in America, as well as in this country, and this practically virgin field is so large that when the present work is finished—it will run to about 600 pages—there will still be room for a more detailed work on the same subject. The gallery of portraits, about 50, will also form an admirable part of the work. It goes without saying that this "History of Freethought" is one which all avowed Freethinkers should possess. But it is also one that all interested in social reform and intellectual reform of any kind ought to buy and carefully read. It might drive home the lesson that no other movement of the nineteenth century was of quite so great importance as was the Freethought one. And never was any movement carried on with such slender resources against such wealthy and powerful enemies, with so great courage, such marked ability, or crowned with a greater measure of success.

One of our readers sends us a copy of a letter sent to the B.B.C. protesting against the present arrangement of the Sunday programme with the time given exclusively to religion. He sends along with it the signatures of seventeen licence holders endorsing his protest. This is a capital move, and others might follow suit. We wonder whether the B.B.C. will admit it has more than twenty protests when it again writes its religious article in the B.B.C. Handbook? Perhaps it will admit twenty-five next year. It was Dooley who said that if he had been in Kruger's place he would have given the Outlanders the vote, and then would have done the counting himself. That is evidently the policy of the B.B.C.

When men will not be reasoned out of a vanity, they must be ridiculed out of it.—Sir Roger l'Estrange.

The Reign of Credulity.

THERE was great indignation amongst the Canterbury Pilgrims when the rascally pardoner asked them to kiss his holy relics, for had they not heard the owner tell them with distressing frankness how he imposed upon the superstition of common people? Chaucer, indeed, went so far as to assert that the bones which the pardoner carried in his scrip, were nothing more or less than "pigges bones."

This medieval idea that holy relics were potent to cure diseases, and that to touch a part of the true cross was to procure absolution from sin, naturally led to abuses, and the tale of the trade in sham relics is a dark stain on the history of the Church.

When the alleged true cross was discovered by the mother of Constantine the Great, it was entrusted to the Bishop of Jerusalem, who ran a profitable business selling pieces of the cross to devout and wealthy pilgrims. Luckily for the Bishop, it was found that in some miraculous manner the Cross reproduced itself, and no matter how many pieces of the Cross were sold there were always more for other comers. The reformer Calvin was disgusted at the trade, and asserted that whereas the Cross was originally carried by one man, the present existing pieces of the Cross could not be carried by three hundred men, and that a large ship would be required to transport the relics. Calvin also pointed out that almost everything, from the manger in which Christ was laid, to the towel with which he wiped the apostle's feet, was preserved somewhere or other in one of the Christian churches.

A great deal of duplication took place, and a considerable number of cups, each of which was supposed to be the actual cup used at the marriage feast of Cana were kept at many places. Enough nails, which were used to fasten Christ to the Cross, are preserved to have stocked an ironmonger's shop, and at least seven spears were shown which were the actual ones used by the soldier at the Crucifixion to pierce the Saviour's side.

Relics connected with the saints were also duplicated. St. Phillip apparently had three feet, and St. Sebastian four bodies and two heads, but there was a good excuse for this, said the monks who showed the relics. God in His wisdom had multiplied the number of bodies for the special comfort of the faithful!

During the Reformation, a Continental Prince was amazed to find that a box of holy relics he had brought from Rome cured a man possessed of a devil. He was still more amazed when he learnt that his servant had lost the real box on the journey, and fearing punishment, had substituted a box containing the bones of dogs and cats. The Prince immediately became a zealous Lutheran!

When the monasteries were dissolved the price of relics fell, and when the king's commissioners found that the finger of St. Andrew had been pawned they refused to pay the forty pounds required to redeem it.

It would be interesting to know what was the market price of such relics (which were actually shown to the faithful) as a bottle of Christ's blood; a bottle of Mary's milk; a phial of Christ's breath; and strangest of all, a feather of the Holy Ghost, which it will be remembered came down in the semblance of a dove.

It must not be thought that all the members of the Church were believers in this method of imposing on the credulity of the common people. One monk wrote a treatise on the wickedness of sham relics, and poured scorn on the idea of the monks of St. Medard de Soissons that they possessed a tooth of Christ's; and others were indefatigable in their exposure of frauds.

One favourite device was for the monks and clergy to gather together the bones of saints and to work miracles with their aid. Sometimes bones would be incorporated in statues of the various saints, and by means of levers and small mechanical inventions the arms, eyes and mouth of the statues were made to move—to the great mystification of the congregation. In spite of the holy associations of these relics, it often happened that the prayers of the devoted would be unanswered. When this was so, the monks used to flog the bones in their anger.

The end of the reign of the sham relics came when the blood of Christ kept at Hales, Gloucestershire, was discovered to be duck's blood. A glass tube was regularly shown to the faithful, which, on one side contained water, and on the other duck's blood; a partition divided the blood from the water, and the procedure was for the exhibitor to show the water side until the pilgrims had paid as much as they could, and then by sleight of hand the tube was turned round, and the happy pilgrims saw what they thought was the blood of Christ miraculously revealed to their eyes!

It will be recalled how the Bishop of Birmingham's outburst against the false sentiment surrounding the name and fame of St. Francis of Assisi shocked some people, amused others, but interested all.

The Bishop declared that the Stigmata, that is, the marks on the body of St. Francis, which corresponded to the marks of the nails and the crown of thorns on the body of Christ, were produced by simple means. Religious enthusiasts have hitherto considered that they were imprinted on St. Francis as a reward for his devotion—as a matter of fact more than thirty other well known examples of the Stigmata have been proved. The Bishop of Birmingham says that these wounds were brought by constant rubbing and irritation of an already delicate skin. Admittedly, there may have been a certain amount of will power exerted by St. Francis, and his constant meditation upon the suffering of the Saviour may have helped a little, but the main point is that the so-called miracle was perfectly natural.

And how many other professed miracles have a simple and rational explanation! The story of the dividing of the Red Sea to allow the Israelites to cross is founded upon definite facts. When the tides and winds are favourable, anyone to-day can walk on parts of the bed of the Red Sea, and it follows that centuries ago, the Israelites were fortunate enough to arrive on the shores just at the right moment.

The famous miracle of the burning bush can be imitated by anyone in any English garden. The Biblical story states that Moses saw a burning bush which was not consumed, and that from the bush the Lord spoke to him. Now there is a fairly common garden plant called "dictamnus," or the burning bush, which on summer evenings exudes a sweet oil. If great heat or a light be placed near the leaves they will burn with a steady blue flame, and the plant will be uninjured.

The miracles which deal with the curing of illnesses and abnormalities, all have a scientific explanation. All that is needed is a strong personality on the part of the healer, and a strong and unhesitating faith on the part of the sufferer. If the greatest scoundrel on earth were to persuade a pseudo-cripple that he has the power of curing lameness, then that person stands a great chance of being able to walk about without a limp. This secret was known to Rasputin of evil fame, and was known to men of nobler character.

It obviously follows that it was also known to the saints; and in medieval times, when superstition was rife, miraculous cures were numerous and more easy

to accomplish than in these days of scepticism and enlightenment. The dictionary defines a miracle as "anything above the common action of the laws of nature." It is against the common laws of nature for anything heavier than air to rise from the earth—Sir Alan Cobham has often shown what man can do with an aeroplane—he is therefore just as much a miracle worker as any of the saints of old.

CHARLES H. LEA.

The Quantum Theory and Some Remarks.

HAVING spent a few months in the tropics, I have at times seen a swarm of bees. These swarms of bees have to be seen to be believed. A swarm while flying will be several yards long by a couple of yards broad. I have not measured the thickness. Anyhow, the number of bees flying in one of these assemblies must be of the order of hundreds of thousands. A swarm on the wing makes a most terrifying noise, and all living things, if they are to remain living, stay quiet while it passes. The noise of the swarm is obviously made up of an aggregate of separate sounds made by each bee. In effect, each bee emits a quantum of sound, and to our ears the combined effect is a terrifying hum. Obviously, each bee emits no more and no less than the sound made by a bee flying; that is, the quantum of energy is a definite fixed amount. The hum of the swarm varies when the bees are angry or quiet, but the quantum of energy remains the same, the sound of a single bee, angry or quiet, no more and no less. Of course the noise of each bee can be further subdivided into the noise of each bee's single wing, but then, the quantum is no longer the noise from a bee, but the noise from a bee's wing. If one were so foolish as to fire a charge of bird-shot into one of these swarms the note would alter. Again a new element, damaged bees, would enter, and the quantum would not be the same.

This analogy of a bee-swarm can be extended. Each bee of the swarm has an effect on every other bee of the swarm. At any rate they fly in a more or less orderly mass from point to point. The noise (energy) is due to the individual bees changing their position. There is attraction and repulsion between the units, as the bees do not collide enough to damage each other. From a distance the swarm appears a shimmering solid mass. The analogy may be extended to the more or less known universe. Swarms of bees do not mix, so there may be other universes differing from ours: the bees there might be of a different variety and emit a different quantum of energy. Further, a swarm of bees acts according to a definite plan which we with our imperfect instruments can never know. Although each bee emits a definite quantum of energy, the swarm is doing something. We argue that they are only following a queen bee, which is seeking a new nest. Now, I defy any mathematician, however gifted, to reduce one of these swarms to symbols, mathematical or otherwise. The bees would not let him. He cannot by any means discover what notion in the queen's brain makes her choose one place rather than another.

This is one of the mysteries. The queen would not like such an inquisition. The bees are more likely to reduce the mathematician to a mere symbol for his transcendental inquisitiveness. In return, some physicist may reduce the rest of us to symbols by upsetting the queen of the electrons.

The bee-swarm has a profound effect on the observer, it makes timid people want to say their prayers; the electron, apparently has a similar effect on certain mathematicians, it brings them closer to religion.

These remarks of mine are prompted by reading Professor A. S. Eddington's *Nature of the Physical World*. This book is really an interesting study in psychology. It is obviously written, with one eye on the Bishop, by one who has absorbed religion at his mother's knee. One can imagine our Professor beginning his struggles in mathematics with a feeling of trepidation.

What effect will all this have on religion? At last he gets into a world of thought, where no one can follow him. "Eureka," he exclaims, "I am a mathematician,

and no one can follow me, it is there all the time, and I have rediscovered it, the true religion."

As if a bride covered with a veil is leaving some ancient church. A passer-by asks curiously who the lady is, of a mathematician in the crowd of on-lookers. "Ah," exclaims the mathematician, "I thought you would not recognize her under all those veils, she is religion, I have known her since I could walk under a duck."

Perhaps one begins to recognize why Bertrand Russell is only a mere lecturer in the University of Cambridge; he has not recognized the bride under the veil.

W.L.E.

Correspondence.

BUDDHA, THE ATHEIST.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I would like to thank "Keridon" and Mr. Joseph Bryce for their kind appreciation of my little brochure, *Buddha, the Atheist*. Mr. Bryce has my sympathy, for I know only too well the kind of questions he would be called upon to answer! In my experience it is useless to discuss Buddhism with those who do not want to learn. If such is their desire, they will read the books I have recommended at the end of the book. To these may be added *The Religion of Tibet*, by J. E. Ellam (Murray, 3s. 6d.), and *The Essence of Buddhism*, by Professor Lakshmi Narasu, of the University of Madras. This last is not only a fine exposition of Buddhism in particular, but of Rationalism in general. It is a fine scholarly work, written in the most admirable English. It was published by a Madras firm whose name I do not recall at the moment, and I have not the book by me. Its price in India is two rupees. I think it can be got from the Theosophical Publishing House, in London, or from Messrs. Luzac & Co., the Oriental booksellers, near the British Museum, but what they charge for it I do not know. In reading the book it should be noted that the author refers to the Sanskrit rather than to the Pali, for the reason that he is writing more particularly for Indian readers.

The article on "The Tardy Recognition of the Rights of Animals," by T. F. Palmer, in your issue of December 30, illustrates the essential inhumanity of the Christian superstition. Christ said no word on the subject; probably he did not recognize that animals had any rights. It is, however, the fact that Christians have always been notorious for their cruelty; and it is only as civilization rises superior to the Christian standard that there is an improvement in this respect.

Contrast with the Christian attitude the following teachings of the Buddha:—

If you would do me a friendly service, cease for ever from following the chase; the animals of the forest, who live there in a dim and dreamlike consciousness, have a just claim upon our compassion.

Whoso doeth no harm or hurt to any living thing, neither to the strong nor to the weak, him call I noble.

E. UPASAKA.

THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

SIR,—The article "Testing the Power of Prayer," is very interesting. As one who has always been inclined to the practical side of life, I have made serious consideration of the subject of prayer. Many of my friends have assured me of the value, and since they are ones to whom I should give the benefit of the doubt where honesty is concerned, I have tried to find what this might be attributed to.

Let us briefly analyse the practical side of it. These people have a sincere belief in a personal God. That they attribute to him very ungodly motives and practices, does not affect the issue. At the worst, it seems a case of "being on the safe side." At the best, a species of Caneism. It is a question of the attitude of mind.

They desire something. They bring it to their God. Being sincere, they bring their minds to bear upon it in relation to their conception of their deity, and try to put it into words. They can only ask for something their God can be expected to approve. This is the first step.

According to their lights, they have eliminated what is unreasonable to ask. In the silence and consideration they are bound to consider the ways and means of getting it. Step number two. Given a real trust in the omnipotence of their God, they then feel assured that if he approves he will grant their request. Step number three. The only point now is, that should they not get it, they feel that it was not to be . . . a natural feeling, eminently practical . . . because God did not allow it.

Thus in some indirect way, satisfactory to them, they :—

1. Consider what they might expect to happen.
2. Explore the possibilities of getting it.
3. Acquire a confidence that they will get it.

It must be admitted that these three are the main needs for achieving any desired end, but :—

4. Should they fail to obtain satisfaction, they have a ready excuse as to why they did not get it. Another very human need for consolation, being able to blame somebody else.

Such is the virtue of prayer. Remember that "God helps those who help themselves."

If consideration could stop at that it would be a worthy human expedient. However, most people do not realize this, and so lay themselves open to abuse. The "medicine-man" of the dark ages comes into power, and so we find the masses gulled and their good intentions used in a disgusting fashion by those who ought to know and teach better. The philosopher Jesus was far before his time, and had he not been misinterpreted by Paul, a truer conception of such matters would have been in existence. Cut and refashioned by the author of the "Christ-myth," his practical teachings were transformed and used as passports into a very earthly (?) sort of "life after death," and the short-sighted lover of his fellow man has followed plausible lies, in all good faith. Not only being blinded himself, he has felt justified in smothering any effort to re-state the case for the reign, here on earth, of the Brotherhood of Man in its true sense.

H. WHITHAM.

MR. STUART-YOUNG'S REMINISCENCES.

SIR,—My attention has been called to an article by Mr. J. M. Stuart-Young in your issues of December 23 and 30.

If Mr. Young feels the need to change his opinion, he has every right to do so, but may I be allowed to call attention to certain statements made by him which are definitely and positively untrue.

On page 826 Mr. Young tells the story of Mr. J. J. Morse, "in what was termed trance, gazing through the veil of what appeared to be sealed eyelids," and subsequently giving descriptions to persons in the hall. He follows with a sample of the type of description given. To those who knew Mr. Morse, the allegation is screamingly funny. I was closely associated with him from 1895 to his death in 1919, and his daughter even now is a regular visitor at my house. Let me say emphatically that during all Mr. Morse's public career of nearly fifty years, he never at any time before any audience attempted to give descriptions of spirits. He lectured to large audiences throughout the United Kingdom, United States, Australia and New Zealand, and no one who ever knew him can say that he ever attempted such a thing as giving clairvoyant descriptions.

Consequently, the inference of "seeing through apparently closed eyelids" has no point whatever.

His daughter, who generally accompanied him on his foreign tours, confirms this fact. The whole statement, therefore, is false.

Mr. Young further claims that between 1897 and 1907 he had an intimate personal acquaintance with Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten and others. Mrs. Britten died in 1899, and during the last two years of her life she was almost an invalid and saw so very few people. Mr. Young claims the same intimacy with Hudson Tuttle, who was never in England; with Mrs. Piper, who was only in England for a short time, and then under the closest surveillance of the S.P.R.; and with Eusapia Palladino, who was only in England a few weeks under the same auspices.

The claim to daily intimacy with these people is really remarkable.

Concerning Mr. Young's opinions, I have nothing to say, but in his statement of facts I have no hesitation in stating that a vivid imagination has conjured up a series of events which never occurred.

ERNEST W. OATEN.

[In fairness to Mr. Stuart-Young, we must point out that he is at present in West Africa, and some time must elapse before he can offer any reply to the above. We need only add that Mr. Stuart-Young is a writer of standing, and is hardly likely to make statements that he cannot substantiate.—EDITOR.]

A TARDY RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHTS OF ANIMALS.

SIR,—I was very pleased to read the interesting and informative article by Mr. T. F. Palmer, in your issue of December 30.

Our friend admits that animals have rights, and notes with satisfaction that the cruelties of the past have to some extent ceased.

I cordially agree with him when he says, "Much remains to do." For instance, the horrible blood sports, hunting of stag, hare, fox, otter, etc., and inhuman slaughter should be stopped. Also, in this country, thousands of helpless animals are by law subjected to experiments which involve terrible and prolonged suffering. This is an undeniable fact.

But the vivisectors say they are justified in their actions because certain valuable discoveries have been made which benefit mankind.

Even if we admit, for the sake of argument, that this contention is well founded, the fact remains that the infliction of tortures upon helpless animals is morally unjustifiable. The Jesuitical argument that the end justifies the means is unsound.

One might slightly alter a Bible text and say: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world of science and lose his own soul?"

Our friend Palmer being concerned with the prevention of cruelty to animals, I cannot understand why he is such a strong advocate of vivisection. He argues that we have evolved from the brutes and justifies the cutting up of live animals by man, who is supposed to be the highest animal.

I am extremely sorry to find such an able and well informed gentleman as Mr. Palmer on the side of the vivisectors, and I am happy to say that he is the only Freethinker I have ever known to support them.

A. L. BRAINE.

Obituary.

DEATH OF THOMAS THURLOW.

WE have to record with the deepest regret the passing of another of the "Old Guard," at the advanced age of eighty-six. Thomas Thurlow's connexion with the Freethought Movement dates back to the early Bradlaugh days, and his connexion with the National Secular Society dates back for about sixty years. For many years he was a member of the Society's Executive, and his interest in the Society and the Movement generally continued keen to the end. In the late seventies, and up to about twenty years ago, he was a well-known figure on open-air platforms, and a very frequent lecturer in the days when Christian Evidence rowdyism was a marked feature of the religious opposition encountered. He was impulsive by nature, but extremely loyal both to whatever views he held as well as to those who represented him, and tributes to his steadfastness were paid by both Charles Bradlaugh and G. W. Foote. He lived long enough to see a great many things accepted by religious leaders for the advocacy of which he had to encounter brutal opposition from Christians. Many who have never heard his name will benefit from his work.

Owing to the Christmas Holidays it was not possible to make the news of his death as widely known as was desirable, but in spite of the very brief notice a number of friends gathered at the City of London Crematorium, on December 29, to pay a last tribute of respect to a brave worker in a great Cause. A brief address was delivered by Mr. Cohen.

National Secular Society.

EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD DECEMBER 21, 1928.

The President, Mr. Cohen, in the chair.

Also present: Miss Kough, Messrs. Clifton, Corrigan, Dobson, Easterbrook, Quinton, Rosetti, Silvester, and the Secretary.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Apologies for unavoidable absence were received from Miss Vance and Messrs. Hornibrook and Wood.

New members were received for the Birmingham and Chester-le-Street and South London Branches, and for the Parent Society. Permission was given for the formation of a Branch of the Society at Houghton-le-Spring.

Correspondence was received from the Chester-le-Street, Darlington, Birmingham, and West Ham Branches, and from members of the Society, and others.

A report was received of a successful meeting addressed by Mr. Cohen at the Stratford Town Hall.

Reports were received of activity in different parts of the country, and the question of indoor lectures during the winter season was discussed by the Executive.

The Executive considered the arrangements for the Society's Annual Dinner, and the Secretary was instructed.

The Executive decided to meet on Friday, January 25, 1929, at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting then terminated.

FREDERICK MANN,
Secretary.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.

INDOOR.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (30 Brixton Road, S.W., near Oval Station): 7.15, Mr. F. P. Corrigan—"Why?"

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): Free Sunday Lectures at 7 p.m. Roy Calvert—"The Case Against the Death Penalty."

LECTURE NOTICES—continued.

LONDON—(Indoor).

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (The London Institution Theatre, South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"England: The Unlit Lamp."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY ("The Orange Tree Hotel," Euston Road, N.W.1): 7.30, Debate—"Is the Co-operative Movement Practicable?" Affir: Mr. Watts. Neg.: Mr. F. A. Ridley. On January 10, at 101 Tottenham Court Road. 7 p.m.—A Carnival Dance. Tickets 1s.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Eclipse Restaurant, 4 Mill Street, Conduit Street, W.1): 7.30, Mr. W. P. Campbell-Everden—"The Teaching of Jesus."

OUTDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road, Walham Green): Every Saturday at 8 p.m. Speakers—Messrs. Campbell-Everden, Bryant, Mathie and others.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12 noon, Mr. James Hart; 3.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. Freethought meetings every Wednesday and Friday at 7.30. Various lecturers. The *Freethinker* is on sale outside Hyde Park during our meetings.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.0, Mr. W. P. Campbell-Everden.

WOOLWICH (Market Place): 7.30, Each Thursday—Mr. F. Mann—A Lecture.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BELFAST (Proposed) Branch N.S.S. (I.L.P. Hall, 48 York Street): 3.30, Mr. E. Bourne—"Eugenics."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S. (No. 2 Room, City Hall): 6.30, Mr. Robert Stevenson—"Patriotism and Religion." Admission by silver collection. Questions and Discussion.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (18 Colquitt Street, off Bold Street): 3.0 and 7.30, Miss Stella Browne (London). Subjects: "The Right to Abortion," and "A New Code of Sexual Ethics." Admission free. Collection to defray expenses. All welcome.

SWANSEA AND DISTRICT BRANCH N.S.S. (1a Sloane Street): 7.30, Branch Meeting.

OUTDOOR.

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

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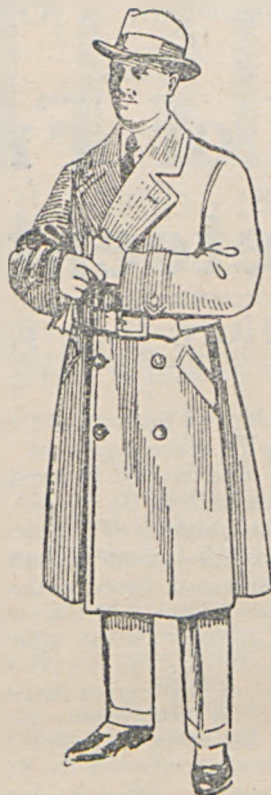
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THE History of Freethought has a variety of interest and importance little known save to those who have sought to trace it. Compared with other fields of "culture history," such as those of Politics, Science, Art and Literature, it is as rich in excitement, in the play of personality, in the thrill of struggle, as any, and much more dramatic in its record than the other separate histories, save that of Politics. And in comparison with the history of Politics that of Freethought has a wider appeal, inasmuch as it covers *all* forms of aspiration for human betterment, the mental as well as the social.

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As the century nears its middle, the output of challenging literature of all kinds grows ever larger and more formidable, till in England the advent of change is incontestable in 1860. By this time the onward thrust of Biblical criticism, early checked in England in the cases of Geddes and Milman, has been immensely re-inforced from Germany; and the new portent of Darwinism becomes the determining factor in all forms of thought.

Thus the record of the emergence of the Doctrine of Evolution, in all its aspects, written from an independent critical standpoint, forms one of the principal chapters in the History. It presents the preparation for that "Turning of the Balance" which is the predominant aspect of the intellectual life of the third generation of the century. And whereas the First Part of the History exhibits "The Reign of Orthodoxy," the Fourth displays "The Passing of Orthodoxy."

Alongside of the Feuerbachs, the Büchners, the Paines and Bradlaughs and Holyokes, the Strausses and the Renans, we must portray not only the Colensos but the Maurices, the Kingsleys, the Martineaus, the Lamennais. And an attempt has been made to do justice to the women. A biographical as well as a critical aim has been present throughout; and some of the details, it is hoped, will be found newly interesting.

In order to make the work more widely obtainable, it is proposed to issue it in twelve Fortnightly Parts of 48 4to pages, price 1s. 6d. each. Each Part will contain as frontispiece a Photogravure; and in the text of each Part there will be three half-tone Portraits. The first Part is now ready; Part II will be published on January 15.

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