

The
FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

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

Vol. XLIX.—No. 3

SUNDAY, JANUARY 20, 1929

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

| | Page |
|--|------|
| <i>Machine-Made Opinions.—The Editor</i> - - - | 33 |
| <i>Half-empty Churches.—Mimmermus</i> - - - | 34 |
| <i>The "Bon Sens" of Curé Meslier.—W. Mann</i> - - - | 35 |
| <i>If Love's Worth Love.—Bayard Simmons</i> - - - | 36 |
| <i>A Folklore Fragment.—T. F. Palmer</i> - - - | 37 |
| <i>A Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity.—E. Upasaka</i> - - - | 41 |
| <i>Testimonial to Arthur B. Moss.—H. Cutner</i> - - - | 42 |
| <i>Doctor Freud on Religion.—Bayard Simmons</i> - - - | 43 |
| <i>Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc.</i> | |

Views and Opinions.

Machine-Made Opinion.

It is amusing to watch the antics of the newspaper press in the face of the proposal of the B.B.C. to issue a "literary weekly," and a series of books covering all manner of subjects which the B.B.C. thinks will help its educational policy. To a man—if one may be excused using that term in connexion with the present-day newspaper—the papers have denounced the proposal as subsidized opinion. For they suddenly discover, what we have all along pointed out, that the B.B.C. is in effect a government organization, and ought therefore to act along the same lines that the government professes to follow where opinion or propaganda is concerned. On the face of it the papers are concerned with freedom of opinion; actually, the whole agitation is based upon business considerations. Many of the newspaper companies are interested in the publication of books and magazines; all of them are interested in the publishers from the point of view of advertising revenue. And the B.B.C., having its own method of advertising, is to a large extent independent of the newspaper world, and so is not likely to spend much of its revenue on advertising. So, from all points of view, the newspapers do not like it; they must not like it, for the *Daily Telegraph* ingenuously lets the cat out of the bag by saying the B.B.C. "has the overwhelming advantage of being able to advertise its wares at no cost to itself," and as it is so placed "as to be able to undersell its competitors without fear of failure. It will be a very serious thing if subsidized competition of this nature becomes the order of the day." So the press is suddenly interested in what looks like a question of fair play for opinion. It looks like it!

* * *

Dead Creeds and Living Lies.

But is it really so? Up to date, the *Freethinker* has stood alone in raising any sort of a protest against the idea of what is substantially a government sub-

sidized institution setting itself up to moralize the people. One can have just a little too much of this moralizing machinery. Personally, I do not regard it as part of the legitimate business of the B.B.C. to set itself up to educate us, as that expression is ordinarily understood. Its main business should be entertainment, and, after that, the dissemination of news and items of interest. But so far as the last two items are concerned they should be given with absolute impartiality. If it is judged of interest to the public that a certain gentleman's opinions in favour of religion should be given to the world, it should be equally important that another person's views against religion should also be given. If Mr. Baldwin's opinion on the value of Conservatism is broadcast, opinions on all phases of political life—Socialism, Liberalism, Communism, etc.—should be broadcast. The *pro* of a subject can never, in any circumstances, be of greater importance than the *con*, because without hearing the one it is impossible to form a solid opinion about the other. Personally, I believe in freedom of opinion, not because freedom of opinion is an end in itself, or of any particular good in itself, but because I believe in variety of opinion as the only reliable method of, first, getting at truth, and second, of keeping the truth achieved living and vigorous. A truth merely accepted rapidly loses its utility and its power to lead to new truth; but a truth constantly exposed to the fire of criticism and the assault of opposite views increases in strength and usefulness. My objection to Christianity is not merely that it is false, but that it is a protected falsehood, a lie that is guarded by law and custom, which social usage protects against straightforward and deliberate criticism. Christianity may truthfully be called a dead creed. The disastrous thing about it is that it is a living lie.

* * *

Dope.

The *Daily Telegraph* says it will be disastrous if subsidized competition becomes the order of the day. But that is nonsense. As a matter of fact, subsidized competition is the order of the day in all directions. Businesses are run for a time as subsidized concerns. They are subsidized by the money of a man or of a company until such time as they pay their way. Newspapers are started and run in the same way. A paper such as this one could hardly be run at all unless it were subsidized by those who believe in the value of its work. Nearly every propagandist organ in the country is in the same position. The Christian Church itself is a subsidized institution. There is no harm in this at all, and I do not raise the least objection to it. The newspapers, in protesting, are thinking too much about probable loss of revenue, and not enough about the principle involved. The root objection to the B.B.C. is that in using its government-given powers

it will do with its publications as it does with its present service—give the public what it thinks it is advisable for the public to know and decline everything which it thinks the public ought not to know. The public will not be educated, it will be doped; and the cheaper and the more accessible the publications, the more dangerous will the doping process become. At present, none of the papers object to the doping, the objection is solely to the kind of dope that is served out. The *Freethinker* is the one paper in the country that strenuously objects to any kind of dope being used on an uncritical and ill-informed public, whether the dope be of a literary, political, religious or anti-religious character.

* * *

Sauce for the Goose.

It is to be noted that the B.B.C. does not purpose doing anything with its publication of books and magazines that it does not do at present with its wireless service. But, as the *Christian World* in its issue for January 10 incautiously protests, "every new journal challenges the circulation and advertising revenue of existing periodicals." As I have said, it is revenue, advertising revenue, that is in question. Had the B.B.C. been smarter, it would have let the papers know that it intended spending large sums on advertising—they could easily have cut the expenditure down at a later date—and the objection of the *Christian World* would thus have been removed. But no one suggests that the B.B.C. should, as a government institution, maintain a position of impartiality. The childishly stupid sermons delivered are applauded, but what a row there would be if one of these days a talk against religion was broadcast! One remembers the bother there was when something was done in this way in relation to Birth Control, a now practically "respectable" subject, and which has very little difficulty in getting a hearing on any platform. In the same issue of the *Christian World*, from which I have taken the sentence just quoted, the Rev. Frank Ballard writes complaining that "we" do not make enough use of the wireless. Not enough use! A large part of Sunday is given over to religion, there are religious services every day in the week, everything against religion is carefully excluded, but Mr. Ballard complains that the Churches do not make enough use of the wireless! What he wants is that the Churches shall agree among themselves on certain persons who should give "studio talks" about religion. But the dope is to be of a particular variety. "About religion" means, with Mr. Ballard, for religion. Mr. Ballard has no doubt about the B.B.C. agreeing to this being done, if the churches can agree as to who shall do the talking, because "no one can accuse the B.B.C. of indifference to religion." It is quite possible that this may be done; and if it is, none of the papers that are protesting against the action of the B.B.C. in relation to the publishing of books, and, as our pious contemporary complains, interfering with "circulation and advertising revenue," will see anything in the slightest degree wrong in the B.B.C. thus setting itself still further to help the Churches. Personally, we do not feel in the least degree upset at the B.B.C. so threatening the profits of the *Christian World*, the *Church Times*, the Harmsworth Press, the Beaverbrook Press, or publishers in general. We even feel a little malicious satisfaction at the turn events have taken. Perhaps it may dawn upon some of these people, and if not upon them, upon some members of the public, that a little attention to principle where the B.B.C. was concerned might have saved them trouble, and have

forced even the B.B.C. to pay some attention to the principles of intellectual honesty.

* * *

Our Mental Robots.

But my gratification at thus seeing our dopemongers hoist with their own petard is, I trust, only transitory. The essence of Freethought, as I have so often pointed out, is opposition to authority in matters of opinion. And for the past generation there has been a very undesirable growth of authority in this direction. The war gave the final impetus to this, but it was growing long before the war. During the war, and since the war, we have seen authority bloated and grown to ridiculous proportions, and few seem to find anything wrong with it. All sorts of childish regulations are created and enforced, and everyone takes an official order with a readiness and a passivity that, fifty years ago, would not have been possible in this country. All over the country magistrates issue decrees that if an offender will attend a chapel regularly, or will stay away from cinemas, or adopt some other quite foolish rule, they will be relieved from punishment. Chiefs of police take to themselves the powers of censors of morals, and decide what music shall be played on Sunday, or issue regulations concerning public meetings, that are at best a violent straining of whatever powers they possess. No one protests against these regulations, and from the sphere of practice, the principle of authority gradually spreads to that of opinion. We have machine-made boots at one end, and we are getting machine-made opinions at the other. A public that takes its opinions ready-made from the "stunt" press, and which hardly has any other method of forming them, may easily take the handing out of one-sided opinions by the B.B.C. as a matter of course. They will think they are getting educated, when they are really getting doped; or imagine they are forming opinions when they are only establishing prejudices. Perhaps things will have to get worse before they get better, but they will certainly have to get better unless our civilization is to end with populations voicing standardized opinions from the time they enter the elementary school until a religious preacher tells the final standardized lie over their remains.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Half-empty Churches.

"The Archbishop of Canterbury must be the chief spokesman of God to his fellow-countrymen."

Archbishop of York.

"Nought may endure but mutability."—*Shelley*.

A PARAGRAPH in the newspaper press states that the rector of Hedgerley, Bucks, has resigned his post because people do not attend his church. The news has caused a mild flutter in religious circles, and praise and blame have been lavished on the rector for his action. Dwindling congregations are, however, the present rule rather than the exception, and pious people are troubled lest other brave clergymen should follow this example.

So far as the State Church is concerned the fear is groundless. Anglican priests do not depend upon the "gate money" provided by their congregations, and, usually, they hang on to their churches like grim death to a leg of mutton. Recently, nineteen derelict churches in the heart of the City of London were about to be put up for sale by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, when an outcry was raised concerning the destruction of ancient architectural buildings. The ministers are still at their posts, presumably

drawing their salaries, although they address a beggarly array of empty benches.

During the past generation nearly all the State churches have suffered from this dry rot attrition. With the exception of show places such as St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, where more attend from curiosity than devotion, there is hardly a church in London which is filled near capacity. Religion no longer plays so important a part in the life of the nation as it did. Not only is the State Church disregarded, but Nonconformity is in the same bad plight. The Congregationalists, one of the oldest of the Dissenting bodies, are in a parlous state. Methodists and Wesleyans are joining forces rather than vegetating separately. The Unitarians have degenerated from a regiment to a corporal's guard. Baptists have sunk to the level of the fancy religions. The only body that shows any signs of increased vitality is that of the Spiritualists, and their churches are far more places of amusement than places of worship, and should be liable to the entertainment tax. Moreover, they are not definitely Christian at all, although some spookists use a veneer of Orthodoxy to attract audiences.

Congregations are still dwindling everywhere. Some years ago a great London newspaper took a census of the Metropolitan places of worship, and found that only one in nineteen of the population attended a church or chapel. The attendance is, probably, less to-day. Yet the number of State priests remains fairly constant, and the number of highly-paid ecclesiastics has increased enormously, to keep pace with the enhanced value of the Anglican Church property.

The dwindling congregation is a knotty problem for the clergy. They cannot bring in worshippers by force, except in the Army and Navy. The old, ferocious Acts of Parliament are still unrepealed, but they cannot be applied to-day. All the twenty thousand priests of the State Church cannot force a dozen Freethinkers to attend divine service. This Church of Christ may be as militant as ever; it is no longer triumphant.

The age of faith has passed; its glory has departed. The choice to-day is not between a State Religion and a milder Nonconformity, but between a plain Secularism and various brands of Supernaturalism. And Secularism is winning all along the line. Attendances at places of public worship are only half what they were a generation ago, when Spurgeon, Parker, Newman-Hall, Baldwin-Brown, and others, drew larger crowds to their churches than any theatre in London. The great preachers of the Established Church then had their following; and even American revivalists could get their hymn-tunes sung from John-o-Groats to Land's End. That time has passed. In the meagre congregations in the churches and chapels of to-day, a goodly proportion are quite elderly people, survivors of the age of faith, and there is slender chance that their places will be taken by the rising generation, brought up in a freer atmosphere.

Commenting on the reaction against religion in this country, one sapient editor ascribes the change to fashionable cynicism. This is pure nonsense. The Royal Family, the aristocracy, most all the folks who fill the big positions, patronize the Christian Religion, and unite in recognizing the State Church as a branch of the Civil Service. Whatever snobbish imitation there may be is placed to the credit of religion. In spite of all this fashionable acquiescence, the clergy have to bewail thinly-attended churches. The rector who resigned because he had no audience may have acted from the courage of despair, but if every parson of a half-empty

church resigned his position, where would religion be in this country?

The State Church, with its ancient endowments, and its Parliamentary support, is in a more favourable position than its Nonconformist rivals to combat the growing indifference of the nation. But, even so, this wealthy Church has to make itself cheap in all sorts of questionable ways to induce people to attend its services. The irony is that the cheaper this official Church of Christ makes itself, the less the people attend. No Church, however, powerful, however wealthy, can put the clock back. This Church is no longer the choice of the English people. Its boasted thirty-nine articles of religion are out of date; its ritual and services are very much out of date; its parsons and curates are antediluvian in their mental outlook. The Church of England marriage service is a perpetual insult to women; the burial service is a standing witness that some folks can console themselves with lies.

Present-day preachers cannot even present the "old, old story" with attractive and plausible emphasis. Everything is flat, stale, and unprofitable. The flood of verbiage from the pulpits is as dull and unpleasant as ditchwater. It is not only turgid, intolerable stuff, but the preachers talk like lawyers presenting a sorry brief, and not with the zeal of the believer. The Church of England is only a society of gentlemen playing at being priests, and England is now a democratic country. That is one reason why they no longer command audiences in the buildings in which they ape the genuflexions of the age of Faith.

A man leaving gaol was implored by the chaplain to bear in mind the sermons he had heard and never to return.

"Sir," said the departing man, with real emotion, "no one who has ever heard you preach would ever want to come back here again."

MIMNERMUS.

The "Bon Sens" of the Cure Meslier.

(Concluded from page 20.)

NOT only does the scheme and outline of the *System of Nature* differ in every detail from that of *Good Sense*, but the style of writing is fundamentally different. The two works are not by the same hand, for the *System of Nature*, notwithstanding the energy and coherence of thought, and the writer's profound sincerity and desire to make converts: "Yet," as Morley remarks, "his literary tone, in spite of its declamatory pitch, not seldom sinks into a drone,"³ and long before the five hundredth page has been reached, has become wearisome. The writer of *Good Sense*, on the contrary, might have continued his work for another five hundred pages without wearying the reader.

It may be objected that it is quite possible for an author to write in two quite different styles. Kant's *History of the Heavens*, for instance, is written in a much clearer and more lively style than the heavy and laborious style of his later work the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, on the contrary, is written in a much heavier style than his brilliant last book, the *Old Faith and the New*.

True, but there was an interval of twenty-five years between the writing of the *Theory of the Heavens* and the *Critique of Pure Reason*. And an interval of thirty-seven years between the *Life of Jesus* and the *Old Faith and the New*. Whereas

³ Morley: *Diderot*. Vol. 2, p. 168.

there is only an interval of two years between the publication of the *System of Nature* and *Good Sense*. And when we consider that the work had to be composed and then sent to Amsterdam in those days of slow travel, printed and returned to Paris, it must have been commenced at least a year before it was published; in fact very soon after the issue of the *System of Nature* itself. Then again, it is unlikely that an epitome of the *System of Nature* would be published so quickly on the heels of the work itself.

But, as we have shown, it is not an epitome, or condensation of the *System of Nature*. It does not follow on the same lines, it does not mention subjects that are dealt with at length in the *System of Nature*, and, on the other hand, it deals with subjects, like the criticism of Christianity, which are absent from the other work.

Sir James Frazer has made an epitome of the *Golden Bough*. He has condensed all the volumes of that famous work into a single volume; upon reading it you have the feeling that you have read it all before. It is quite familiar. It is a real epitome, everything unessential to the main argument has been cut away. You feel nothing of the kind in reading *Good Sense* after the *System of Nature*. They are two distinct works, and in my opinion, *Good Sense* was written, but not printed, before the publication of the *System of Nature*, or it would certainly have made some reference to its more famous predecessor.

And yet, although *Good Sense* is certainly not an epitome of the *System of Nature*, or written by Holbach, all authorities are agreed that it is both, and rely upon the statement of the French author of a *Dictionary of Anonymous Writers*, who gives a list of Holbach's works in which *Good Sense* figures as an abridgement of the *System of Nature*. Barbier says he received his information from Naigeon, the agent employed by Holbach to carry the manuscripts to Michael Rey, the printer at Amsterdam. If Naigeon ever made such a statement, then he was either making a blind guess, or he was pretending to a knowledge he did not really possess. For, as we have seen, Holbach never talked of or discussed his own works, and never admitted his authorship of them even to his intimate friends, and that is how he managed to keep out of the Bastille. Is it likely that he would confide to his messenger what he refused to confide to his friends? It is incredible.

Who then was the author of *Good Sense*? We have not the smallest doubt that the real author of that work is Diderot. Compare it with the *Philosophic Thoughts* of Diderot published a quarter of a century earlier. The plan of the work is exactly the same. It is divided into aphoristic sentences, each consecutively numbered, as in *Good Sense*. Allowing for the lapse of years during which Diderot had advanced in thought (like many others of that time), that he had now discarded all belief in a God, and had an increased gift of literary compression, the style and composition is identical, and I do not know of any other writer of that time who was capable of producing the work.

Carlyle's edition of *Good Sense* was published over a hundred years ago. Our copy of the edition, published by Cousins, bears no date, but it has certainly not been published within the last forty-five or fifty years, or we should have known it. Possibly, but not probably, it may have been published before Carlyle's edition. However that may be, many of our readers have probably never seen the book, and for their benefit we produce a few samples to show its quality:—

Who made the devil? God. But, why did God make this devil, destined to pervert mankind?

This is unknown; it is a mystery which the Diety alone is acquainted with.

What is a soul? A spirit. What is a spirit? A substance, which has neither form, nor colour, nor extension, nor parts. How can we form any idea of such a substance? How can it move a body? That is not known; it is a mystery. Have beasts souls?

What is a mystery? By examining the thing closely, I soon perceive that a mystery is nothing but a contradiction, a palpable absurdity, a manifest impossibility, over which theologians would oblige men humbly to shut their eyes. In a word, a mystery is whatever our spiritual guides cannot explain.

Without mysteries there can be no religion; mystery is essential to it, a religion void of mysteries would be a contradiction in terms. The God who serves as the foundation of *natural religion* or *deism* is himself the greatest mystery of every mind that attends to it.

The more mysterious and incredible a religion is, the more power it has to please men's imagination which finds in it continual food. The darker a religion is, the more it appears divine; *i.e.*, conformable to the nature of a hidden being of whom they have no ideas. It is the property of ignorance to prefer the unknown, the hidden, the fabulous, the marvellous, the incredible, or even the terrible, to what is clear, simple and true.

Are not theologians strange reasoners? Whenever they cannot divine the *natural* causes of things, they invent those which they call *supernatural*, such as spirits, occult causes, inexplicable agents, or rather *words*, much more obscure than the *things* they endeavour to explain.

When we complain of the evils of which our world is the theatre, we are referred to the other world, where, it is said, God will repair all the iniquity and misery, which, for a time, he permits here below. But if God, suffering his eternal justice to remain at rest for a long time, could consent to evil during the whole continuance of our present world, what assurance have we, that, during the continuance of another world, divine justice will not, in like manner, sleep over the misery of its inhabitants.

Is the notion of an infinitely good and powerful being, who causes or permits an infinity of evils, less absurd or impossible than that of a square triangle?

He [God] informs them solely, that *he is what he is*; that he is a *hidden God*; that his ways are unspeakable; that he is exasperated against all who have the temerity to fathom his decrees, or to consult reason in judging him or his works.

The author of these sentiments was evidently not a reverent agnostic. W. MANN.

If Love's Worth Love.

If love's worth love, then for it go "all out";
Why this mistrust; this hesitance; this doubt?
Leap in, I say, leap in; not hang about!

Dame Nature gave her mandate unto you:
Therefore, why care that an Hellenic Jew,
Called Paul, should disapprove? He little knew!

The intellect above all cast aside;
Love knows no reasons and will none abide;
Instinct alone is your sufficient guide.

When Nature calls her children to account,
What will you say? To what shall then amount
Your "reasons" for not drinking at life's fount?

BAYARD SIMMONS.

I shall never regret my life passing away if I have lived in such a manner as to be conscious of not having lived in vain.—*Cicero*.

A Folklore Fragment.

THE folklorist constructs the philosophy and religion of primitive man from its lingering or recorded remains. Among the less advanced races these survive longest, and it is in their tales and superstitions that the student discovers his richest and most suggestive data.

The dwellers in our island home are of very composite descent. In Tennyson's words, Norman, Saxon and Dane are we, but we must also include Iberian and pre-Iberian stocks, whose physical characteristics remain plainly apparent in our present population.

To what extent the religious traditions and superstitions of the British Isles have lingered from a pre-historic past, or have been introduced by invading peoples within historical times cannot be stated with certainty. But as all supernatural beliefs were born of man's misconceptions of natural phenomena, however much they have become differentiated by the changes and chances of time and place, there remains a plain kinship among all.

The Nordic or Scandinavian invaders of Britain arrived with their mythology fully formed. Woden and Thor, with others, were ancient divinities when the Saxon settlement commenced in the fifth century of our era. The gods they supplanted appear less clearly defined, and evidence exists that the Celtic deities still in fashion were the modified descendants of more primitive gods. The medieval chroniclers upon whom we rely for our knowledge of ancient British cults were dominated by a desire to tell the story of the early British deities, and to trace their descendants to the ruling families of the day. Here, as elsewhere, ancestor worship is inseparable from adoration, and prayer to the gods.

Later literary accretions have so transformed many of the gods and heroes that their human origin is obscured. Dagda, the Zeus or Jupiter of ancient Erin, despite his later association with elemental nature, was the father of all created things, and exceeded the lesser divinities in greatness, so much so, as to become "the object of worship, even to the gods themselves." His fame increased and his powers were magnified as the years sped on: "Alone among the gods," writes Miss Eleanor Hull in her fine work, *Folklore in the British Isles*, 1928, "Dagda's name has always the definite article prefixed, and Munster people still swear by the Dagda."

The Dagda—the Lord of Lords—lives in recorded tradition as a fat and monstrous old man—more corpulent and cumbersome than Falstaff himself—whose heavy and swaying movements excited laughter in the onlookers. "It took eight men to draw his club on a wheeled car behind him. As it rolled along it left tracks as broad and deep as the boundary dyke between two provinces. . . . He possessed a magnificent harp, into which he had so bound the melodies that they sounded forth only when summoned by his call, and the harp would move of its own will from the wall to his hand when he called upon it, overthrowing all who stood in the way." These and other attributes of this remarkable deity appear as the distorted traditions which grew up in folk lore, of a once living man.

Another deity, whose cult extended from Britain to the Continent of Europe, was the beautiful sun god Lugh Lamh-fhada. The lord of light and learning, he was also the great artificer. In the wondrous halls of Tara he excelled all competitors in their respective crafts. In Welsh legend he appears as the precocious infant endowed with all wisdom at birth. Lugh's face was so splendid that it outshone the

light of the sun. Like most other gods, his birth was shrouded in mystery, and he ascended into heaven disguised as an eagle.

Lammas Day—our August 1—is derived from Lugh's cult. This, his festival, has been widely associated with the much later St. Patrick. Observances relating to Lugh persisted in Ireland down to 1838 and perhaps more recently. Lammas Day was celebrated as a feast for the dead. It was called Garland or Garlic Sunday. "A garland or hoop was decorated the night before with coloured ribbons, and flowers were added on the day itself. A procession was formed with a young man at its head carrying the wreath from which apples were hung, and they proceeded to the churchyard to say prayers and strew flowers with much keening and weeping. The ceremony closed with a dance and a feast in the place where a garland was fixed not far from the graveyard."

There was a fair in Ireland held at Tailten (now Teltown) dating back through many centuries which has recently been revived. Marriage was an outstanding feature of this festival. This was a famed fair, and people came from far and near, some journeying from Scotland. The leading ancient Irish festival, the day was devoted to sports and pastimes. Youths and maidens were lined, facing each other, on opposite embankments, and then those who fell in love at first sight descended into an artificial hollow, which is still known as "Marriage Hollow." Wedlock there contracted lasted twelve months and a day. If the couples found marriage a failure during this probationary period, they returned to Tailten, stood back to back, and departed a divorced pair.

The term "Teltown marriage" is said to be still in use. In past times a hill at old Tailten was known as "the hill of the buying." This was where the marriage was acknowledged by the elders, and the bride-price paid. Traditions, and even survivals of similar matings occur sporadically throughout Britain. The Teltown custom was ultimately suppressed by the priests on the plea that it created turmoil, but it was long replaced by a Lammas Day carnival.

Miss Hull quotes from *Lincolnshire Notes and Queries*, a curious case of the blending of Teutonic and Christian folklore concerning an old ague charm. The fen countries were long afflicted with ague in their primitive undrained condition. "In Lincolnshire," she notes, "an ague charm takes the form of an invocation to Woden and Loki, with the aid of the hammer of Thor. Three old horse-shoes were nailed to the foot of the bed where the patient lay, with a hammer placed crosswise upon them.

"'There lad,' said the boy's mother, 'when the old'un comes to shake 'un, you will fix 'im saafe as a church steeple 'e wa'ant never pass you. . . . Then for the 'chawms'; I taks the mell (hammer) in my left 'and, and I taps them shoes, and I ses:—

Feyther, Son and Holy Ghost,
Nail the daval to the poast;
Throice I stroikes with holy crook,
One for God, one for Wod, and one for 'Lok.'"
(i.e., Woden and Loki.)

"The old Scandinavian gods have here become part of a pantheon which includes them alongside of the newer Christian deities."

In addition to the gods the mother goddess played a great part in Celtic religion. Among the Gaels the female deities were more numerous and potent than the gods. They created the everlasting hills, and ruled the spring and winter seasons. These goddesses were also hoary with antiquity. Anu or Danu serves as mother and guardian to the gods. She is wealthy and generous. Two Kerry mountains, "The Paps of Anu" recall her fame. Buanann "the

nurse of the heroes" is a variant of Anu in Celtic folklore.

In the days of their decline, once venerated divinities become the victims of apathy and scorn. A once mighty goddess is now called "the Hag of Beare." There is a hill in West Meath with megalithic remains. These were placed there by the "Hag" who carried the stones in her apron. It is related that she left one at Cambane, then flew to the top of Hag's Hill, where she deposited a second, and then a third on a nearby height. And had she succeeded in dropping a fourth stone she would have become immortal, but unluckily she stumbled and died. Her last resting place was shown to visitors until recent times.

This goddess has given her name to Cailleach Bheara, while many other place names in Ireland and Scotland preserve her memory. "All the hills of Rosshire were built by her, and Ben Wyvis was formed of rocks carried in her creel." This Hag or "Auld Wife" as the Scots call her, not only builds mountains, but raises storms. During winter she is supreme, but in the spring, in Faust-like fashion, she must quaff the charmed water of the Well of Youth, and so maintain her maiden energy. The Auld Wife is many centuries old, and her offspring past computation.

As the Hag or Auld Wife reigns as winter's queen, so Brigit or Bride governs the spring. Brigit was Dagda's daughter, and her cult was widespread in our Isles. She was the guardian of the hearth, and smiled on the birth of every Gaelic child. In Scotland she is remembered as the comforter of the mother in the pangs of childbirth. The Holy Virgin is a later personification of Brigit in her earlier form.

In ancient Erin, Brigit's sacred fire was never extinguished. Her cult was adapted to the Church's requirements. Brigit's flame was one of the three perpetual fires in Irish convents, and "was attended by nineteen nuns and holy women in turn."

The Eve of St. Bride's Day was commemorated for long centuries in Ireland and Scotland. St. Bride's bed was welcome to the homeless wayfarer, for according to modern fancy she had prepared a bed for God's mother when she gave birth to the Saviour. Each rustic family was accustomed to cover a sheaf of corn with a woman's raiment and deposit it in a basket. This was called St. Bride's bed. The members of the household each called to the goddess as they retired to rest, and in the morning her footprints were searched for in the ashes on the hearth. And if St. Bride had blessed the dwelling with her presence this was a promise of a prosperous season with a bountiful harvest. This custom lingered at least as late as the reign of Queen Anne. T. F. PALMER.

Peace.

They make their Jesus as they make their gods
It is their wallowing egos magnified,
Their vanity writ large and murderous pride,
Storming high heaven with saphury periods.

The black night dawns, and, scourged with red tipped
rods,
Star-riven, flame-englobed, and rocket-dyed;
Stares at the conflagration myriad-eyed
And artificial eye-balled winks and nods.

Then as that earth born tumult fainter glows,
The fathomless abyss of the unknown,
Nirvana's viewless hope resumes its own
Faint shadow of the million-petalled rose
of sweet impersonality alone,
Death—and death's inconceivable repose.

W. W. STRICKLAND.

Freethought Flashes.

There is nothing absurd in the Trinity—if one can understand it. Neither is there anything absurd in a six-sided triangle—if one can understand it.

Persecution is the homage which a convicted lie pays to a conquering truth.

The theist argues that progress is proof of a divine plan. But progress at best is a process which goes from a greater to a lesser imperfection. So that all the time the theist imagines he is demonstrating an infallible wisdom, what he is really doing is proving the existence of a faulty construction. If things were not bad they could not get better.

What is the use of trying to prove purpose in the universe by showing that the end is implicit in the beginning. The end is always implicit in the beginning. That is a postulate of the most uncompromising materialism. The end of a product is the consequence of the forces operating during the process, and to point to the wonderful way in which the factors combine to produce the result is only a way of tracing the interaction of the forces at work. But purpose is psychical fact, not a physical one, and the only way to prove purpose is to show an exact relation between what is intended and what results. But "intention" in the universe is pure assumption. Of course, if the assumption is granted the conclusion may easily follow. It will follow, for the intention is assumed in view of the result. And theists do not *deduce* purpose from the result, they assume the purpose because the result is what it is, when as a matter of fact it could not be otherwise than it is. A way of proving purpose would be to show that the results could not have followed from the mechanical combination of the factors involved.

India is said to possess about three thousand gods, and the missionary expects the Hindoos to be thankful because he adds another one to an already over-stocked market.

Is the statement that God's ways are our ways a complaint or a compliment?

All legislation should have an eye on the future and make preparations for it. That is why the world is governed by old men whose ideas and outlook belong to the past.

To have the quality of perfection, one must have the sense of imperfection.

In every way religions conform to the lower types of existence. They do this even in their growth, for they multiply by simple division as do the single-celled structures.

Nine men out of every ten are ruled by their wives, and eight men out of every nine are the better for the government.

It is not nearly so difficult to die for an unpopular cause as it is to live for one. Mere pugnacity may accomplish the one; calm, clear resolution is demanded for the other.

It is deeply to be regretted that during the prevalence of the ascetic epidemic in the early ages of Christianity, that all those inclined to the priesthood did not embrace the ideal of celibacy—and live up to it.

Acid Drops.

Writing about "wireless value," the *Daily Sketch* says that many listeners have protested that they are not receiving value for their money. And the point is, says the *Sketch*, not whether one who pays 10s. for a licence is getting value for his money, but whether listeners as a body are getting entertainment value to the tune of £1,000,000 a year, which is the B.B.C.'s income. Well, we can safely say the majority of listeners, who we know are not interested in religion, are not getting full value for their money. Those silent hours on Sunday—which have been ordered by the Churches—want filling in with secular entertainment, and the pious items require curtailing, for they appeal only to the minority.

This is the way the *Church Times* sees it:—

The newspaper press has become the open forum of our own age. All things under heaven are for free discussion, and the one thing that, above all others, is debated from every angle is religion.

That is what we may call playing the game. The arrangement being that the newspapers shall boom religion; the religious parties to the agreement boost the newspapers. And all the time, the *Church Times* knows quite well that religion is not debated from every angle. The deliberate freethinking angle is carefully and deliberately excluded. In only one of these many symposiums has an uncompromising criticism of religion been admitted, and a Council of the Churches was immediately summoned to see what could be done about it. And the newspapers have never repeated that mistake. All the rest have taken care that "every angle" should mean every religious angle. Still, one falsehood more or less matters little where the defence of religion is concerned.

One more gem from the *Church Times*. "Faith is not dead when men are continually arguing about it," it says. Perhaps not dead, but evidently men are very uncertain about it or they would not be arguing about it.

President Coolidge declares: "It is a long way from a world that walks by force to a world that walks by faith." We hope the world will not think President Coolidge was referring to the Christian faith. That and force have never been far apart. The greater the faith the more certain the conviction that disputes could be settled only by force—God helping, of course.

Europe is full of people who are brave as lions, but most of them are as silly as geese, says Mr. J. B. Priestly. A few thousands of them cackle every Sunday from a pedestal six feet above contradiction.

A medical journal asks: Will noise destroy civilization, or will civilization destroy noise? Undoubtedly civilization will destroy one kind of noise—that of the Churches, and particularly that of the Salvation Army. Civilization will ultimately remove from man the superstitious fears now dominating him. With the removal of these the Churches and their noisy priests will disappear also. And the mental quiet that comes upon man will give him that heaven on earth which centuries of Christian teaching have never brought, and will never bring to him.

A royal personage thinks that the British have been too modest in the past. Except the parsons, of course. They never tire of assuring the world what a wonderful thing is the English brand of religion, how ideal is the English Sabbath, and how valuable are the English Churches and (by implication) the English parsons. Our parsons have nothing to learn of the peculiar art of blowing one's own trumpet. Still, a sign of progress is that an increasingly large number of people think the parsons' music is more than a little flat.

It is said that the world's loss through rust to iron and steel is over ten millions pounds a week. God alone knows what was, and is, the world's loss through the intellectual rust caused by the Christian superstition.

Another dynasty appears to be going the way of all hereditary anachronisms. The Booth throne is tottering to its fall. A certain section of the Salvation Army cavemen have at last become enlightened enough to disbelieve in the divine right of "Generals." Praise God, brother, praise God!

As regards the programme of the Lords' Day Observance Society, a reader of a daily paper says: "I think it a pity the law of England does not make the people who constitute this Society stay in their own homes or places of worship, and mind their own business instead of other people's." We notice that the energetic Secretary of the Society never answers this kind of criticism of his godly organization. Apparently he is intelligent enough to know that his excuses for interfering with the liberty of other people would sound pretty lame in cold print.

Dr. Crichton-Miller declares that if a child is to develop, he must be happy. That is true; and in this twentieth century he has, more than ever before, a greater chance of developing through happiness. For intelligent parents and educationalists no longer "bring up a child in the way he should go" according to repressive Biblical notions. Also, most modern children have escaped being taught that fear of hell-fire which terrorized their parents and grand-parents. The influence of the Christian superstition can be seen growing steadily less; the days of childhood are freer and happier. This is no mere coincidence. It is our old friend cause and effect.

A writer in a daily paper has been contending that it is the parsonical voice which is responsible for so many empty pews. A reader—Mr. A. Radley, of Leeds—replies:—

Is it not a fact that the Church has ceased to attract the best brains to its service? Thinking men and women cannot believe in the impossibilities of religion.

We hope this will have startled some intelligent men and women still in pews. If they let their thoughts play on the term "impossibilities of religion," they may try to discover why the doctrines of religion are impossible for thinking men and women.

At a recent Conference of educationalists, Mr. W. A. Brockingham urged that children should be trained to cultivate the habit of getting clear and accurate impressions from books, of extracting the information they contained, of selecting what is important, and rejecting what is irrelevant; by these means would be acquired sound mental control of thoughts and actions. Mr. Brockingham's suggestion is a timely one. In most schools the child is taught merely to follow print and to memorize facts. Consequently, on leaving school, he is quite inadequately prepared for dealing with the clap-trap slung at him from press and pulpit. A generation of citizens trained to analytical and discriminative reading would revolutionize the press, and start an unprecedented exodus from the Churches.

Mr. W. B. Steer (a past President of the N.U.T) told the same Conference that the child should be taught to doubt everything he reads. This provocative assertion caused Sir Geo. Lunn to ejaculate that "the real philosophy of life is to believe and make sure of one thing rather than doubt everything." For our part, we don't take kindly to Sir George's philosophy. It is too suggestive of Christian faith for our liking. We prefer the Freethought attitude—accept nothing without questioning and testing. Quite possibly Mr. Steer meant by his assertion nothing more than this. Miss Conway (another past President, N.U.T.) declared it was "a wicked thing to lead children to doubt"; rather should teachers foster imagination. And the Conference agreed

with her. Miss Conway is a staunch supporter of Bible reading in schools. This probably explains her indignation at Mr. Steer's "wicked" suggestion. She quite sees that, with the Bible in the schools, it would be fatal to encourage any mental attitude antagonistic to the "will to believe." The fifty thousand parsons in this country will heartily agree with her.

According to Mr. Frank Roscoe, M.A., a lecture is not a meal but a condiment. Since a sermon is a kind of lecture, a Modernist sermon may be defined as a condiment for disguising the over-ripe flavour of Christian meat.

Radio Times in its Retrospect of the Programmes of 1928 says:—

The scope of talks, lectures and debates has been greatly widened by the removal of the ban on the broadcasting of certain types of controversial matter . . . Talks and debates of subjects of public interest in which arguments in support of one point of view have been balanced with scrupulous fairness with those of the opposite camp. By these means the listener has had the case spread out before him . . . and has then been left to draw his own conclusions. No attempt has been made to dragoon him into one way of thinking rather than another.

Forewarned by the B.B.C.'s past efforts in dodging the truth, one must not expect too much from the Corporation in the way of accurate statement. Week after week some parson has been permitted to spread out before the listener the case for the Christian religion. And with scrupulous carefulness the B.B.C. has prevented the opposite camp from voicing the "balancing" point of view. Then the self-righteous B.B.C. asks you to believe that "no attempt has been made to dragoon" the listener "into one way of thinking rather than another." We fancy this is about the limit of stupid Christian cant. The Corporation will have to try hard to equal it.

The Irish Free State has issued a set of new coins. The advisory committee decided, when designs were being considered, than no ancient saints should appear on the coins. The reason given by Sir Thos. Bodkin (of the National Gallery) is that if a coin showed a picture of a saint, a person might be tempted by the habit of centuries to spit on the coin for luck. And besides, many pious Irish would bore a hole in the coin and keep it as a religious image. All this is very revealing. It indicates the type of intelligence many centuries of Roman Catholic "education" has produced in the land of no snakes. We believe Mr. Belloc thinks Catholic education is superior to any other. We are glad to say it has no equal.

The Rev. Viscount Mountmorres, vicar of St. Mark's, South Farnborough, Hampshire, preached at Westminster Abbey on January 6, and although his congregation may consider him as dealing very familiarly with science, he overcame it in a typically Christian manner. "Life," he said, "had been made nobler for millions of people because of modern science." It would be difficult to indicate at what point in history Christianity definitely did not retard scientific research. We will not say helped, but it is ironical to have truth uttered in the precincts of Westminster Abbey. It is a pity the Rev. Viscount did not leave well alone; he went on:—

The discoveries of modern science are more in accordance with the revelation of Christ than the old. This for being anywhere near verbal accuracy, is as good as describing the movements of elephants—the higher they fly the fewer.

The magistrates of Hereford have granted permission for the exhibition of the film, "The King of Kings," which depicts the life of Christ, on condition that there is to be no smoking and no sale of chocolates during the performance. They evidently think that if men and women are allowed to munch chocolates and smoke "fags" while the life of Christ is being shown, the absurdity of accepting such a yarn as being historic will become apparent. Somehow or the other this tale

has to be screened off from everyday life and thought if it is to be taken as true. In other words, the critical intelligence of man must be put to sleep. That is what is meant when people talk of maintaining a reverential atmosphere.

Says the Archbishop of York:—

We desperately need more competent thinkers to deal in lectures and writings with the broad outlines of the Christian conception of God and of life, and to do it in the language of ordinary intelligent people.

We note the admission of the Archbishop as to the mental quality of those at present engaged in writing and lecturing on behalf of Christianity, but all the same we hardly think the Archbishop means what he says. What is going to happen if "competent thinkers" come along and deal with Christianity *inside the Church*? In a very little time they, and many with them, would be outside the Church. Besides, there are plenty of competent thinkers writing and speaking about religion, but it is certain that the Archbishop would not welcome them. We take it that he really means thinkers about religion, men who will dress up ancient superstitions in modern language, and so manage to fool the people a little longer.

There was recently a complaint that educated young people from Methodist homes are taking little part in the various pious activities of the Church. A Methodist writer appears to think that the headmasters of the Church's public schools have something to do with the young people's luke-warmness. He thinks they ought to be doing something besides educating. They ought to be producing the perfect Bible-puncher also. We have no doubt that the reverend headmasters do their best. But the fact is that, if the young people receive anything worthy of the name of education, they inevitably come into contact with ideas, opinions and facts that cannot be squared with the faith learned in kindergarten days. Hence the luke-warmness of the young Methodists. The Methodist Church must face up to the fact that modern education is not helpful to religion.

Here is an extract from a daily paper:—

Electrically-blown organs were put out of action and lights failed in Kingston-on-Thames churches yesterday morning, as a result of a breakdown in an electricity main.

What an excellent opportunity for a miracle was here, and yet apparently nothing was done. When it is remembered that a good old man went to heaven in a chariot of fire, that another was fed by ravens, that Piccadilly was nearly blown into Oxford Street, London, by a gale, all that was wanted at Kingston-on-Thames was a little wind in the right place.

One may assume that our newspapers are not telling us the whole truth about the trouble in Afghanistan; but whatever are the factors involved, it is quite plain that whenever sinister ends are to be served, and stupid passions excited, religion is always a serviceable thing. King Amanullah's attempts to Westernize the Afghans have been effectually prevented by an appeal to the religious passions of the people, and the priests have been against him to a man. Whatever time or country we are dealing with, the same feature always comes to the front—the unreasoning conservatism of established religion, and its instinctive reaction against anything that is new or unusual. Our own priests are built on the same lines as those of Afghanistan, although the conditions here do not permit of their so openly avowing their aims and their antagonisms. But the lesson is always the same. Some of our papers are writing in a very superior tone about the poor Afghan being so upset over an alteration in dress as involving a religious issue. But it is not so long since our own enlightened public was being violently agitated over the question of the Mass, and the right kind of costume parsons ought to wear, with other topics not a whit more reasonable than the things that are now agitating the religious mind of the Afghan.

National Secular Society.

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

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

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

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

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THOSE SUBSCRIBERS WHO RECEIVE THEIR COPY OF THE "FREETHINKER" IN A GREEN WRAPPER WILL PLEASE TAKE IT THAT 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.—W. K. Hutty, £1; V. H. Smith, 5s.; J. A. Davies, 10s.

E. MASON.—There is no Branch of the N.S.S. near you. Why not get your friends together and see what can be done in the direction of establishing one?

J. WHITE.—Very pleased to learn that you were all so pleased with Mr. Rosetti's address on Sunday last.

DON WALTON (S.A.)—Papers are being sent. We sincerely hope they will have the desired effect. Thanks for good wishes.

P. R. WHITCOMBE.—Your letter is quite a good one, but it proceeds upon a misapprehension. The problem of morals has been well worked by Freethinkers. To say nothing of the work done by avowed Freethinkers such as the editor of this journal, there are numerous works by well recognized writers on science and philosophy.

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.

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.

In the *Freethinker* for December 23, we published a paragraph in which it was stated that the Chief Constable of Sheffield had ordered the promoters of Sunday concerts to submit to him their programmes for approval, so that he might decide whether the proposed songs and music were "in keeping with the spirit of Sunday." What we then said was based upon a newspaper paragraph, but we are now informed that no such order was issued by the Chief Constable. It was the

City Justices of Sheffield who ordered that the programmes of Sunday concerts should be submitted to the Chief Constable for his approval, acting on behalf of the Magistrates. We very much regret that we should have been so misled by the newspaper report as to have done the Chief Constable an injustice. The paragraph was written in all sincerity, and we are glad to have had our attention called to the matter. On that head we owe the Chief Constable our apologies.

Our complaint really lies against the City Justices, and with regard to their action we can only say again, that public liberty will never be safe so long as we have men in office who use their position to promote their narrow sabbatarian prejudices. We are strongly of opinion that the magistrates have no power whatever to give permission for any Sunday concert to which there is an admission charge, and if there is no charge for admission they have no power to prevent it. What can be done is for a mean advantage to be taken, and if the promoters do not agree, oppose or refuse the ordinary licence. They thus get those concerned to agree in the exercise of what we fancy is an abuse of power. This is the situation we had in mind when we said that those who run Sunday concerts might sometimes tell these justices, politely, to go to the devil, and then fight against any attempt that was made to penalize them in other directions. We do not know of any Act which gives a magistrate power to permit a concert on Sunday, provided the music or the songs agrees with what he thinks is "in keeping with the spirit of Sunday." The very notion is almost too ridiculous for discussion.

Last week we had some notes on a Plymouth parson who was anxious to prevent Freethinkers having either the use of a hall for their meetings, or advertising their meetings. Now we see that the *Western Morning News*, which also controls the evening *Herald*, declines to accept advertisements for any meetings at which a lecture on Birth Control is announced. Religiously, Plymouth is very backward, and the religious temper of the place evidently infects the newspapers. Yet there are those who imagine that Christianity is dead. Little things like these ought to disabuse their minds of such a delusion.

A Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity.

(Continued from page 27.)

FETISH WORSHIP.

A VAST and lucrative trade in relics developed throughout Europe during the Middle, fittingly styled the "Dark," Ages. No church was properly equipped unless it had gruesome properties of this description. The lists of these objects are to be found in contemporary records still preserved. Many exist to this day in the churches of Europe, though the more naively indecent specimens have been put out of sight. The increase of scepticism has led to a greater degree of modesty. But in the Dark Ages there was little modesty and less refinement.

Thus we read that there was enough milk of the Virgin Mary to feed a few calves; bottles of it were sold for enormous sums to the Crusaders; some of it was exhibited in Spanish churches as late as the nineteenth century, and may be shown even now privately to the pious. John Calvin, in the blunt language of the times, declared that there was so much of it that "one might suppose she was a wet nurse or a cow." There was enough of her hair to stuff a mattress. There was sufficient wood of the true cross to build a boat. There were enough teeth of Christ to supply a dentist; one monastery at Charroux had the complete set. There were so many sets of the baby linen of the infant Jesus in

Italy, France and Spain, that one might have opened a shop with them. One church in Rome had Christ's manger-cradle. Seven churches had his umbilical cord. One had the miraculous imprint of his little "sit-me-down" on a stone on which he had sat when a child. Oh no! it did not shock anyone in those days! Mary had left enough wedding rings (!), shoes, stockings, girdles, etc., to stock a museum. In Chartres Cathedral, even now, one of her shifts can be seen. Several abbeys had Christ's crown of thorns; eleven had the lance that pierced his side. A monastery in Jerusalem even had one of the fingers of the Holy Ghost! Six churches had the head of John the Baptist.

Among many other similar "exhibits" in Canterbury Cathedral, in the fifteenth century were the following: The head-band of the Blessed Virgin; a piece of Christ's garment; the brain of St. Thomas; the blood of St. Thomas and St. John the Apostles; a part of the shoulder of the blessed St. Simeon; one leg of St. George; a piece of the body and the bones of St. Lawrence; a leg of the Bishop of St. Romanus; a leg of the Virgin Milda; a leg of the Virgin Eduarda; a tooth and a finger of St. Stephen the Martyr; bones of the Virgin Catherine; a tooth of St. Benedict; a finger of St. Urban; the lips of one of the infants slain by Herod; bones of the blessed Clement; bones of St. Vincent.

All these were to be seen, revered, and (for a consideration) touched by the pious, and were thought to cure disease and to bring good fortune. Here we find a savage fetish-worship as gruesome as anything in "Darkest Africa."

The "Holy Coat" of Christ at Treves still does a roaring business. But there is another at Argenteuil. Pope Pius IX (1846) favoured Argenteuil, and his successor Pope Leo XIII (1878) Treves. Both these coats have been blessed, one by one Pope and one by the other; thus both must be genuine since the Pope is infallible! John Calvin, in the sixteenth century, pointed out, in his *Treatise on Relics*, that the Holy Coat of Christ was kept in several churches; there were no less than twenty of them, all authentic and guaranteed by the Great Lying Church. But the priests will no more allow an expert to examine the Treves coat than they will the blood of St. Januarius, preserved at Naples, which "liquifies" twice a year.

Thomas Newton, Bishop of Bristol, 1704-82, writing on the paganization of Christianity says: "Is not the worship of saints and angels now in all respects the same that the worship of demons was in former times? The name only is different, the thing is identically the same . . . the deified men of the Christians are substituted for the deified men of the heathens. The promoters of this worship were sensible that it was the same, so likewise it is performed with the same ceremonies. The burning of incense or perfumes on several altars at one and the same time; the sprinkling of holy water, or a mixture of salt and common water, at going into and coming out of places of public worship; the lighting up of a great number of lamps and wax candles in broad daylight before altars and statues of these deities; the hanging up of votive offerings and rich presents as attestations of so many miraculous cures and deliverances from diseases and dangers; the canonization or deification of deceased worthies; the assigning of distinct provinces or prefectures to departed heroes or saints; the worshipping and adoring of the dead in their sepulchres, shrines and relics; the consecrating and bowing down to images; the attributing of miraculous powers and virtues to idols; the setting up of little oratories, altars and statues in the streets and highways, and on the tops of mountains; the carry-

ing of images and relics in procession; . . . the shaving of priests, or the tonsure as it is called, on the crown of their heads; . . . all these, and many more rites and ceremonies are equally parts of the pagan and popish superstition. Nay, the very same temples, the very same images, which were once consecrated to Jupiter and the other demons, are now consecrated to the Virgin Mary and the other saints. The very same rites and inscriptions, the very same prodigies and miracles are related of these as of those. In short, almost the whole of paganism is converted and applied to popery; the one is manifestly formed upon the same plan and principles as the other; so that there is not only a conformity, but even a uniformity, in the worship of ancient and modern, of heathen and Christian Rome." Yet the good bishop was unable to see that this discredited the whole Christian legend, and that his own modified form of it is no more credible. He accepted the unauthenticated documents which comprise the Bible on no better authority than that of the Church which perpetrated these frauds! The Christian mentality is strange indeed. When the poor, benighted Heathen is accused by them of idolatry, all he can do, if he has a sense of humour, is to roar with laughter!

E. UPASAKA.

(To be continued.)

Testimonial to Arthur B. Moss.

It is over twenty years ago since I first saw my friend, Arthur B. Moss. He was taking the chair for one of George William Foote's lectures, and in a few clear incisive words introduced the speaker. From that day to this, I looked out for and read everything Mr. Moss wrote, and noted how, behind his clear and amiable writing, was the keen thinker, the undaunted fighter, who held aloft the flag of Freethought and never let it down. Mr. Moss attracted me also because his hero, of whom he could never say too much, was Charles Bradlaugh, and like that great leader, was an unashamed Malthusian. To believe in Birth Control nowadays requires as little courage as to avow oneself a Rationalist. But Arthur B. Moss was not afraid to say outright he was a Malthusian and a Freethinker when ostracism and obloquy were the penalties attached to any avowal of heretical opinion. It is to men of his stamp that we owe so much of our freedom of opinion these days, to a noble band of, in many cases, almost unknown Freethinkers, who never ceased to proclaim their right to free thought and free expression on any subject.

To hear Mr. Moss at a N.S.S. dinner is to marvel at his perpetual youth. He was born, for all that, a Londoner, in 1855, and like most of us was a thoroughly devout believer up to his seventeenth year. A friend lent him the *Age of Reason*, he commenced to attend Freethought lectures and debates, and his conversion was complete. But conversion for Mr. Moss did not mean merely passiveness. He became a burning advocate for the Cause; and when I read Mr. Heaford's biographical sketch, published in 1895, I marvel at his activities. How it was all done in the time passes my comprehension. Mr. Heaford tells us:—

Some measure of the magnitude of Mr. Moss's services as a propagandist, and of the sustained appreciation of his advocacy by the (N.S.S.) branches may be gathered by the fact that during the last twenty years he has delivered, on an average, sixty lectures per annum, in other words, about 1,200 lectures in all—rather more than less . . . Biographical, historical, scientific and secular subjects have been alternately dealt with by him, and illu-

mined by his humour and philosophic insight. This statement of his labours would, however, be incomplete without mention of the fact that he has also delivered, in addition to all this, some hundreds of political addresses from time to time.

Please remember that all this was done in his "spare" time. Mr. Moss, like most of us, had a wife and family to keep, and had to work for a living. He was employed by the London School Board, and his Freethought brought him into conflict with his employers. For asking Mr. J. R. Kelly, M.P., to vote for Bradlaugh's Oaths Bill, that gentleman did his best to procure Mr. Moss's dismissal. It is good to put on record that the London School Board were so satisfied with the way Mr. Moss fulfilled his duties that Mr. Kelly failed in his attempt, though the Board passed a resolution forbidding any further Freethought activities. Luckily Mrs. Besant later on was returned on the School Board as member for Tower Hamlets, and she managed to get the prohibition rescinded. From that day till he was seventy years of age Mr. Moss continued his advocacy of Freethought by pen and tongue, and is still at work with the former, as readers of this journal so well know.

On the back of Mr. Heaford's pamphlet are notices of no less than twenty-five works published by Mr. Moss—including his written debate with Mrs. Wilkie, the Scottish novelist, on *Was Jesus an Imposter?* It runs to 100 pages, and received golden opinions from critics. The other works consist of pamphlets and books on Christianity, Buddhism, Evolution, Miracles, Science—in fact, I marvel more and more. How did he do it all?

Moreover, Mr. Moss was a fine elocutionist, Shakespearism and general, and—ye gods!—a dramatist whose plays were acted for hundreds of nights. Jointly with Mr. Patmore, his *Lured to London*, produced in 1890, ran for 300 nights in five metropolitan theatres, and many of the chief provincial towns. His *Organist, Land and the People, Workman's Foe* and *Paul the Rebel* were all produced in London and other towns with success, and all this before their author was forty! The late George R. Sims was an old friend with whom he worked, and for whom, among other things, he wrote some articles in *Living London*, published by Cassells.

Mr. Moss was always ready to cross swords with any orthodox champion in a public debate, and met, among others, W. T. Lee—no mean debater in those days.

On the economic side, he met the late Harry Quelch on Malthusianism in 1899, at a time when Quelch was at the height of his powers, and recognized as one of the leading Socialists of his time. This debate is well worth reading now, as it proves how thoroughly Mr. Moss had mastered his subject, no easy task.

For twenty-five years, Mr. Moss was a member of the Camberwell Borough Council—returned without a break every three years. That is testimony to his popularity—and usefulness—and all the more so because he never hid his opinions on Freethought.

And he has written hundreds of articles in many other papers besides this one, with a passionate devotedness to Freethought, and most, if not all, for "love." That is, I think, the supreme test of his splendid sincerity.

Well, some of his friends, young and old, felt that such a champion of the Best of all Causes should be remembered in his old age. Mr. Moss is nearly seventy-four years of age, and he can look back upon all his years of activity with pride. He has indeed been a soldier, like Heine, in the service of humanity, and he must not think his services have been for-

gotten by those of us who either have been his comrades or are younger soldiers in the Cause.

Headed by Mr. Chapman Cohen and Mr. Charles A. Watts, a few friends of Freethought were approached and they readily responded. No general public appeal was made, as it was felt sufficient recognition could be obtained from those of us who well knew the work of Mr. Moss. A dinner was arranged, it took place on January 3, and Mr. Moss was presented with a cheque, and in his own delightful reminiscent manner, he thanked all who contributed. It should be recorded, however, that both Mr. Watts and Mr. Cohen did the "spade" work. Only those who are behind the scenes can know the labour attached to getting up any testimonial, and both these gentlemen worked hard for their veteran comrade.

All lovers of the Movement will wish, I am sure, many years of activity and happiness to that great fighter and worker, Arthur B. Moss.

H. CUTNER.

Doctor Freud on Religion.

It was Dante, was it not, who in his *Inferno* depicted the Lord of Hell, somewhat after the style of the triune chief of the other department, as having three heads. Each of these heads was engaged in an everlasting cud-chewing of the three greatest sinners. The Iscariot was naturally one, but memory fails me—it is years since I read the melancholy stuff—as to the others. At a hazard, they were the personal antipathies of the poet, for it was his pleasant little way to consign his political and personal enemies to some form of exquisite torment. No wonder Beatrice turned him down.

The devising of hells and of utopias has ever been a popular recreation of mankind, and in this sport the Christian has his share. Whom, one wonders, would the Twentieth Century Christian regard as the three greatest of modern sinners? Lenin, Wilhelm Hohenzollern, Bradlaugh? Perhaps: but if they were intelligent and well-informed, I think their choice would have to fall on Copernicus, Darwin, and Doctor Freud. For these three men have done more than all else to undermine those pleasing illusions which pander to man's vanity, and on which Christianity and other religions are based.

What Copernicus and Darwin did is, of course, well known to Freethinkers and other educated persons, but, for the sake of comparison with Dr. Freud's contribution, their work may be summarized here in a sentence or two. They began the process of putting man in his proper perspective. Copernicus proved that the heavenly bodies, the moon excepted, did not revolve around the earth; that is, he shattered the hemicentric view of the cosmos. Darwin showed that the Lord of Creation was biologically at one with the beasts over which he had dominion. Man ceased, in fact, to be the only pebble on the beach, an illusion which his religions had always fostered.

I am not sure that the most deadly of the onslaughts on religion does not come from Dr. Freud and his new science of psycho-analysis. I do not, of course, wish to suggest that the Viennese professor, any more than the other two gentlemen, was animated by a deliberate hostility to religion. Their business was to establish truths, and truth established has done its work in the usual way. What Dr. Freud and his fellow psycho-analysts have done is to show the irrational basis of most of man's thinking, and how closely allied the so-called sane are to the so-called insane. Their study and demonstration of the illusionary nature of man's cherished beliefs has

naturally included the greatest illusion of all, religion.

The foregoing paragraph is true for almost the whole of Dr. Freud's considerable literary output. (Incidentally, what a fine literary style the man has, even in translation). But his last book, *The Future of an Illusion*, written on the brink of the grave (for the great man's end is, as he tells us elsewhere, approaching from an incurable malady), is a purposive examination of religious illusions and a definite expression of the hope and belief that when mankind is *educated to reality* that illusion will pass away.

The position that Dr. Freud takes up in this book is somewhat as follows. He considers human culture, or civilization; defines it; and analyses it. By culture he means all those respects in which human life has raised itself above animal conditions and in which it differs from the life of the beasts. Dr. Freud disdains to separate culture and civilization; for the purpose of his thesis he regards them as one. He analyses this culture and finds that it consists of and can be considered under two aspects. There is, first, all the knowledge and power that men have acquired in order to master the forces of nature, and win resources from her for the satisfaction of human needs. The second aspect includes all the necessary arrangements whereby men's relations to each other, and in particular the distribution of the attainable riches, may be regulated. Put in other words, the aim of our culture is, first, to produce wealth, and, second, to divide and distribute this in certain ways.

The foregoing states the basis of civilization in economic terms, but, since men have minds, psychological problems immediately arise. The price man pays for his civilization is heavy. Although men are scarce able to exist in isolation, they nevertheless feel as a heavy burden the sacrifices that civilization expects of them in order that a communal life may be possible. As Dr. Freud so strikingly puts it, every individual is virtually an enemy of civilization, the same institution that man collectively supports. Culture, therefore, has to be defended against the individual, and its organization, institutions and laws are all directed to that end.

Every civilization in this queer world is based on compulsory labour and instinctual renunciation. It must be left to Communists and others to argue whether they should be; here this is merely asserted as an existing fact. Man's wealth does not fall like manna from the skies, and such instinctual wishes as incest, cannibalism, and murder must be renounced in communal life. The repression of these instinctual desires is at first purely an external compulsion, but as civilization grows older this external compulsion is gradually "internalized," and becomes instinctive in its turn. We can witness the process in every child; it is only by this means that it becomes a moral and social being.

From out man's dissatisfaction with his civilization has arisen his desires which could not, *ex-hypothesi*, be granted. A frustrated desire, as every psychologist knows, if held long enough and strongly enough, finally fabricates a substitute formation, or, technically, a "wish-fulfilment." An all-loving, Heavenly father; paradise; hell for his enemies; all these are wish-fulfilments that compensate man for the frustrations of his imperfect civilization. Dr. Freud regards the whole stock of religious ideas as such, and thinks that mankind is passing through a more or less distinct phase of neurosis, in the same way as every child does on its path to adult culture. But the child grows up, and in most cases overcomes spontaneously these neuroses. Religion, says Dr. Freud, is "the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity," and he claims that, if this be a true

analogy, "one might prophesy that the abandoning of religion must take place with the fateful inexorability of a process of growth, and that we are just now in the middle of this phase of development." It follows from this, says the writer, that we, *i.e.*, the enlightened, should form our behaviour after the model of a sensible teacher, who does not oppose this development but, on the contrary, seeks to further it. At the same time I must record the fact that Dr. Freud expresses the view (which I think is true *under present conditions*) that by accepting the universal neurosis the believer is spared the task of forming a personal neurosis.

It is said that over the entrance to a famous shrine in Moscow, the present rulers of that city have caused to be painted these words: Religion is the opium of the people. This is not quoted by Dr. Freud, but he agrees with this dictum, for he writes that "the effect of the consolations of religion may be compared to that of a narcotic." Quite seriously he writes that the effort in America to deprive men of all stimulants (tea, alcohol, tobacco, etc.) is to promote religious piety by way of compensation. An interesting sidelight on the land of Fundamentalism and Prohibition!

I have written enough to show to Freethinkers the value of this little work. In this closing paragraph I would like, however, to make just two quotations from the book, to give you a taste of Dr. Freud's quality. "He who humbly acquiesces in the insignificant part man plays in the universe is irreligious in the truest sense of the word." Again, "Where questions of religion are concerned people are guilty of every possible kind of insincerity and intellectual misdemeanour." How often have we "vulgar Atheists" said the latter of our Christian fellows, and with what indignation has this been denied. Will they accept this "hard saying" more readily from a great scientist and genius? I haec ma doots.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

Epitaphs.

I.

His life was like white —a mind
Keen as the wind yet ever kind.
Like an eager wind he blew
Through the world. He loved a few,
Hated none. Beneath his wings
Crowds of little helpless things
Found shelter. These shall surely keep
Trusty watch about his sleep.

II.

A handful of wild thyme, a breath, a song,
This was my life—I lived a summer long:
Lived, loved and died. To love a summer through,
And then to die—what could I do?

III.

I had a name, a place, who now have none,
For all I was lies crushed beneath a stone—
Fame was my mistress—but a crumbling name
On a grey slab is all I've had of Fame!

IV.

Break not my silence, trouble not my sleep;
A weighty secret's given me to keep:—
Life's confidant was I, but what he said
None knows—nor what Death tells me now I'm dead.

V.

Though life was good,
I find sleep best:
Even happy things
Have need of rest.

Lady Margaret Sackville.

"Plain Speaking."

Essays in Freethinking. By Chapman Cohen. (London: The Pioneer Press). 3s. 6d.

MR. CHAPMAN COHEN is a redoubtable fighter, and these essays are all combative. He brings the cold scientific mind to bear upon religious doctrines, and with many a keen thrust and a hard logical blow he does some devastating work. It is not for us to decide whether he succeeds or fails; we simply record the fact that he argues with great force and gives his opponents a hard case to refute. Merely as literature these essays have a strong claim on attention, for Mr. Cohen writes with lucidity and power, and he presents his points with all the skill of an experienced dialectical strategist. He allows, of course, nothing for sentiment or emotion, and he admits nothing but what is scientifically demonstrable.

Just at present, when orthodox religion is readjusting itself to modern views and coming into line with the latest research, the volume is particularly useful, and such a chapter as that on the Revised Prayer Book has a value in stimulating thought as to the real problem which theologians must solve. Mr. Cohen is for downright methods and no compromise; any fallacy or superstition he riddles unsparingly, and, whether we agree with him or not, we are bound to recognize in him an ardent seeker for truth, and for nothing but the truth. Now and then he permits himself a gibe which would have been best dispensed with, but on the whole, despite the force of his thrusts, he avoids needless offence while pursuing his stern purpose.

Those who wish to hammer out problems for themselves should avail themselves of a book such as this, which treats, from the Rationalist standpoint, such subjects as Miracles, Design in Nature, Man and Morals, the Fear of Death, the Sabbath, and History and Myth in the records of Christianity. We do not say that this is a pleasant volume for orthodox minds, but we agree with Mr. Cohen in one point—that nothing is gained by suppressing "the other side," pretending to ignore what opponents have to say, and brushing aside serious arguments by means of phrases and platitudes. Truth, as Milton said, will not be worsted in any encounter; but the duty of all men is to try to discover where the truth is, and manfully accept it when found.

Manchester City News.

Correspondence.

BUDDHA, THE ATHEIST."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—It is astonishing how wide of the truth a man can be when he dogmatizes upon a subject with which he is not familiar. This is illustrated by the letter of Mr. H. B. Dodds in your issue of last week. The noble Eightfold Path is not a bad one for anyone to "take to," since it simply consists of a right and rational state of mind, with conduct to match, and no more.

I may say, without apology, that Buddhism does not interest me so much in its religious, as in its philosophical aspect. I regard the early, and authentic, Buddhism rather as a system of rationalist ethics than a religion; and, as such, it is of the greatest interest to the student of philosophy. I would agree that the establishment of the Sangha (the religious Order of Buddhism) would be an anomaly in this country to-day. In estimating Buddhism, we have to take into consideration the vast difference between modern, social, economic, and other, conditions in the West, and those of ancient India, 2,500 years ago.

Mr. Dodds asserts that "the Buddha is neither a man, nor an Atheist, nor yet a religion builder. He is a myth . . ." It would be interesting to have the evidence for these very decided statements. The cremation relics of the Buddha were actually found, with an inscription indicating their identity, by the Archaeological Department of India not long ago. In my opinion, Gotama the Buddha was as real a historical personage as the Emperor Asoka who popularized his religion. But the Buddhist would say that this is not

of paramount importance; it is the doctrine that chiefly matters.

I have pointed out elsewhere that many corruptions crept into Buddhism in the course of centuries, and that we know precisely what allowances to make in this respect. Especially do we distinguish between the older Pali and the later Sanskrit literature. It has been truly remarked that the one is a cosmos and the other a chaos. But there is no "stuff about the making of (the Buddha into) a god." Mr. Dodds says that there is "a doctrine of no soul and another of transmigration." There is no doctrine of transmigration in Buddhism, neither is there "a succession of lives" in the sense conveyed by him. No Buddhist is required to believe in "the gods," nor is there a refusal to discuss them. They were freely discussed by the Buddha, as I show in my little book.

Having a comprehensive knowledge of Hindu religion and philosophy, I can say definitely that the "distinctive" marks of Buddhism, as I have defined them, were *not* common property prior to the Buddha's time. Perhaps Mr. Dodds will say what and who those "orders and individuals" were? He tells us that the Buddha said: "Lewdness clings to woman like filth." Will he give chapter and verse for this quotation? As a matter of fact, Buddhism elevated women to a position of equality with men. On the other hand, Hinduism and Mohammedanism degraded them. Contrast Siam and Burma, or even Tibet, with India to-day in this respect.

As one who has had intimate association with bhikkhus (Buddhist monks), has lived in their monasteries, observing their daily lives, habits and routine, I have no hesitation in characterizing Mr. Dodds' final sentence as a gratuitous and very gross libel. The only fact that clearly emerges from his letter is that prejudice is not confined to religious circles.

F. UPASAKA.

Obituary.

MR. WILLIAM HOUGH.

It is my duty to announce the death of Mr. William Hough, of 12 Monton Avenue, Eccles, Near Manchester, which occurred on January 9. Deceased was a life-long Freethinker. It was his pride that he remembered, and took an active part in, some of the stirring episodes of the last century. Some years ago he had the misfortune to fall down some steps, which rendered him less active than he would have been otherwise.

Shortly before he died, Mr. Hough reiterated his adherence to the principles of Secularism, and requested a secular burial service. His ashes were cremated, and on Monday, January 14, Mr. Bayford conducted a secular ceremony at the graveside when his ashes were interred.

We extend our sympathy to the daughters of the deceased and other relatives.

F.E.M.

DR. ALICE DRYSDALE VICKERY.

THE death of Dr. Alice Drysdale Vickery, on January 12, at the age of eighty-four, marks the passing of another valiant fighter in the cause of freedom. She came prominently forward at the time of the Bradlaugh-Besant trial over the Knowlton pamphlet, and later married Dr. C. R. Drysdale, the first President of the newly-formed Malthusian League. This movement had no greater friend, and she helped it enthusiastically in every way. Her loss will be deeply felt by many friends, and Dr. and Mrs. Drysdale can rest assured of every sympathy at their great bereavement.

I want to work. I want so to live that I work with my hands, and my feeling, and my brain . . . to be rooted in life—to learn, to desire, to know, to feel, to think, to act. This is what I want. And nothing less.—*Kathleen Mansfield ("Letters")*.

Education is expensive, but ignorance is more so.—*Mr. R. Rhydderch (Chief Inspector of Schools for Denbigh.)*

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.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 59 Finchley Road, N.W.8): 11.15, Dr. Prynce Hopkins—"What so many Wise Men have Always Believed."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N.W.1) 7.30, W. R. Lester, M.A.—"What is Property?"

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (30 Brixton Road, S.W., near Oval Station): 7.15, Mr. Archer (League of Nations Union)—"The War Against War."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): Free Sunday Lectures at 7 p.m. R. Dinsdale Stocker—"Science as Tyrant and Liberator."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (The London Institution Theatre, South Place, Moorgate, E.C. 2): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"Morals in the Current Novel."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY ("The Orange Tree Hotel," Euston Road, N.W.1): 11.0, Mr. E. C. Botting—"Evolution and the Absurdity of God." Thursday, January 24 at 7.30—Social and Dance.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Eclipse Restaurant, 4 Mill Street, Conduit Street, W.1): 7.30, Mr. F. Mann—"The Crime of Blasphemy in Scotland."

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.

LECTURE NOTICES—continued.

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12 noon, Mr. James Hart. 3.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. Every Wednesday at 7.30, Mr. W. P. Campbell-Everden. Every Friday at 7.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. The *Freethinker* is on sale outside the Park at all our meetings.

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

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Stills' Restaurant, Bristol Street, opposite Council Schools): 7.0, Mr. Eric N. Hill—A Paper.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S. (No. 2 Room, City Hall): 6.30, Mr. W. H. MacEwan—"Human Probabilities."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Pembroke Chapel): Friday, January 18, at 8 p.m., Dr. C. Carmichael—"The Meaning of Science." (18 Colquitt Street): Sunday, January 20, at 7.45, Mr. E. Egerton Stafford—"Early Christianity." Admission free. Questions and Discussion.

OUTDOOR.

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

UNWANTED CHILDREN

In a Civilized Community there should be no UNWANTED Children.

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

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



Going to the Dinner

SUGGESTS SPEECHES.

Listen to this one:—

I am writing to you in respect to my suit received from you recently, as I find it quite satisfactory. The fit is excellent, and, in fact, is the best I have had from any tailor, I believe. I think I can better express my satisfaction by asking you to forward suiting patterns in all your ranges, as I intend to have another suit immediately. Please include another self-measurement chart, as I have a friend who might have a suit from you.

R. F. HAMPER (Brooklyn, New York).

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

Send your Postcard TO-DAY
for any of the following
patterns:—

SUITS

B to E, prices from 57/-
F to H, prices from 79/-
I to M, prices from 105/-

OVERCOATS

D & E, prices from 48/-
F & G, prices from 60/-
H & I, prices from 68/-
J to L, prices from 77/-

3/- FOR EVERY CUSTOMER

As an advertisement until further notice, Suits, Costumes, Overcoats, Dresses, etc., will be perfectly dyed Navy or Black for 7/6 instead of 10/6—in 6 days (other colours 10 to 14 days). Or thoroughly French dry cleaned and pressed for 3/6 instead of 6/6 (returned for week-end certain, post paid). (Fine repleating extra.) Enclose address and remittance in parcel, or we will send C.O.D.

Martins, Dyers and Cleaners (R. Dept.), Waterloo Mills, Bramley, Leeds.

Miscellaneous Advertisements.

MAN wanted between 40 and 60 years old, for light clerical duties, such as writing invoices, answering telephone and addressing envelopes. Hours 10 to 5.—Apply or write: LYCEUM TRANSLATING OFFICES, 85 New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1.

Some Pioneer Press Publications—

HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE. By Prof. J. W. DRAPER. 395 pages. 2s., postage 4½d.

THE OTHER SIDE OF DEATH. By CHAPMAN COHEN. A Critical Examination of the Belief in a Future Life, with a Study of Spiritualism from the Standpoint of the New Psychology.

Paper Covers, 2s., postage 1½d.; Cloth Bound, 3s. 6d., postage 2d.

A GRAMMAR OF FREETHOUGHT. By CHAPMAN COHEN. A Statement of the Case for Freethought, including a Criticism of Fundamental Religious Doctrines. Cloth bound, 5s., postage 3½d.

MAN AND HIS GODS. By GEORGE WHITEHEAD. 2d., postage ½d.

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

THE STORY OF RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY

BY

Joseph McCabe

JOSEPH McCABE, famous scholar, lecturer and author, has, in these 50 Little Blue Books, covered the whole field of religious controversy.

These 50 pocket-sized volumes average 15,000 words each, making 750,000 words in all. Each book measures 3½ by 5 inches in size, is bound in stiff card covers and contains 64 pages. In this form the books are available to everyone at the amazingly low price of 13/- for the entire set—all sent prepaid to any address.

Single Volumes 3d. each

Post free 3½d.

SEND NO MONEY

For this special set of Joseph McCabe's STORY OF RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY you need not remit in advance unless you wish; you can pay the postman only 13/- on delivery. Use the form at the right.

NOTE.—No C.O.D. orders can be sent to foreign countries. These must remit in advance and allow for extra postage.

50 BOOKS for 13/- !

- The Revolt against Religion.
- The Origin of Religion.
- The World's Great Religions.
- The Myth of Immortality.
- The Futility of Belief in God.
- The Human Origin of Morals.
- The Forgery of the Old Testament.
- Morals in Ancient Babylon.
- Religion and Morals in Ancient Egypt.
- Life and Morals in Greece and Rome.
- Phallic Elements in Religion.
- Did Jesus Ever Live?
- The Sources of Christian Morality.
- Pagan Christs Before Jesus.
- The Myth of the Resurrection.
- Legends of Saints and Martyrs.
- How Christianity "Triumphed."
- The Evolution of Christian Doctrine.
- The Degradation of Woman.
- Christianity and Slavery.
- The Church and the School.
- New Light on Witchcraft.
- The Dark Ages.
- The Horrors of the Inquisition.
- Medieval Art and the Church.
- The Moorish Civilisation in Spain.
- The Renaissance: A European Awakening.
- The Reformation and Protestant Reaction.
- The Truth about Galileo and Medieval Science.
- The Jesuits: Religious Rogues.
- Religion and the French Revolution.
- The Churches and Modern Progress.
- Seven Infidel U.S. Presidents.
- Thomas Paine's Revolt against the Bible.
- The Conflict between Science and Religion.
- The Absurdities of Christian Science.
- Do We Need Religion?
- Religion's Failure to Combat Crime.
- Christianity and Philanthropy.
- Debate on Spiritualism. Conan Doyle and Religion in the Great Poets. [Joseph McCabe.]
- The Failure of Christian Missions.
- The Triumph of Materialism.
- The Beliefs of Scientists.
- Robert G. Ingersoll: Benevolent Agnostic.
- Myths of Religious Statistics.
- The Lies of Religious Literature.
- The Future of Religion.
- My Twelve Years in a Monastery.
- The Psychology of Religion.

SIGN AND POST THIS FORM.

THE LITTLE BLUE BOOKS,
82 BRIDGE ROAD, THORNTON HEATH, SURREY.

Send me Joseph's McCabe's *STORY OF RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY*.

Unless my cheque is enclosed herewith, I will pay the postman 13s. on delivery. It is understood that 13s. is all I pay, and I am under no further obligation whatever.

Name.....
(BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE)

Address.....

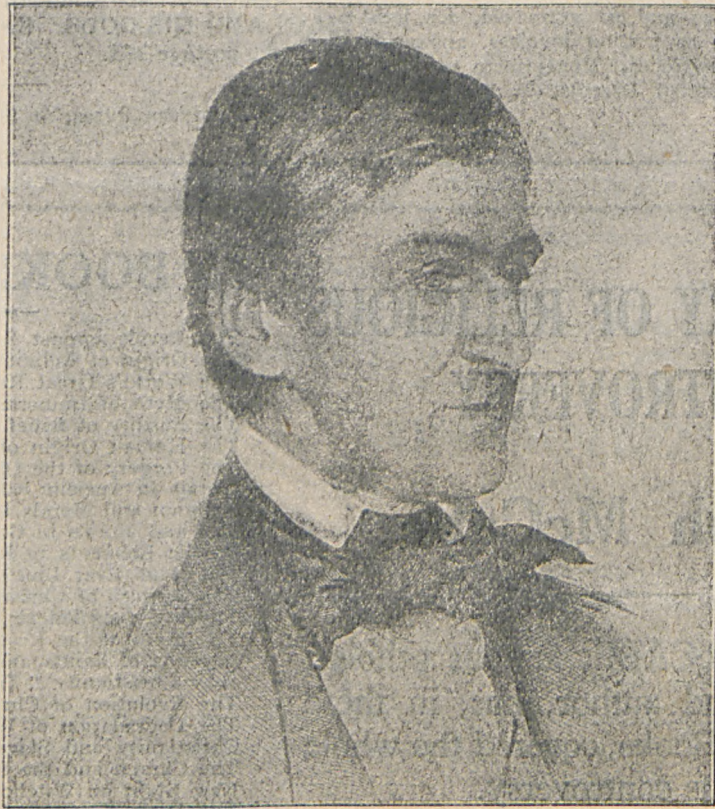
Now being published in about 12 Fortnightly Parts, price 1s. 6d. each

A History of Freethought in the Nineteenth Century

By the Rt. Hon. J. M. ROBERTSON

PORTRAITS
APPEARING

JEREMY BENTHAM
PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY
AUGUSTE COMTE
P. J. PROUDHON
ROBERT OWEN
GEORGE COMBE
THOMAS PAINE
FRANCES WRIGHT
P. S. LAPLACE
GEORGE GROTE
CHARLES LAMB
R. W. EMERSON
D. F. STRAUSS
ALEXANDER GEDDES
C. C. HENNELL
F. C. BAUR
HERBERT SPENCER
L. FEUERBACH
L. BÜCHNER
ALEXANDER BAIN
BISHOP COLENZO
F. W. NEWMAN
GEORGE ELIOT
HARRIET MARTINEAU



PORTRAITS
APPEARING

G. J. HOLYOAKE
G. LEOPARDI
H. HEINE
E. FITZGERALD
CHARLES DARWIN
ERNST HAECKEL
E. B. TYLOR
H. TAINÉ
LORD MORLEY
W. K. CLIFFORD
LESLIE STEPHEN
W. R. CASSELS
CHARLES BRADLAUGH
R. G. INGERSOLL
LESTER WARD
J. M. GUYAU
ERNEST RENAN
A. KUENEN
J. WELLHAUSEN
CANON T. K. CHEYNE
T. H. HUXLEY
F. A. LANGE
HENRY SIDGWICK
A. W. BENN

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

(One of the half-tone portraits in Part III. There are twelve photogravures and thirty-six half-tone portraits in the complete work)

**Become a Registered Subscriber for the Twelve Parts,
and get A Binding Case Free**

SEND THIS FORM
WITH
4/6
TO-DAY

If preferred, 18s. may be
remitted in one sum.

ORDER FORM.

To MESSRS. WATTS & CO.,
8 & 6 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C. 4.

Please register me as a subscriber for the twelve parts of the Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson's A HISTORY OF FREETHOUGHT IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. I enclose 4s. 6d. for the first three Parts, and undertake to remit 4s. 6d. each six weeks from February 14 in payment for three further Parts until the publication of the work is completed. This undertaking is subject to the Publishers, when the last Part is issued, presenting me gratis with a superior Binding Case for binding the whole of the Parts in one volume.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

DATE.....1929

N.B.—Should the work extend to 13 Parts, each Subscriber will be asked to remit an additional sum of 1s. 6d.