

The

# FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

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

VOL. LII.—No. 51

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1932

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>The Religious Mind.—The Editor</i> - - - - -	801
<i>Rousseau: The Sentimental Pictist.—W. Mann</i> - - - - -	803
<i>Impostors and Parasites.—Ignotus</i> - - - - -	804
<i>Witches and the Christian Religion.—Charles G. Mott</i> - - - - -	805
<i>Bernard Shaw and the "Bogey Man."—Mimmermus</i> - - - - -	810
<i>"The New Atheism."—H. Cutner</i> - - - - -	811
<i>Some Christian Types.—Criticus</i> - - - - -	812

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

Views and Opinions.

The Religious Mind.

THE most striking thing about the "religious mind" is that it doesn't exist. There are minds which readily reach religious conclusions as there are minds that reach political or other conclusions. There is a form of mentality which decides that three times eight equal twenty-five, and there is a form of mentality which, because a man has missed a train that is afterwards wrecked decides that "the providence of God" has intervened in his behalf. There are religious beliefs and there are religious ideas, and some minds are so saturated with these that it is a case of "House Full" to any genuinely logical idea that seeks admission. But there is no more a "religious mind" than there is a football mind or a cinema mind. Such phrases indicate the character of a mental outfit, but there is no more a religious mind *per se* than there is a religious instinct *per se*. Both are the mushy creations of a muddled intelligence. Every quality of mind that is expressed in relation to religious ideas may be expressed in relation to other ideas. Certain qualities are more strongly expressed in relation to religion than in relation to other subjects, and that is all.

Thus, one may relate the improbable, or the impossible, or go in for downright lying with greater safety if one is supporting religion, than one can with regard to other subjects. In other walks the rule "Don't get found out," has at least a working application. But to be found out in circulating a lie or giving currency to a wholly absurd tale in support of religion entails no penalty. You are sympathized with because the tale has not been so successful as it might have been. For example. The other day (December 6) the *Daily Express* published a report of a woman who had been burned to death at Hythe. It said that:—

While fire raged round her, and her last path of escape was cut off, Maud Marshall opened her Bible at the words, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." They

found her burned to death, sitting on a trunk . . . The Bible, unscathed, lay near.

Now is there anything else but the religious mind that would ever find use for a tale of this kind? A woman is burned to death, she is all alone, fire is raging all round her, but she is comfortable enough to get a Bible, open it at an appropriate passage, and—go on burning. And although the fire is raging all round her the Bible is unscathed—not even singed. Now I do not wish to imply that the *Daily Express* believes this ridiculous yarn. But it knows the mentality of its religious readers, and it may sell a few more copies. And it knows that its religious followers will never stop to ask why on earth God could so "miraculously" preserve his "Holy Book," and leave a poor old woman to burn.

\* \* \*

Bradlaugh and Bottomley.

I might not have cited this example from the *Daily Express*, but for something else, of greater interest to Freethinkers, which hails from the same outfit. Some time ago there appeared in the *Sunday Express* an alleged interview with Mr. Horatio Bottomley, reported by Mr. James Douglas, in which it was stated that Bottomley claimed to be the illegitimate son of Charles Bradlaugh. Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner promptly contradicted so absurd a tale, and supplied proof of the lie by producing a copy of Bottomley's birth certificate. One would have thought that an editor's duty would have been, first to have made some investigation in order to test the truth of such a story before publishing it, and when so decisive a disproof was offered, to have printed it at once with due apologies. But what the editor of the *Sunday Express* did was to suggest to Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner that as the statement had been made by Mr. Bottomley she should write to him. That would have, of course, have kept the exposure of the lie away from the readers of the *Express*. Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner very properly declined to do so, and eventually her reply appeared. So much for editorial honour where religion is concerned.

Now through the kindness of a *Freethinker* reader I am able further to illustrate the kind of mentality that religion encourages. Looking through the volume for 1922, my friend discovered in our issue for June 18, a reference to an interview with Bottomley in Wormwood Scrubbs prison, and published in the *Sunday Express* of June 4. In this interview Bottomley is reported as saying:—

I understand that the flying voice of rumour has said that I am Bradlaugh's son. I wish it were true. I loved my mother. I love her memory, if I thought that Bradlaugh was my father I should not only love her memory, I should revere it.

Both these statements appeared in papers under the same ownership and general direction. A reference to its own files *should* have prevented the insertion

of the slander. Does anyone imagine for a moment that had this story been about a highly-placed personage in the religious world that the *Express* would have published it, or if it had been inadvertently published that it would not have given full publicity to its refutation? There is no "religious mind," but there are certainly ugly mental qualities that are perpetuated and strengthened by their association with religious beliefs.

\* \* \*

#### Bernard Shaw and the Bible.

The last example for which I have space, of the way in which religion strengthens unlovely mental qualities is in connexion with Mr. George Bernard Shaw's just published *The Adventures of a Black Girl in her Search for God*. The essay is a pungent account of different forms assumed by the god-idea with a criticism of the Bible and of orthodox Christianity. There is—for Freethinkers—nothing new in what is said about either the Bible or God, and it has been interesting to me to listen to the way in which the rank and file of Freethinkers congratulate each other on the way in which Mr. Shaw is coming to their own position. This would not be very flattering to the vanity of Mr. Shaw, but it is the cold truth. The *Freethinker* has been saying all that Mr. Shaw has to say about God, the Bible, and Christianity for well over fifty years, but we are none the less pleased to see him saying it to-day. The instructive thing about the press criticisms of Mr. Shaw's book lies in their illustration of the crooked mentality induced by religious belief, and that is true whether the newspapers really believe what they say or are saying it because they are expected to say it.

The attitude of the press critics is of the "You really-shouldn't" order. They do not say that Mr. Shaw is wrong (as a matter of fact he might have said and ought to have said much more than he does, and he mistakes the fundamental significance of the changes in religious belief which he outlines). In the main these critics say that Mr. Shaw has spoken plainly—too plainly; he has committed the unforgivable sin which the *Freethinker* has been committing during the whole of its history. This complaint is made in the review in the *News-Chronicle* for December 4, by Mr. Robert Lynd. He cites this,

The crucifixion thus became what the Chamber of Horrors is to a waxwork; the irresistible attraction to children and for the crudest adult worshippers

and calls it a vulgar misunderstanding. Now giving Mr. Lynd credit for knowing the meaning of the words he uses, why "vulgar?" The conception of the crucifixion outlined by Mr. Shaw is certainly vulgar in the sense of being common. And if another sense of vulgar is taken it is also fully justified. For the doctrine of the crucifixion, so far as its purely religious aspect is concerned actually does appeal to the sadistic and mean side of human nature. It can—religiously—attract only children, and those who are, and mentally and morally, crude adults. There is another aspect of it, but the better aspect never interests the real Christian, nor has he ever learned the real human moral of that imaginary event. Mr. Shaw's real offence is that he has put the Freethinking view of the crucifixion in a way that every man can understand his meaning.

\* \* \*

#### How to Behave.

That we are not misrepresenting Mr. Lynd is shown by the following:—

There is little in Mr. Shaw's epilogue . . . that has not been said in other forms by Biblical critics during the past century. The substance of much of

it is preached even in many Christian churches to-day. Mr. Shaw . . . unlike most critics says what he says in the way likeliest to hurt the feelings of millions of men and women who disagree with him.

And the *News-Chronicle*, in a leading article remarks:—

With much of what he says on his present high subject he could by merely expressing it differently have secured very wide agreement. By the method he adopts he will simply wound and exasperate and antagonize . . . the feelings and traditions and opinions of the mass of those whom he presumably wants to read his book.

Now observe, it is not that what Mr. Shaw has said about Christianity is not true, it is not asserted that if it is true it ought not to be said, it is simply that he has committed the offence that was committed by Paine, and Carleile, and Bradlaugh, and Foote, and scores of other Freethinkers. He has said that a vile thing is vile, and that an untruthful thing is a lie. And where religion is concerned that, in this country, is not permissible. You must not denounce the cowardly spirit displayed by crawling to salvation through the sufferings of another, and gloating over the splendid bargain made; you must not dwell upon the childishness of the delusion of the "Second Coming"; you must not say that the Christian doctrines are directly descended from a pack of savage superstitions, nor must you say that the visions described in Revelation are of the same family as those experienced by a drug addict. If you believe these things, you must at all cost avoid saying them so that everyone can get your meaning. You must talk of the comfort experienced by generations of believers, and the sadness with which you differ from them; you must say that the belief in a second coming of Christ enshrines man's faith in the ultimate reign of righteousness, that the doctrine of hell expressed man's belief that wrong will be finally punished, that the gradual rejection of god after god, from the over-sized man of the savage to the respectable, constitutional god of the modern Christian is an evidence of man's hunger after God, and that the visions of the writer of Revelation are glimpses of that spiritual world—couched in oriental imagery—which great spirits have had from time to time. You may say anything and everything, but you must do it in the name of God, of Christ, of a purer religion. In other words the only way in which it is permissible to attack religion, is that in which you perpetuate in a little milder form the stupidities and the superstitions you are pretending to reject.

And that is precisely what a man who is at once intellectually sound and morally courageous will not do. It is precisely what is *not* needed to-day. It is safe, quite safe, for any man to-day to dismiss Christianity on these terms. Bishop Barnes is doing it, Dean Inge does it, any number of prominent men and women are doing it. Real Christianity, original Christianity, true Christianity, is to-day so intellectually and morally discredited that it is only a small minority of educated individuals who believe in it. And the labours of those who will not speak plainly about Christianity is helping very materially to give Christianity a new lease of life. In the sixteenth century Protestant Rationalism gave Christianity a new lease of life. In the nineteenth century the full effect on religion of the teaching of evolution was weakened by the number of eminent men who dared not speak openly, and so provided an opportunity for the many reconciliations which became popular. And to-day we have an exactly similar process at work. We are casting out Beelzebub by Beelzebub; with the result that we are undoing with the one hand what we are doing with the other. We know that

the whole of genuine Christianity is myth—or worse. But it is still unfashionable to say so, unless the confession is accompanied by concessions and qualifications that rob the criticism of most of its value.

\* \* \*

#### A Counsel of Sanity.

Needless to say none of the critics have paid attention to that part of Mr. Shaw's preface—intellectually, the best part—bearing upon this point. Taking the old maxim, "Don't throw away dirty water till you get clean," he adds the necessary complement, "but be particularly careful not to get the two mixed." And that is precisely what we have not done, and I agree with Mr. Shaw in thinking that that is the cause of a deal of our trouble. We have surviving as part of the mental furniture of men such as Dean Inge, Sir Oliver Lodge, Bishop Barnes and crowds of other eminent men and women, a number of uncivilized beliefs concerning life and its meaning (Mr. Shaw himself is not free from this lumber) which always vitiate, and sometimes completely destroy the value of their acquired knowledge. To use Mr. Shaw's own language:—

The educated human of to-day has a mind which can be compared only to a store in which the latest and the most precious acquisitions are flung on top of a noisome heap of rag-and-bottle refuse and worthless antiquities from the museum and lumber room.

That is an exact statement of fact. All my life I have been pointing this out, that the savage does not exist merely among what are called the uneducated and the uncultured. He is to be found among the cultured and the educated. He flourishes in the cathedral and in the chapel, in the school and in the university, on the throne and in the gutter, in the chair of science and on the street corner platform. It is the recognition of that fact that has led me to stress the truth that it is a cleansing of the mind that is needed, not merely substituting a "rational" Jesus for a genuine one, or a new religion for an old one, a "religion of ethics" for an ethical religion. It is a good thing to get clean water; it is probably a question of policy not to throw away the dirty water before we get the clean. But it is downright idiocy to mix the dirty water with the clean, and so get the evil of the one without benefiting from the goodness of the other.

I do not wonder that so many are wroth with this last effort of Mr. Shaw. If he were by some miracle to meet with complete success, all those who have complained of his latest "vulgarity" would be without an occupation. They would be washed away by the clean water of genuinely civilized thinking.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

#### THE MONK'S CELL.

Idle fears and ancient dreads,  
Track him every step he treads;  
Contemplating his last end,  
Spurning life, man's only friend.  
Fasting when 'tis time to feast,  
Sad as bread that lacketh yeast;  
Yet when he doth give an ear  
To his secret haunting fear,  
Doubt is king in his dark cell,  
Hotter fire is not in Hell  
Than consumes him who doth fly,  
The life men live before they die.

A.C.W.

## Rousseau: The Sentimental Pietist.

(Concluded from page 787.)

If Rousseau had had, at this time, Madame de Warens to guide him, things might have turned out very different from the way they did. With her knowledge and experience of good society she would have smoothed the way for him, soothed his sensitive feelings, and treated him like the petulant child he was.

In after years, "the thought of his beloved Madame de Warens, his 'mother,' who had moulded him so tenderly upon her generous bosom—the thought of his good protectress came back vividly. Ah, why in the world had he ever departed from her, to embark upon turbulent adventures, in the world outside their valley of Charmettes?"<sup>16</sup> But by that time the lady was dead, and all he could do was to kneel and wail at her tomb, when passing through Chambéry later on. Only a few weeks before he died, he wrote that the few years he had spent in the country with her, he had "enjoyed a century of life and of pure and full happiness," which he was never to experience again.

Although Rousseau had shaken off the dust of Society, he still attended the weekly dinners of the philosophers at Baron d'Holbach's, although not so frequently as before, and was still considered by them as one of themselves. Indeed, when Voltaire published his famous poem on the Lisbon earthquake of 1755—in which 40,000 people were swallowed up—he sent a copy each to d'Alembert, Diderot, and Rousseau, as the three who would best understand him. The poem had quite the contrary effect upon Rousseau to that expected. He replied in a long letter of fifteen pages freely criticizing and disapproving of the work. "The boldness of language such as none other used with him astonished Voltaire. He felt the impertinence and vanity in the letter."<sup>17</sup> But, to Rousseau's secret disappointment, he gave a brief reply, at the same time inviting him to come and stay with him for a time at his chateau. His real reply was that mordant satire *Candide*, "that masterpiece of irony which had hit at Jean-Jacques in his pride and made him quail."<sup>18</sup> Rousseau, however, ostentatiously declared that he had never read it—the work everyone was reading and talking about. That was just "pretty Fanny's way."

Failing to rouse Voltaire, Rousseau—who was determined to make a break with the philosophers—now launched an attack upon d'Alembert, who was not only a great mathematician, but one of the most temperate, tolerant, and generous of the band. d'Alembert's article on "Geneva" appeared in the great *Encyclopædia* in 1757. It was full of praise for the little republic, but urged the Genevans to establish a municipal theatre to liven up the life of the city.

At once Rousseau was roused to fury. They were bent upon introducing the vanities of Paris and destroying the old simple natural life of its citizens; and behind it he saw, or thought he saw, the hand of Voltaire, who was at that time living within the jurisdiction of the city, and had a private theatre of his own. Rousseau at once, in the spring of 1758, wrote, and published, his open *Letter to d'Alembert on the Theatre*, a passionate diatribe against the corruption of the stage, by which they intended to debase and deprave Geneva, his native city! And all this violence from a man who had himself written plays, and had them performed on the stage! Voltaire was

<sup>16</sup> Josephson: *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. p. 428.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* p. 271.

<sup>18</sup> Charpentier: *Rousseau: The Child of Nature*. p. 205.

furious, he saw in the book an attack upon himself and his theatre, "Rousseau's book aroused a memorable storm, some four hundred pamphlets of attack and defence appearing in the years that followed. Not only was his public rupture with the philosophers' party an event in the history of the period, but his balking of Voltaire's design—since the Genevese authorities were encouraged to shut up the great man's theatre—made a sensation."<sup>19</sup> The rupture was complete. From this time "the movement of progress was divided into two streams: the one rationalist and moderate, the other emotional and revolutionary." It was said that Voltaire appealed to the mind, and Rousseau to the heart. To finish with this duel of Rousseau v. Voltaire. In 1760 the impudent letter Rousseau had addressed to Voltaire concerning the Lisbon earthquake was published in Berlin, without, so Rousseau declares, his permission.

Rousseau, writing to Voltaire to acquaint him with the matter, throws aside all caution and courtesy, and gives his anger and positive hatred full vent. It is the screech of a petulant child. He declares:—

I do not like you, sir; you have done me wrongs which I have felt most deeply: I, your disciple and your enthusiast. You have ruined Geneva in return for the refuge you received there. . . . It is you who render impossible my return to my native country; it is you who will make me die in a foreign land, deprived of all the consolations of the dying and thrown in the gutter, for all the honours that a man could expect in his lifetime are paid you in my country. In short, I hate you, since you wished it. . . ."

Voltaire did not deign to reply to this screech of a sick and jealous man, already in the grip of the persecution mania; but he wrote to d'Alembert:—

I have received a long letter from Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He has become completely mad. . . . He writes against the stage after having written a bad comedy himself; he writes against France, which nourishes him; he finds four or five rotten staves from the barrel of Diogenes and climbs into them in order to bark at us; he abandons his friends. He writes to me, to me! the most insulting letter that a fanatic ever scrawled. . . . it is the action of a scoundrel, and I shall never pardon him. I would have avenged myself on Plato if he had played a trick of that sort on me; even more on the lacky of Diogenes. The author of the *Nouvelle Heloise* is nought but a vicious knave.<sup>20</sup>

Rousseau had succeeded at last in arousing the wrath of Voltaire, the man at whose name, says Macaulay, even tyrants who were deaf to the wailing and curses of millions, grew pale. His folly had been great, his transgression unpardonable; his punishment was terrible. Voltaire launched pamphlet after pamphlet after the wretched man, retailing among other things, his liaison with Thérèse, and the abandonment of his children. To all of which Rousseau remained dumb. He had already quarrelled with Diderot while at the Hermitage—a house on the estate of Madame d'Épinay, in the forest of Montmorency—who paid him a visit to try and patch up a peace, but could do nothing with him. He saw him "transfigured, flaming, distorted features, pacing the garden, brandishing his arms, pouring forth a torrent of inarticulate expressions of wrath, fear, hatred." Describing the visit, in a letter to Grimm, he says: "Let me never see him again: he would make me believe in devils and hell. . . . I am not sure that he would not have killed me! One heard his cries from the end of the garden."<sup>21</sup>

We have no space to follow Rousseau in his flight

from place to place, pursued by imaginary enemies; or of his arrival in England at the invitation of that good-hearted philosopher David Hume, in spite of the warning from d'Holbach that he was taking a viper to his bosom which would bite him. Hume simply refused to believe that a man who could write of nature as Rousseau did, could be guilty of the things attributed to him. In the end he had to write to d'Holbach that his prediction had been fulfilled, and he had been bitten. He had not been in Hume's company many hours before he became filled with the deepest suspicion of Hume's motives, and soon left him for a house in the country put at his disposal by another gentleman. From there he makes a headlong flight, still pursued by the phantoms of his imagination, to Dover where he demands of the governor a guard to prevent his assassination. The vessel being delayed by contrary winds, he regards as another plot of the enemy, and in his frenzy he mounts a bank and harangues the passers by in French which of course they cannot understand.

He arrived in France at last, alone without a friend in the world, surrounded by a wonderful web of intrigue, all the more cunning because he could not see the threads, or his assailants who were evidently only keeping him alive so that they might further torture him. Five years of his life he devoted to writing the famous *Confessions*, which is really a romance or novelized biography. Rousseau declared "I have only to consult my own self concerning what I wish to do. All that I feel to be good, is good; all that I feel to be bad is bad."<sup>22</sup> That is the spirit in which the confessions are written. As Charpentier has truly said: "A child he was and remained, in his untrammelled but petty and vague passions, in the weak spirit with which he craved love from all the world, and in his very madness, the persecution mania which pursued him to his grave, comparable only to the child's fear of phantoms."<sup>23</sup>

W. MANN.

<sup>22</sup> Charpentier: *Rousseau* p. 147.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* p. 300.

## Impostors and Parasites.

THOUGH in the Old Testament Dispensation there were orders of priesthood, we have been taught that under the New Testament Dispensation those were done away with—all being swallowed up and centred in the individual personality of the great High Priest—an intercessor with God the Father—his son and our elder brother Jesus Christ. Accordingly the definite teaching and ordinance of the gospel is that there can be no priests except Christ. That is the position of most Protestant bodies. The leaders of such bodies have come to be called "pastors" and "ministers." But has the "priest" been eradicated despite the definite instructions of the New Testament? He has not. When Christianity became a great power patronized by the rulers of the earth, professed by courtiers and protected by mighty proconsuls and magnates of great wealth, the priest (though there was no scriptural authority for him) came into his own again. He was needed economically as a buffer between the ruling classes and the ruled masses; and he has kept his position unto this day, with disastrous results to human progress.

He has been the real cause of dissension, wars and bloody revolutions. No king went warring with another King without divine sanctions com-

<sup>19</sup> Josephson: *Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. p. 277.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* p. 279.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* p. 253.

municated through his augurs—the priests. Even monarchs themselves have trembled at the word of powerful priests. The priests in the ages of the darkest ignorance “cornered” the knowledge of the world. They alone had books, they alone practised the fine arts, and by means of both they could impress noble and peasant alike, for in point of intellectual standing the one was about as ignorant as the other. The priests kept the world from falling into stagnation by stirring up periodical fightings. If they did not themselves hold the money bags, they controlled and ordered those who held them, and, under an affectation of humility, maintained their order in respect and even awe. They were indeed the power behind the thrones of Christendom, a position that Papa at Rome is assiduously working to again achieve. But many thrones have toppled. What is Papa to do now? Oh well, he reflects, human nature does not change though crowns go down, and Presidents and Statesmen and Professors can be “influenced” as well as Kings and Courtiers. The great thing is to maintain fear of and obedience to the Supernatural, and that evidently can only be done by violating the New Testament ordinance and making more and more priests. It must be a satisfaction to the Pope to observe how the Roman Catholic idea of priesthood is eating into the Episcopal Churches and even into some of the larger Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist Churches. The uprising of the dissenters in the nineteenth century many thought had killed the idea of priesthood—among themselves at any rate. The idea may have been scotched—it was never killed. And in the last thirty years it has grown again to such an extent that the modern dissenter coquettes with the Anglican who in his turn coquettes with Rome—the final objective being the complete reunion of Christendom—one flock and one shepherd. Witness the negotiations which are proceeding between the Scotch Kirk and Lambeth. Every person who has a drop of the toxin of Supernaturalism in his blood—even a Unitarian—is a potential Romanist, and some day may be actually one. Have we not had recent examples of the “admission” to the Roman Catholic Church of men who were once ardent Nonconformists and the eloquent deniers of priestly assumptions? Protestantism has for 300 years tried to build such a house; but it is always upon sand.

Hence the tremendous task of those who seek to instil a naturalistic and humanistic conception of the universe as opposed to the Supernaturalistic beliefs inculcated by priests for many centuries. With the uninformed, uninstructed and unenlightened these beliefs still hold powerful sway, for they are fortified by fear and their continued existence depends upon methods of terrorism.

But in the light of the discoveries of science and the increasing knowledge of the peoples generally, how do the priests show up? It is the old problem of the philosophy of clothes. This is an age of distinctive uniforms. Nowadays we even put school children into uniform. A Scouts cap, a tunic with a badge or a dog-collar has a transforming effect upon the mentality of the individual wearer of each. But it is something artificial, and therefore unnatural as contrasted with the majority who dress alike and who do not affect any distinctive features by a special uniform. Even the park officer in his own peculiar uniform thinks himself a bit of a nib as compared with the general crowd. This again in each case is vanity. It tends to swell the heads of a number of human two-forked radishes—jacks in office who are on the outlook for some opportunity to exercise a petty authority over their fellow beings.

And so in far greater measure is the vanity of the priest fed by his dog-collar, cassock, shovel hat and the elaborate robes he dons when he is conducting religious ceremonies and services. It is all so much “punk” which serves to impress the unthinking believer. Compared with other men, what does the priests’ life consist of? Unlike the doctor or lawyer he is at liberty to “work” as and when he chooses and in many instances he need not “work” at all, except to conduct worship on Sundays. The doctor must regularly attend his patients, otherwise he is amenable to the discipline of the B.M.A. or the Courts of Law. Similarly the lawyer must have regular hours in which he can be consulted by his clients and for dereliction of duty he can be punished by the Courts of Law. The priests are above all such mundane authorities. They are responsible only to God, from whom they get their appointments. What a farce it is! They are useless, unnecessary, and are the enemies of independent and original thought though they have to be kept by the members of their respective communions—while those in the Established Churches draw incomes from unwilling payers who are compelled by unjust laws to provide for the maintenance of priests. How much could be done to fight disease by national hospitals, for example, if the endowments of the State Church were diverted to such a purpose? Is there not something craven in the attitude of so many members of the general public to the priests?

IGNOTUS.

---

#### SCIENCE AND EVERYDAY LIFE.

By Sir William Bragg, F.R.S., D.Sc.

The work that scientists have been doing in recent years is very remarkable in many ways, especially for those of us who study the physical sciences. We often think that it is as it was in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when the exploration of new worlds was a matter of everyday experience. When one thinks of this work of discovery it may surprise you to hear that there is a very close connexion between the great discoveries of physics and the actual work of the world, and of this country. We see every day in the newspapers references to the influence of science on this or that industry or profession. It is true that science is now finding its way and influencing all the actions of everyday life. How does this happen? It happens from sheer compulsion of the struggle for existence. It is because science in the form of natural knowledge—and in that, science is the antithesis of ignorance—is actually necessary in order to enable this country to live. If you were to withdraw from this country what science has done and is doing every day, in a few months we should be in a worse state than anything that has ever happened in China or Russia. It is not only a case of adopting some discovery of science and then leaving it alone; it is the fact that unless science is continually applied the country must steadily decline. This is one of the most fundamental features of modern life. If you want to realize how much it is so you have only to take some great activity as an example, and then, as we often do when we want to acquire a true sense of magnitude, select some small portion for a closer examination; magnify this portion until it fills the field of view, and again make a selection for a still closer examination. If you take any industry in this country and divide it into sections; select one sub-section and again sub-divide until you have under examination a minute portion of the whole, you will find that at the back of it there is an amount of scientific research that is astonishing.

(In an Address at the Reform Club.)

---

He who desires nothing is not in want.—Proverb.

## Witches and the Christian Religion.

SIR MATTHEW HALE, during the trial of two widows for witchcraft in 1664, charged the jury: "That there are such creatures as witches I make no doubt at all: the Scripture affirms it, and the wisdom of all nations has provided laws against such persons, which is to my way of thinking an argument of confidence in such a crime, as appears by that Act of Parliament which hath provided punishments proportionable to the quality of the offence." It was on the strength of the Scriptures then primarily that Sir Matthew Hale encompassed the subsequent destruction of these two poor widows, though I mention this instance as but one of comparative insignificance beside those enormities perpetrated by both civil and ecclesiastical authorities in pursuance of the Scriptural injunctions. This (and indeed most of the other official witch murders), were done a long time ago, and can have at most an historical or morbid interest for the average person. But not so with us. It interests us because the attitude of the Romish Church is, to all intents and purposes, the same to-day. They regard witchcraft as a crime, and but for civilization, would be burning supposed witches even now. They maintain and encourage belief in the devil's miracle-working power, regardless of the pernicious influence such teachings must have upon certain minds.

Because Moses says: "Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress to live." "There shall not be found with thee . . . one that useth divinations, one that practiseth augury, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirit, or a wizard or necromancer"; and "Turn ye not unto them that have a familiar spirit, nor unto the wizards": because Moses says that death should be the penalty for witchcraft: "A man also or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death," the Church feels obliged to maintain his doctrine. After all, what has common sense to do with what the Bible says? Distrust everything sooner than disbelieve one syllable of the Bible. If Isaiah says: "And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have a familiar spirit and unto wizards that chirp and mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? on behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead?"; and again, "The burden of Egypt . . . I will destroy the counsel thereof; and they shall seek unto their idols, and to the charmers and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards," then what Isaiah says must be good for all time. What if we are (says the Church) convinced in ourselves that there are in reality no witches? The Divine Writings state definitely that there are, and who are we to dispute it? Micah says, "I will cut off witchcrafts out of thine hand and thou shalt have no more soothsayers." Jeremiah has something to say on this head also, not to mention Daniel. But perhaps it is because the New Testament writers lay a heavy hand on this sort of thing that the Church still maintains its belief in witchcraft. Both St. Paul and St. John denounce magic and sorcery as dreadful crimes. Justin Martyr and Minutius Felix write against witchcraft. Lactantius says: "Astrology, the arts of the aruspex and augur, and what are called oracles themselves, and necromancy, and the magic art, are their inventions." Non-apostolical these writers might be, but they have none the less served to help convince the Church of the existence of devils and demons, witches and magic. Witness St. Augustine: "All such arts, whether of a trifling or a noxious superstition, from a certain pernicious association of men and demons . . . are to be altogether renounced and eschewed by Christians." The Church has taught that devils inspired idols, empowered witches and wizards, haunted hills and groves and rocks and springs, and, in the words of Chrysostom, when unable to tempt Christians to actual idolatry, resorted to roundabout ways to seduce them. One could hardly consider this kind of teaching elevating. It is glaringly apparent that at rock bottom the Christian religion is more than half pagan.

Five hundred years before Christ, Herodotus recorded his profound faith in divinations, and traced their source back to that most ancient home of magic—Egypt.

Horace wrote of the witch Canidia; Scott has written of witches; Shakespeare, I think, really created any witches which might exist in peoples minds—see Macbeth; Lucian wrote of Erichtho; Juvenal and Persius refer to the Chaldean sorceries; and in Lucian and Apuleius mention is made of frightful hags who mangled dead bodies to make charms of them. And what has the Church done towards extirpating idolatry and superstition? Nothing. What would you have her do? Are not the rites of the Christian Church as mystifying as any of the rites for invoking the aid of the devil? Are not her priests commanded to kneel and bow, make signs with the fingers, kiss this and bless that? It would be an unpardonable digression in the present article to dwell at any length upon the Mass, but let us consider for a moment the happenings at High Mass. The head priest walks into the sanctuary muttering prayers in Latin (to the great mass of people an unintelligible jargon). He is clothed in all sorts of magnificent and multi-coloured garments—cloaks, copes, robes, belts, amulets, girdles, beads, and lace; men precede him, silent footed and reverent, bearing banners and instruments, books, crucifixes, candles, and thurifers; music echoes round and round the Church, and the people stand with heads bared. A simple narration. But how the whole thing smacks of cymbals and bass-drums, gesticulations and genuflexions. Cannot you hear, issuing from the bended form of the priest, the invocations and prayers, the incantations and abracabra's; cannot you picture the gaudy clothes; you suffocate from the sickly fumes of the incense? The Ju-ju man is about to appease the wrath of God. What more in it than this? We succeed in converting savages because of this. It is only in virtue of this fact that our medicine-men wear much more wonderful and gaudy clothes than their own medicine-men, that these savages consider Christianity a finer religion.

It is well-known that the Church did not scruple to use pagan rites and idols and temples to further Christianity, and we are told by the Venerable Bede that Redwald, the first Christian King of East Anglia had in the same temple two altars, one for the Christian worship and the other on which to offer victims to devils. Mr. Grant Allen in his book *Anglo-Saxon Britain*, tells us "that heathen sacrifices continued to be offered in secret as late as the thirteenth century." Of the Roman Church in particular we might mention that in the thirteenth century a whole country, Stedingerland was laid waste by troops raised under direct orders from the Pope as a punishment for witchcraft. No measure was too strict it appears. And who could help smiling at the fact that in 1300 the Pope (Boniface VIII.) who had proclaimed that "God set him over kings and kingdoms" was himself accused of witchcraft? It was in the fifteenth century that Pope Innocent issued his famous Bull, appointing certain persons "to execute the office of Inquisition, and correct, imprison, punish and fine, and if necessary the secular arm to be called in to help." A book was later published called *Malleus Maleficarum*—which might be described as a complete textbook on witchcraft: It appears that witchcraft was held to be a sin against the Holy Ghost and therefore irremissible. Why against the Holy Ghost any more than God or Jesus Christ I have yet to determine. But it was left to Henry VIII. to command the clergy "to beware of the superstition of sprinkling bells with Holy water, ringing bells or using blessed candles for driving away devils." Henry VIII. was far from being an ideal monarch, but we have yet to appreciate to the full the service he rendered to mankind in attempting to gratify his own personal desires and ambitions. How different might England have been to-day had he kissed the Pontifical toe!

It was in the German (Roman Catholic) State of Wurtzburg, that over 150 supposed witches were burnt in the years 1627-1629. But this is totally eclipsed by the 900 trials held in Bamberg (another Roman Catholic State in Germany) for witchcraft during the years 1625-1630. Had not this belief in witchcraft been fostered by the Church, the probability is that witchcraft, and all other superstitions would have died out long since. But then, this is but another of the blessings for which we have to thank the Church. To conclude this article I would like to quote a paragraph which appeared in the *East Anglian Daily Times* of (I think) 1897. "The

*Globe* Vienna correspondent reports that an extraordinary and horrible tragedy has just been enacted at the little village of Bekesely near Tamesvar. Thérèse Kleitch an old woman, who lived in poverty, had long been alleged by the superstitious villagers to possess the power of a witch. Misfortunes in the village were attributed to her alleged evil influences and the outbreak of an epidemic among the children was declared to be her work. She was also supposed to have cast a spell over the stables, with the result that many horses and cattle recently died of disease, and this apparently incensed the neighbours. A plot was therefore formed in the village, and a terrible vengeance carried out. The unfortunate woman was seized, gagged, and after being flogged was crucified."

In stating that the last recorded cases of witch murder occurred in Italy and Ireland, perhaps a mere mention of the words "Roman Catholicism" might serve to establish a connexion . . . ?

CHARLES G. MOTT.

### Acid Drops.

When the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Rev. Scott Lidgett, and other clerics issued a letter advising Christians to do nothing to commend the *Outline of Knowledge for Boys and Girls and their Parents*, we said that this was an invitation to set on foot a boycott, a correspondent wrote suggesting that we had misjudged the letter. But we knew our Christians, and we understood quite well what the letter meant. Christians have no longer the power to put their critics in prison, and they cannot quite prevent publishers issuing heretical books. But they do what they can, and the weapon of boycott is used whenever possible. Nothing that man can do will ever completely civilize Christianity, nor can human efforts make a genuine Christian behave with decency to those who disagree with him. The most that can be done is to make Christianity a little less obviously barbaric, and Christians behave with a little less indecency where their religion is concerned.

So we are not surprised to find that a movement has just been made in Manchester to induce the Libraries Committee to withdraw the book from circulation. Members of the City Council have been circularized denouncing the book as Atheistic in spirit, for attacking "the Christian idea of family life," and for comparing the Christian religion "to the worship of false Gods." As we said when reviewing the book, the complaint made was, and is, that the book really leaves Christianity out, and has nothing of the usual silly slobber about the sublimity of Jesus and the grandeur of "true Christianity." So far as we are concerned the Pioneer Press has done what it can to counteract the boycott by stocking the work, and we are glad to say that the sales have been brisk.

To a symposium entitled "Marriage To-day and Tomorrow," in the *Sunday Dispatch*, Mr. F. E. Bailey, the novelist contributes an outspoken indictment of the Christian marriage service of the Church of England. That it was "first ordained for the procreation of children" is, says the writer, at this time of day "conspicuously untrue." That it "was ordained for a remedy against sin" is, he says, "revolting to any decent-minded woman." The vow "till death us do part" is an outrage and involves a contract "which no normal housemaid would accept in taking a situation," and which ignores the fact that either of the parties may become "drunken, insane, sadistic or incurably diseased." The Church, says Mr. Bailey, "forces people to make at the foot of the altar what may well turn out to be lying statements." There is nothing new in these criticisms, but we welcome the appearance of such an article in the deluge of pious dope with which best part of the press is at present flooded.

A bright idea is forwarded from Plymouth to a daily paper. A reader suggests: "Is it not possible for a short address to be given from the stage of cinemas open on

Sunday? I'm sure the patrons would be only too glad to listen to them." The only drawback, so far as we can see, is that the patrons will have paid their money for amusement, to be entertained. The point is, however, why should religion be thrust upon people who think so little of it that they prefer a cinema to a church? There is only one good explanation of the suggested imposition, and that is—Christian impertinence.

The Bishop of Woolwich says: "If you have not raised your finger to assist in stopping war, God help you. Your conscience will burn like fire." It is hard to see why God should be offended with people who do nothing to prevent war, when, according to the majority of parsons, during 1914-18, it was God who helped the nation to win the last war. If God preferred to help to win the war rather than prevent it, the presumption is that he has no strong objection to war—which seems quite feasible, seeing that he (according to Holy Writ) assisted the Hebrews of Biblical days to achieve all their victories. In any case, however, is the Christian conscience of parsons and laity a reliable guide in this issue? Eighteen years ago it was inspired in the direction of waging war; since then—and presumably because the results have proved disastrous to victors and losers alike—some of the Christian conscience is inspired against war. Therefore one may suggest that, where the no-more-war movement is concerned, appeals to such a weathercock kind of thing as the Christian conscience can well be dispensed with.

The Bishop of London, inspired as usual, has made his contribution towards solving the unemployed problem. "Young men to-day would rather stay here on the soft dole than seek fortune in the Empire." The very very reverend gent hasn't noticed that most of the Dominions cannot find work or "fortune" for their own unemployed. Or maybe he has noticed the fact but isn't intelligent enough to understand it. Which need not surprise anyone, for enlistment in the service of God doesn't depend on intelligence but on piety and the capacity to memorize dogmas and perform ecclesiastical antics.

Apropos of an assertion by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool that it is not possible to live a perfectly moral life and disbelieve in immortality, *Psychic News* says: "Unfortunately, there are hundreds of people living immoral lives who believe in immortality." Quite so. Still, a special pleader like the Archbishop cannot be expected to notice awkward facts like that.

Big advertising spaces and much free "copy" are being given to the Christian Protest Movement, to the formation of which we called attention recently. This mushroom organization is out to fight "anti-religious and blasphemous teaching in this country." It ignores entirely the only militant Freethought organization in England, and goes for Communism and the "British Workers League of Militant Atheists"—whatever that is—in the hope of extracting money from the pockets of reactionary and religious persons. It is out against "Bolshevik Atheism"—a hodge of its own invention, so far as this country is concerned. This stupid scaremongering crowd have secured the support of such varied and conflicting religionists as Viscount FitzAlan—a Catholic peer, and Mr. Henry Fowler, the Secretary of the Protestant Alliance. We need hardly say that the Bishop of London is among the Vice-Presidents. We challenge the *Morning Post*, which publishes this advertisement and appeal, and which backs it with what purports to be an account of Atheism in Great Britain, to state what it well knows to be the truth, namely that militant Atheism in Britain has nothing to do with Communism or any other political party.

The Rev. G. C. Briggs says that the very last place where one would wish to be reminded of income-tax is the entrance to a place of worship. Perhaps, however, income-tax and places of worship may not be so remote from one another after all. There might be some possi-

bility of a reduction in the tax if church buildings were not exempt from rates and taxes, but were compelled to pay their share of the Nation's expenses, as do non-ecclesiastical buildings. The result of the exemption is that religion is a little cheaper for church-goers, and that rates and taxes are heavier for non-churchgoers. But, of course, there is nothing wrong or unjust about that—to a Christian.

In an article all about "Keeping the spirit of Christmas," and gentle Jesus, meek and mild, the Rev. Leslie D. Weatherhead says that:—

It is the child that makes you believe in the image of God! It is the child that makes you believe in the divinity of man!

But it is Mr. Weatherhead that makes one believe in the infinite sloppiness of the parson.

Liverpool Diocesan Conference wanted the Bishop of Liverpool to forbid his clergy to marry for at least five years after ordination. Presumably, the Conference had some sort of notion of "making the punishment fit the crime."

A voice from Cornwall explains to the readers of a newspaper that churches are not for people's amusement; they are "for the worship of God, and for nothing else." That's worth knowing. Some people are under the impression that a church is merely an excuse for enabling a parson to take money from persons whose credulity outweighs their discretion.

Father Tigar, S.J., is running an entirely undenominational Institute in Hoxton. Anybody can join—no matter of what religion—and there will be no arguments or controversy. The distinguishing feature of the Institute is, however, that everybody who does join, will be able to see what really is "the complete Christian and Catholic religion" by concrete example. Quite a number of "pagan boys and girls" in the salubrious district of Hoxton are already beginning "to love the Catholic Church," we are told, and needless to say "individual conversions" have already taken place. Could anything be fairer and more undenominational than that, we humbly ask?

Talking about conversions, we note that this year the Roman Catholic Church boasts of no fewer than 12,019 in England and Wales (and no doubt the number has increased to 12,020 by the time this Acid Drop is out). We are not quite sure whether a thanksgiving service has already been held in honour of the converts—or the Almighty—but we do feel that, after all the boasting and jubilation in the Catholic papers, the number is extraordinarily small. It is like being told that 12,000 more people are at work out of 3,000,000, this week than last. In any case there is a big drop in Catholic marriages and baptisms.

Father Leonard, however, does not seem to be quite as happy about the power of his Church as so many conversions—to him—warrant. He seems terribly frightened at the "anti-God" campaign. Although its captains "are of a microscopic minority, their influence and power are titanic." Speaking at a South London Catholic parliament recently, he added, "I sincerely believe that we in England—we of the Catholic Church—will have to suffer, even as Spain and Mexico." Let us reassure the nervous and unhappy priest. There will be no "persecution" of his Church in England. There will be just gentle extinction, that's all.

Some interesting and significant statements were made at the recent national conference on the place of Biology in national education. Dr. R. H. Crawley, Senior Medical Officer to the Board of Education, said that contemporary discussions of sex-teaching in schools were

really the result of failure to teach biology properly. Every child who left school at fourteen should have a clear knowledge of the function of sex in animals, plants and in himself. Dr. Ward Cutler, of Rothamsted Experimental Station observed that the interest taken by children in animals was an easy foundation for sound teaching. "It was necessary to realize that human beings are the product of evolution, and that their nature was based on animal nature. When the relation of human nature and animal nature was understood pupils came to see that evolution and civilization were products of self-control." This goes to prove the harm done by the holding up of sex instruction. It is given wherever teachers are free and enlightened.

A Methodist writer lengthily explains that "A Gospel for Sinners," is the essence of Methodist teaching. He quotes Jesus as saying, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." Possibly this explains why Methodist teaching leaves Freethinkers quite cold. They are not sinners and therefore need no Gospel to "save" them. Moreover, they do not hanker after the company of self-righteous reformed sinners, while they can enjoy the society of men and women who are decent citizens without being compelled to be so through fear of a God.

A locked church door, declares the Rev. W. S. Waddell, ought to be a thing of the past. Still, it has its uses, if it excites ordinary folk to wonder concerning the lack of faith the parsons have in their God to protect his own special property. Such things as locked church doors, lightning conductors, and fire-insurance policies would appear to be excellent advertisements of how little is the faith of ecclesiastics in the God whom they are always exhorting other people to rely on and trust in.

A shark fence, costing about £30,000, is to be erected in Middle Harbour, Sydney, as a protection for bathers. The citizens have evidently concluded that the God who tenderly watches over sparrows has gone out of business. Of course, it is up to true Christian believers to test this assumption by always bathing outside the protection.

Certain remarks by "advanced thinkers" belonging to the Government religion appear to have alarmed a reader of the *Daily Mirror* signing himself as "A Churchgoer." He says:—

The Anglican Church admits "all sorts and conditions of men." I wish it would exclude Atheists, as one or two of our prominent ministers appear to be. He needn't be alarmed; there are no real Atheists in the Anglican Church. Those whom he suspects are merely persons who have been impelled, through Freethought criticism and ridicule, to discard the more glaringly absurd and stupid beliefs and notions of the Christian faith. They still believe in enough Christian absurdities to warrant their being entitled to be classified as Christians.

## Fifty Years Ago.

How can you throw overboard any part of a divine cargo from a divine ship? Every box and bale carries the same label, and if you sacrifice some the sanctity flies from all. It is literally All or Nothing. Let those who wish to remain Christian take refuge in the fortress of Rome. They will find safety there for a while. But only for a while. For when Science and Freethought have demolished all the Protestant detachments, and occupied all the open country, they will besiege the great Catholic citadel. Then will come the crowning fight in the long war between Reason and Faith. It may be fierce and bloody, but it will decide the destiny of the world.

The "Freethinker," December 17, 1882.



## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. DRAKE.—Your suggestion that we should devote one issue per month to articles on one particular subject is interesting but we doubt whether that would appeal to the majority of our readers. It might be done occasionally, though, and we will bear the matter in mind.

D.P.S.—We think it is better to leave the matter to those immediately concerned.

S. R. A. READY.—We are looking forward to meeting you and other Liverpool friends at the Annual Dinner.

F. G. CLARK.—Much obliged, but we commented on the subject some time ago.

G. EVANS.—Thanks, but sorry we cannot use at the moment.

T. BORLAND.—Many thanks for kind wishes, we heartily reciprocate same.

F. HENDERSON.—Thanks for addresses, paper being sent.

*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.*

*Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 61 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, R. H. Rosetti, giving as long notice as possible.*

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

*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.*

*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.*

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

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

## Sugar Plums.

Arrangements for the Annual Dinner on January 21 at the Imperial Hotel, Russell Square, are now well in hand, and applications for tickets are coming in. The N.S.S. Annual Dinner is becoming famous for providing one of the best of evenings—a good meal, good speeches, good company and a capital concert. Last year, and the year before, applications for tickets had to be refused because they were left too late. We hope that this will not happen again. And it is a great help to those responsible if applications are made early. There will be, we expect a goodly number of visitors from the provinces, and if parties were arranged it might be possible to fix up separate tables for separate districts. The price of the tickets will be as usual, 8s. each.

Orders for the gramophone record of Mr. Cohen's address on the "Meaning and Value of Freethought" are coming along well—rather better than was anticipated. It is a double-side record, and the space is, of course, strictly limited. But somehow or the other Mr. Cohen has managed to summarize a whole lecture into a series of telling and descriptive phrases. The price of the record is 2s., or 2s. 6d. by post, and it is hoped that all orders will be dispatched by December 19.

We again remind our friends of the possibility of doing a good stroke of work for Freethought by sending along 7s. 6d. as a six months' subscription to the *Freethinker* for a likely subscriber. If a thousand new readers re-

ceived this paper for six months we should expect to retain something in the neighbourhood of fifty per cent as regular readers. Those who have become genuinely acquainted with the *Freethinker* do not readily go without it.

Two or three weeks ago, commenting on the statement that the B.B.C. purposed arranging for a series of talks on Christianity from different points of view, we said that this was no more than an exhibition of the usual humbug. No talk against Christianity would be permitted. The most that would be allowed would be an expression of doubt concerning certain doctrines, but nothing further. We had not to wait long for confirmation of what we said. One of our readers, Mr. G. J. Finlay, wrote the B.B.C. protesting against the policy of giving all that could be said in favour of Christianity and nothing against it, and suggesting that both sides should be heard. To this, after an attempt to dodge the question, the B.B.C. replied that:—

Nothing has arisen to induce the B.B.C. to alter its policy of not broadcasting anti-Christian matter.

Well, that is definite, at least, and it bears out all we said. As an instrument for misleading, the B.B.C. is true to itself. It has never allowed a straight talk against Christianity, and it never will—until Freethinkers insist more strenuously on their rights than they have done, and refuse to be put off by the broadcasting of a merely conventional question of particular Christian teachings, which can nowadays be heard in many churches.

Leicester Freethinkers are informed that Mr. R. H. Rosetti will lecture in the Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester, to-day (Sunday) at 6.30 p.m., on "Wake Up England." The advice is good and timely, and as Mr. Rosetti is known to Leicester audiences the hall should be well filled. On Tuesday evening, at 8 o'clock, Mr. R. H. Rosetti will address the Workers' Circle at Circle House, Great Alie Street, Aldgate, London, E., on "Do We Need Religion?" Admission is free, and members of the general public are invited.

The number of new Branches of the N.S.S. continues to increase. Efforts are now to be made to form a Branch at Chester. Will all saints prepared to help make the effort successful communicate with Mr. A. D. Hodgkinson, Cambrian Villas, Garden Lane, Chester. We hope to see Chester's example followed in many other directions.

A Gramophone Social and Dance has been arranged by the Liverpool Branch, to take place on Saturday, December 17, at the Minsterley Cafe, Rumbold Street. Tickets are 1s. each, which does not include refreshment. The function will commence at 7.30. We hope to hear of a good attendance.

As a seasonable publication we commend the re-issue of J. M. Wheeler's *Paganism in Christian Festivals*. This is a careful and scholarly work, plainly and simply written, and full of information for both Christians and Freethinkers. It is printed on good paper, tastefully bound in clothette, with a striking design by H. Cutner. Not the least attractive feature is the price at which it is published—one shilling, by post 1½d. extra.

A correspondent of the *Daily Herald* (Kuklos) quotes an apposite letter from the Chief Constable of Blackpool re Sunday Cinemas. Thus:—

Permission for Sunday Cinema shows was given by the Watch Committee about twelve years ago. The arrangement has been an unqualified success. The picture houses are crowded each Sunday, and there is no rowdyism on the streets. It is also a great help towards sobriety. Further, these cinema halls do not interfere with Sunday evening church or chapel services.

There will be no alteration in our publishing days over the Christmas season. But we shall have to go to press with the issue dated January 1, on December 23, so that any items of news that are intended for the January 1 issue must reach us not later than December 22.

The Liverpool Education Authority has adopted the Anson by-law, which allows parents to withdraw their children from the Scripture lesson in Council Schools to receive definite Church teaching elsewhere from clergy or other competent teachers. The Liverpool Diocesan Leaflet notifies all the clergy and school managers of this decision. We hope that one result of this further surrender to sectarianism will be that Liverpool Freethinkers will not hesitate to withdraw their children from the Scripture lesson. The time might come when those who withdraw from that lesson and those who went for religious teaching elsewhere would be all but a handful of the scholars. Then, perhaps, such a preposterous interruption of the proper business of the school would help secular education on the way to general adoption.

Headed "Why be a Christian?" the *Liverpool Echo* prints the following: "The Caicos Islands—a British Dependency—have had a bad year from the point of view of trade, but a Colonial report shows that there are compensating features. There is no income tax, no land or property tax, and there are no taxes on trades, animals or vehicles, no poll tax, and no excise or stamp duties!"

In his Diocesan Gazette the Bishop of Coventry actually suggests that the new B.B.C. series of pro-Christian talks "might be 'received' in Church after evensong," and the clergy are asked to "develop in their own sermons the subjects treated by the lecturers." In short, the B.B.C. is regarded by the Bishop as being a more efficient purveyor of religion than many of his own clergy. Broadcasting House is better value to the Church than its own officers.

Never listen to people who say "many Churches are not full; do not build any more," said the Bishop of Chelmsford at the foundation-stone laying of a new Church at East Ham. "The people of our land are going to awaken from their sleep and come to their senses. They are flocking back to the Churches; so we want to be ready to receive them with open arms." No doubt; but we think it is the Bishop who is going to wake-up.

The *Church of England Newspaper* prints the following: "Have you any religious views," asked a mistress of her new maid. "No ma'am," replied the girl, "but I've got some picture post-cards of Blackpool and Southport." This may produce many pious giggles; but we wonder if it is printed for that purpose or to reveal the sad lack of religion in the ranks of domestic servants.

The control of men's conscience, and, thereby, of their conduct and resources is too valuable a weapon of aggrandisement not to be grasped at by the secular power, be it that of Czar, King or Republic, or the temporal power of the Papacy. What tyranny ever voted for its own destruction, or admitted a truth fatal to its interests?

George Tyrrell.

A mass, if not the majority of people in every civilized country is still living in a state of intellectual savagery. In fact, the smooth surface of cultured society is sapped and mined by superstition.—J. G. Frazer.

It is of vital importance to retain a hold on the popular mind, and in order to do that you must have religious services centuries behind the times!—Dennis Hird.

## Bernard Shaw and the "Bogey Man."\*

"Miching mallecho, this means mischief."  
Shakespeare, "Hamlet."

THE reproach has often been levelled against our insular art that it is Philistine and commercialized. The French artistic sense lifts itself out of that ruck. It may go to what Mr. Mantalini calls, "the demnition bow-wows," but it is not Philistine. As a fact, art in France, in all its divisions, is Bohemian and very much alive. There is remarkably little risk that the bulk of our English writers will ever be Bohemians. If any foreigner shall throw this up in our complacent faces we may take refuge behind the broad back of Bernard Shaw. This writer does not dwell beside the still waters. To think of his literary career, indeed, is to think of alarms and excursions, of Mrs. Grundy in hysterics, of church calling to chapel, tabernacle yelling to conventicle, of manifold recriminations and vituperations. We may wish that Shaw had not been compelled so often to exchange his pen for his sword, but on his career all will look with pride to whom the glory of English literature is dear. The bright flame of his enthusiasm has always burned for right issues and noble causes. His eagerness for battle has ever been in the cause of Freedom against convention and traditions. As a writer and playwright Shaw has attained to that height in which praise has become superfluous; but in the character of iconoclast he has a lasting claim on the attention of all Freethinkers.

Shaw is known as a brilliant jester, as the prince of humorists throughout the civilized world, but he is also a man of profound and passionate convictions. As a young man he proclaimed himself an Atheist. That was in the "eighties" of the last century. Now, near half a century afterwards, he is hurling the weight of his wit and irony at the god-idea. His latest book, *The Adventures of a Black Girl in Her Search for God*, is a frontal attack on religion with flame-throwers, tanks, and machine guns, quite in the modern style.

The story itself is as slight as that of Voltaire's *Candide*, but it is packed as full of corrosive wit as an egg is with meat. The black girl comes straight from conversion to search through the forest in search of the three-headed Christian deity she has just heard of. The female missionary who converted her is not inspired, but her call to service in the "Lord's Vineyard" is prompted by several disappointments in love-affairs.

Shaw is at his best in the introductory note to his story, for we see here the real Shaw, not a playwright making his puppets dance, but a man of flaming enthusiasm, elemental passion against all tyranny, all shams, and against the God-idea, which priests use so artfully to enslave the people.

This is the way the brave veteran challenges Priestcraft:—

Hence the Bible, scientifically obsolete in all other respects, remains interesting as a record of how the idea of God develops from a childish idolatry of a thundering, earthquaking, famine-striking, pestilence-launching, blinding, deafening, killing, destructively omnipotent Bogey Man to a braver realization of a benevolent sage, a just judge, an affectionate father, evolving finally into the incorporal word that never becomes flesh.

Of the legendary "twelve disciples," Shaw says:—

\* *Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God*, by Bernard Shaw. Constable, 2s. 6d.

There are moments when one is tempted to say that there was not one Christian among them, and that Judas was the only one who showed any gleams of common sense.

The book will raise a storm, for the clergy cannot afford to ignore Bernard Shaw and his attack on their Bogey-Man. Whatever this Yule-tide publishing season may produce, it is not likely to bring anything more vital or significant, than this attack on Godism, written by one who is the most eminent of living authors, and whose books and plays are an asset of national pride. The book is more than usually interesting, for it shows Ariel turned Prospero, and in that unexpected transformation how impressionable and extraordinary a spirit Ariel is.

To this most distinguished of living writers we owe something of the present proud position of Free-thought, for scepticism is nothing if not intellectual. In the far-off days, Paine and Voltaire heralded the dawn of liberty, and largely through the untiring work of their successors it is now beginning to permeate all classes of society. Bernard Shaw stands for the liberation of the human intellect, and for freedom, no less than Paine and Voltaire. Like his illustrious predecessors, he is first and last a Freethinker, and has the same abiding faith in the ultimate triumph of what our own George Meredith has called "the best of causes."

"What good is like to this"

To do worthy the writing, and to write  
Worthy the reading and the world's delight?"

MIMNERMUS.

P.S.—Here is a new story to add to the Shavian collection. Recognizing the earnestness of Shaw's untiring propaganda, George Foote, the former editor of this journal, dubbed him "reverend." "No! No!" laughingly replied Shaw, "not reverend, but say the Bishop of Everywhere."

## "The New Atheism."

MR. HILAIRE BELLOC, like his great friend Mr. G. K. Chesterton, now and then turns from his light-hearted satire on men and things, and attempts to get in a blow for his faith. Mr. Belloc, of course, is a formidable opponent. He can write and he is an historian of great ability. His *bête noir* is unbelief. To doubt his Church is the greatest of sins, and to fight for it is a most hilarious adventure, not to mention the joy in Rome and in heaven at every blow of his bludgeon. I say bludgeon deliberately and not rapier. Mr. Belloc is incapable of the rapier-like thrust of Newman. Here is the enemy, he cries, and the whole might of Bellocian prose is brought to bear on the unhappy unbeliever—alas, devoid of the wit and satire which mark almost everything he touches *except* religion.

Mr. Belloc is typical of this style in his latest article contributed to the *Universe*. He has done with the old Atheism just as Christians every generation have done with the old Materialism. It really is the same Atheism and the same Materialism in essence. Some difference might be found in the terminology it is true, but Atheism is Atheism and Mr. Belloc, tired of fighting the old Atheism—perhaps because his bludgeon has been broken in the process—thinks he might have a better chance with the New Atheism. So he has got a new Bludgeon. It is encircled with Reason and Logic. The old Atheist used to boast that these two were *his*; the New Atheist has contemptuously rejected them. Like a flash, Mr. Belloc has roped them in for his own use, and here he is, ready to do battle against the heretic, the un-

believer or New Atheist, armed, not merely with the weight of an infallible Church, but also with those two outstanding weapons Reason and Logic, and—believe it or not—with Modern Physical Science.

Those of us who are veterans in the Cause remember a day when Reason, Logic and Physical Science were rejected by the Roman Church—that is *infidel* Reason, Logic and Physical Science. They were too dogmatic. They were riddled with heresy and unbelief. And even now—it is a shame to disclose it—they are looked upon askance by many right reverends in the Lord. It is like reading the Bible. We insist, says the Church, that the Bible is true in substance and in fact. We deny that we prevent the Faithful from reading it. On the contrary, if we are asked, we *almost* always give our gracious permission. We do admit, however, there is one snag. It is that the interpretation of the Bible must be *our* interpretation. That's all. And, if you won't accept our interpretation, there's a good priestly boot . . .

To prove to Mr. Belloc that I am not talking through my hat, I turn to another page in the same number of the journal in which his article appears. Mr. Belloc is quite certain that he can defend his faith with Reason and Logic. Very well then. But what are "mysteries?" The Editorial voice in the "Enquiry Bureau" is gently heard telling us that "Many of the truths of faith are mysteries, and a mystery is a truth which is above reason." Now that is terrifically interesting for it shows how often great minds simply will not think alike. "We accept," says the editorial voice, "what the Church teaches, *not* because we fully understand her doctrines nor because we see they are true (we don't) but because we know that they come to us on the authority of God."

Now as that appeared in the *Universe* for December 2, 1932, no one will accuse me of dealing with the "old" Catholicism and afraid of facing the "new." The authority of God is vastly greater than anything man-made, and we are surprised that, as far as we can see, Mr. Belloc throws it overboard for such human ideas as Reason, Logic and Physical Science.

I have said that Mr. Belloc has roped them in for his own use. But, he points out, the New Atheist is eloquent about what he *feels*; he is positive in what he *asserts*. But proof, the full use of the reason, a conclusion arrived at by *thinking*, he avoids. It seems also that the New Atheist runs away when the New Catholic asks him simple questions:—

"For instance (says Mr. Belloc) a man tells you that modern physical science is irreconcilable with Catholic doctrine. When you ask him what discovery in modern physical science is at issue with what Catholic doctrine, he either won't answer, or gives you as Catholic doctrine something that is not and never could be Catholic doctrine or makes a reply which shows probable inability and certainly no desire to answer rationally at all. Or, again: there is the man who meets the doctrines of the Real Presence by talking about Christianity . . ."

and so on.

How easily Mr. Belloc seems to have met this kind of New Atheist! Some of us who are old Atheists (and who claim to be also quite New) have gone about with a flashlight in all sorts of dark corners, and have never come across these extraordinary examples of stupidity. We used to meet them regularly in Protestant tracts. The Atheists found there were, in addition, either wife-beaters, or drunkards or child torturers—generally for long periods. It was often a little child—a dear little Sunday school mite who confounded the brute with a Pauline text which, like a flash of lightning, overawed the bestial intelligence of the ignorant infidel. In a trice, he saw the Light. Very often the Light was in the shape of a Cross

either in the sky or in a dream. It's a long time since I read any of these elevating tracts, but the memory of their Christian heroes and heroines and their Atheistic drunken bullies will never leave me till I die.

It is true Mr. Belloc does not endow his New Atheist with intemperance followed by delirium tremens; nor with murder or sadistic cruelty. But, as far as intelligence goes, what is the difference between the New Atheist and the old one culled from those dear old four-page leaflets? Mr. Belloc should, when dealing with us, be a little more original. To put up a silly ass, call him a New Atheist, endow him with the intelligence of a fish, pulverise him with Logic, Reason and Physical Science in the name of the Holy Roman Catholic Church is not cricket.

Mr. Belloc tells us, the Church has no longer the "old heresies" to fight. But the Church has converted, out of say, 35,000,000 heretics in England this year, only 12,000 odd. If the heresies have been annihilated by the all-conquering Church, surely there would be no heretics? It seems, however, that there is still one enemy in the fair garden—"a growing popular Atheism based upon unintelligence."

When one ponders on this admission, one is in a quandry. Out of the 300 million odd Roman Catholics in this world, almost all base their belief entirely on the authority of the Church. I am far from denying that the Church has produced some brilliant men. Considering that for many centuries any boy who showed the slightest talent for learning was immediately gathered into her bosom and the clod-hoppers were relegated to tilling the land or tanning leather or similar pursuits, it is not marvellous to find some intelligence in the ranks of the priests. But the brilliant thinkers can almost be counted on our two hands, and the greater part of the true believers—and this applies equally to the Protestant sects—never rise above the intelligence of children of ten.

The Atheist, and we are concerned not with the figment of Mr. Belloc's vivid imagination but with the living reality is equal, if not superior to the average educated Catholic. There is a simple proof, and it applies to Mr. Chesterton as well as to Mr. Belloc and his fellow-Catholics. The Atheist never shirks a battle of wits in the open. The Catholic runs away as fast as his lungs and legs will let him. It is easy to gull the readers of the *Universe* with a bold front. It is easy to say that "we (Mr. Belloc, that is), must go on using logic in spite of having to address it to those who apparently cannot think." It is easy to talk nonsense and still easier to talk drivel; and easier still to make Catholics believe that Catholicism is a fighting organization ready to do battle with all and sundry, here and now, anywhere and everywhere.

Mr. Belloc must know it is nothing of the kind. He knows that there is nothing which could make his Church tremble so much as a genuine discussion, a real battle of intelligence, not outside but inside her precincts.

He knows that the members of such a frightened and nervous little body as the Catholic Evidence Guild would shut up shop or call a policeman if a New (or an old Atheist) came anywhere in sight. Where are the champions of his Church? Is he one? Has he yet challenged the New (or old) Atheist anywhere except where they could not reply?

Mr. Belloc tells his readers that to combat the New Atheism is "a heart-breaking task that Catholics must now undertake." Catholics have been for some time exhorted to attack, and so far they have utterly failed to produce any one who dared invite an opponent to face him in his lair.

Dare I proffer advice to the gallant, if rather heavy, Mr. Belloc? It is—not to insist so much on

the unintelligence of the New Atheist, but on the summoning up of courage for the modern Catholic. Not to tremble behind the tail-coat of an Editor, but to dare the enemy to meet Catholic Logic, Reason and Physical Science in his own arena. My advice will never, alas, be taken to heart. The Cross is too heavy. But there is nothing the New as well as the Old Atheism despises so much as this Old Catholicism pretending to virtues it never had. The leopard never changes its spots.

H. CUTNER.

## Some Christian Types.

### I.—THE PIOUS JOURNALIST.

THE pious journalist is not really so much a pietist as a profitmonger. He has discovered that writing religious slush pays handsomely, just as his newspaper proprietors have discovered that, to be most profitable, their Sunday editions must be made up somewhat as follows—20 per cent religious articles, 20 per cent sob stuff, 20 per cent murders, social scandals and sexual crimes, 20 per cent sporting news, 10 per cent general news and 10 per cent scrappy science, literature and education. This arrangement works out very cleverly for the newspaper proprietor—it gives the numbers of readers and on the numbers the advertisers are charged. Bringing in Jesus Christ as a sop to the respectable readers enables the Editor to introduce salacious details about sex which otherwise would give the paper a thoroughly bad name, and thus he secures an immense circulation among the general public and retains his good reputation among the pietists.

Also the introduction of the religious articles provides lucrative employment for the sanctimonious pen-pushers who write usually with a belly full of beer and their tongue in their cheek. The following is typical of the bilge turned out by Fleet-streeters of this type for the benefit of the hundreds of thousands of insured, if not saved, readers:—

#### WHAT WOULD CHRIST DO AT GENEVA?

In a few weeks' time the statesmen of the world will be gathered together at Geneva to try and settle the troubles of Europe. If that Conference is going to be a success what is needed is the spirit of the lowly Nazarene, The Prince of Peace. Never was there a time in the world's history when the teaching of Jesus was more needed than to-day. Never was there a time when the peoples of the world were more ready to receive a message from the Mount of Olives. The Gospel of the Carpenter applies with the same dramatic force to the peoples of the twentieth century as it applied to the fishermen on the shores of the Lake of Galilee. Let our statesmen on entering the Conference Hall ask themselves this question: What would Christ do at Geneva?

At the distance of only a few square inches of newspaper the Editor can then get away with the latest and most unsavoury sex scandal—thus:—

#### MADAME X AND HER DEAD LOVER.

Yesterday morning the Old Bailey was crowded to suffocation when the case of Madame X was resumed. Her costume was even more striking than on the previous day of her evidence. This time she wore an emerald cloth frock slashed with white and trimmed with black fur, with a closefitting felt hat that contrasted strongly with the dead-white pallor of her face that made at once a background and a frame for her dark liquid eyes.

There was a dramatic pause, after the preliminary opening proceedings, when Counsel for the Prosecution, learned towards the witness and asked solemnly: "Did you or did you not

sleep with the deceased on the night of his death?" The Court hung breathlessly upon the reply of the witness. The silence was profound: nothing could be heard but the ticking of the clock above the head of the learned Judge. Slowly and almost inaudibly—as though the words were being dragged from her lips—the witness replied: "I did."

"Speak up," thundered the Counsel for the Prosecution, "so that the Gentlemen of the Jury—I mean the Ladies and Gentlemen (bowing and smiling) of the Jury may hear what you say."

Desperately Madame X tried to pull herself together—but without avail: she broke down completely and had to be revived with smelling salts from the Wardress.

"I think," interpolated the learned Judge, "that the Jury quite understand the reply of the witness was in the affirmative."

The Editor of the paper, being an experienced and observant man, knows full well that the majority of his readers are far more interested in Madame X's reply than they are in the question of whether or not Christ goes to Geneva; but he also knows that the paper which placates the Church by dishing out a certain amount of pious flapdoodle every Sunday with regard to His Teaching, can safely dish up the Criminal Court news in an extra spicy fashion. Thus everybody is pleased—the proprietors are pleased because the circulation increases, the advertisers are pleased because the public keeps instead of throwing away Sunday editions, the Editor is pleased because he is able to give the public what they think they want, and the public is pleased because their lusts are vicariously satisfied, and the pietists are pleased because they are sure some of the seed is bound to fall on fruitful ground—the word in season, you know; and casting bread on the waters—not to say in the drains.

But it is when Armistice Day comes round—the 11th minute of the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, etc.—that the pious journalist rises to his most dizzy heights in spouting a mingled gushing torrent of patriotism and religion combined. Always he has ready-made stories of the widowed mother fingering the medals of her soldier-husband and her soldier-son, her lips moving in thanksgiving that she has sacrificed both her dear ones: the pious journalist watches her lynx-eyed throughout the two minutes' silence, and returns to his desk splurging about the sun breaking through the clouds and drying the widow's tears—his last memory of that Mother being the light of ineffable bliss on her face. She knows—not believes—but knows that soon she and her husband and her son will all be joined forever in the Great Beyond—the Great Beyond from which the Unbeliever will be forever excluded.

And he turns to the latest War novel—furious with the writer because he also is not a liar but a truth-teller—maybe a vivid truth-teller like the author of *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Bad enough for a German to tell the truth about other Germans, but everybody holding down a well-paid job in front of a well-filled inkpot knows that Briton's soldiers were never immoral, never cruel, never drunken, never sexually diseased: they were soldiers of the King filled with highest ideals for humanity and bursting with an unquenchable desire to die for their country, preferably with some popular hymn on their lips—"Onward Christian Soldiers," always sang our men as they went into action, and "That will be glory for me," they breathed reverently as they were blown to bits at the dictates of politicians and placehunters, whose notions of War were gained at a Sham-fight on some home training ground for all men excepting themselves. Deluded, riotous, hard-living, the real soldiers

of Briton may have been, but at least they served and suffered and died: at least they have earned the right to be free from the slime and slobber of journalistic hirelings.

CRITICUS.

## Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

A REPLY TO MR. LUNN.

SIR,—According to Mr. Lunn, a man who misquotes the title of a book cannot have read a line of it. Applying this to Mr. Lunn himself, I find that on p. 133 of his *Flight from Reason* he gets the title of the *Freethinker* wrong. Yet on the same page he attacks the *Freethinker*. Hence, on his own reasoning, his attack on the *Freethinker* is worthless.

Mr. Lunn's reply, like his book, is a fair example of what happens when an anti-Freethinker is brought out into the open. I criticize St. Thomas' argument. No answer. I misquote the title of an obsolete book. Great jubilation.

Obsolete? Well, it is not only I who say so, but even the late Dean Rashdall, one of the leading lights of the Church. (*Ideas and Ideals*).

Another device of Mr. Lunn's is to shelter behind other writers. First he takes cover behind Darwin, and then Eddington. I said that we should no more disbelieve in man's capacity for truth on account of his descent from an ape, than we should discredit a professor of biology because he was descended from a labourer who knew nothing about it. Mr. Lunn's reply is to shift the blame on to Darwin. But what use is there in evading attack by simply calling up someone else who also uses it? Mr. Lunn uses the argument and should stand by it.

And then it is Eddington. Mr. Lunn wants me to refute Eddington on determinism. But why should I? It is not my move. It is Eddington's. I am still waiting for Eddington to answer (if he can) the repeated criticisms of Bertrand Russell, Sir Herbert Samuel and Professor Levy, not to mention Mr. Cohen.

Letters to the editor should incline to brevity. Mr. Lunn is hiding behind Eddington's back. Therefore I will do no more than simply turn Eddington round on him with these words: "I have not been able to form a satisfactory conception of any kind of law or casual sequence which shall be other than deterministic. . . . I shall not deal with this dilemma." (Eddington himself speaking, *Nature of the Physical World*.)

Mr. Lunn's next move is conveniently to ignore nine-tenths of what I said. Thus: "Mr. Taylor's second article raises a good many very interesting points, to which I am glad to have my attention called." Just that. Nothing more. It seems very much like looking the difficulty squarely in the face, and then passing on.

He passes on—to give me some free advice on how to review books. Well, one good turn deserves another, and so perhaps he will accept a friendly hint regarding his bookshelf: Get away from Darwin, Huxley and Delage, and try to appreciate evolution as it stands now. Thomas Hunter Morgan's *Scientific Basis of Evolution*, just published by Faber, should be a useful starting-point.

So Mr. Lunn is taking his Materialism from Huxley (via Romanes). Splendid—except for one trivial detail: Huxley was not a Materialist.

My criticism of Behaviourists, which Mr. Lunn asks for, will be found in *Freethinker* No. 16 (1931).

No Catholic, says Mr. Lunn, believes in the infallibility of the Pope. I made no such statement. The Pope is infallible only when speaking *ex cathedra*; but in appointing the Inquisition the infallible Church blundered very badly.

The reason I didn't wait for the impregnable Second Edition was simple. I didn't know it was coming. I don't think I shall criticize it now. There may be a Super-Impregnable Third Edition on the way, so I will take Mr. Lunn's tip and wait.

G. H. TAYLOR.

SIR,—The late Dr. Mivart once observed that "there is nothing at once so pathetic and so absurdly grotesque as for members of the Anglican Church to pretend to be Catholics." It was with this sentence in mind that I wrote of Mr. Lunn as pathetically believing himself to be a Catholic. I knew (from his published debate with Father Knox, and other sources) that he was not a Catholic in what seems to me to be the only intelligible sense of that word. I assumed from his use of Catholic authorities (in his debate with Mr. Cohen and elsewhere), from his anxiety that Catholicism should not be misrepresented—with which, I may say, I agree—and from his recent suggestion for manufacturing whitewash and tar—the whitewash for Catholicism and the tar for science—that he must be a Catholic of some sort, and, therefore an Anglo-Catholic. For my mistake Mr. Lunn will, I am sure, accept my apologies. Was it not a pardonable mistake? If Mr. Lunn is not a Catholic, Roman or Anglican, would it not be well for him to explain exactly what are his religious beliefs? To say "Church of England" will tell us no more than that appellation means to hospital and police and other officials who still enquire the religion of persons with whom they deal, presumably in order that all who make no other profession may be added to the diminishing ranks of the Establishment.

ALAN HANDSACRE.

## A REQUEST.

SIR,—I have not read Mr. Lunn's writings, and I am not interested in his ideas.

Will Mr. Lunn, in the columns of the *Freethinker*, give us one small fact which is not in line with the History to which we give the name of Evolution.

Only just one little fact, out of line.

W. L. ENGLISH.

## A CORRECTION.

(Re paragraph on p. 791.)

SIR,—I beg to thank you the copy of your paper. I have only to say that you are under a misapprehension. I did not preach the sermon. I do not receive a single farthing in Tithe. The Tithes of Burwell were bought by the University of Cambridge in the sixteenth century.

I certainly did not offer any prayer as suggested, because I did not consider it appropriate to do so.

You will see that I have no interest in Tithe whatever, and therefore your inference was unwarranted.

A. G. WALPOLE SAYER.

Vicar of Burwell.

[We apologise for the error. Our report was based on one in the *Tithepayers Bulletin*. It was the preacher, The Rev. Sir Edwin Hoskins, Bart., and not the Vicar, who preached. Our criticisms apply to the former.—ED.]

## "Recessional."

Hoover is my Shepherd. I am in want.  
He maketh me to lie down on park benches;  
He leadeth me beside still factories.  
He arouseth my doubt in the Republican Party;  
He leadeth me in the path of destruction  
For his party's sake.

Yea, as I walk through the Valley  
Of the Shadow of Destruction,  
I fear evil—for thou art with me,  
The politicians and the profiteers  
They frighten me.  
Thou preparest a reduction in my salary  
Before me.  
In the presence of mine enemies  
Thou anointest mine income with taxes,  
My expense runneth over.

Surely unemployment and poverty will  
Follow me  
All the days of thy administration;  
And I shall dwell in a mortgaged house  
Forever.

"The New English Weekly."

(Quoted in *Leeds Citizen*, November 11, 1932.)

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

## LONDON.

## INDOOR.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (New Morris Hall, 79 Bedford Road, Clapham, S.W.4, near Clapham North Station) : 7.30, Mr. T. C. Archer—"The League of Nations Union."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road) : 7.0, Sunday, December 18, Gilbert Rowland and Choir—"Musical Recital."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1) : 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"Can England Save Herself?"

STUDY CIRCLE (N.S.S. Office, 62 Farringdon Street, E.C.4) : 8.0, Monday, December 19, Mr. Turney will speak on G. B. Shaw's—"The Adventure of the Black Girl."

THE CONWAY DISCUSSION CIRCLE (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1) : 7.0, Tuesday, December 20, Dr. Gompertz—"Where and How did Civilization Begin?"

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (City of London Hotel, 107 York Road, N.) : 6.30, David Cohen—"Modern Spiritualism and the Science of Psychic Research."

WEMBLEY AND DISTRICT BRANCH (Mitchell's Restaurant, High Road, Wembley) : 7.30, Sunday, December 18, Mr. H. J. Savory—"A Freethinker's Outlook on Life."

## OUTDOOR.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead) : 11.30, Sunday, December 18, Mr. L. Elbury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park) : 12.0, Sunday, December 18, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. 3.0, Messrs. Bryant and A. D. Howell-Smith, B.A. 6.30, Messrs. Bryant, Tuson and Wood. The *Freethinker* and other Freethought literature can be obtained during and after the meetings, of Mr. Dunn, outside the Park in Bayswater Road.

## COUNTRY.

## INDOOR.

ASHINGTON : 7.0, Sunday, December 18, A Debate—"Have We Lived Before." *Affir.*: Mr. Alex Duke. *Neg.*: Mr. J. T. Brighton.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Shakespeare Rooms, 174 Edmund Street) : 7.0, Sunday, December 18, Mr. Charles H. Smith—"The Earth is Established for Ever" (Psalm 78 v. 69). Science's answer Geological. Lantern illustrated.

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Godwin Cafe, Godwin Street) : 7.30, Sunday, December 18, Annual Business Meeting.

BURNLEY (St. James' Hall) : 11.0, Sunday, December 18, Mr. J. Clayton—"Determinism."

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S. (Branch Rooms, Font Street) : 7.0, Sunday, December 18, Mr. T. W. Raine. A Lecture.

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley) : 2.30, Sunday, December 18, Gramophone Recital including "The Meaning and Value of Freethought," by Chapman Cohen. All welcome.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (No. 2 Room, City Hall, Albion Street) : 6.30, Mr. White—"Tolerance." Questions and Discussion. Silver Collection.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate) : 6.30, Sunday, December 18, Mr. R. H. Rosetti—"Wake up England."

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, Islington, entrance in Christian Street) : 7.0, Sunday, December 18, A Lecture.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S.—Gramophone Social and Dance, on Saturday, December 17, from 7.30 p.m. till 11.0 p.m., Minsterley Cafe, Rumford Street, off Water Street, Liverpool. Admission (excluding refreshments) 1s.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH N.S.S. (Hall No. 5, Plymouth Chambers, Drake Circus) : 7.0, Sunday, December 18, Mr. Jewell—"Infinity."

SOUTH SHIELDS (Unity Hall, Mill Dam) : 7.0, Saturday, December 17, "Life after Death?"

## ACADEMY CINEMA, Oxford Street

(OPPOSITE WARING &amp; GILLOWS). Ger. 2981.

Second Week.

RICHARD OSWALD'S

Brilliant German Comedy

"DER HAUPTMANN VON KOEPENICK."

Also BERNARD SHAW'S satire

"ARMS AND THE MAN."

THE  
**"Freethinker" Endowment Trust**

**A Great Scheme for a Great Purpose**

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

The Trustees set themselves the task of raising a minimum sum of £8,000. This was accomplished by the end of December, 1927. At the suggestion of some of the largest subscribers, it has since been resolved to increase the Trust to a round £10,000, and there is every hope of this being done within a reasonably short time.

The Trust may be benefited by donations of cash, or shares already held, or by bequests. All contributions will be acknowledged in the columns of this journal, and may be sent to either the Editor, or to the Secretary of the Trust, Mr. H. Jessop, Hollyshaw, Whitkirk, Nr. Leeds. Any further information concerning the Trust will be supplied on application.

There is no need to say more about the *Freethinker* itself, than that its invaluable service to the Free-thought Cause is recognized and acknowledged by all. It is the mouthpiece of militant Free-thought in this country, and places its columns, without charge, at the service of the Movement.

The address of the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust is 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

**SHAKESPEARE**  
 . . and other . .  
**LITERARY ESSAYS**

BY

**G. W. FOOTE**

With Preface by CHAPMAN COHEN

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

Price 3s. 6d. — Postage 3d.

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

**Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity**

BY

**UPASAKA**

Price—ONE SHILLING. Postage—One Penny

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

**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 HALF A CENTURY.

**FOOTSTEPS of the PAST**

— By —

**J. M. Wheeler**

With a Biographical Note by VICTOR B. NEUBURG

JOSEPH MAZZINI WHEELER was not merely a popularizer of scientific studies of religion, he was a real pioneer in the field of anthropology. His present work is rich in ascertained facts, but richer still in suggestions as to future lines of research. It is a book that should be in the hands of all speakers and of students of the natural history of religion.

Price 3s. 6d. 228 pages. By post 3s. 9d.

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

**DETERMINISM OR  
 FREE-WILL ?**

An Exposition of the Subject in the Light of the  
 Doctrines of Evolution.

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

Half-Cloth, 2s. 6d.

Postage 2½d.

SECOND EDITION.

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

220 pages of Wit and Wisdom

**BIBLE ROMANCES**

By G. W. Foote

The *Bible Romances* is an illustration of G. W. Foote at his best. It is profound without being dull, witty without being shallow; and is as indispensable to the *Freethinker* as is the *Bible Handbook*.

Price 2/6 Postage 3d.

Well printed and well bound.

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

**BLASPHEMY ON TRIAL**

**DEFENCE OF FREE  
 SPEECH**

By

**G. W. FOOTE.**

WITH HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION BY H. CUTNER

Being a Three Hours' Address to the Jury in the Court of Queen's Bench, before Lord Coleridge on April 24, 1883.

Price SIXPENCE.

Postage 1d.

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

**NOW READY.**

A  
 \* Seasonable Gift for \*  
 Christians and Free-  
 thinkers.

## PAGANISM IN CHRISTIAN FESTIVALS

BY

J. M. WHEELER.

\*  
 A lucid and learned  
 study of the non-chris-  
 tian origin of the  
 Festivals of the Church  
 from Christmas to  
 Easter.  
 \*

Clothette 1s.

Postage 1½d.

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

## FREETHOUGHT ON THE GRAMOPHONE!



### A Double-side Edison Bell Record.

GOLD LABEL.



### “The Meaning and Value of Freethought”

AN ADDRESS

BY

**CHAPMAN COHEN.**

Price 2/-.

By Post

carefully packed 2/6.

## SELECTED HERESIES

An Anthology from the Writings of

**Chapman Cohen**

Cloth Gilt - 3s. 6d.

Postage 3d. extra.

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

## GOD AND THE UNIVERSE

EDDINGTON, JEANS, HUXLEY & EINSTEIN

BY

**CHAPMAN COHEN**

With a Reply by Professor A. S. Eddington

Second Edition.

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

Paper 2s.

Postage 2d.

Cloth 3s.

Postage 3d.

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

## The Revenues Of Religion

By

**ALAN HANDSACRE.**

A RECORD OF ESTABLISHED RELIGION.  
IN ENGLAND.

Official Facts about Church Revenues.  
History—Argument—Statistics.

Cloth 2s. 6d.

Postage 3d.

Paper 1s. 6d.

Postage 2d.

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

## OPINIONS

Random Reflections and Wayside Sayings

BY

**CHAPMAN COHEN**

(With Portrait of Author)

Cloth Gilt - - - - 3s. 6d.

Superior Edition bound in Full Calf 5s. 0d.

Postage 3d.

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