

# THE FREETHINKER

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Views and Opinions.

Burying the Dead.

ABOUT five years ago there was issued a work, edited by Mr. Brimley Johnson, at the suggestion of Mr. Bath, entitled, *Shelley—Leigh Hunt: How Friendship Made History*. The main purpose of the book was to place Leigh Hunt before the British public in his true character as a social and political reformer. I reviewed the work at considerable length, soon after its appearance, and was gratified on learning that the review had a deal to do with the book running into a second edition. One newspaper review, I fancy it was the *Observer*, said that this book placed Leigh Hunt before the people in quite a new light. But it was a new light only to those who did not know Leigh Hunt, save as a writer of literary essays and drawing-room poetry. Those who knew the real man knew him as a heretic in religion, and as a republican worker for reform in politics. Leigh Hunt could not be altogether buried, even after he was dead, so he was given a place as an essayist, while his more important work was so far forgotten that the publication of Brimley Johnson's book gave the reviewer a new and hitherto unknown man.

That, as I have pointed out more than once, is the way things are done in this country. Either the heretic and the reformer are buried completely in such a way that the ordinary reader, and even the ordinary student, never come into contact with him, or he is "toned down" so that the real man is never known.

It is likely that something of the same thing will happen with Bradlaugh if some of the newspapers and some writers can have their way. The Centenary Committee's publicity campaign has roused enough attention to get considerable notice of Bradlaugh as a figure of national importance. Yet I have noted several articles in which the writer has managed to present him as a "great man," but has curiously

enough overlooked the real Bradlaugh altogether. He becomes not what he was, the great Atheistic, Republican, Malthusian reformer challenging privilege and superstition and sham morality on all sides, but a man who entered Parliament, had a row over the oath, and gained the good opinion of a number of very eminent gentlemen. In that light Bradlaugh is quite harmless—or at least he is as harmless as he can be made. The real Bradlaugh is being buried in the act of glorifying him.

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History as it is Written.

Mr. A. W. Benn has written a *History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century*. The work is in two volumes. It covers close on a thousand pages, and commences with a survey of "Rationalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries." With these I am not greatly concerned. Paine receives rather deprecatory treatment, "His language about the Bible and its authors is *notoriously violent*" (the italics are mine), his strictures on the Apostles and the Evangelists "jar painfully on a modern ear . . . largely due to the mistaken notion shared by Paine with his *orthodox contemporaries*, that the Gospels and Acts were written by contemporaries and eye-witnesses of the events related." No examples of Paine's notorious violent language are given, Mr. Benn is evidently content to take this on other people's estimate, and one can safely challenge Mr. Benn to give examples that are more violent than those of his quite respectably pious contemporaries. If, as Mr. Benn says, "Paine's reputation . . . has suffered from the obloquy heaped on his name by orthodox contemporaries," it is hardly likely to be rehabilitated by the scant treatment measured out to him in this *History*. One would have thought that in a history of Freethought the influence of Paine on the thought of his day should have been subjected to serious examination. But in that case Mr. Benn would probably have had to admit that Paine's "notoriously violent" language consisted in plain vigorous English that alone would mark his writings as worthy of notice. Mr. Benn, however, may congratulate himself on the fact that no one who reads his work is likely to be tempted to dip into Paine. He has clearly escaped the charge of advising readers of his history to study Paine, even to-day when his main teachings are endorsed by the mass of Christian ministers.

But Mr. Benn has achieved real marvels of omission that cannot help but keep the newcomer to history on safe lines—provided he goes no further than Mr. Benn takes him. He has nothing to say on Carlyle and his followers, nothing to say of Taylor, or Hetherington, or Watson, or of the different Free-thinking organizations that existed in the first fifty years of the nineteenth century. Nothing of the

National Secular Society with its nation-wide propaganda. It is true that the men I have named—out of scores that I could have named—were not, save in the case of Taylor, graduates of universities, nor were they men or women who held a place in "respectable" society; but as an historian Mr. Benn might have reflected that thousands of copies of Paine's works, sold at a guinea each, could not have been bought only by working-men; that in the majority of cases the scholars only brought documentary evidence in support of what quite "common" people has been teaching, and that an agitation of the kind that went on must have affected the "upper classes," and the clergy to some extent; and that Paine's works by creating a more sceptical atmosphere encouraged further advances. He might have reflected that there is really something in the law that "action and reaction are equal and opposite." If Colenso—to whom he pays due honour—could be led to criticize the Pentateuch in consequence of a question by a Kaffir, whom he had been sent out to convert, why, even a very learned professor might have been incited to heresy by the criticism of the poor Freethinker who could not write M.A. at the end of his name, but who could go to prison to win the freedom that Mr. Benn enjoys.

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#### Poor Bradlaugh!

But the crucial instance of Mr. Benn's value as an historian of real Freethought is found in his notice of Bradlaugh. He apparently had paid so little attention to the Freethought movement in this country that he had to depend upon Professor Flint giving Bradlaugh and Holyoake a testimonial as to their general ability. That being given, by a fully-fledged university man, he says, "It would seem that their arguments ought to be given a place in this work." But alas! he has been "unable to find that they made any addition to the Rationalism of Hume and Mill, nor that they have influenced the general trend of English opinion on the subject." Well, well! If Mr. Benn had omitted mentioning those who had made no original contribution to the trend of thought, how many of the array of the "respectables" mentioned by him would have had to be omitted? A goodly number, beyond question. But is it conceivable that the life-work of men like the two he names had no influence on the "trend of English opinion?" The assumption is too ridiculous to demand serious discussion.

But Mr. Benn guards himself still more from suspicion by saying that Bradlaugh incurred "odium by his share in the publication of an *offensive* neo-Malthusian pamphlet, an act for which he was criminally prosecuted, and would have suffered six months imprisonment but for a technical irregularity." Common fairness might have prompted Mr. Benn to point out that there was nothing more "offensive" in the Knowlton pamphlet than there was in scores of books published at higher prices. And not even Mr. Benn could urge that the action of Bradlaugh and Besant did not affect very much the "trend of English opinion." Mr. Benn ought to have entitled his work "A History of Rationalism among the Clergy and the Respectable Classes." But even then he might have had to face the statement of his friend John M. Robertson, that it was "the fighters who won freedom for the scholars," and that without the fighters many of the scholars who occupy places of honour in Mr. Benn's pages would have remained dumb.

Finally, in this less than two pages of comment on Bradlaugh, he brushes aside the Parliamentary contest by saying "neither the hostile majority nor its

victim greatly distinguished themselves for dignity of behaviour." Why, by common consent of even his enemies it came to be admitted that Bradlaugh was the only one in that conflict who came out of it with dignity unimpaired. But to expect Mr. Benn to praise the man without a university training or a social standing, and at the same time blame men with degrees and occupying good social positions, is too much. Socrates died a long time ago, or one feels certain that if Mr. Benn had been, as a contemporary, recording the trial and the poisoning, he would have described Socrates as a man who by his violent and common language had roused bitter resentment, and that in the conflict between the victim and the hostile majority neither was distinguished for dignity of behaviour. But even so, I think Mr. Benn might have pointed out, without giving great offence, that Bradlaugh's parliamentary fight over the oath did really advance the cause of intellectual probity, and that it taught zealots that a man's constitutional rights were not to be set aside in consequence of religious bigotry. The pity is that Mr. Benn did not settle down to a serious study of the Freethought movement before writing a history of "Rationalism." There is bound to be something missing in "Hamlet," if the Prince of Denmark is left out.

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#### A Bad Rule.

Mr. Benn is not alone in thus treating the pioneers of unpopular opinion. He is following a standardized type of treatment, and it is for that reason I have selected him. He is not worse than others, in some respects he is better than others, but the better is bad enough. I have selected him because he is an example of the way we have in this country of burying men and women whom the world ought to hold in grateful remembrance. During his lifetime the pioneer receives abuse—that is the badge of his tribe—and when he dies his very name is often buried with him. If he *must* be named then the policy is to do so with a sneer at his work or his culture, or the comment that he made some stir while he lived, but he is now dead, and there's an end of him.

So it happens that when a younger generation turns to a study of history and picks up a book of the scope of Mr. Benn's, they have their ignorance at worst, or their misconception at the best, fixed. They give honour where it is hardly due, and none at all where it should be given in full measure. They know nothing of the men and women who with bleeding feet and aching hearts have blazed the trail for them. They enjoy a freedom their fathers never knew, a conception of the dignity of "common" humanity of which their ancestors never conceived, but of the men and women who gained these things for them they know nothing. An unappreciative generation often kills its pioneers; that is a crime grave enough. But the graver sin is that after they have been killed, care is taken that their names shall not be recorded nor their services recognized. We give our thanks to this or that celebrity, unconscious of the fact that but for these unacknowledged benefactors these celebrities would not, for the most part, play the part they do. Self-interest and intellectual snobbery thus supplement and strengthen each other, with only a voice here and there to cry "shame" on so sinister an alliance.

CLAPMAN COHEN.

Fear is an untrustworthy guardian of constancy, but a kindly heart is faithful even to the end of the world.

Cicero.

## The Children and a Bible.

"In religion,  
What damned error, but some sober brow  
Will bless it, and approve it with a text."

Shakespeare.

"You do not believe, you only believe that you believe."—Coleridge.

"Did God drown the horses too?" asked a boy of his teacher in a London school. The teacher had been recounting the legend of the crossing of the Red Sea and the Egyptian pursuit. "Yes," answered the teacher reluctantly. "Well," continued the pupil relentlessly, "I call it rotten, the poor animals had done nothing wrong, anyhow."

Strangely, the juvenile critics seem to be concerned not so much with matters of fact, as with matters of morality. This is a remarkable sidelight on the use of the old Christian Bible as a school-book, and is not to be so lightly dismissed.

Education in this country has been badly hampered by the desire of the clergy, of whom there are forty thousand, to ally religious teaching with the ordinary school programme. This desire has been much further complicated by the dissensions and quarrels among the priests themselves. The teachings of the Established Church are considered by the Nonconformists to be wrong and harmful, whilst the instruction given by Dissenters is pronounced by Churchmen to be heretical and dangerous. The Romish Church, in its turn, considers that Anglicans and Free Churchmen are alike so monstrous that they provide their own schools. Jewish priests also have their own religious classes. State-Churchmen and Nonconformists, however, agree that the Christian fetish-book be read in the schools, but that no definite theological doctrines be taught. This pleasant piece of clerical camouflage is known as "the compromise," and although it satisfies most of the clergy, who use it as the thin edge of the wedge, it still impedes education and fetters progress. For the clergy know only too well that so long as the Christian Bible is forced upon the children of this country their own bread and butter, and position as a sacred caste apart, are adequately safeguarded for another generation.

There are very grave reasons, however, why the Christian Bible should have no official place in the school programme. Its educational teaching is absolutely untrustworthy and out of date, and comes to us encumbered with the dust and rubbish of past centuries. What do our kindergarten teachers, for instance, make of such Biblical advice as "a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding"; "Thou shalt beat him with a rod"; "Chasten thy son and let not thy soul spare for his crying"; "Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones"? Such sacred injunctions, such inspired advice, may receive the blessings and approbation of all the hundreds of thousands of priests of Christendom; but they remain the essence of barbarism, and merit the attention of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, or even the police.

This is only part of the indictment. Large portions of this Bible are really unfit for children. If it were an ordinary volume instead of a fetish-book, it would be pilloried as immoral, and excluded from every school and every home in the country. For in its so-called sacred pages may be found plain, unvarnished accounts of rape, sodomy, unnatural vice, and all manner of Oriental frightfulness, written with all the love of detail peculiar to Eastern writers. The florid, heated rhetoric of the Old Testament scribes leaves

nothing to the imagination, and the least-lettered reader can appreciate its glowing periods. Oriental licence begins where Occidental laxity stops, and the ordinary sex-novel is a model of restraint compared with the lusciousness of most Eastern writers. Yet the forty thousand clergy of this country force this fetish-book, which contains all this nastiness, into the hands of millions of little children, knowing all the time that they dare not read the work in all its completeness to a mixed audience of adults.

There are still further objections. Why should children be taught that the universe was created six thousand years ago; that "Adam," "Noah," and "Methuselah" lived near a thousand years; and that "Melchisedek" had neither beginning nor ending of days? The science of philology gets no countenance from the farcical legend of the building of the Tower of Babel, nor from the petty story of the tongues of flame at Pentecost. The mistakes of Moses would fill a column of a daily newspaper. Indeed, there is neither history nor science worth troubling about in this sacred volume. The atmosphere is strange and unreal, like that of the *Arabian Nights* or *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. In the sacred pages a snake talks, a whale has a boarding-house in his stomach, a pigeon acts as a co-respondent, and a donkey makes speeches. There are also fiery chariots, unicorns, dragons, flaming horses, giants, satyrs, cockatrices, and many other ancient marvels, which, found in another book, would only excite wonder and amazement, and, maybe, smiles.

The long-discredited notion of devils being the cause of disease is perpetuated in this book. Fevers are rebuked, leprosy cured by a fig-poultice, and blindness removed by expectoration. Some Biblical personages die twice, and others, still more favoured, never trouble the undertaker at all. Witchcraft is still insisted upon as being true long after it has been discarded by every nation with the slightest pretence to civilization.

As for ethics, the least said the better. The lives and actions of the Old Testament heroes and patriarchs, and of the "Kings" of Israel and Judah are too closely paralleled in the pages of the Newgate Calendar. Some of the over-praised "Psalms of David" are a further proof that ancient theological ideas are, fortunately, no longer present-day ideals. In short, the Christian Bible is a vastly overrated book, which is exploited by a greedy and intolerant priesthood for their own sorry commercial purposes.

The world is changing very rapidly, and in a few years may develop in ways impossible to foresee. The rising generation cannot be properly educated whilst that education is "cribb'd, cabin'd, and confined" by a reactionary priesthood, whose principal repository of wisdom is a centuries' old Oriental Salmagundi of riotous and exuberant Eastern imagination and ignorance. The Christian Bible is absolutely out of harmony with modern principles and Democratic ideals. If Democracy is to live, first and foremost the Intellectuals will have to force the priests to let go their present strangle-hold on education. Otherwise it is doomed to impotence and decay, and the British people to be handicapped with the helpless perplexity of a backward race.

Democrats focus their attention on affairs in Russia, in Germany, in India, in Ireland, but neglect the far more vital matters at home. A clerical caste is incompatible with Democratic ideals, and this alleged sacred body owes its strength to the reverence paid to its fetish-book, which is inculcated in the schools. Priests are very clever. They get their fetish-book recognized by Parliament; they protect it from criticism by special laws directed against blasphemy;

they safeguard themselves in all possible directions, even going so far as to impose a ten-per-cent tax on agriculture for their own special benefit. They are wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice, whilst their opponents are scattered and poor. But there is a way out. What Parliament has made, it can also unmake. Remove the fetish-book from the State Church, and the power of Priestcraft will be broken. Then, and not until then, will Democracy be free to inaugurate the reign of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, and to bring the dreams of the pioneers into the realm of reality.

MIMNERMUS.

## Language and Religion.

THE sophisticated smile at the strange stories of savage peoples concerning the origin of the world and its ways. Primitive traditions of the causes of human speech seem to the white man supremely absurd. Yet how little less ridiculous were the treasured legends relating to the birth of language for centuries received as articles of faith throughout the Christian world! And what a long and furious contest was waged before we approached this problem in a scientific spirit!

In the earlier civilizations, thoughtful men speculated about the genesis of speech, its original form, and the reason of its diversities. With natural egotism each community regarded its native tongue as the special gift of the national divinity. It was bestowed by Oannes in Chaldea, by Thoth in Egypt, and by Jahveh in Israel.

The existence of a complete language is assumed in *Genesis*; God converses with Adam, and the subtle serpent with Eve, and they easily understand each other. The animals are named by Adam. Human speech appears fully developed, and the compilers of the Scriptural legend never dreamed that language is the product of a prolonged course of evolution.

All the traditions of mankind imply that their gods addressed them in their native tongue. So, as Hebrew was the speech of the Jews, their deity gave them a language he had specially devised, and consequently Hebrew dated from the creation. Moreover, it remained the universal language until the tongues were confused by Jahveh at the destruction of the Tower of Babel.

The Babel tradition was borrowed by the Jews from Babylon, and it was very little changed by the priestly scribes from the form in which it has since been deciphered from the Assyrian inscriptions. But the Jews cherished their deity's creation of Hebrew as a sacred verity, and this belief descended as a heritage to the later Christian Church.

One Christian Father, Gregory of Nyssa, probably influenced by the sceptical Lucretius, expressed doubts as to the truth of the accepted tradition. But he was alone in the wilderness. Other Fathers, including Origen, Augustine, and Jerome, championed the accepted view. St. Jerome declared that: "The whole of antiquity affirms that Hebrew, in which the Old Testament was written, was the beginning of all human speech." It was positively asserted that God's language was Hebrew, that he imparted it to Adam, and that all existing languages were derived from it when the Lord confused men's tongues when they impiously aspired to storm heaven by means of Babel's Tower.

This for centuries was the Church's teaching, and the very rare doubters were silenced or ignored. Nor were the Reformers any more rational than their Roman rivals. A Protestant is a man with a Bible,

and the Reformers merely transferred their allegiance from Catholic infallibility to that of the Scriptures. It was claimed that the writers of holy writ were divinely guided in every particular. It is true that there was much cavilling concerning Hebrew punctuation marks. Yet the unchanged attitude of the Roman Church was shown by Marini in 1593, when he declared in his huge folio that Hebrew, both in its letters and punctuations, was "divinely inspired at the very beginning of the world."

A few sceptical scholars voiced their dissent from the prevailing doctrine in the seventeenth century, but the traditional view retained its sway. Still, the sacred inerrancy of Hebrew punctuation was sullenly abandoned by all but the hopelessly irreclaimable, but both the France of Louis XIV., and the England of the Stuarts bowed before the preposterous pretension of Hebrew primacy. Even the celebrated Bentley in full enjoyment of his clerical pluralities was arrayed on the side of the angels. He was sufficiently time-serving to assert that: "We are sure from the names of persons and places mentioned in the Scriptures before the Deluge . . . that Hebrew was the primitive language of mankind, and that it continued pure above three thousand years until the captivity in Babylon."

The Renaissance favoured philological studies, and the discoveries of travellers made Europe acquainted with alien languages. Comparative philology then dawned, and in the seventeenth century a few choice scholars noted that Hebrew resembled some forms of speech more than others. The profound philosopher, Leibnitz, sat in the seat of the scornful, when he declared: "There is as much reason for supposing Hebrew to have been the primitive language of mankind as there is for adopting the view of Goropius . . . that Dutch was the language spoken in Paradise."

A time had now arrived when firmer foundations were possible for a real philological science, but the period was also productive of much learned ignorance and folly. Still, despite the reigning chaos, substantial progress was made.

A brilliant historian has directed attention to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* articles on languages published in succeeding editions. This splendid work of reference has ever reflected respectable opinion, and is very rarely in advance of the time. In its first edition (1771) the essay on philology is as nebulous as the shadow of a shade. A second edition appeared in 1780, when it was deemed prudent to assume a more definite attitude, for the author of the article states that: "There are some divines who pretend that Hebrew was the language in which God talked with Adam in paradise, and that the saints will make use of it in heaven, in those praises which they will eternally offer to the Almighty. These doctors seem to be as certain in regard to what is, as to what is to come."

Presumably as a result of complaints from pious subscribers, this passage was deleted in the next edition, and the writer, while stating "the best arguments on both sides," inclines to patronize the more popular opinion. This prudent plan was continued in the two following editions. Concession and compromise prevailed until 1859, when an article was published in the eighth edition in which time-honoured traditions were completely abandoned. In their place there appeared a sober sketch of philological progress. Since 1885, the *Britannica's* articles have been avowedly evolutionary, and constitute a model of their kind. Nor does there seem any danger of reaction.

The discovery of Sanskrit, the language of ancient India, proved the death-blow to Christian philology. The painstaking studies of Sir William Jones, Colebrooke, and other scholars, rendered the traditional doctrines untenable. The tongues of early Europe were obviously related to this Eastern speech, while the development of language was clearly demonstrated by the fact that the various Romance tongues of modern Europe have all been evolved from Latin dialects in late historical times. Similarly, English, German, Dutch, Flemish and the Norse languages all mainly rest on an earlier Teutonic tongue.

Even then, however, men of ability were so enslaved by religious prejudice that the newly discovered Sanskrit language and literature were denounced as fraudulent or anathematized as an invention of the Devil. But the most repugnant policy pursued by the disconcerted clericals was one of shameless mendacity. In 1856, a light of the Anglican Establishment, Archdeacon Pratt, after solemnly citing the names of several celebrated linguists, whose researches had proved fatal to the supernatural theory, boldly claimed them as supporters of the very doctrines they disavowed, and then declared that, "So singularly do their labours confirm the literal truth of Scripture." Even later, in 1870, that brazen swashbuckler, the Rev. Dr. Baylee, had the impudence to assert with the applauding concurrence of his pious supporters that: "With regard to the varieties of human language, the account of the confusion of tongues is receiving daily confirmation by all the recent discoveries in comparative philology."

Yet all this wicked lying has been in vain. No living linguist, with a reputation to lose, would dream of disputing the purely natural genesis and development of language from the rude gestures and articulations of primitive human kind, onward to the most exalted modes of spoken and written communication so far evolved.

T. F. PALMER.

## Christian Missions: Tried and found Wanting.

(Concluded from page 597.)

UPON their first approach to the heathen religions, says the report, the missionaries did not use the "Pauline tact or understanding." This is putting it very mildly. What they usually did was to declare that the native religions were inventions of Satan, and all the dead who had believed in them were suffering eternal torment, and all the living followers were due for the same fate. The missionaries also considered that the new convert's "best attitude to his own past was a clean breach." The cruelty of thus cutting off the convert from his natural environment, and his separation from his kindred and society, has often been insisted upon by those who have witnessed its evil effects. But the missionary is proof against merely human appeals when they conflict with religion. Moreover, did not Christ declare that he had "come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." (Matthew x. 35.) It had all been foreseen, and this was the fulfilment. Besides, the more suffering in this life, the greater the reward hereafter. But the Report condemns these proceedings altogether. It observes:—

This clean-breach method, experience has now amply shown mistaken. Its uncompromising attitude toward local tradition, social scheme, religion, required heroism in the convert and found its heroes.

But its cost in human suffering was like the cost of medieval surgery, and its results were mixed with failure. It was a cruel pedagogy, which required pruning down to the stalk the earlier growths of the spirit, and checking the momentum of an ancient current of life . . . For the made-over individual was out of working relation with the rest of his society. The mission was forced to assume some responsibility for his livelihood and even for his marriage within the Christian group. The position of these uprooted Christians was the more unhappy since their tutors in the faith were seldom inclined to admit them to social equality. (*Re-thinking Missions: A Layman's Inquiry After One Hundred Years*, pp. 30-31.)

Thus the new convert was cut off from his own people, and treated as a social inferior by his new religionists.

As the report points out, the eastern religions, Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism, are, like Christianity itself, on the defensive, fighting for their very existence. Of the spreading world-culture, it observes:—

The scientific and critical temper of that culture is in a peculiar degree deadly to their authority. What becomes of the issues between the merits of one sacred text and another when the sacredness of all texts is being denied? Why compare Mohammed and Buddha, when all the utterances of religious intuition are threatened with discard in the light of practical reason? It is no longer, which prophet? or which book? It is whether any prophet, book, revelation, rite, church, is to be trusted. All the old oracles are seeing a new sign: the scorn on the faces of students who know the experiments in anti-religion in Russia and non-religion in Turkey, and the actual religionlessness of much of western life. The chief foe of these oracles is not Christianity, but the anti-religious element of the philosophies of Marx, Lenin, Russell. The case that must now be stated is the case for any religion at all. (pp. 32-33.)

Thus it is, proceeds the report: "that Christianity finds itself in point of fact aligned in this world-wide issue with the non-Christian faiths of Asia." The old enemies are to become allies! And it is the future duty: "for every religion to be aware of and to stand upon the common ground of all religion."

There is a long discussion as to how the principal religions might co-operate. There is much cry and little wool; which is not surprising, when you attempt to imagine the feelings of a Catholic priest, a primitive Methodist, a Mohammedan, and a Hindu, being invited to preach from a basis of what they all commonly believed and nothing else!

We are told that the modern missionary movement had its origin in the Evangelical Revival in the eighteenth century: "Under its stimulus men felt impelled to go to the ends of the earth to save souls and build them into the church. The great personalities who led this movement were primarily evangelists." (p.61.) There was no idea of making life better here and now, all their efforts were confined to the future life, but, as our authors point out, they soon found that there was more involved in the business than this. For, unfortunately, the Lord, when he caused the confusion of tongues at Babel, and created a multiplicity of languages, failed to foresee the difficulties he was making for the spread of true religion among the nations, so that the poor missionaries "in order to proclaim their own message they were obliged to master languages, translate the Scriptures, and produce literature in those languages." Until to-day the educational interests tend to outrank the religious activity.

This tendency, however, has met with serious resistance: "For the idea that the missionary's task not only begins with the proclamation of the message, but also ends there, has remained solidly entrenched in the minds of many missionaries. There are not a few who regret to see the newer objectives introduced and oppose them, either through inability to alter their perspective, or through inertia, a formidable factor in all religious institutions." (p. 62.)

In Japan the Mission schools have to compete with the much more efficient government schools, pupils, we are told "preferring (even though they are of Christian families) to go to government schools, such is the prestige of government schools, both in education and in the securing of positions later on." (p. 145.) Again, far more pupils are taken on—for financial reasons—than the teachers can cope with. The report tells of "looking into a sea of boys' faces, 900 boys, in a huge assembly hall, with no atmosphere, spiritual or material, to quicken it. . . . 'How many of these boys are Christian?' one asks a teacher. 'About fifty,' he answers. Fifty out of 900—not an overwhelmingly Christian student body." (p. 147.) And as to their quality:—

It is generally agreed that the average educational standard is low: "Their standards must be raised if they are to compete." (p. 49.) These sixteen boys' schools, according to the Report on Christian Education in Japan, need at present \$2,230,000 gold for endowment to maintain them at their present standard of efficiency. In our judgment, that standard is not sufficient to justify their continued support: such justification would call for both a higher educational level and a more distinctive religious spirit. (pp. 147-148.)

In India some of the mission high schools are good, and some cultivated non-Christian Indians who were educated in them, "spoke in the main with gratitude of their schools. At one point the gratitude of the graduate commonly ceased. That related to the enforced attendance at daily chapel and the daily Bible study classes." The city schools, however, were found lagging behind the government schools:—

Too often the Indian teachers are ill-prepared (the fact that a majority of Indian Christians are from the depressed classes is a disadvantage when an educated class of Christian teachers is required); too often the principal himself has had training in theology, not in education, and has been pressed into the service by a board in need of filling a vacancy. How can a man so unprepared teach his Indian teachers better methods? (p. 127.)

Of the Indian village mission schools it may truthfully be said, they are schools only in name. The report quotes Alan Fraser as saying: "We have just visited nine far-out schools. It is about the most discouraging thing a mortal man can do. . . . It was unusual to find any pupil beyond the first pages of the primer; most seemed to be learning the alphabet 'forever.' Arithmetic occasionally reached multiplication by four, although addition was very uncertain. Bible stories and singing reached a high level, but altogether the village school seemed only a name." And further:—

A survey made by Dr. Mason Olcott of 161 villages showed that in 22 out of the 161 villages not a single man or woman could be found who was literate, and that in spite of the fact that several of these villages had had mission schools for 35, 25, and 15 years. The result drawn from his survey was that many of our schools leave no permanent educational result. The money expended on them is largely wasted. (p. 132.)

The Mission hospitals, of which we hear so much, come in for an equal share of criticism. It is admitted

that: "The place of evangelism in the mission hospital is a basic issue. Hospitals have been used from the first frankly as a means to that end, and even now—although changes are observable—there is a conscious dependence upon medical work to secure a hearing, and obtain converts. By many missionaries the use of medical service as an evangelizing device is earnestly defended. They point out that the sick are peculiarly accessible to spiritual comfort, and often seem eager to hear the message." They would—in return for free medical treatment.

In this connexion they cite the criticism of Gandhi, who asks: "Why should I change my religion because a doctor who professes Christianity as his religion has cured me of some disease, or why should the doctor expect or suggest such a change whilst I am under his influence?" Many of the hospitals are shown to be under-staffed, badly equipped, and out of date.

The report, as a whole, is the most damning ever published on the subject, the more so as coming from the Christian side.

W. MANN.

## For Our Youngsters.

### "JOLLY JACK'S WEEKLY."

*The Sunday Dispatch*, which was, once upon a time, a good newspaper, has now a weekly supplement for young people. It is called *Jolly Jack's Weekly*.

There is nothing the matter with it except its religious section; written by a priest.

We often hear that religion nowadays is merely a way of teaching people to be good and kind. It is said that all the old stories about a cruel, wicked God, such as one finds spread all over the Bible, are no longer taught or even believed in.

This is not true.

There are no Christian Churches which say plainly and officially that the Bible contains anything that is false and that many of its teachings are very bad indeed.

The newspaper which gives away this *Jolly Jack's Weekly* is, like the churches, willing to make people think it is up-to-date, scientific, and clever enough to know the truth from falsehood.

But its owners and editors either believe all the lies in the Bible, or they lack the courage to tell their readers what they really believe.

A Freethinker does not say that there are no good stories or wise sayings in the Bible. What he says is that the Bible is like every other book—partly good and partly bad.

We think that the worst thing about the Bible is that it is supposed to be the perfect book of a perfect God. This belief would be bad in the case of the very best book ever written—and we find in the Bible some very evil teaching and some very bad stories.

If you believe that God wrote it you dare not believe that any of it is wrong. That is why we find priests and pious editors continuing to talk nonsense about the old stories in the Bible—some of which are quite comic, some of them quite stupid, some altogether vile, and a few of them as good as any other old tales.

One of the worst stories in the Bible is the story of Abraham being told by God to sacrifice his son. It is one of the Bible "Plain Tales from the Hills," which leaves no room for doubt as to what was in the mind of the writer. It is a perfect picture of what the Old Testament writers believed about their God.

In the latest issue of *Jolly Jack's Weekly*, the Rev. E. L. Macassey (Vicar of a London parish) re-tells this story (in a series called "Children of the Bible"). He does not condemn the God who is said to have been so inhuman. He does not point out how barbaric were the days when such a God could have been worshipped. No, his religion ties his hands and closes his lips to that side of this Bible atrocity.

If this London priest to-day heard a man pretending that God ordered him to murder a child, the priest would most likely send for the police. (Wiser men would consider it a case for the lunatic asylum). But as the story is bound up with all that the Vicar's church, his religion, and his job stand for, we are treated to a Sermon intended for Boy Scouts to read: in fact this priest says that Isaac's story displays "the Scout spirit (Be Prepared) in perfection." He ends up thus: "The Moral of the story, boys and girls, is that there's nothing so pleases your parents as obedience with a smile."

That may be the teaching of clergymen. It is not commonsense. The "Casabianca" legend takes for granted that parents are all good and sensible. Isaac's father was a religious fanatic unworthy to be trusted with power over what Mr. Macassey calls "a jolly little chap full of jokes"—a human boy in fact. The untruths which old Abraham told the little fellow, to lure him into one of the most painful forms of death, were probably self-delusions.

There are many fine stories in ancient history of wise kind fathers, and of sensible good mothers. Mr. Macassey most likely sees in London every day families living in harmony, loving and protecting one another. That is what a family does best. That is the right sort of Father and Son to write about. Let us try to forget the horrible story of Abraham and Isaac.

UNCLE GEORGE.

### Acid Drops.

A few months ago, "Evans, of the Broke," expressed himself at Durban in the following terms:—

By nature I am piratical and rebellious—and so I must have principles or come to grief. My religion is that of the healthy primitive man.

I view with some apprehension the gathering storm clouds, the further reduction, and disarmament. What British sailor wouldn't.

Patriotism towards the country of one's birth or adoption become's one's bounden duty, otherwise one should get out and go elsewhere.

Patriotism is a family business, and I hate folks who won't fight for the family welfare.

Since then, Vice-Admiral Evans has had a god-sent and man-manipulated opportunity of putting his "principles" into effect, in the case of the native chief Tshekedi. We think our readers should be aware of the delicate mental and moral texture of those chosen by His Majesty's Government to represent the Empire on which the Sun never sets.

The case of the Bechuanaland chief Tshekedi is distinctly ugly. He has been deposed, it will be remembered, on account of his having tried a white man in a native court and having ordered him to be flogged. The white man was a notoriously bad character, who had been "living native," and who had been taking native girls into the bush. The evidence made it clear that the white authorities had several times been asked to deal with this particular offender—and others—but nothing had been done. The number of half-caste children is on the increase, the safety of the native women is not so secure as it might be. The Chief Tshekedi is a Christian convert, he has received an English education, is intelligent, well-behaved, and was appointed chief by, or with, the consent of the British authorities against his will. He has, moreover, carried out his duties with conspicuous success, until he dared to take this particular disreputable specimen of white humanity in hand. Then a naval officer comes along with a large and quite unnecessary display of guns and men, tries the chief, lectures him on the enormity of his offence and deposes him. The white man is merely ordered to leave the territory—for some other part of Africa, where he may continue to offer to the coloured people an example of the superiority of the white race.

The case is bad enough thus far. But worse remains behind. We are indebted to so staid an authority as the *Christian World*, for the information that as far back as June 18, the *Johannesburg Sunday Times* published

the information that General Smuts would open negotiations with Mr. Thomas for the annexation of Bechuanaland, and that the whole matter would be settled "within a few months." The announcement was brought to the notice of Mr. Thomas, and this valiant champion of liberty did not contradict it. On these grounds it looks as though the deposition of Tshekedi and the display of force at the "trial," is as much a put-up job as the Leipzig trial at present proceeding. First the insolent and wayward chief threatening the power of the British Government, then the display of armed force which enforces the lesson that every white in South Africa is in danger of having his or her throat cut unless the "nigger" is kept under, finally, the annexation of the country in the interests of peace, white culture, and civilization. It is an old game, but an ever-new one. And if a few new disturbances are required for the benefit of the British public, "providence" will see that they happen. These are the times when one could do with a few hours of Bradlaugh in the House of Commons.

We often call attention to the carelessness of the Lord in not clearly distinguishing between the faithful and the infidel. He seems often to have a nasty habit of dealing out his "favours" indiscriminately much to the disgust of those who believe so faithfully in him. The latest incidents we must record are the collapse of a church at Matamoros in Mexico, when thirty genuine Catholics were killed, through a terrible hurricane—just as if it had been the *Freethinker* office—and the death of three Trappist monks, doing God's own work in Chengtingfu, through sunstroke, just as if they had been mere Secularist lecturers. Perhaps the Church hadn't a lightning conductor and the monks worked bareheaded; in any case, surely it was the Lord's business to look after his own faithful elect. Or are these little incidents just sent to try us?

Father A. English, O.P., preaching in Leicester the other day asked, "What is the truth about the history of Science?" and answers it by, "Is it not a fact that the cloister has done more for science than any scientific college?" Ye gods and little fishes! One has only to consider the state of sanitation in Europe during the centuries of Roman Catholic domination, as one little example. The details are quite unprintable, and it is a fact that the terrible plagues which decimated Europe every century or less were due to the ignorance, stupidity and credulity which poured out of almost every cloister. Prayer and filth went hand-in-hand, and the unlucky people were forced to believe the dirty monks and friars who swarmed in every country and whose method of dealing with epidemics and disease was based upon Church teaching and the incredible nonsense of her saints. Fr. English mentions St. Albert and St. Thomas as having actually anticipated the conclusions of modern science! We expect one day they will be hailed as the greatest Materialists and the greatest Roman Catholic Atheists the world has ever seen. The real truth is simply that not until men put the Church on one side and investigated without the fear of hell, was any progress made. And Fr. English knows this as well as we do.

Holy souls, a pious writer tells us, "can best be helped by having Masses said for them." It seems also that the more Masses the better, and thirty Masses are particularly efficacious. We are not quite certain whether Masses are paid for, individually or collectively. At a rd. a time thirty Masses mean half-a-crown, and if the person who is paying for the Masses is desperately anxious for the Holy Soul which is in Purgatory to get out, he might be ready to have thirty Masses said every day which would give £45 12s. 6d. per year. If 100,000 of the elect did this in one town every year, quite a nice little sum could be collected—which is tantamount to saying that while the Church is ready to help any soul to be ejected from Purgatory, it always keeps a weather eye on the cash. No cash, no Mass, is a practical motto, and it explains why the Roman Catholic Church always manages to keep a sound balance in the bank.

A perplexed Catholic in a pious journal is quite disturbed at finding there are so many relics of St. Bartholomew, and so many of St. Philomena, that it is quite impossible for them all to belong to the genuine saints. These little perplexities cause no worry to priests. One of the relics at least must have belonged to the saint, so by venerating and adoring the lot, a good believing Catholic is bound to hit upon the right one, which is all that is necessary. This savours too much of the backer who makes certain of winning the Derby by backing all the horses which are running—which brilliant idea, no doubt, had its birth in the difficulties Catholics like the above encounter when they learn of the large number of shin bones, for example, which are claimed to be the only genuine ones, belonging to one saint. But the greater the difficulties, the more blessed the believer. And what more does Our Lord want?

A reverend writer in a Methodist journal has been talking about "The Search for Certainty." For our part, we can quite believe there is considerable searching going on among Protestant Christians. Most of the old certainties have become uncertainties. One of the certainties that remain is doubtless the Christian's belief that an Almighty God sent an indeterminate fraction of himself to be slaughtered here, in order that the Christian might be "saved." That is a certainty which will endure—the sublime egoism of the Christian can always be depended upon.

The Chairman of the Bristol magistrates recently ordered a youth of sixteen, charged with breaking into a house and stealing a stereoscope, to be put on probation, and said in addition, "We make it a special condition that you attend Sunday School regularly." A few hymns, a few prayers, and a few simple Bible stories, are expected to work wonders. The lives of the Patriarchs served up with faithfulness may indeed influence juveniles profoundly, improving their technique and supplying them with religious sanction for any criminal propensity they happen to possess. Points can be acquired from Jacob in crooked and underhand dealing; from Joseph as to the manipulation of corners in wheat and Big Business generally; from Abraham as to diplomatic lying; from Joshua as to ruthless militarism and general bloodiness. Solomon will illustrate how excess in wisdom tends to libidinousness, whilst for samples of every viciousness concentrated in one frail human vessel, they can be regaled with the example of David, the "man after God's own heart."

Melanesia needs Missionaries. The Bishop of Melanesia says so; the Bishop of Liverpool says so; Admiral Sir William E. Goodenough says so; the Rev. D. E. Graves, from the Solomon Islands, says so. What the Melanesians say is of course of no consequence. A new mission-ship, *Southern Cross*, has just been dedicated in Liverpool, and all that is now wanted is missionaries. A determined effort to get them has just been made at the India Buildings, Liverpool. Note the methods employed in this year of grace. Admiral Goodenough tells them "A lot of nonsense is talked about savage, treacherous natives. As President of the Geographical Society I come in touch with nearly all the great travellers, and everyone of them has something good to say of native peoples." Exactly! Nothing could be truer. The vicious, underhand, bloodthirsty side of native races only becomes observable when it is realized that the land they possess and the wealth it contains could in the interests of civilization be better managed by Christian peoples. Meanwhile, in order to persuade the young clerics that Melanesia provides for them comparatively comfortable jobs, the truth slips out.

Wouldn't it be a fine thing, says the Rev. D. E. Graves of the Solomon Islands, if some young priests from this diocese would go out to Melanesia? They should not be deterred by the word "Cannibalism," for "No native would ever eat a white man if he could help it. I asked one the reason, and he replied, 'Because you

taste of soap.'" Well-washed Christians are of course now the rule, even if there are exceptions, and if there is any truth in this story, which we more than doubt, then we can rely upon the next cargo of missionaries landing in Melanesia being not only well-washed, but excessively washed. But it was not ever thus. Historically, the connexion between godliness and cleanliness has always been very remote, and even in Voltaire's day the odour of sanctity was distinctly unpleasant.

A correspondent has favoured us with a list of some of the mottoes of the ancient Trade Guilds, suggesting that they badly need bringing up to date. For instance, he thinks that the sentiment over the Royal Exchange "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" is obviously requiring the additional words "is the Landlord's." Other emendations occur to us, and we should be glad indeed if any of them found favour with the bodies concerned. Carpenter's Hall might replace "Honour God" by "Live by Rule," and Haberdashers' Hall, "Serve and obey," by "The Customer is always right." The Waxchangers' Hall might take "How far that little candle throws his beams." The Guildhall might make its motto of more universal appeal by substituting "God Help us!" for "God Direct us," and the Girdlers' Hall could scrap "Give Thanks to God," and substitute "What we lose on the Swings, we gain on the Roundabouts." The Worshipful Fishmongers could drop with advantage the irrelevant "All worship be to God only," giving in its place the short and snappy "Eat more Fish." "Unto God be the Honour and Glory" of the Drapers' Hall should make way for "Bless thee, Bottom! thou art translated!" We hesitate to alter the best of the lot, that of the Goldsmiths' Hall, "Justice, Queen of Virtues," but we are afraid it will have to go, and "Other Times, other Standards" take its place. As for "My trust is in God alone," and "Our trust is in God," of the Clothworkers' Hall and the Saddlers' Hall respectively, we cannot improve on the American addendum, "All others Cash."

### Fifty Years Ago.

THE Rev. W. Sharman preached his farewell sermons at Plymouth to large congregations. In the morning he chose his text from the 16th verse of the 1st chapter of Romans—"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." In the course of his talk he took occasion to reaffirm and re-enforce his views concerning the Christian faith. With regard to his resignation of the pulpit, and its causes and consequences, he remarked: The men whose imprisonment aroused my indignation and put on me the duty of agitating for the repeal of laws alien to the spirit of Christ and disgraceful to his name, are still in prison. Numerous petitions for the release of the prisoners, signed by men of high repute in the worlds of science and religion, have been disregarded by a Home Secretary, whose latest utterances on the subject prove that he does not understand even the nature of the charge tried before the jury. The laws that have caused us to see the shameful spectacle of the transfer of the martyr's crown from the defenders of Christianity to its assailants have received the condemnation of the Lord Chief Justice of England, but they are still in force. They can only be repealed in one way—the way I am taking. Your kindness during the past few months has made it abundantly clear that if I chose I might remain with you. To do so would hamper me in my work, and would not serve your interests. There is one misrepresentation sure to recur again and again in near coming time against which I wish this morning specially to protest. It is the allegation that my resignation is an evidence of a change of faith. That is not so. Although I cease to be your minister, I remain a Unitarian and a Christian, and my name will continue to occupy a place in the list of Unitarian ministers. To-day I repeat the saying with which I began my ministry among you—"I am not ashamed of the gospel."

*The "Freethinker," September 30, 1883.*



# THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE,

EDITORIAL

61 FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

Telephone No. : CENTRAL 2412.

## Bradlaugh's Burial.

[This poem was originally written to be read at the Memorial Meeting to be held at the Hall of Science immediately after Bradlaugh's death. It has not, we believe, been republished in Massey's poetical works. The moral of the poem is one that should appeal strongly to Freethinkers whose appreciation of Bradlaugh should lead them to work for the cause for which he lived.]

"Sponge out the record, make tardy amends  
With tears of contrition that shame as they flow:  
Blot out the Past, forgive and be friends;  
Up from his tomb may the Olive grow!"

OH! NO!

WE DO NOT BURY THE HATCHET SO!

They who have harried him till he is dead,  
For their creeds accursed shall reap as they sow,  
Not at his tomb is the last word said;  
We shall pay back to them more than we owe!

OH! NO!

WE DO NOT BURY THE HATCHET SO!

Over his ashes they pray for peace  
Who have helped to quench his fiery glow.  
But not for an hour will our battle cease:  
Our spoils of triumph his tomb shall strow!

OH! NO!

WE DO NOT BURY THE HATCHET SO!

Do they think we have ever forgotten the way  
He was badgered and bandied to and fro?  
Do they think we have ever forgotten that day  
Of the cruellest Gladiatorial Show?

OH! NO!

WE DO NOT BURY THE HATCHET SO!

'Tis one more lost of unnumbered lives  
Wrecked, or taken by torture slow!  
'Tis the common lot of the Thinker who strives  
To the death, for Tyranny's overthrow.

OH! NO!

WE DO NOT BURY THE HATCHET SO!

Birds of the night from their hiding place  
Will venture to mount their middens and crow.  
There are those who will feel he has turned his face  
On the other side for their safer blow!

OH! NO!

WE DO NOT BURY THE HATCHET SO!

Deeds, not words, for our Champion brave;  
Deeds that will lighten the weight of woe.  
I may not stand by his Wintry grave,  
But I shall be with you when facing the foe.

OH! NO!

WE DO NOT BURY THE HATCHET SO!

Rise to the Hero's stature in soul!  
Cower not down with the curse laid low.  
Let the loud war-drums of the fighters roll  
Defiance, as on for the goal we go.

OH! NO!

WE DO NOT BURY THE HATCHET SO!

GERALD MASSEY

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R. McCLUSKY.—We regret that we are unable to find space for your letter replying to Mr. Moss. We have inserted a letter from Miss Conquest, which appears to cover the essential questions at issue, and we must let the correspondence stop at that.

G. BURGESS.—Sorry we have been compelled slightly to curtail your letter.

A. DAVIES.—Many thanks for cuttings.

H.C.—You are quite right in your recollections. Bradlaugh complained that "each week he [the editor of *Reynold's*] gives publicity to some ridiculous statement intended to be prejudicial to myself." At a much later date we had to complain to the then editor of the false and misleading news published concerning the National Secular Society.

H. MURPHY (Liverpool).—Thanks for useful cuttings.

*The "Freethinker" is supplied to the trade on sale or return. Any difficulty in securing copies should be at once reported to this office.*

*The Secular Society, Limited Office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.*

*The National Secular Society's Office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.*

*When the services of the National Secular Society in connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, 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.*

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*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.

To-day (October 1) Mr. Cohen will lecture in the Piccadilly Theatre, Manchester, on "Charles Bradlaugh," at 7 p.m., doors open at 6.30. He may take occasion to comment on some of the recent newspaper notices of Bradlaugh, some of which are, at any rate, in sad need of additions. We must see that the real Charles Bradlaugh is placed before the public.

There were but a very few seats unoccupied at the Bradlaugh Demonstration in the Friends' House on Saturday last, despite the heavy storm which came on just before the time at which the meeting was to commence. Every seat had been sold days before. Freethinkers came from many parts of the country, a contingent of twenty-eight coming from Leicester. It is a pity that a larger hall could not have been secured, but none were available for that date. The hall was tastefully decorated with flowers in the Bradlaugh colours, and a painting of Bradlaugh, by the Hon. John Collier, was hung at the back of the platform and illuminated.

The speeches, which are noted elsewhere in this issue, were all good, and were well received. The only general criticism we have to make, is that some of the speakers made the mistake of delivering essays on subjects rather than on Bradlaugh in connexion with the subject. Professor Laski's speech as Chairman was excellent in both matter and manner. We know little of him as a speaker, but our opinion of him was enhanced by the performance.

Mr. G. B. Shaw delivered a very pointed speech, full of good things, and it was appreciatively followed by all. There was, however, too great an emphasis on Bradlaugh attacking the official religion of this country. Bradlaugh

confined himself to nothing so harmless. His attack was on *all* religion, official and non-official, and on religion wherever it existed. He was "thorough" in both thought and speech. Mr. Shaw also fell into the jargon of the journalist when he said that if Bradlaugh were alive to-day he would realize that a "negative system" is not enough. This piece of downright nonsense marred a very fine speech.

This is not the place to say much of Mr. Cohen's speech. It will be enough to say that he received quite an ovation on rising, and was enthusiastically applauded when he sat down. The speech had the effect of rousing the audience to enthusiasm, and after another good speech from Mr. Charles Bradlaugh Bonner, grandson of the great C.B., the audience dispersed, inspired, we hope, by what was a most memorable meeting.

Very little appeared in the press concerning the meeting. Such as did appear was concerned mainly with Mr. Shaw. The one good thing about this phenomenon is that Freethought in this country owes nothing to the press, and cannot therefore be affected by it. When the British press deals fairly with Freethought the assistance of the press will not be needed.

After saying this, it is just to remark that good articles on Bradlaugh have appeared in the *Daily Mail* of September 26, and in the *Manchester Guardian* of September 25. A fine article by Professor Harold Laski appeared in the *Daily Herald* for September 23.

On Sunday last Mr. Cohen visited Leicester. The Secular Hall was full, and the lecture on Bradlaugh was received with the greatest appreciation. Mr. Hassell occupied the chair, and what he had to say marked him as one in whom the Leicester Freethinkers may have the fullest confidence. We were sorry that ill-health prevented our old friend Mr. Sydney Gimson from being present. The Secular Hall without his presence, whenever anything special is afoot, seems to lack something.

As we anticipated, our Bradlaugh Number has been even a greater success than was the Ingersoll issue. But we printed the largest number of any one issue of the paper that has ever been printed, with a view to keeping it on sale for several months. I do not think that there has ever been published a cheaper threepennyworth than this number, and we are looking to our friends to see that it is the most useful one. We can still send it out at twelve copies for 3s., twenty-five for 5s. 6d., and fifty copies for 10s.—all post free.

We have also had printed a special contents sheet, and we shall be obliged if our friends will induce their newsagents to exhibit copies. The poster will be serviceable so long as there are copies to send.

Mr. F. A. Davies, a one-time lecturer on the N.S.S. platform, and whose membership of the N.S.S. dates back to 1884, writes concerning our Bradlaugh issue:—

Hearty congratulations on the Bradlaugh number. It is something that all the "Saints" should preserve  
"And dying, mention it within their wills  
Bequeathing it as a rich legacy unto their issue."

We have received a very large number of congratulatory letters on the issue, and although we doubled the printing order, it is likely that we may have to reprint. The sale should be good for several months.

The Stockport Branch N.S.S. has been carrying on an excellent press campaign, which should help considerably towards successful meetings during Mr. G. Whitehead's visit to Stockport, commencing to-day (October 1) and continuing during the week. Details of meetings will be found in the Lecture Notices column, and any other in-

formation concerning the Branch may be obtained from its energetic secretary, Mr. G. Burgess, 98 Athens Street, Stockport.

Mr. R. H. Rosetti will visit Leicester to-day (October 1) and speak for the Leicester Secular Society in the Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate. The subject "The Ethics of Persecution," is one which should arouse a deal of interest, and we hope to hear there was a full house.

Mr. B. A. Le Maine has a number of friends in Birmingham who will be pleased to note that he will be speaking for the local N.S.S. Branch in the Bristol Street Schools to-day (October 1), on "Christianity and Intolerance." The Branch's winter arrangements include a series of meetings in the same hall, and local saints are asked to attend and help to make the movement in Birmingham more representative.

The Study Circle, under the direction of Mr. A. D. McLaren, will meet every Monday evening, commencing October 2, in the offices of the N.S.S., 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4, at 8. Whilst all interested in the Circle are invited to attend, Mr. McLaren makes a special appeal to young Freethinkers desiring to become speakers on the Society's platform, to take advantage of the facilities offered.

We must apologize for the absence in these columns of many letters that have reached us. Some we are quite unable to find space for, but some we are printing, although they are much behind time. The preparation of the Bradlaugh issue has involved a deal of extra labour, and it was worth it, but with extra lectures on hand, we must again request our correspondents to grant us as much patience as possible.

## The Bradlaugh Centenary Celebration.

IN spite of the inclement weather, the large hall in the Friends' House, Euston Road, was packed last Saturday evening (September 23). There was no mistaking the enthusiasm of the large audience, and their unflinching loyalty to the great name of Charles Bradlaugh. London Freethinkers and their provincial comrades rallied round the flag of Freethought, the flag carried so proudly by Iconoclast, and never lowered during his forty years of battle with reaction, and it is safe to say that the evening proved a landmark in the history of Freethought. Bradlaugh was a many-sided man, and there must have been a number of those present opposed to some of his political views. But they never wavered for an instant in their devotion to the memory of one of the greatest fighters for freedom this country ever produced.

A long list of speakers was provided which obliged the Chairman, Professor Harold Laski, to limit their speeches. One felt that in their enthusiasm they each could have held the audience for hours, but it was very interesting to compare the speakers, who each dealt with some particular aspect of Bradlaugh's career, which—for them—centred around their own particular subject.

Professor Laski, in opening, read out a long list of the societies who joined in the evening's proceedings, and also letters of regret for their absence from Mr. Charles A. Watts and Mr. F. Maddison, and one from the Secretary of the late Dr. Annie Besant, written some months ago. In his short, but finely expressed opening speech, Prof. Laski pointed out that we were

not there merely to honour a great man, but to renew our faith in the causes for which he stood. Freedom, the freedom for which Bradlaugh fought for all his life, was in danger, and we should continue the fight in his spirit, with his iron determination, relentless persistence and high courage. There never was a greater liberating force than that represented by Bradlaugh, who was loved by the common people of England, who recognized him as their friend and champion. He left a great heritage which none could take from us. We must follow in his tradition and hand down the torch of his conscious ideals.

Mr. J. P. Gilmour, the Chairman of the Directors of the Rationalist Press Association, followed with a written sketch depicting his memories—vivid, visual and auditory—of Charles Bradlaugh. Mr. Gilmour described his personality and the impression made upon him by the man who was, in his opinion, the most powerful orator that ever moved an audience, and concluded that Bradlaugh must ever rank as one of the greatest men in the history of the nineteenth century.

The next speaker was Judge Cluer, whose personal connexion with Bradlaugh over sixty years ago, when his Honour was an undergraduate at Oxford, provided delightful reminiscences. It was in 1874 that Bradlaugh determined upon an onslaught on Oxford. He hired a hall, but his audience numbered only about forty, and he therefore failed to make an impression on that impregnable rock of orthodoxy. Later Bradlaugh came to Judge Cluer's rooms and entertained Mr. Asquith "with interesting conversation and excellent fun." With some entertaining remarks on the Knowlton trial and the Newdegate case, the Judge concluded a fine tribute to his old friend.

Mr. Arthur B. Moss followed with personal memories of his old chief, whom he first heard, as a youth of eighteen, over sixty years ago. He added his testimony to Bradlaugh's greatness, not only as a lecturer but as a debater. Mr. Moss had heard the debate with the "scurrilous and malicious" Brewin Grant, and also the one with Dr. McCann, "a gentleman and well worthy of Bradlaugh's steel." Mr. Moss insisted that Charles Bradlaugh was one of the greatest reformers humanity ever had.

Lord Snell of Plumstead, was then called upon—the Chairman remarking that he was, however, better known to most members of the audience as Harry Snell. Lord Snell commenced by asking how could he compress the vivid memories of ten and the influence of fifty years in a short speech? He owed an immense debt to his old chief, and gave an enthusiastic and impassioned account of the way in which Bradlaugh, ever on the side of subject races, championed the cause of the Zulus and the people of India.

The next speaker was Mr. George Bernard Shaw, whose speech was, as might have been expected, full of witty paradoxes. Mr. Shaw agreed that Bradlaugh was a many-sided man, but he was, he thought, pre-eminently a man of one subject. Bradlaugh recognized that the great question in this country was the religious one, and Mr. Shaw agreed with him. He pointed out how people had unconsciously changed on this question by citing two recent lectures broadcasted by Dean Inge and the Bishop of Chichester, on Jesus, both of which never referred to Christ as other than a man. Mr. Shaw not only agreed with Bradlaugh's Atheism, but claimed he was ten times more of an Atheist himself. Bradlaugh hated the wrong thing, and went for it. We could do with a few more men like him. Dr. C. V. Drysdale, who followed, spoke more particularly with reference to Bradlaugh's

connexion with Malthusianism, and his great stand over the Knowlton pamphlet. The famous trial, he thought, was one of the greatest and most significant in history, and the fall in the birth-rate in most civilized countries was directly attributable to it.

Although an Anglo-Catholic, Mr. F. Verinder, who followed, gave praise to Bradlaugh as a champion of Land Reform. Though disagreeing with Henry George on both the population question and Socialism, Bradlaugh gradually began to agree with the American Single Taxer on many questions relating to Land. Mr. Verinder gave some interesting details of Bradlaugh's fight on this one question alone.

Mr. Chapman Cohen said that he was standing there not as one who had known or had heard Bradlaugh, but as one who by the turn of circumstances, was standing in the position once occupied by Charles Bradlaugh, and so he represented, however poorly, the fighting Freethinkers of this country. Much had been deservedly said respecting the many directions in which Bradlaugh worked, but the greatness of Bradlaugh was to be sought and found in the fact that what he accomplished was done without compromise, and in the face of the fiercest opposition. Bradlaugh was a leader who gave people what he felt they needed, and not what they wished to hear. He threw into the face of English society the three tremendous challenges of Malthusianism, Atheism, and Republicanism. That people misunderstood these things was only a reason for clear exposition, and that the forces against him were wealthy and powerful was the occasion for a more determined attack. It was this that made Bradlaugh great, it was the expression of a great force in human affairs. But much as was accomplished there was still much to be done. The Blasphemy Laws remained religion was still in the schools, the terrorism exercised by religion in business and in politics still existed. If there were more of the Bradlaugh spirit about, this would soon be altered. We cannot all be Bradlaughs, but we can all, within the limits of our opportunities do something to advance the principles he taught us, and the cause for which he stood.

The last speaker was Mr. Charles Bradlaugh Bonner—Bradlaugh's grandson. As the last man in, he asked the audience to be generous to him. He spoke for his mother, who shared with him the deepest gratitude for all the kind things which had been said by the various speakers, and he was pleased to see among the audience so many young people. Mr. Bonner dealt particularly with Bradlaugh's connexion with Ireland, and his championing of the Irish people—all the more remarkable because three quarters, at least, of the Irish Members of Parliament had violently opposed him during his great struggle to take his seat. Bradlaugh was always against violence and force—except the force of reason, logic and law. Our freedom was menaced, and we may have to fight for it once again. It was the one ideal for our younger men—a renewal of the spirit of Bradlaugh, who believed in freedom for all.

It need hardly be said that all the speakers were loudly acclaimed, and those present will ever remember as a red-letter day in their lives, this Demonstration in honour of the indomitable Charles Bradlaugh.

H.C.

---

'Tis not in mortals to command success,  
But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it.

*Addison's Cato.*

## Death of Annie Besant.

THE death of Annie Besant on September 20 was not unexpected. For some time her health had been of the poorest, and from various sources it would appear that for several weeks she was almost oblivious to what was going on around her. At the age of eighty-six, with her powers completely exhausted, her death comes as just one more link broken between her and those of her own generation, to whom she stood as one of the most lovable and the most interesting of memories. Death to such a woman comes as a painless close to a life spent in the pursuit of what she believed to be true and just.

Her public life began with her association with Charles Bradlaugh, and until she joined the Theosophists the two were identified with the work of the National Secular Society. It will always be a source of pride to that Society that the most redoubtable man and the most remarkable woman of the last half of the nineteenth century were identified with its policy and its propaganda.

She was the wife of the Rev. Frank Besant, a naturally intolerant clergyman, who believed to a considerable extent that "Man was the head of the woman as Christ is the head of the Church," and who expected complete acquiescence on the part of his wife to his own views. The marriage was in every sense an unfortunate one. Her own reading set her on the quest for truth; her husband held that it was not her duty to seek for truth, but to accept the truth as laid down by the Church. In the end Mrs. Besant, a young and beautiful woman with two children, was forced to separate from her husband, being practically given the alternative of conforming to her husband's views or leaving his house. She chose the latter, and found refuge for some time with Moncreu Conway and his wife. She became acquainted with Thomas Scott, who served to help her still further along the road to a complete break with Christianity. Then her acquaintance with Bradlaugh ranged her definitely on the side of militant Atheism. For years she shared Bradlaugh's work and his opinions. She was with him in the Malthusian struggle, and in his Free-thought work.

On the platform she was an instantaneous success. I never heard her during her Free-thought career, but I heard much about her. By general consent she was one of the most fascinating of women speakers. Even those who disagreed with her, either as Secularist speaker or as Theosophical advocate loved to listen to her marvellous oratory.

One result of the Knowlton case was the loss of her daughter. A bigoted husband and a bigoted judge combined to take her daughter from her charge—on the avowed grounds that Mrs. Besant's Malthusian and Free-thinking opinions made her unfit to have care of a young girl. The judge shielding his own brutal bigotry behind the power which the law gave him, said of the mother that "respectable ladies would not associate with her."

She worked the harder for the insult, and for her sorrow at giving up her child. In addition to her purely Free-thought propaganda she worked on the London School Board, led the match-girls in their endeavours to secure better conditions of labour, was an ardent advocate of Malthusianism, of the rights of women and of Socialism.

It has been left for Mr. Bernard Shaw to say the silliest of all things to a representative of the *Daily Sketch*. "She was a woman who went through many phases, and none of them left much trace." Mr. Shaw is at times apt to take himself far too seriously. Such a statement as that made by Mr. Shaw—who is always clever and interesting rather than profound—is absurd. Mrs. Besant was not a great thinker, she probably never had half a dozen original thoughts on any subject, but to say that her work left little trace is ridiculous.

Mrs. Besant's break with Free-thought came with her adoption of Theosophy of which curious amalgam of spurious science and bastard philosophy she has been for some years the high priestess. But no greater compliment was paid to the quality of the individual members of the National Secular Society than that which followed her breaking away. It is not using figurative

language to say that everyone loved her. She was "our Annie." She had won all hearts, and there was hardly a member who would not have gone through fire and water for her, but when she announced her break with the Society, while tears were plentiful, there was not a single person that followed her. Their affection remained unchanged, their admiration weakened, but their own opinions were too solidly based to be thrown away by another's personal revolution.

Her closing years have been devoted to the cause of Indian reform, which brought her on several occasions into conflict with the authorities. But she had been brought up in a school of fighters that were not easily cowed, and she will be remembered in India for the work done. She founded the Central Hindu College at Benares, and the Central Hindu Girls School. She also played an important part in establishing the Hindu University. On the purely political side she formed the Indian Home Rule League.

The newspaper notices of her death have been deservedly complimentary. She was without doubt one of the most remarkable women of her age. Beautiful and fearless, she never recked whether a movement with which she identified herself was profitable or popular. It was enough that she believed it to be right. And when the balance is cast, it may be that this unswerving desire to be in the right, the courage to follow what appears to be the truth, irrespective of where it leads and what it costs, may be of greater importance to the race than truth itself.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## For Children—and Others.

OLD beliefs, especially when they are backed up by religious or other authority, die hard, and for that reason, perhaps, most people of the present-day continue to think of the ancient inhabitants of these islands as savages, half-naked and wholly primitive.

Dr. T. F. G. Dexter, whose researches into controversial questions have already been mentioned in these columns (see my article in the *Freethinker* of July 9, 1933), has just published a very valuable little book, *A Pre-history Reader* (Watts, 1s. 6d.). Whilst it is primarily intended for the school-child, and is written in the simplest possible language, there are not many adults who would not learn something new by a perusal of it.

Beginning at the time of Julius Cæsar, he traces the history of the inhabitants of Great Britain, as far as it can be ascertained, back to the days of Piltown Man, estimated as being 800,000 years ago.

He shows how little there is, in fact, to be said for the view that the men popularly known as the "Ancient Britons" were uncultured savages, and proves that it was only the misunderstanding of the ancient civilization by the Romans that gave us our ideas to-day.

The Church of to-day, by an ingenious piece of philology, he traces back to the stone circles of the ancients, and thus shows that we are justified in saying that the oldest Church in Britain is Stonehenge.

In fact, the book is full of stimulating reading, and is as interesting as any novel, besides being far more instructive.

I hope (though I feel doubtful about it) that some of the more progressive of our Education Authorities will adopt it for their classes—but in the meantime, I advise all who have children, nephews or nieces whom they wish to grow up with independent minds, capable of judging for themselves, and not too submissive to blind authority, to get this book.

If our knowledge of Ancient Man, and the early history of civilization progresses, as it looks like progressing, under the *ægis* of such men as Professor Elliot Smith, and Dr. Dexter, the children will thank you. And anyhow, you will, I am sure, enjoy reading the book yourself!

JOHN ROWLAND.

## Religion at the Antipodes

### THE RELIGIOUS PRATTLE OF A BENIGHTED DOCTOR.

It would be wearisome to you for me to send you, with comments, the many clippings that might be made from the Sydney dailies. Here, however, is one that I could not let pass, if only for the interest it may possess for some of your London readers. It is from the *Daily Telegraph*, with a top-heading "Not Atheists," followed by the sub-heading, "Doctors' Training and Religion."

The paragraph is as follows:—

"Because a doctor's training is more scientific than theological, he is not necessarily prone to Atheism. There is no conflict between science and religion. That's an antiquated idea." Those observations were made last night by a Sydney doctor when discussing a statement made by Rev. W. P. Hodge, formerly of London, in the Chapter House of St. Andrew's Cathedral, that the doctors of London were nearly all Atheists.

First, is it not sheer impudence for this Sydney doctor to presume to speak for the doctors of London?

But let that pass.

Biblically, illness and sickness are generally regarded as visitations by an angered Deity, to be borne with meekness and content; the Biblical view of the mentally afflicted is that for the most part, they are possessed of evil spirits, to be dispersed by the whipping of the victims; and to the extent that the Bible prescribes any cure, beyond what I have here hinted, it may be said to consist of "the laying on of hands."

Do present-day doctors, in dealing with patients, endorse the diagnosis and follow the treatment thus set forth in the Bible? Would not the doctor who was idiotic enough to seek to do so be ignominiously ejected from the profession? And it is not clear that, in their complete departure from Biblical methods, the doctors of the world are flatly refuting the statement that there is no conflict between science and religion?

"An antiquated idea!" I rather like these words so fatuously used by the Sydney doctor. All I hope is that, if ever it is my lot to be attended by him, he does not himself prove to be as antiquated in his professional skill as he is in grasping the fact that the Bible—in medical science as in every other branch of science—is just a repository of rubbish.

FRANK HILL.

Sydney, New South Wales.

## Correspondence.

### THE SLUMS.

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—May I, through the medium of your paper, answer a few points in a letter written by Mr. Moss, and published in your issue of the third of this month.

This gentleman held the post of School Attendance Officer in 1880, an archaic date in which many of us were either in their earliest infancy or not even born. I am of a generation which was taught respect for age, but for all that I would draw Mr. Moss's attention to the fact that:

(a) To-day, a writer is not necessarily a journalist.

(b) A woman's effort to save her unfortunate brothers and sisters, the slum people, from further degradation, is not of necessity a "journalistic stunt"—Mr. Moss's own words.

(c) A Sanitary Official has the right to enter a house, but the fully qualified nurse, the symbol of help and goodfellowship, is welcomed with open arms in the slums. She is besieged in the streets, and on the stairs, of every house she enters by women clamouring for her assistance, her advice, for her to come in and look at the baby, or at the foul conditions in which a State allows the family to live, or just to drop in and have a friendly cup of tea.

(d) Quite by herself, and at any hour of day or night, a hospital nurse can walk down any street and through any thoroughfare in which the police dare only appear in couples.

(e) Whereas Mr. Moss, to quote his letter, has no hesitation in saying that the description of the slums in my book, *The Naked Truth*, is absolutely wrong, and my statements concerning the slums are monstrously and ridiculously absurd, other people of far greater enlightenment than the aged gentleman, men such as Town Clerks, Town Councillors and Medical Officers have only been too pleased to help me in my investigations whilst from all over the country, and including London, I daily receive letters begging me to continue my fight for the salvation of the slum people.

Mr. Moss writes that he is quite satisfied that the sanitary condition of London was never better than it is to-day. Were he to break from the eighties and get into touch with some slum expert of to-day, he would be able to get the right angle of those conditions by *visiting them himself*. A visit to any of London's criminal slums, and provincial slums as appalling, would show him the helpless, hopeless slum people the State condemns to live in vermin-infested houses, the swarms of mice, flies, cockroaches and snails, the rat-ridden backyards, the playgrounds of countless *British children*, the filthy and inadequate sanitary arrangements, the total lack of cooking, washing and bathing facilities, of light, ventilation, privacy and space, the *scandalous* overcrowding.

You can criticize a book with impunity but you *cannot deny the evidence of bricks and mortar*.

I am making a tour of the provincial slums at the moment, and find words totally inadequate to describe the horrors I have seen in every city excepting in the go-ahead City of Carlisle.

The Zoo Authorities look after the Zoo inmates.

London, and the Provincial Cities, which allow uncountable numbers of their citizens to live like brute-beasts in kennels, rookeries and dens, would do well to follow the Zoo's example.

JOAN CONQUEST.

### RELIGION IN POLITICS.

SIR,—All your readers will agree that the Labour Party has increased, if not intellectually, at least numerically during the last dozen years. This period has seen an increase in various religious groups, especially the Roman Catholics, who, though only a minority, have brought their militancy to such a pitch of perfection that such Socialist items in the Party's programme as "Secular Education," and "Birth Control," have been eliminated at the behest of this reactionary religious caucus.

I hope all members of the Labour Party who are Free-thinkers, will back up the efforts of Mr. J. H. Round in his attempt to bring the party leaders round to common sense.

G. BURGESS.

## Obituary.

CHARLES MOORE.

THE older Freethinkers in West Ham will hear with regret of the death of Charles Moore, which took place on September 13, in the Poplar Hospital. For some time he had suffered painfully from asthma and bronchitis, eventually followed by pneumonia which brought about death, at the age of seventy-eight years. For many years he was a very active worker in the West Ham Branch N.S.S., and was well known for his sterling character and adherence to principles. Freethought became part of his very being, and he never lost any opportunity of exposing the nature of religion, and the objects of the clerical salesmen. The interment took place on Monday, September 18, at the East London Cemetery, Plaistow, London, E., where in the presence of a number of relatives and friends a Secular Service was conducted by Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

COUNCILLOR R. H. MINSHULL.

We regret to record the death of Councillor R. M. Minshull of Sheffield. Mr. Minshull took a very active part in local politics, and in various local movements for the benefit of the inhabitants of Sheffield. He was a good Freethinker and a regular reader of this journal. We recall his taking the chair at some of our meetings in Sheffield, and in our intercourse with him we had formed a very high opinion of his character and attainments.

### National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 22, 1933.

THE President, Mr. Chapman Cohen, in the chair.

Also present: Messrs. Quinton, Hornibrook, A. C. Rosetti, Moss, Clifton, Wood, Le Maine, W. J. W. Easterbrook, McLaren, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., Mrs. Grant, and the Secretary.

Minutes of previous meeting read and adopted. Financial Statement presented. New members were admitted to Glasgow, Bethnal Green, Swansea, Sunderland, Dublin, Derby, Bradford, North London Branches, and the Parent Society. Under correspondence matters connected with Newcastle-on-Tyne, Brighton, Birmingham, Bradford, Burnley, Fulham, Bethnal Green, and reports from Messrs. Brighton, Clayton and Whitehead were dealt with. The Secretary reported the receipt of a legacy from the Allfrey Estate. Details of the Charles Bradlaugh Centenary Celebrations were noted; Mr. Moss expressed admiration for the Centenary issue of the *Freethinker*, which he described as a wonderful production, upon which an enormous amount of work must have been expended, and moved, "That the Executive records its congratulations to the President, who was also the Editor of the *Freethinker*, for his remarkable achievement in the Bradlaugh issue of the *Freethinker*." Mr. Clifton won in the unanimous desire to second the motion, which was put and carried.

The Secretary was instructed to forward the Executive's cheque for £100 to the Bradlaugh Centenary Committee, as a contribution towards the fund being raised for the celebration of the Centenary. Sanction was given for reprinting a number of propagandist leaflets, for providing a pocket calendar for 1934, and possibly seasonable greeting cards suitable for Freethinkers.

The next meeting of the Executive will be held on October 27.

R. H. ROSETTI,  
General Secretary.

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## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

### LONDON.

#### INDOOR.

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Reggiori's Restaurant, 1 Euston Road, opposite King's Cross Station): 7.30. G. Allen Hutt—"Russia and Ourselves."

STUDY CIRCLE (N.S.S. Office, 62 Farringdon Street, E.C.4): 8.0, Monday, October 2, Mr. A. D. McLaren—"The Beginnings of Science."

#### OUTDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (The Grove, Hammersmith): 7.30, A Lecture. *Freethinkers* on sale.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, October 1, Mr. L. Ebury. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Mr. C. Tuson. South Hill Park, Hampstead, 8.0, Monday, October 2, Mr. C. Tuson. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Thursday, October 5, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Outside Technical College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, W. P. Campbell-Everden. 3.30, Messrs. Bryant and Wood. 6.30, Messrs. Campbell-Everden, Tuson and others. Wednesday, 7.30, Messrs. Tuson and Wood. Thursday, 7.30, various speakers. Friday, 7.30, Messrs. Bryant and Le Maine.

WOOLWICH (Beresford Square): 8.0, Sunday, October 1, F. W. Smith and S. Burke—"A Freethinker's Point of View." Plumstead, corner of Edge Hill and Herbert Road, 8.0, Friday, October 6, S. Burke and F. W. Smith.

### COUNTRY.

#### INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Bristol Street Council Schools): 7.0, Mr. B. A. Le Maine—"Christianity and Intolerance."

BRADFORD SECULAR SOCIETY (Godwin Cafe, Godwin Street): 7.0, Mr. T. Townend (Branch President)—"Secularism."

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley): 2.30, Jack Pickford—"Christianity and Morality."

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, R. H. Rosetti—"The Ethics of Persecution."

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Piccadilly Theatre, Piccadilly, Manchester): 7.0, Chapman Cohen (President of the N.S.S., founded by Charles Bradlaugh)—"A Hundred Years of Freethought, Charles Bradlaugh 1833-1933" Admission Free. Reserved seats 1s. each.

SUNDERLAND BRANCH N.S.S. (Co-operative Rooms, Green Street): 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"Charles Bradlaugh, M.P."

#### OUTDOOR.

BLACKBURN MARKET: 7.30, Monday, October 2, Mr. J. Clayton.

CLITHEROE: 7.45, Friday, September 29, Mr. J. Clayton.  
CROOK (Market Place): 7.0, Wednesday, October 4, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

HETTON (Market Street): 7.0, Monday, October 2, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (Bigg Market): 7.0, Mr. Holliday.

MANCHESTER CIVIC SERVICE LEAGUE (Queen's Park, Parliament, Queen's Park, Harpurhey, Manchester): 3.0, Sunday, October 1, Mr. J. B. Hudson—"The Centenary of Bradlaugh and Ingersoll."

PRESTON: 7.0, Sunday, October 1, Mr. J. Clayton.

SHERMOOR: 7.0, Thursday, October 5, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

STOCKPORT BRANCH N.S.S. (Armoury Square): 7.30, Sunday, October 1 to Friday, October 6, Mr. George Whitehead will speak each evening.

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The Memorandum of Association sets forth that the Society's Objects are:—To promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action. To promote freedom of inquiry. To promote universal Secular Education. To promote the complete secularization of the State, etc. And to do all such lawful things as are conducive to such objects. Also to have, hold, receive, and retain any sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of the Society.

Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings, and a subsequent yearly subscription of five shillings.

The liability of members is limited to £1, in case the Society should ever be wound up.

All who join the Society participate in the control of its business and the trusteeship of its resources. It is expressly provided in the Articles of Association that no member, as such, shall derive any sort of profit from the Society, either by way of dividend, bonus, or interest.

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of Directors, one-third of whom retire (by ballot), each year, but are eligible for re-election.

Friends desiring to benefit the Society are invited to make donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favour in their wills. The now historic decision of the House of Lords in *re Bowman and Others v. the Secular Society, Limited*, in 1917, a verbatim report of which may be obtained from its publishers, the Pioneer Press, or from the Secretary, makes it quite impossible to set aside such bequests.

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