

# THE FREETHINKER

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**Views and Opinions.**

**That Religious Revival.**  
We hear a great deal about the revival of religion, which is either coming or has arrived. Not that there is anything new about such talk. I doubt if there was ever a decade during the past century when there was not a revival on hand, and during the past fifty years the revivals have become quite monotonous in the regularity of their appearance. Sometimes it is a general campaign undertaken by a number of churches in concert, sometimes it is an individual crusade by some professional evangelist such as Billy Sunday, Gipsy Smith, or Aimée Macpherson. When the war broke out I remember the Rev. R. J. Campbell preaching a sermon, in which he said that never in his time had there been such a revival of Christianity, never before had there been such a readiness of Christians to drop their sectarian differences and join in a common work. The common work, by the way, was that of killing other Christians. Then there was the revival of religion which the Bishop of London found taking place at the front—exclusively reported to the people at home—and the revival of religion which he found at home—exclusively reported to the men at the front. The latest revival is that of a number of callow young men and women—mainly in university centres—who convert an adolescent inquisitiveness concerning sexual matters into a craving for intercourse with the Holy Ghost, and which is duly hailed by some Christians—not by all—as a revival of religion that is certainly on hand this time. Meanwhile the number of those who remain genuinely attached to real religion becomes less year by year. The old lady who lost money on each apple she sold, but who made good on the quantity disposed of, is nothing compared to the religion that is growing stronger by means of these revivals.

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**Methodist Progress.**  
The United Methodist Church has inaugurated a "Great Advance Campaign," and in a recent issue of the *News-Chronicle* an enlightening article by the Rev.

J. Mackay—a Bournemouth Methodist minister—indicates the kind of "advance" made by the Methodist Church. Just over a year ago the union of the Methodist Churches was effected amid a great blowing of trumpets—secular and religious. It had so great a religious significance that it was anticipated its first President, the Rev. Scott Lidgett, would be made a peer and take his place in the House of Lords. In any case the union of the Methodist Churches was expected to have a great influence for good—religious good—and many articles were published concerning a probable revival of faith.

Mr. Mackay publishes some figures on the advance of the United Methodist Church, and they form interesting reading. It seems that during its first year of existence the Methodists have been losing members at the rate of 600 a week—without counting losses by death. The total loss from all causes is over 44,000. Against this loss has to be set 1,817 received from other churches, and 39,000 new members. But 3,000 of these are ex-Wesleyan ministers, who for the first time have been included in the annual statistics, and the "vast majority," is made up from the ranks of young people already in the Methodist Church. So that the Methodist Church is actually not merely unable to hold its own members, but it quite fails to keep pace with the growth of population. Taking the figures over a longer period Mr. Mackay points out that since 1910 the Methodist Churches have lost 184,253 members. So much for the various revivals, the thousands who have—on paper—been brought to Christ by Gipsy Smith, the revival of religion effected by the war, and the B.B.C announcement that the fight between religion and Secularism belongs to Bradlaugh's day and has no longer relevance to our own.

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**The General Slump.**  
Consider that the Methodist Church has a propagandist army of 4,000 ministers, 34,948 local preachers, 31,142 class leaders, 198,852 Sunday School teachers, 355 Deaconesses, 6,039 junior leaders. This totals an army of altogether 275,336 soldiers, backed by social prestige, business interests, the force of religious tradition, and great financial resources—to say nothing of the "power of the Holy Ghost." And the net result is a loss of 184,253 members since 1910, with a loss of 600 a week for the past twelve months!

Of course if the Methodist Church were alone in this loss it might be put down to bad organization, or faults of teachers, and that, indeed, is the favourite excuse. But is there any other Church that is doing better? It is said that the Roman Church is making headway. There may be a certain superficial truth here, but several important qualifications have to be made and borne in mind. First, there is some confusion between increase in numbers and increase in power. The Roman Church has unquestionably gained in both power and wealth. It holds far more



property than most people know, and its control over an unenlightened (I am not referring merely to the vote of the lower-class Catholics) mass vote makes it a great bargaining power with politicians of all sorts. Second, in its aim for quantity irrespective of quality the Roman Church sternly discourages birth-control. Where the militarist cries for a larger birth-rate in order the more profitably to engage in mass-murder, the Roman Church cries out for more births in order to outnumber the rest of the population. Third, the Roman Church, while it can exercise excommunication, only indulges in this occasionally. Its children may leave her, they do leave her, but she very seldom bids them depart. But in spite of these considerations even the Roman Church as a whole is declining. Its numbers do not even equal the increase in population. If other churches show a more marked decline than does the Roman Church, it is because in the disintegration of religious beliefs that is going on the latter manages to secure some who regard the taking of an opiate as a desirable substitute for religious conviction.

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#### The Old and the New.

Mr. Mackay thinks that the decline of the Methodist Church is due to trying to catch the people of the twentieth century with methods that belong to the eighteenth. I do not believe it is due to anything of the kind. Of course, one may continue to attract people to Church by adopting a few stunts, but by the same methods one can gather an audience for a circus or the cinema. There was only one purpose that originally took people to church and that was because they believed in the things taught there, and because they worshipped a deity whom they thought would wallop them if they did not give him his due measure of praise and worship. When this belief began to decline the force of habit and the pressure of public opinion operated, as it still operates in many instances. Take away the number of people who attend Church or Chapel for various business reasons, those who attend because it helps to introduce them to a particular social circle, those who go because their wives take them, or because they want a wife to take them, or because some other man's wife takes them, and the number of Church attendants would be very much smaller than it is.

But every one of these artificial inducements to attend Church, or even to profess belief in religion, grows weaker with the development of life. Non-attendance at Church or even avowed disbelief in religion becomes sufficiently common to pass without serious comment. There are not left many Christians to-day who would seriously argue that a man must be the better for attending Church, or who would take church attendance as a proof of good character. The few Churches that are well-attended are those where a preacher of outstanding personality officiates, or who says little about religion but is most likely to say something interesting about other things. If, for example, Dean Inge is to preach he may count upon a good congregation. But while he may have owed his position primarily to the fact that the presence in the pulpit of a man of ability was sufficient of a novelty to excite attention, people to-day would go just as readily to listen to him on a purely secular subject. The obvious fact is that religion has lost its pull, and the most popular preachers are those who say least about it.

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#### A Hopeless Fight.

It is not a question of trying to retain the methods of the eighteenth century, but one of trying to force on this age a set of ideas that belongs to a more prim-

itive period. The essential ideas that lie at the root of the religions of the world are hopelessly out of date. We retain the language of the past and then imagine that we are perpetuating the ideas for which that language once stood. "Advanced" preachers talk about "God" and the poor believer presently discovers that all he means is an abstract, impersonal force in which an Atheist might express belief without any injury to his Atheism. Prayer is urged, but one presently finds that it means no more than an act of self-delusion, which may produce a good effect so long as you knowingly accept it as being at one and the same time what prayer ought to be, and a mere "dope." "Our Saviour" receives unctuous mention, just as though we still existed in the fifteenth century, when all that is meant is that if he existed he was a good man who aimed at some kind of social reform. If the inspiration of the Bible is in question, one discovers that it means no more than the inspiration of the Koran, or of Shakespeare's plays.

For a time this palpable trick of using an old terminology in the hope of securing the old reaction to it, works. We have the same game played in other directions, and with the same partial success. Only the other day one of the newspapers had stuck right across one of its pages "The King Orders Tshakedi's Reinstatement," when as a matter of fact it was Mr. Thomas who instructed the King to sign his reinstatement and the King obeyed instructions. But the fiction operates with a large number who never trouble to reach the facts of a situation. So with the use of religious terms. So long as the old terms are used there will be a certain number who will give them their old meanings. But this number is of necessity a dwindling one. The gap between language and thought will probably always exist for the reason that we are bound to use old terms to express new ideas; but the constant readjustment is always there also. Thought and language move on to other and higher levels. The savage is left farther and farther in the rear, and it is the savage who is the parent of all genuinely religious ideas. There is only one way by which one can re-establish a genuine religion, and that is by reversing the order of civilization.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

### The Press Gang Again.

"Is it honest in deed and word? Is it a true thing?"  
Shakespeare, "As You Like It."

"By the irresistible maturing of the general mind, the Christian traditions have lost their hold."—Emerson.

THE death of Annie Besant was the occasion of a flood of journalese from the hired pen-pushers of Fleet Street and elsewhere. Reporters, too young to have had any knowledge of her work, were let loose on the story of her life, and, in most instances, made a terrible mess of it. Editors and sub-editors competed with one another in the search for sensational headlines, and the dead woman's obituary was treated as if it were an account of a film-star's seventeenth divorce. "Her Work for Theosophy," "Unhappy Marriage," were sub-titles in one of the yellowest of the yellow press. "End of Stormy Life," a more sober journal proclaimed. The chief Labour daily frothed up with "Vicar's wife becomes Eastern Prophet," "Followers expect Rebirth." But the *Daily Express* (September 21) beat all records with a column of venomous verbiage, of which the following passage is a sample:—



This stormy old heretic married a parson uncongenially. Then worked for Secularist Bradlaugh (centenary ballyhoo next week). They went to gaol together. Bradlaugh was always claimed as his father by Horatio Bottomley.

Indeed, so full of malice and ignorance was this contribution that it reminds one of the American-Christian definition of Thomas Paine as "a filthy little Atheist," which is a libel in three words. Paine was a tall man; a Deist, not an Atheist; and the reverse of filthy. But the lies persisted, as editors brook little contradiction, and the lies were in full cry whilst truth was never permitted to put its boots on.

Annie Besant's unpardonable offence was her long association with the Freethought Movement. If she had but boxed the theological compass, all would have been well with her, and she would have been treated with respect by these very journalists who deride her memory to-day.

However muddled the reporters may have been concerning the events of Annie Besant's life, their unanimity was simply wonderful concerning her association with Freethought. In this instance ignorance and malice were driven in double harness with the most grotesque results. The gentlemen of the press never slung mud at her when she became the arch-priestess of a new superstition; nor when she hailed the latest of so many messiahs. They stoned her because she was a Freethinker who had aroused the hatred of the priests. No enmity is more unscrupulous, more relentless, more venomous than religious hatred. Those obsessed with it will dance upon the coffin of an opponent.

Young Freethinkers can have little conception of the intense hatred and antagonism which the Freethought pioneers roused in religious circles. To-day, if there be not a greater tolerance, there is at least, less bitterness. This is not due to the growing humanity of Christians, but is traceable to the blunt fact that Freethinkers are now too numerous to be treated as mad dogs. Christian apologists, who never tire of boasting of the tolerance of their tyrannous creed, need to be reminded of these things. Christians sought to deprive Annie Besant of the custody of her own child. They tried to imprison her for championing the rights of free speech. Her colleague, Charles Bradlaugh, had to wait for years before he could take his seat in the House of Commons as the elected member for Northampton. These were by no means isolated examples.

During the whole of the nineteenth century scores of Freethinkers suffered terribly. The poet Shelley, for example, was expelled from Oxford University for Atheism. Years later it was sought to deprive him of the custody of his children, his Freethought being considered a sufficient reason. When he died, some of the press notices displayed the divergence between the practice and the profession of Christian charity. Here is an example, showing that journalists have not improved in the course of a hundred years:—

We ought as justly to regret the decease of the devil as one of his coadjutors. Percy Bysshe Shelley is a fitter subject for a penitentiary dying speech than a lauding elegy; for the muse of the rope rather than of the cypress.

Yet the moment it was clearly seen that the star of a really great genius had arisen, Christians at once altered their attitude. They added insult to injury by then claiming Shelley as one of themselves, and by asserting that the poet was a Christian without realizing the soft impeachment. This impudent fabrication still passes muster in certain literary circles, where at least the elementary facts of the great poet's life

should be known. Shelley's militant Atheism, be it clearly remembered, was never disputed during his unpopular days when men and women were actually imprisoned for selling his *Queen Mab*, which shares with Paine's *Age of Reason* the honour of Christian vindictiveness through the nineteenth century.

Simply because men and women are Freethinkers, journalists cast libellous dust in the eyes of the busy and unsuspecting public, and so incapacitate them from seeing the real facts of the case. This garbage is thrown of set purpose. It is done deliberately to discredit the cause to which these pioneers have dedicated their lives. Really great writers have suffered through this well calculated deception. Hardy, Meredith, Swinburne, George Moore, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, to mention no others, have had books banned from the circulating and municipal libraries in consequence. The *Index Expurgatorius* of the Roman Catholics, the oldest and most influential of the Christian Churches, contains the names of all the authors of any real distinction in the literature of Europe.

So far as the press is concerned, there is no excuse for this frigid and calculated insolence towards Freethought. Even the least-lettered journalist must realize that Freethinkers are not all congenital idiots. There is a great difference between damning with faint praise, and dipping one's pen in malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness. In the particular case of Annie Besant these reporters treated with respect the antics of her decadence, and ignored, or obscured, the vital services she rendered during fifteen years of her prime, when she showed herself a heroine no less than a pioneer in the cause of intellectual and political liberty. There is plenty of room for a serious criticism of the over-rated "glorious free press" of this country, which has not improved its manners towards intellectuals since the days of Byron and Shelley to our own time. Flattering wealthy vested interests, and writing puffs for dubious commercial advertisers may be part of the sorry game, but debasing the moral currency tends to lower the tone of the ethics of a whole country. The popular tabloid newspapers are the worst offenders. They have introduced a new and most undesirable note in journalism. Instead of editor and reader, it is now tallyman and client. It is all that most of them are fitted for. Such men are not really suited to the serious responsibilities of journalism, which should be an entirely honourable calling, but which is seen in such questionable form in far too many publications. Newspaper directors and editors might give their own public some little credit for intelligence; for all newspaper readers are not half-wits nor ignoramuses. Yet there is a definite animus against the "Intellectuals" in the press.

MIMNERMUS.

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### To the War-makers.

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Each joy of childhood's days you'd desecrate;  
Each hope that springs in men's hearts uncontrolled  
You'd turn into an everlasting hate  
To satisfy your greedy lust for gold.

Two gods you worship: they are wealth and power.  
"Peace and all that" you will not understand:  
Just to obtain the plaudits of an hour,  
You'd sacrifice the honour of your land.

Oh foolish ones! To you I write my verse,  
And if you read it, even you should see  
That men there are who do not heed your curse,  
And will not call your mad whim "Destiny."

HERBERT SHELLEY.



## A Russian Scientist, Freethinker and Humanist.

THERE has just appeared, in English, a translation of the great Russian scientist Professor Vladimir Bechterev's work *General Principles of Human Reflexology* (Jarrolds, 21s.). Prof. Bechterev's name, as Prof. Gerver, in an "Introduction" to the work, observes: "is one of the most popular in Russia and abroad. During the last thirty to forty years, there has been no congress of psychoneurology, pedology, or pedagogics in which Bechterev has not directed the proceedings and delivered addresses of general interest." His works have been translated and are well known in France, Germany, and other countries; yet this is the first of his works to be translated into English.

Bechterev was not only a writer and lecturer, he was himself an investigator, and undertook a great deal of valuable research work; indeed, Prof. Gerver asserts that "Bechterev's works touch on every part of the central nervous system, and it may be definitely stated that there is no bundle, no nucleus, in the brain or spinal cord in regard to which Bechterev has not expressed his view concerning its structure and function." There is a part of the brain known as the "nucleus of Bechterev," and "the band of Bechterev" in the cortex. There is also a disease of the backbone named "Bechterev's disease." Besides this he also wrote and published upward of six hundred works dealing mainly with the anatomy and physiology of the brain and the central nervous system; the treatment of nervous and psychic diseases, biology and psychology. He also founded the new science of Reflexology, which is expounded in the work now translated.

Professor Bechterev was born in Russia on January 2, 1857, and died on December 24, 1927, at the age of seventy. At the age of sixteen he entered the Military Medical Academy, where he graduated in 1878, at the age of twenty-one. After this he went abroad and worked under some of the most distinguished scientists of the time, namely, Du Bois-Reymond, Flechsig, Wundt, Charcot, and others. His publications, even at this time says Prof. Gerver: "attracted the attention of the whole scientific world, and in 1885, while still abroad, he was appointed Professor at the University of Kazan in the chair of psychic diseases." There he remained seven years until transferred in 1893 to St. Petersburg, where, in 1902, he founded the famous psychoneurological Institute—after a long and painful struggle with the old autocratic authorities—where he could be free from official red tape and State control. The Institute was a great success; during the first ten years ten thousand students passed through it.

In 1913, Bechterev vacated his chair and gave up his Government position, ostensibly because he had worked sufficiently long, but really because the Tsarist Government regarded him as a revolutionary, and could not forgive him for giving evidence, as an expert witness, in favour of Beilis, a Russian Jew, accused of murdering a Christian child to use its blood for ritualistic purposes. Bechterev's evidence shattered the plot of the Stolypin clique, then in power.

The most important work of Prof. Bechterev's life, was the founding of the new branch of science under the name of Reflexology, which, though not identical with American Behaviourism, has much resemblance, and is very similar to it in practice. Bechterev himself

observes, as regards the three main trends in Behaviourism: "None of these is completely co-extensive with reflexology, which I began to elaborate (beginning from the middle of the 'eighties) before the development of behaviourist psychology, which must, therefore, take an independent place in scientific thought."<sup>1</sup>

Like Behaviourism, it takes no account of consciousness, soul, mind or spirit. It ignores them completely. It studies what an animal, and a man, does, or how they respond to certain stimuli; and not what they are. People unacquainted with the methods of science are prone to think that the scientist simply sits down and thinks out his problems, all out of his own head. Such people know nothing of the vast number of experiments that are continually being carried out, and upon which modern science is founded. The Indians tried the metaphysical, or subjective method of finding truth without experiment, and it led them nowhere. In the words of Matthew Arnold:—

The East bow'd low before the blast  
In patient deep disdain;  
She let the legions thunder past,  
And plunged in thought again.

The result is what we see to-day, the mass of the people sunk in the lowest depths of ignorance and poverty.

We are told with parrot-like iteration, that now matter has been resolved into energy, materialism is dead as mutton—we had been told it often enough before—and that we had better throw up the sponge, come back to Church, and make our peace with God "while the lamp holds out to burn." But wait a minute, let us see what Bechterev says about it, before we do anything so rash. Strange as it may seem to our pulpit friends, Bechterev was not in the least discomposed by the disappearance of matter, quite the contrary. He observes:—

But if matter is a fiction, and only energy is real, there is no ground for the contraposition of the psychic to the material and *vice versa*, and we have to ask ourselves: Is it not possible to reduce psychic activity, too, to physical energy?

First of all, we must maintain that all psychical processes are brain processes, at the basis of which lies the movement of the nervous current. But the nervous current is, in reality, energy; and we have every reason to speak of the transformation of those energies, which are known to us, and which are acting on the outer and inner surfaces of the body, into a nervous current, and of the transformation of the latter into the molecular activity of the muscles, which, in turn, is transformed into mechanical work.

Everything that is referred to the subjective or psychical process obviously represents the result of a higher tension of the same energy, or of its capacity to manifest itself under appropriate conditions. (p. 98.)

The mysterious "thing-in-itself," underlying all phenomena, says Bechterev, "is merely potential energy, and thereby we exhaust the concept of 'the thing-in-itself,' about which so many pages have been written in various philosophical works." (p. 99.) Bechterev also holds that the experiments of Rubner, later confirmed by Laulanie, prove that the Law of the Conservation of Energy, which prevails in the material world, also holds good for the living world.

Holding such views Bechterev is, of course, a thorough-going determinist, and opponent of free-will. In this connexion he quotes the following from O. Christiansen's *The Philosophy of Art* (p. 17):—

Man cannot maintain of himself that he is the *font et origo* [the source and origin] in respect of caus-

<sup>1</sup> Bechterev: *General Principles of Reflexology*, p. 173.



ality; try to think over seriously the proposition that a new series of processes could arise without any cause in the individual, and you will abandon it with terror; and if causeless phenomena should arise in the individual, confidence in oneself and in others would disappear; it would be replaced by the terror of events, the mere possibility of which outstrips the wildest monstrosities of insanity. And the more free will in this sense man possessed, the more reason he would have to fear the future, for he does not know beforehand what inner processes might begin to dominate him. The greatest absurdities would be possible.

Bechterev bears no resemblance to portraits of the hard-hearted and callous determinist of pious fancy. He was fond of children of whom he made a special study. He was director of the Clinical Institute for nervous children, and organized a number of institutions for homeless children, and Prof. Gerver tells us that: "Practically no students' meeting of importance was held in the Psychoneurological Institute, at which Bechterev, whom the students always received with marked enthusiasm, was not present. He concludes his "Introduction" with the following fine tribute:—

Bechterev was a fine fellow to work with, treated his students and collaborators with particular affection and attention, and was accorded boundless esteem and love by all who had dealings with him.

Bechterev's unlimited energy, his indefatigability (he worked not less than fifteen to sixteen hours a day), his particular interest in scientific work—hospital and laboratory—and his constant striving to link up his scientific investigations with the practical problems of life, created conditions particularly favourable for work in the institutions he founded and supervised. Bechterev's whole life was an uninterrupted service to science and mankind, and humanity, by his death, lost a great scientist and a true friend.

Bechterev's work reminds us of Darwin's. The same cautious, patient seeking for the strongest arguments that his opponents could bring forward; there was no attempt to gain a cheap victory. Of this book it might well be said what Prof. Clifford said of another, when replying to the piteous plea of those who would keep their heavens and hells and gods for another half-century:—

These sickly dreams of hysterical women and half-starved men, what have they to do with the sturdy strength of a wide-eyed hero who fears no foe with pen or club? This sleepless vengeance of fire upon them that have not seen and have not believed, what has it to do with the gentle patience of the investigator that shines through every page of this book, that will ask only consideration and not belief for anything that has not with infinite pains been solidly established? That which you keep in your hearts, my brothers, is the slender remnant of a system which has made its red mark on history, and still lives to threaten mankind. . . . Take heed lest you have given soil and shelter to the seed of that awful plague which has destroyed two civilizations, and but barely failed to slay such promise of good as is now struggling to live among men. (Clifford: *Lectures and Essays*. (Ed. 1886) p. 179).

W. MANN.

There is a risk also to unclassed and indeterminate Rationalists; a risk of intellectual vacillation and sentimental improbity; a risk of half-snobbish, half-intelligent or half-priggish, half-Philistine, disloyalty to the rationalism which bears the heat and burden of the day, and makes smooth the path of the eclectic.—J. M. Robertson.

## The Miracles of St. Martin.

(Concluded from page 654.)

PART III.

REMARKS.

THE miracles attributed to St. Martin of Tours are not less stupendous than those attributed to Jesus of Nazareth. This fact will occasion no surprise whatever to any true Christian; for Jesus himself is said to have promised that his followers should rival and even surpass him in the performance of marvellous works. (*John* xiii. 12.) It cannot, however, be denied that the wonders of Jesus are below the miracles of Martin in the all-important point of attestation. The existence of Jesus is disputed, and it is still disputable; whilst as regards his alleged biographers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the first and the last are the only ones said to have known him, and there is abundant evidence that neither of these wrote the work now issued in his name. All the four are quite unknown to secular history, and our knowledge of them is derived from penurious references in the New Testament, and sparse anecdotes in the traditionary lore of the early Church—unless indeed we reckon as knowledge the numerous fictions invented about them by the pious of later ages.

How different from the foregoing is the case of Martin and that of his biographer Sulpicius Severus! The existence of both these persons is indisputably attested, and the evidence concerning them clearly proves not only that they knew each other very well, but also that they had in common various friends whose historicity is beyond doubt. Besides this, Martin and Severus unquestionably displayed the same religious traits as those attributed to Jesus and the Evangelists, to wit, a great love and fear of God, a firm belief in the efficacy of insistent prayer, and an invincible resolution to oppose the ever-present activity of the Devil and his dusky legions. They also held fully and firmly the teaching of Jesus respecting himself as it is set forth in the Gospels, and whatever is taught about him in other parts of the New Testament. Thus believing in God they believed also in Christ, and must therefore be regarded as typical Christians who were mighty upholders of "the faith once delivered to the saints." Hence it is quite evident, that, taking all the facts of the case into consideration, we cannot disbelieve the miracles of Martin without bringing the miracles of Jesus into suspicion. . . . Sulpicius declares that "The Life of St. Martin," wherein he credits him with the twenty-two miracles marked *V*. in my account, was known to Martin and received Martin's approval. Among the wonders in question there are several cures, and two startling resurrections of the dead, whence it follows that unless Sulpicius is a redoubtable liar, Martin related or admitted that he had wrought those miracles. If, then, Sulpicius fabricated the facts, or knew that they were false, he had Martin for his accomplice; whilst, if Sulpicius was guiltless, he fell a victim to Martin's deception. Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, who knew and honoured Martin, and who was the bosom friend of Sulpicius, pronounced Martin blessed in having Sulpicius for a biographer, he being a man "whose life consonant to his speech proclaimed him a servant of the truth." On the other hand we have the testimony of Sulpicius that the miracles of Martin had been doubted and that even bishops were among his gainsayers (*V*. 27 *D*. iii. 5); which recalls the testimony of the evangelist John, that the works of Jesus were disbelieved even by his brethren. (vii. 5). In the days



of Jesus and in those of Martin, the means of verifying tales were much inferior to what they are at present. The belief in the miraculous was strong and universal.

Hence those who heard of a distant miracle received the news with the same lack of incredulity that we experience on hearing of a distant earthquake; and when by any chance a man had got the reputation of working miracles, the vanity of story-tellers, not to mention the zeal of his admirers, would provide him with a plentiful stock, whilst the only limits to his growing fame would be those furnished by the cavils of personal enemies, partisan opponents, and mere enviers. Probably tricks on the part of renowned thaumaturgists would sometimes be detected, but this would not then destroy the faith of believers in miracles any more than the detection of fraudulent mediums now causes spiritists to lose their faith in supernatural manifestations. It should moreover be noted that both in the case of Jesus and in the case of Martin, there is no record of any inquiry having been made into the genuineness of the miracles, nor has any refutatory evidence been preserved, which is not at all remarkable since the believers triumphed and became supreme. Besides this, the destruction of Pagan and heretical works was a well known practice of the Christian Church . . . Another interesting circumstance is that both to Jesus and to Martin three resurrections of dead people are imputed. The first two of these in Martin's case are found in *The Life of St. Martin*, a work which Martin is declared to have known, but the third is given in *The Dialogue*, a work written after his death. This miracle, Sulpicius makes Gallus relate, and in his relation, Gallus says that he himself witnessed the event. Here the parallel between Jesus and Martin is very noticeable. On approaching the City of Nain, Jesus and his disciples meet a great crowd accompanying a widow woman, who is taking her only son to his tomb. Jesus, pitying her, restores him to life (*Luke vii. 11-18*). In like manner at his approach to a Carnutian village, Martin, accompanied by his monks, sees a multitude coming forth with a woman, who is carrying the dead body of her only son, which at her request, he re-animates. Each of these stories, however, has resemblances to that wherein Elijah is described as raising the only son of a widow whom he had previously met at the gate of Zarephath as he was about to enter it. (*1 Kings xvii 10-24*). Thus as to these three resurrections of only sons, if Sulpicius plagiarized Luke, Luke himself might have plagiarized the relator of Elijah's life. If such plagiarizing occurred, Luke desired to prove that Jesus was not below the ancient prophets in miraculous power; whilst Sulpicius wished it to be thought that through Martin, Jesus fulfilled his promise of empowering his followers to repeat his miracles . . .

Martin rivals Jesus in his successful dealings with supposed devils. If anything the disciple, as regards this matter, was greater than his lord. Here the life of Martin supplies awful witness to the ravages made by the demonology which Jesus learned from the Jews, and which upon his authority gained acceptance for long ages throughout Christendom. Beyond doubt superstition in various forms existed under Paganism, but then it never dominated educated people as it did under Christianity. The aristocracy of the Pre-Christian era favoured superstitious beliefs and conduct both from patriotic pride, and for the sake of controlling the democracy; but they did not allow these things to obsess their own lives; when, however, Christianity had finally prevailed, gentle and simple, like the good and the bad, yielded themselves wholly to superstition, embracing with peculiar

fervour the faith and practice of Jesus respecting demons, and thus made the world a frightful scene of supernatural horrors. Classical authors, Tacitus for instance, allude now and then to prodigies and portents, but they never devote page after page to the recital of miraculous occurrences, as Sulpicius does in his records of Martin's life; yet, for what concerns natural capacity and secular knowledge, that author, if unspoiled by the corrupting influence of his creed, might have vied with the best of them in literary achievement . . . The demonology of the period caused much insanity. Some believed themselves to be possessed, more still saw possession in other people; and those who were thus suspected often came to regard the suspicion as correct. The conduct of the demoniacs in the Church when Martin entered it, and even when they thought he was on his way to it, is explicable as the natural reaction of lunatics to the opinions which were held about their spiritual state by themselves and by the spectators, the whole assembly being in a morbid condition of nervous excitation. Similar extravagances took place at meetings held by Wesley, and later Revivalists, all of whom mistook the phenomena of hysteria for manifestations of a conflict between God and the Devil going on in the souls of the congregation . . . As regards the alleged intercourse of Martin with demons, if the stories are not pure inventions, he was certainly insane. Considered in this way many of the narratives may be true in the sense that, being a victim of his own obsessions, he really did see and hear in visions the things recorded. The tale about Count Avitianus and the ugly fiend behind him, becomes natural when explained by the madness of Martin, and the credulity of the count in accepting as a real thing what was only a figment of Martin's disordered mind. Further cases are when Martin sees and addresses the Devil at the beginning and the ending of his own career; and when he so often has to do with him and other evil spirits in the solitude of his cell. These are not the only miracles of Martin for which an explanation is at hand. Some look like natural incidents mistakenly provided with supernatural causes. Fright explains the going back of the swimming snake, and the abrupt silence of the barking dog; also perhaps, the pacification of the bedevilled cow. It should not be forgotten that such tales are usually improved in the process of repetition . . . Two different classes, still remain to be noticed. The first class is that where the facts must be regarded as wholly fictitious. Examples of this type are the case of the leper cured by Martin's kiss, as told in the book which Martin approved, and that of the serpent-bitten boy, whose envenomed blood flowed out at Martin's touch as related in the work written after Martin's death. The second class is where Martin, with or without the assistance of other men, or by their contrivance of which he was unaware, may have worked fraudulent wonders. Cases of such priestcraft were for ages so common in the Christian Church, that they may well be suspected to have occurred in the execution of Martin's prodigies. Consider these examples: the demoniac who at the call of Martin publicly confesses that he had disturbed the peace by starting a false rumour; and the occupant of the dubitable shrine whose form and voice Martin perceives, whereas the other bystanders perceive only the voice. Both these affairs look like "frame-ups," and both occur in the work that Martin approved.

C. CLAYTON DOVE.

True worth lies in doing, without witnesses, what one would be capable of doing before the whole world.

*La Rochefoucauld.*



## Bradlaugh Centenary in Glasgow.

The joint Committee of the Glasgow R.P.A. and N.S.S. are to be congratulated on the conclusion of a busy week of work for Freethought.

On September 30, a Dinner was held in the Grosvenor Restaurant, with an attendance of 206. Baillie McWhannel presided, and the toast of the evening, "To the Memory of Charles Bradlaugh," was proposed by Prof. Laski, and among the speakers were R. D. Cunningham Graham, J. P. Gilmour, Prof. Crewe and Sir D. M. Stevenson. On Sunday, October 1, Prof. Laski had a fine meeting in the Woodside Hall, on "The Militant Aspect in Religion and Politics," and emphasized the necessity of preserving and enlarging the political and spiritual freedom for which Bradlaugh fought. During the week successful meetings were held at Motherwell and other places in the district, and new interest aroused in Bradlaugh and his work.

On Saturday a social evening of the Glasgow Branch of the N.S.S. was arranged for the purpose of welcoming Mr. Cohen to Glasgow, and a mixed programme of music, songs and dancing provided. On Sunday the proceedings were brought to a successful issue by a crowded meeting in the Woodside Hall, when Mr. Cohen delivered a lecture on "The Real Bradlaugh." Mr. T. Robertson, one of the oldest of Glasgow Freethinkers, presided.

On the whole the celebration will have had the effect of creating interest in the minds of those to whom Bradlaugh was no more than a name, of quickening activity in those who knew Bradlaugh, or who were acquainted with his work, and of strengthening the Freethought movement in Glasgow and district.

W.

## Acid Drops.

The *Tablet*, which represents the Vicar of Christ, the Unchangeable Church, Catholic Truth and the Short and Easy Method with Heretics (whenever possible), lectures the Quakers on their letting the Friends' House to the Bradlaugh Centenary Committee for their recent Memorial Meeting:—

We understand the Quakers wish to be regarded as Trinitarian Christians. Certainly they give themselves out as Theists. To lend or lease their Hall for meetings in honour of an avowed militant Atheist was therefore not a broad-minded but a wrong-minded act on the part of the Quaker Trustees. It would not have been intolerant and bigoted to refuse the use of a Friends' House in this case.

The Quakers know the meaning of Tolerance. Their record is an honourable one, and we can hardly imagine their turning for enlightenment, either theological or philological, to the Roman Catholic Church. The meaning that Church attaches to the word is stamped on History. Experience might have taught them better, but they do not profess to learn that way; all their wisdom comes from the Oracle on the other side of Beyond. The Oracle has decreed that Heresy must be stamped out, so whenever she can, she burns, slays and spares not. She has been, is, and will continue to be the Enemy of the Human Race.

In a Methodist paper a reader declares that Roman Catholicism has applied to the Department of Overseas Trade for exhibition space at the 1934 British Industries Fair. Messrs. Burns, Oates, and Washbourne, Ltd., in applying for space explained that, on an average, a new church for Catholics is being built every week in England. The Catholic population is increasing by about 12,000 every year. Convents and monasteries are springing up all over the country, and this is providing increased demand for Catholic Church furniture and equipment and literature. The aforesaid reader asks why Methodism has not applied for exhibition spaces. For our part, we think all the many and various Christian sects should exhibit at the exhibition of British Industries. There would be two useful results from this. One is that the average man would gain some notion that this religious stuff is very much of a commercial

undertaking. The other is that all the sects being exhibited together would remind the average man how beautifully the Religion of Brotherhood and Love has succeeded in dividing, not uniting, mankind.

Thousands of people flock to the Crystal Palace and claim to be cured of cancer, consumption, rupture, deafness, blindness or any old trouble by a smear of oil, a small prayer and a full bath. This is under the ægis of the Elim (or is it Heal'em?) Foursquare Revivalists. Others become Christian Scientists or join pilgrimages to Treves or Lourdes for the same quite useful purpose. Results are in all cases excellent (so it would seem) so that God is quite willing to work through Mrs. Eddy, the Pope or Pastor Jeffreys. This is, we suppose, what is known as "divine impartiality"—an excellent thing in a God—but we suspect that this virtue is viewed by the ring-masters concerned with a certain impatience. Dr. P. McBride, in his *Doctors and Patients*, just published by Heath Cranton, shows that as these "cures" occur entirely amongst those who are not critically-minded, any explanation given to them, even if in unintelligible jargon, is quickly accepted. Meanwhile progress in curative science continues to depend upon the belief in natural causation, and scientific method.

A missionary society asks its pious dupes: "Must Missionaries be Recalled?" And the answer is to the effect that they can be kept "in the field" by "prayer and work." By the word "work" is meant the collecting of money. And this is obviously the most important item of the two. For missionaries cannot live by means of prayer alone, but they could on the money without the prayer. If this be doubted, the missionary society might try the experiment of relying for a twelve month on prayer alone, and refusing to accept any money. That would be an excellent way of discovering whether God really approves of missionary societies and missionaries. But the Christian Churches, we are afraid, care not for such excellent ways, and would say as they said to Tyndall last century, that they refused to subject God to scientific experiment.

There was not a word, as far as we could see, on the Bradlaugh Dinner, in the *Daily Express* the day after the event. Instead there was a "striking" article on "Can Revivalism succeed again?" It's author, Mr. W. W. Lourie, anxious, no doubt, to counteract the evil the Bradlaugh publicity was certainly doing to religion, provided us with an impassioned plea for revivalism with more gush to the square inch than we have read for many a long day. "Evangelism is not dead," he cries, "the souls of John Wesley, like the soul of John Brown, goes marching on." Mr. Lourie may think so, but if evangelism, or rather, revivalism, is not dead, except in some isolated cases which are mostly hysterical and pathological, we would willingly eat our hat. These shrill appeals to faith and belief and not to reason, are sadly behind the times.

In the same number of the paper, there is another article which predicts "a great evangelical movement is to take place in Britain this winter." This refers to the stupid and laughable so-called Oxford Movement—which like the equally silly Moody and Sankey and Torrey and Alexander revivals, has its origin in America. Dr. Frank Buchman is its leading light, and we were not surprised to find one of its testimonials is that, "In the St. Quentin State prison of California there are 500 who attend group meetings." What could be more impressive than to learn that gangsters, racketeers, boot-leggers, kidnappers, "shoot-at-sight" murderers, burglars, forgers and the other gay inhabitants of an American prison are all staunch Buchmanites!

Finally, in the same number, there is an article on "Women demand the right to preach." Women ministers of religion insist that more of them should be allowed to minister to the religious needs of the nation, and we are solemnly assured that in that magnificent



body devoted to Christ, the Salvation Army, "a woman is allowed to become even a General." No one can deny that the *Daily Express*, no doubt under the weather eye of Mr. James Douglas, is doing its best to further the cause of Our Lord. But we must be allowed to wonder what its own staff think about it.

Christian restrictions in regard to wholesome amusement and recreation on Sunday quite naturally reduce large numbers of young people to boredom. Some of them having expressed their opinions about being bored on Sunday, a well-meaning Christian woman advises them of an excellent cure, namely, to "take a Sunday-school class." This, to our mind, savours of letting the punishment fit the crime. But perhaps, as the young people themselves mostly don't believe the fairy-tales which have to be told to children in Sunday-schools, the suggested cure for being bored may be a homeopathic one.

The *Sydney Bulletin* tells us that during a storm at Walgett, New South Wales, one sabbath evening, "three emus electrified the Scotchbyterian congregation by bursting open the insecurely-closed door and avalanching down the aisle, where all of them diverted attention from the pulpit by slipping and skidding."

Emus amuse the bemused!

In regard to what are called "naughty plays," a reader of a daily paper opines that, "If there's a play or a film of dubious morality, I find the audience largely composed of women." Curiously enough the audiences in churches are also largely composed of women, and women are supposed to be more religious than men. Perhaps some of our clever modern psychologists will investigate these two phenomena.

Someone at Brighton has discovered a wonderful remedy for putting the nation right. A revival of religion will do the trick, he informs a daily paper. "A wholesome, but not wholesale, fear is necessary; we have lost the sense of sin." For our part, we find a difficulty in regarding a revival of fear of a supernatural bogey as being in any way "wholesome." Past centuries, when the "sense of sin" was widespread, and fear of a supernatural policeman was common, were notoriously times when the mind of man was in fetters. Supernatural fears hindered the investigation of the cause of disease—religion taught that God sent disease as punishment. The inculcation of a "sense of sin" based on a presumed code of commands and laws from a Divine source prevented the study and teaching of a rational code of ethics and morality. To-day, belief in this same code, and fear of that same God, hinders many an advance in social matters—one example is that of divorce. It is the weakening of supernatural fears and beliefs that has permitted man to make whatever progress he has so far made.

As a reminder of what Sunday would be like if there were a large revival of religion in England, the new generation might note the remarks of a reader of the *Daily Mirror* on the "dismal Sundays" of his youth. It was, he says, a day of mourning with continual tolling of various church bells. Everybody wore black and spoke in whispers. There was no music—the piano being locked—and no reading except of a sacred character. Finally he remarks, "I was glad that we have said good-bye to all that sort of intolerance." And quite right, too! But he needn't be absolutely sure he has said a last farewell to it. A sudden epidemic of religion could revive the whole sorry business again. Let it be remembered that a large effort is being made to-day to effect a religious revival. The only way to prevent it, and its evil effects, is to spread Freethought.

In the Thanksgiving Column of the *Cork Examiner* people who have made friends in influential quarters rejoice as follows:—

In everlasting thanks to Sacred Heart, Our Lady under many titles, Little Flower, St. Anne, St. Jude, St. Anthony, and Holy Face for a miraculous cure.—Delayed.  
Thanksgiving to Sacred Heart of Jesus, Our Blessed

Lady, St. Anne, and St. Anthony for favours received.  
More expected.

This latter Good but Businesslike Catholic knows what he has paid for his favours and thinks he has got short weight. If we were God, a touch of lumbago would be the next favour this gentleman would receive.

We learn from a column in the *Manchester Guardian* that the Prefect of Schleswig is issuing decrees about religious teaching for children, "pending a thorough revision of the Old Testament for Nazi Schools." This, to put it colloquially, will be some job. The idea of the Jews being God's chosen people will have to be eliminated or toned down somehow, and all God's well-meaning but pathetic efforts to do them a good turn will have to be explained away as a sad error of judgment. A still more delicate task lies before them when they come to the consummation of the Almighty's Plan for you and me, for it was a Jewish lady whom God chose as his avenue of fractional approach to the planet Earth—and in a Jewish stable, of all places. The first men who gathered round Jesus were Jews and the first women, Jewesses. There was every evidence that up to then God liked Jews very much indeed, and that all other peoples were to him but cheap bargain lines.

God, of course, learnt better when he found himself killed. The Jews, unluckily for themselves, but luckily for us, misconstrued the whole situation and the Good News for you and me, spread over the earth. Then by slow degrees we got *Civilization*, of which Hitlerism is the choicest flower. It is the job of the Prefect of Schleswig to get over, somehow, the fact that God, being off with the old love, considers the Nazis as his latest blue-eyed boys; and that it is the pleasing personality of Hitler, who is to lead humanity into the New Promised Land. It will take more than a Bowdlerized Bible to accomplish that. What is wanted is a brand new Revelation. First imprison a weird and unintelligible fanatic—there are plenty of these always—and encourage him to write. Then have his ravings carefully edited by saner men and the necessary and useful pro-Nazi "texts" inserted. Each chapter should commence with "Thus said the Lord," and end with "Heil, Hitler!" After that we can look forward to another few hundreds of years of Dark Ages—unless the Lord, in his infinite mercy, is kind enough to substitute another Deluge.

### Fifty Years Ago.

THE Church Congress, recently held at Reading, will be memorable, if for nothing else, for the extraordinary confession—probably unique in its child-like simplicity—made by the Rev. Archdeacon Denison. Speaking of the rapid spread and growth of "infidelity," as the clerical party love to term the revolt against superstition, the rev. gentleman uttered the following remarkable words. He declared that "The present danger was very great, and especially from those who call themselves the 'educated classes.' He had no fear of the uneducated, but the utmost fear of the great mass of the people who appealed to nothing but the intelligence of the human mind."

The Archdeacon has, in a few words, given to the world a perfect justification of the famous declaration of the great Gambetta: "Clericalisme, c'est l'ennemie!" He openly confesses that he has no fear of the uneducated. And why? Because the uneducated and ignorant are always an easy prey to superstition, and those who live by it. But he declares that he has the utmost fear of the people who appeal to nothing but the intelligence of the human mind. Well indeed may the clergy dread an appeal to the intelligence of the human mind, but they have hitherto avoided confessing as much.

It is said that "children and fools speak the truth"; and without being impolite enough to call the Archdeacon a fool, we may certainly congratulate him on having spoken the truth as regards the feeling of the clergy as to the progress of Freethought, in a way perfectly marvellous, considering how many of his class carefully conceal their real fears, under a pretence of great confidence in their faith.

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# THE FREETHINKER

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## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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## Sugar Plums.

To-day (October 15) Mr. Cohen will lecture in the Picton Hall, Liverpool, at 7. The Picton is a large hall, but it is likely to be taxed to its utmost capacity on this occasion. There will be some reserved seats at 1s. each, but those who wish to secure seats should be there in good time. Tickets may be obtained at the hall, or from the Secretary, Mr. S. R. A. Ready, 28 Sycamore Road, Waterloo, Liverpool.

On Monday evening Mr. Cohen will be one of the speakers at a Bradlaugh meeting in the Town Hall, Stockport. The chair will be taken by the Mayor; Lt.-Colonel L'Estrange Malone, and Mr. Philip Oliver will be the other speakers. Admission will be free, but there will be some reserved seats at 1s. each.

The latest player in the game of burying the real Bradlaugh is Commander Locker-Lampson, M.P. Writing in *John Bull*, his reference to Bradlaugh is that he "professed disturbing religious doubts." I rather like that word "professed." It implies so much, and is so characteristic of those who feel that Bradlaugh ought to be mentioned, but his real character should be hidden as much as possible.

We may again emphasize the truth that although Bradlaugh acutely and quickly turned the House of Commons question into one of the rights of Constitencies, the fundamental quest was Bradlaugh's Atheism and Republicanism. The right of the Constitencies to elect was never questioned. The question that was raised was essentially that of whether the oath would be binding upon a man professing Atheistic and Republican opinions. The House acted wrongly in raising the issue it did raise, but there can be no question as to its essential nature. We desire to emphasize this point, because we wish to warn

all Bradlaugh's genuine admirers against being misled by those who, while feeling bound to notice Bradlaugh, seek to obscure and belittle the essential issues in all his fighting. Bradlaugh might have had a very easy life had he denied in practice what he professed in theory, or had he cared more for the opinions of the "respectable" classes than for intellectual integrity. The only use to the world of to-day is Bradlaugh the Freethinker. Spectacular events in which he was the principal figure were no more than accidental illustrations of his high character and intellectual courage.

Those who think that John M. Robertson's summing up of the evils of an hereditary monarchy is wrong:—

Monarchy is always a bad influence in a civilized State. It is a great machine for manufacturing snobs and sycophants . . . Many men, not themselves servile, look at the throne-worship around them with indifference, not recognizing how harmful it is. But if they will look into the sentiment they will find that wherever it flourishes it promotes meanness of spirit and vulgarity of taste . . . To have millions of people living in this connexion at the spiritual level of an inferior type of flunkey is a moral calamity.

Or that Bradlaugh's remarks on monarchs are unjustifiable:—

If they do nothing they are "good"; if they do ill, loyalty gilds the vice until it looks like virtue.

will find some information in Philip Guedalla's "The Queen and Mr. Gladstone," in the *Sunday Times*. The Queen's vanity, her insistence on pomp and ceremony, her gradual increase of a sense of self-importance, the growth of a feeling that she really ruled the country, and that Parliament ought to be subservient to her wishes, come out strongly. And as she could not make either the claims or the exhibition of her qualities too openly, she was driven to exert all sorts of back-stair and underground influences. The one who played upon her weaknesses—always, one suspects, with his tongue in his cheek—was Beaconsfield. His flattery of a fussy, self-important woman was such that few men would have sunk to use, and few people would have been either vain enough or stupid enough to swallow. But Victoria appears to have lapped it up greedily and to have longed for more. As Mr. Guedalla says, under the administration of the undiluted flattery of Beaconsfield she came to regard herself as a combination of Titania and Catherine the Great.

Gladstone she positively hated. When he wished her to postpone her visit to Balmoral in order to be present for a parliamentary ceremony she saw no reason why she should do so merely to meet the convenience of the House of Commons. When it was proposed to include Joseph Chamberlain in the Cabinet she asked for an assurance that he had "never spoken disrespectfully of the Throne or expressed openly Republican principles." In the case of Sir Charles Dilke, who was never permitted to enter the Cabinet, she asked before consenting to his appointment of Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, for a written explanation of his "very offensive Speeches on the Civil list and Royal Family." How far this thing went on one can only guess; how far it goes on to-day no one knows. That it stops all place-hunters and title-hunters from exercising their proper functions, and turns them into so many flunkeys, is tolerably certain. It is a pity that the Prime Minister to whom Victoria wrote such letters, did not politely remind her that she was becoming impertinent.

Finally, here is the manner in which this fussy, egotistical, and not very intellectual woman wrote about Bradlaugh during the course of a debate on his right to take his seat:—

The Queen has read with interest the discussion on . . . Mr. Bradlaugh and she cannot help rejoicing in the feeling of indignation exhibited against such a man's sitting in the House. It is not only his *known* Atheism, but it is his other horrible principles which make him a disgrace to an assembly like the House of Commons.



This is perhaps the most impertinent of all her interferences. It is a pity that such a letter could not have been read to the House. And at the Bradlaugh Dinner the chairman, with that distortion of a sense of honesty of behaviour which seems to naturally accompany strong religious and Royalist feeling, took advantage of his position to propose the toast of the King, despite the knowledge that those responsible for the gathering had deliberately omitted it out of respect to the name, opinions and character of Bradlaugh!

Mr. A. G. Gardiner's article on Bradlaugh in *John Bull* is good not only in the web, but in the warp and woof.

Mr. W. J. Meador writes:—

Congratulations to you upon the splendid Memorial Number of the *Freethinker*, also the part you have taken and still are taking in bringing the work of Bradlaugh to the attention of an otherwise inattentive public. I am pleased to be able to say that I did some little to help by introducing half a dozen readers to the good old *Freethinker*, and have persuaded some to attend the Picton Hall on October 15, where all Liverpool Secularists are looking forward to seeing and hearing you again.

We publish elsewhere in this issue a brief report of the Bradlaugh Celebrations in Glasgow. The joint committee of the Glasgow N.S.S. and the local R.P.A. worked well together, and their efforts met with the reward they craved—success. Mr. Cohen's debate with the Rev. Mr. McQueen, fixed for October 9, will be noted next week. Meanwhile, as Mr. Cohen will not reach London in time to see this issue through the press, we must ask the patience of correspondents until next week.

Mr. J. A. Hobson will deliver the Twenty-fourth Conway Memorial Lecture on Wednesday, October 18, at 8 p.m., at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1, his subject being "Rationalism and Humanism." Admission will be free.

Burnley and District Freethinkers are reminded that Mr. R. H. Rosetti will speak in the Phoenix Theatre, Market Street, Burnley (October 15) on behalf of the East Lancashire Rationalist Association. At 2.45 the subject will be "Christianity and the Crisis," and at 7 p.m., "Where are the Gods?" Mr. J. Clayton will be in the chair, and Mr. Rosetti's many friends in Burnley are looking forward to the visit.

## On the Origins of Christianity.

I WONDER how many books and pamphlets and articles have been written on the question of the origins of Christianity. I am sure they must run into tens of thousands, and we are still far from an answer which will satisfy even a moderate sceptic. To say that its origins are lost in the mists of antiquity is merely to repeat a phrase which would be applied to many institutions, but it leaves us where we were. What were the causes which brought about a religion which took such a fervid hold of the imagination of men nineteen hundred years ago? Is Judaism really its precursor, the only one, or were many other religions concerned in its birth? Is Christianity merely a continuation of Judaism? Is the Judaism we know, the same which gave rise to Christianity? What was it which gave rise to Judaism? Did the Law precede the Prophets or *vice versa*? If Christianity is based on the Messianic ideas of the Jews, when did they commence to hope for a Messiah? Can the sun-myth or sun-worship be distinctly traced to Judaism or Christianity? Was there ever such a person as Jesus Christ or is he, whether considered as a god or a man, simply a myth? Are Paul and Peter also myths?

These and dozens of other pertinent questions crowd on one directly an attempt is made to define

clearly necessary data upon which to base some positive conclusions. For myself, I certainly have come to some positive conclusions, but if I were asked to substantiate them logically, I think I should find the task far from easy.

\*Here, however, is one of the latest works on the subject, coming from the pen of a very able Freethought scholar. It is nearly thirty years since Mr. Whittaker wrote the first edition of his book, which he based primarily on the well-known thesis of Van Manen with regard to the Pauline Epistles. Since then his ideas have undergone some change, but this book is a worthy addition to those dealing with one of the most difficult questions in the whole history of religions. The two prefaces reprinted in this edition, the prologue and the epilogue, all repay careful reading, and they show how deeply Mr. Whittaker has pondered on the problems he had to face, and how hard it was to find an answer.

Christian tradition, of course, must be in the main discounted. The idea of a god choosing a race specially to give the world a particular message to be changed into something different, because he came down to the world in the shape of his own son; the idea of a Catholic (that is, a universal) Church to perpetuate not only some nonsensical supernatural narratives, but absurd "sacraments," a priesthood and a Pope—these ideas are really too fantastic to waste time considering in any shape or form. But there are traditions which should be at least considered, and one of them is the priority of the Pauline Epistles. Were they or were they not written by Paul? If they were, when and where and to whom?

A vast literature has risen dealing with these questions, but for the Freethinker to come to any definite conclusion is almost impossible. For one thing, as far as the English translations are concerned, it is extremely difficult to know what Paul is driving at. His theology is a hopeless muddle, and I say this in spite of many works, some very ably written by Freethinkers, which attempt to rescue his meaning as far as possible, and to give it some sort of basis on rational lines. This can apply also to his "moral" teachings which—except in a few places—is more than silly as well.

Out of the twenty-one epistles in the New Testament, thirteen bear the name of Paul. Of these, most critics and even many orthodox ones, consider only four really genuine. Professor Van Manen considers none is genuine. It should be noted, however, that the critics do not actually claim that the four "genuine" ones are genuine through and through—only that these epistles in their *original form* were written by a real Paul. Unfortunately we have not got them in their original form.

If the epistles are really genuine, they were written by a Jew, who became a Christian, long before any of the gospels were written, and therefore they should throw real light on the beginnings of the earliest Christian communities. On the other hand, suppose the epistles are productions, as Van Manen contends, of the second century—together with the gospels—to what conclusions are we forced? The Christian communities were there because "Paul" was addressing them—how did they get there? What did they believe, then?

Mr. Whittaker found it impossible to come to a definite conclusion on Van Manen's hypothesis alone, but in combination with Mr. John M. Robertson's myth theory he felt he had a clear basis to work upon and his book gives his ideas and deductions in detail.

\**The Origins of Christianity*. Revised edition. With Epilogue on the Myth Theory. Thomas Whittaker, B.A. 7s. 6d. net. Watts & Co.



He first deals with Judaism, and his sketch of the way in which this religion arose among the people known as Jews is particularly well done. It is, of course, almost impossible to say for certain what really happened, especially as we are dealing not merely with an exceptionally obscure phase of history, but also because whatever happened extended over many centuries. The elaborate Jewish religion and ritual, ancient and modern, is not just the product of a few minds working it out in a few weeks. It is the work of possibly hundreds of priests, prophets, rabbis, and laymen working for hundreds of years, suggesting this, altering that, and changing anything and everything according to the progress of thought, the filtration of new ideas, the advancement of ethics and morals, and the freedom or slavery of the race itself.

H. CUTNER.

(To be concluded.)

## Bradlaugh Year Centenary Notes.

### XVIII.—BRADLAUGH'S PARLIAMENTARY LEVEL.

DURING the Parliamentary Struggle, it was one of the commonest of public pleasantries that if the Member for Northampton were admitted to the House he would speedily "reach his level"; the implication being that this would be a low level indeed. This attitude could not have been otherwise. The deliberately manufactured legend of Bradlaugh's coarseness and illiteracy necessitated such a pose. When he was eventually allowed to take the Oath, the *St. Stephens' Review* wrote: "It was a monstrous piece of misconduct on the part of the Speaker to connive at Mr. Bradlaugh's manifest profanation. It is true enough that the safest way to extinguish the man himself was to admit him to Parliament . . ."

Sir Henry Lucy sat on the Conservative Benches at that time, but he was much better known as the writer of the "Essence of Parliament," week by week, in *Punch*. His chronicles of the Bradlaugh episodes are, in themselves, quite sufficient for the serious historian on this point. We repeat them here, chronologically, with one prefatory comment. Although "Toby, M.P." is guilty of two ungenerous gibes in the earlier references, these lapses can be taken as due to his ideas of what "loyalty" to his Conservative colleagues demanded; there is evidence that long before this he felt "that Bradlaugh had truth and justice on his side," and he certainly knew that he was no ordinary man. For in the *Punch* notes, after his first speech at the Bar of the House, he had reported that "he rose to heights of impassioned eloquence, but always with perfect command over himself and his audience."

January 16, 1886. And so round by back of the chair into obscurity. Here and thus endeth what is called the "Bradlaugh" incident, an incident just five years long.

September 4, 1886. After which Bradlaugh got the Speaker's eye, and the House promptly emptied.

May 14, 1887. Bradlaugh did his work uncommonly well. Kept his temper when Grandolph\* lost his, meeting all contradictions and denials with inexorable Hansard. The more Grandolph wriggled the more self-possessed and incisive Bradlaugh grew, and the more uproarious the merriment of the House. General impression that Grandolph had met something more than his match, and that Bradlaugh had scored off long-standing account.

September 3, 1887. Conservatives quite forgotten their old animosity to Bradlaugh, member for Northampton; as for Parnellites they cheer him, Bradlaugh,

as they do Parnell. Certainly Bradlaugh has acquired House of Commons' manner. Speeches in good style and full of point.

March 10, 1888. Bradlaugh wound up night's proceedings in vigorous speech. Listened to with attention by crowded House. Strange how whirligig of time (whatever sort of conveyance that may be) brings its revenges. Not many years ago, members crowded the lobby to see Bradlaugh kicked downstairs. Now they throng the benches to hear him reply to "his learned friend, the Home Secretary."

March 24, 1888. When we rearrange the Parliamentary calendar this will be known as St. Bradlaugh's Day. It was the voice of the Attorney-General, I knew he would complain. Bradlaugh had moved second reading of Oaths Bill. A few years ago member for Northampton had been hustled out of the House and finally kicked downstairs, first because he would not take the Oath, and then because he wanted to. Now had brought in Bill not only practically abolishing the Oath in Parliament, but everywhere else where honest citizens are called upon to swear. Attorney-General not even permitted to speak for Government in opposing Bill. Too many Conservatives, including Solicitor-General, going their way. Bradlaugh master of the situation. Terrible conviction that he might, an he pleased, have Old Morality kicked downstairs, or even the Attorney-General.

Business done—Bradlaugh's "Oaths Bill" carried by a majority of 100.

T.H.E.

## Atholl Blows!

ON August 29, His Grace the Duke of Atholl opened his shop in Leith Street, Edinburgh for the receipt of the ten shilling notes of his fellow-countrymen in return for tickets in respect of which the Duke gives his assurance that the money he receives will be applied for the benefit of hospitals, as he in his unaided wisdom shall determine. Inferentially, though no pledge seems to be given in the matter the purchasers of the tickets assume that they are paying into a Sweep because of His Grace's animadversions upon the number of British people who invest in Irish and French Sweepstakes. If the thing is not a gamble it is difficult to see what else it is.

It would be interesting to know what the Church of Scotland, in which the Duchess, at any rate, is a leading light, thinks of the scheme. Hitherto the Church has been significantly silent about it, and the only organ of repute that has been outspoken in criticism is *Truth*. Its articles are well worth careful perusal. Most thinking people will agree with it in its view as to the effrontery of His Grace. The scheme is a revised version of an earlier one, which was stopped by the police.

No doubt there will be many investors to trust the Duke with their respective ten bobs for the benefit of hospitals, to be applied and distributed by him at his sole discretion. It reminds one of the trader who stuck up in his window the notice: "Trust in the Lord—Everybody else cash." There is still a lot to be done with a title!

For instance, if Mr. Chapman Cohen, President of the N.S.S., were to devise a scheme similar to that of the Duke of Atholl's, and to ask the public to subscribe 10s. a head, to be applied by him in his sole discretion for the purpose of mental healing by such institutions as the N.S.S., what response would he be likely to get? Even if he could guarantee that by the use of the money the numbers of those admitted to Lunatic Asylums would be substantially reduced, and that there would be fewer suicides, he would merely be laughed at and have his scheme pool-pooled. What it is to be a Duke!

\* Lord Randolph Churchill.



At the same time it is saddening to see present representatives of the ancient nobility of Scotland reduced to the necessity of taking up jobs as gamblers' touts. The Duke's chief organizer is a prominent Glasgow bookie, whose portrait is displayed in the Scottish press along with His Grace's. One would like to know what the Duke of Montrose and other Scottish Home Rulers and Nationalists and Independents think of this sample of the Duke of Atholl's activities? Is it something likely to redound to Scotland's credit and to assist in the achievement of her self-government? After all there is a considerable section of people that really thinks; and a dispassionate consideration of the whole circumstances surrounding the Duke of Atholl's project leaves a nasty taste in the mouth. There is something hidden which suggests something sinister to the orthodox and patriotic Scotch mind.

The Duke of Atholl boldly says that when questioned by the Home Office about his scheme, he merely sent it press cuttings describing the scheme, which set forth everything known to the whole public. It has yet to be seen whether the Home Office will accept this answer as entirely to its satisfaction. But the enquiry by the Home Office should surely suggest to the public generally an attitude of caution. No one has suggested anything against the Duke's personal *bona fides*; but one may doubt the infallibility of his knowledge of the Law, and his judgment upon its construction.

Assuming that the scheme is based upon the highest philanthropic principles and is conceived from the most disinterested motives, why could not the Church of Scotland have dedicated one of its redundant Kirk buildings as an office for the Duke and his big bookie organizer? There are no doubt many Presbyterian ministers who could contemplate this with equanimity seeing they have an occasional "bob each way" on a big race; but the public and official deliverances of the Church as a whole constitute a solemn condemnation of all forms of gambling. But who, asks someone, says the Duke of Atholl has anything to do with gambling?

Anyway the subscribers of ten shillings each to the Duke's scheme are not paying away their money without the expectation of competing for a substantial return in the shape of some money prize greater in amount than their contribution to the Pool. There is no doubt about that. We may be a lot of simple Sandies, but there are limits to our simplicity, and in view of all that went before in booming the Duke's first scheme we expect to be in the running for a share of the "Atholl Brose"—a compound it may be explained for the benefit of non-Scotch readers, consisting of Scotch Whisky, Honey and a sprinkling of Oatmeal.

And if there are no prizes paid—and of decently good size too—the result will not be accepted in a spirit of submission and resignation. Life is certainly full of uncertainties, so that in going into anything of this sort, it is as well to see *where* we are going and be as certain of the situation as is possible. Thus, there might have been a responsible official Committee of management which would have laid down definite terms and conditions which everybody could understand. As it is we have the whole thing in the hands of one person; who gives no information, offers no terms and conditions, and asks us all to be satisfied with *his* word!

The swollen vanity and conceit of this man is amazing. Well does *Truth* emphasize his "effrontery!"

IGNOTUS.

## The Slum Problem.

I AM glad that Mr. A. McHattie and Mr. R. A. F. Leighton have taken up the cudgels on behalf of Miss Joan Conquest's book *The Naked Truth*, and are prepared to endorse her contention "that a larger amount of overcrowding and horrible conditions exist to-day in certain slums of London of which she has knowledge than has ever existed before." Remember, however, that I have never said that there are no slum areas in London, but have contended that since the London County Council and the various Borough Councils have come into existence, these areas have been considerably reduced, and that the sanitary condition of London, on the whole, is better than it has ever been in the past, and in fact that it is to-day one of the healthiest places to live in, in the country. Briefly put that is the sum and substance of the whole matter in dispute between us.

Let me say at the outset that it does not matter in the least what position any of the parties in the discussion may have held; the only question in dispute is this—is Miss Conquest's contention true?

Mr. McHattie, in order to show that Miss Conquest is right in her contention, cites a case within his own knowledge. He says, in the year 1911—that is twenty-two years ago, "he remembers a basement room in Southam Street, in the Royal Borough of Kensington, where he saw a man, his wife, a married daughter, her husband and three children, all occupying the same bed. At the other side of the room, on a chair bedstead, were two men between twenty-five and thirty years of age. The walls were green with damp and the bed, if you could call it a bed, was filthy."

Well, did Mr. A. McHattie report the case to either the County Council or the Borough Council? And if not, why not? It was surely a case for either or both of them to take action. I am not sure whether the County Council had any jurisdiction over the Royal Borough of Kensington; but surely the Borough Council would not have hesitated to take action, especially with an alleged eye-witness like Mr. A. McHattie to support their case. He says he did not know what the Sanitary Inspectors were doing, at that time, but that this was the state of affairs in the Royal Borough of Kensington twenty-two years ago. I wonder whether he will contend that there has been no improvement since. With regard to the question of "Birth-Control" among the wives of the workers, I remember that I was, on two occasions, shouted down by the Tories of the Camberwell Borough Council for merely suggesting that "Birth Control" information might be suitably given by doctors to poor women in certain circumstances.

\* \* \*

I turn to my other friendly opponent—Mr. R. A. F. Leighton, and what does he say? He read my article with "mixed feelings," and he asks me quite fairly, if I had read Miss Conquest's book. I answer, quite frankly, No. I read a number of book notices of it in various papers, but I based my article entirely upon Mr. Cohen's descriptive account of it in the *Freethinker*, and I sincerely hope that I have not misrepresented any portion of it. Mr. Leighton also asks me if I have read a work entitled *The Condition of the Working Class*, by Alan Hutt. Again I say No. I cannot afford to buy all the books I should like to read upon many subjects. But Mr. Leighton gives me a reason why I might hesitate to read the book he mentions, when he says "it may be a political tract," although it is backed by an official record. Mr. Leighton also asks me, "whether Borough Council-



lors see or understand more than nurses." Individually, Borough Councillors know very little about the work of nurses, but collectively they are as well able as anybody else, to judge whether houses are in a sanitary condition or not, especially after the report of the Medical Officer of Health. But Mr. Leighton declares that the slums are being destroyed perhaps; he says "in ninety-nine per cent of the cases, flats and dwellings of a much higher rental are erected, making the very poor very much worse off—a state that is not helpful." But surely the workers cannot have it both ways. Either they must remain in their insanitary dwellings, or if they get improved dwellings, they must pay a higher rent, if possible, for improved conditions. In many cases it is a great hardship, but we have got to look the ugly facts fairly in the face. Then he asks me another question, "Did Southwark possess a Birth-Control Clinic," and did these thoughtful Councillors help its efforts? The answer is that a Birth-Control Clinic has been established in Walworth (which is in the Borough of Southwark) for many years, and to the best of my belief the Borough Council assists it in its work.

The County Council have had a number of new buildings erected recently in various neighbourhoods for the re-housing of persons turned out of tenements that have been condemned as insanitary—and a similar kind of work goes on uninterruptedly all the year round. Can any rational creature expect more?

\* \* \*

I thank Miss Joan Conquest first for her kindly references to my age—but although I am getting older day by day, those who know me know that I am young in spirit, and that I am still an active worker for Free-thought and other advanced movements. Miss Conquest has five points upon which she makes observations. The first is that a writer is not necessarily a journalist. I certainly described Miss Conquest as a Nurse and a Journalist, and I cannot help thinking that a lady who earns part of her living by writing for newspapers may be fairly described as a Journalist without giving any offence. But she objects to her book being described as a "Journalistic" stunt. I think, however, she is too sensitive on that point, for what is the object of all writers for the press, but so to present their case by a little touch of exaggeration here and there as to cause a sensation in the minds of their readers? That is all I mean by the word "stunt."

I quite agree with Miss Conquest that a fully qualified nurse would be welcomed "with open arms in the slums," and I commend her heartily for her good work among the poor, but she must not necessarily take all the tales they tell about the conditions under which they are forced by necessity to exist, to be absolutely correct, without verification. Nor did I say that Miss Conquest was "monstrously and ridiculously absurd," in her statement of the condition of the slums in her book, *The Naked Truth*, except so far as she thought the conditions were worse than they were in 1881, when Mr. Geo. R. Sims and I investigated the conditions of the poor in Southwark.

I am glad to learn that Town Clerks and Borough Councillors and Medical Officers have been pleased to help Miss Conquest in her investigations; but have they also explained to her that her work was only necessary because of their neglect of their duty in the past? I have read Miss Conquest's article in *The Leader*, on "And they call this Christian Britain," describing the "unspeakable Horrors of Scotland's slums"—but in all her writings I have seen no mention of the great population problem, and above all, no mention of the doctrine of Birth-Control—which she as a trained nurse could impart to poor women without fear of hurting their feelings. In conclusion, let me wish her every success in her crusade against the poverty and misery of the poor in the slums—wherever she goes.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

## Bradlaugh For Northampton.

ON September 11, 1933, Mr. C. Bradlaugh Bonner spoke at a public meeting in the Public Library on "Charles Bradlaugh—His Life and Work." It was an excellent meeting and stirred many warm hearts. One old stalwart, Councillor E. J. Wright, recalled the good old days. "We have never had anything like the enthusiasm we had in those days," he said. "There were no such things as chairs at Mrs meetings, we used to stand there packed in." Many who attended, like Mr. Wright, took part in the strenuous fights with the bigots in Northampton and elsewhere.

In the Library was an interesting exhibit of prints, placards, portraits and political mementoes. The old-time bigots could not allow a man of Bradlaugh's well known opinions to fight a purely political contest, so we find many of the placards and leaflets dealing with his atheistical opinions. One poster invites the working man elector to vote against Bradlaugh because of his support for the Sunday opening of places of amusement, and strange to say this poster was issued by a working men's organization.

"He is anxious," says the placard, "to see museums and similar places of amusement (sic) opened on Sundays, consequently he is not the true friend of the working classes." An illustrated cartoon depicts Bradlaugh at the George Hotel living in luxury and sneering at the foolishness of his supporters in the 1874 election whilst an "honest and stupid" working man supporter is depicted in his poor home living in privation so that Bradlaugh could live like a Lord. The cartoon ends up by suggesting that Bradlaugh was an excellent patronizer of the bar at the "George."

There was one Christian argument in concrete form, namely, a good sound hard cobble stone that had been thrown in the riots at the 1874 election, which same riots called forth a proclamation by the chief constable inviting all and sundry to become "Special Constables," to assist the aforesaid chief constable to keep the peace. Then there are several pint pots that had been made in the Potteries by ardent supporters of Bradlaugh. They were in his election colours, and sold to raise money to pay for the election, the said colours being mauve and white. The words "Bradlaugh for Northampton" are inscribed on the mugs. These mugs called forth a poster in the 1868 election, in which Bradlaugh is depicted as the driver of a donkey-cart that had been loaded with the aforesaid mugs, but unfortunately it had been upset. Bradlaugh is seen standing in a miserable attitude gazing at the poor old donkey which is labelled "Our darling Secularism." Underneath the load of broken mugs is written "The effigies of BRAG-LAW." At the top of the cartoon there are two of these mugs sketched with the face of Bradlaugh shown. One shows him all smiles, and underneath is written, "Monday's Mug." The other shows Bradlaugh's face very downcast, and this is entitled, "Tuesday's Mug," alluding, I suppose, to the day after the election.

Our hearts are downcast by another poster in large type announcing that "The FOOL hath said in his heart there is NO GOD," and after this unfortunate description it evidently names the "fool" to be one "Bonsell the Hatter," who will address the Constituency of Northampton from the balcony of the Woolpack Inn, in Bridge Street, on Monday evening next at 7 o'clock. Subject: "Is Bradlaugh a fit and proper person to represent the Borough of Northampton?" Thus history accidentally preserves the nonentities of the past.

There is an excellent leaflet written in Bradlaugh's best and most scathing style replying to the Jewish Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, who was squealing because Bradlaugh refused to take the Christian oath. My word, what a walloping friend Levy got!

One of the many memorial leaflets circulating after the hero had passed away was headed, "In memory of Charles Bradlaugh, M.P., who passed away January 30, 1891." Its opening words are a brilliant epitaph. "For thirty-five years by tongue and pen he defended the absolute right of all to Free Speech, and was returned to



Parliament by the electors of Northampton in 1880 by 3,827 votes with Mr. H. Labouchere. His heroic struggles, his dignified bearing, and inflexible integrity are matters of history, and we dedicate to all lovers of a courageous exponent of national honour, and popular rights, the following lines in grateful recognition of his marvellous talents, devotion, persistency and rectitude." Then follows a splendid poetic tribute.

The Town's statue erected to Bradlaugh stands in Abingdon Place. It is an imposing and dignified work depicting Bradlaugh in his favourite attitude addressing a meeting. The descriptive plates are on each side. The foremost gives his old motto, "Thorough." Charles Bradlaugh. Born September 26, 1833, Died January 30, 1891. M.P. for Northampton, 1880 to 1891. Four times elected to one Parliament in vindication of the rights of a constitution. India, too, chose him her representative. A sincere friend of the people. His life was devoted to Progress, Liberty and Justice." Other plates give extracts from some of the stirring election songs.

Another poster gives notice of the unveiling of this statue on June 25, 1894. printed in his election colours. The unveiling was by Mr. H. Labouchere, Esq., M.P., the staunch friend and colleague of Bradlaugh in his many fights. A procession, we learn, was to leave the Market Place at 2.30, and the unveiling was to take place at 3 p.m. Afterwards there was to be a tea at the Corn Exchange at 5 p.m., and a great public meeting at 6.30 p.m., at which—amongst other public men—the following well known Atheists were to attend: Mrs. Bradlaugh Bonner, Mr. J. M. Robertson and Mr. G. W. Foote.

My visit to Northampton was an inspiration, and it encouraged me to write these few lines, in the hope that they may afford some interest to many who loved, or have learnt to love, the Master. WHAT A MAN!!!

FRED HOEY, J.P.

## Correspondence.

MRS. BESANT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I have not seen in any notice of the life of Mrs. Besant any reference to the fact that before she made the acquaintance of Mr. Bradlaugh, she attended for a time the services held by the late Charles Voysey, then, I believe, at St. George's Hall, Langham Place. At any rate it was before he went to Swallow Street. That she was intimately connected with that venture is proved by the fact that she wrote two hymns for the "Theistic Hymn Book," which he compiled. In the Index to that book her name is given as the author of three hymns, but one was attributed to her in error: it was from the pen of an American writer. I may say that I had confirmation of the fact I have stated many years ago from both Mrs. Besant and Mr. Voysey, and particulars were given in a notice I contributed, also many years ago, to the defunct *M.A.P.*

DUDLEY WRIGHT.

## Obituary.

J. A. REID.

WE hear with deep regret of the death of Mr. J. A. Reid, of Perth, which took place after a brief illness. He was Secretary of the Perth Branch N.S.S., and a thoroughly keen Freethinker. Admired for his sterling character and adherence to principles, his circle of friends included many who were in no way sympathetic to his Free-thought. His death at the early age of forty-six years came as a shock to all who knew him. The remains were cremated on Wednesday, October 4, at the Western Necropolis, Glasgow, a Secular Service being read by Mr. J. Wingate. To the surviving members of the family we offer sincere sympathy.—J.W.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, C. Delisle Burns, M.A., D.Lit.—"The Horizon in Morality."

STUDY CIRCLE (N.S.S. Office, 62 Farringdon Street, E.C.4): 8.0, Monday, October 16, Mr. A. D. McLaren will read a paper on Spengler's "Decline of the West."

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Reggiori's Restaurant, 1 Roston Road, opposite King's Cross Station): 7.30, Miss Monica Whately—"Must England Lose India?"

OUTDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (The Grove, Hammersmith): 7.30, Mr. L. Ebury. *Freethinkers* on sale.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, October 15, Mr. L. Ebury, Highbury Corner, 8.0, Mr. C. Tuson. South Hill Park, 8.0, Monday, October 16, Mr. C. Tuson. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Thursday, October 19, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Aliwell Road, Clapham Junction): 8.0, Friday, October 13, Mr. C. Tuson. Brockwell Park, 3.30, Sunday, October 15, Mr. F. P. Corrigan.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Sunday, B. A. Le Maine. 3.30, Messrs. Tuson and Wood. 6.30, Messrs. Bryant, Le Maine and Wood. Wednesday, 7.30, Messrs. Tuson and Wood. Thursday, 7.30, various new speakers. Friday, 7.30, Messrs. Bryant and Le Maine.

WOOLWICH (Beresford Square): 8.0, Sunday, October 15, F. W. Smith and S. Burke—"Bad Glad Things." Plumstead, Corner of Edge Hill and Herbert Road, 8.0, Friday, October 20, F. W. Smith and S. Burke.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Bristol Street Council Schools): 7.0, Miss M. Marsh—"My Impressions of Soviet Russia."

BRADFORD SECULAR SOCIETY (Godwin Cafe, Godwin Street): 7.0, Mr. J. S. Wooler. Subject announced in *Bradford Telegraph* next Saturday. Will all members attend.

BURNLEY (Burnley Lads' Club): 8.0, Thursday, October 17, Mr. J. Clayton—"Citizenship Class."

DAWDON (Miners' Hall): 7.0, Sunday, October 15, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"Charles Bradlaugh."

EAST RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (Phoenix Theatre, Market Street, Burnley): 2.45, Mr. R. H. Rosetti (General Secretary, N.S.S.)—"Christianity and the Crisis." 7.0—"Where are the Gods." Chairman, Mr. Jack Clayton (Burnley).

HETTON CLUB (Miners' Hall): 7.0, Wednesday, October 18, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"Charles Bradlaugh."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (East Hall, M'Lellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow): 7.0, Miss Agnes Smith, M.A., Ed.B.—"Nature and Nurture."

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Mr. Ernest Thurtle (Secretary, R.P.A.)—"Modern Shams and Superstitions."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Picton Hall, Liverpool): 7.0, Mr. Chapman Cohen (President of the N.S.S. Founded by Charles Bradlaugh)—"The Real Bradlaugh, Freethought in Religion and Politics, 1833-1933." Admission Free. Reserved Seats 1s. Doors open at 6.30.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Clarion Cafe, Market Street): 7.30, G. Whitehead—"Marxian and Other Interpretations of History."

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OUTDOOR.

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CLITHEROE, 7.45, Friday, October 13, Mr. J. Clayton. HETTON, Mondon, October 16, Mr. J. T. Brighton. SEAHAM HARBOUR, Saturday, October 14, Mr. J. T. Brighton.



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Secretary: R. H. ROSETTI.

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