

THE FREETHINKER

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— Founded 1881 —

VOL. LIII.—No. 44

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1933

PRICE THREEPENCE

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Views and Opinions.

Keeping it Dark.

The question of the censorship of opinion exercised by or through the B.B.C. is once more to the front, and we hope that it will be kept to the front. When the Corporation was first founded we protested against the policy of censorship adopted in the case of religion, and encouraged others all over the country to cooperate with us in the matter. These protests were not completely successful, but that they were not wholly ineffective, may be seen in the great modification that has taken place in the attitude of the B.B.C. with regard to matters of opinion in general; although, as one would expect, the least latitude is shown where religion is concerned. But in other matters the B.B.C. has been driven from its first absurd excuse for censorship that controversial questions could not be broadcast, by the plain fact that the most controversial subject of all, religion, was the most carefully guarded from criticism. To-day, while religion is still carefully guarded, a considerably wider degree of difference of opinion is permitted. The B.B.C. might reply that this is because it has after some years educated the public to the discussion of questions in dispute. That reply is pure nonsense. It is not the B.B.C. that has educated the public; it is the public that has educated the B.B.C. And if the public will continue its educational pressure the B.B.C. may be forced a little farther along the right line of development. Parsons and politicians are not altogether immune from education, although we admit that both are very unwilling pupils.

The B.B.C. Again.

The bother this time has arisen in connexion with a broadcast by Mr. Vernon Bartlett on disarmament, and on the selection of speakers on the same subject. Mr. Bartlett gave great offence—it is said—to the Foreign Office, because he put the German case to

the British public. In the other case, Lord Lloyd—one of the greater-navy men, and whom, we suspect, would be clamouring for more ships if even the seas dried up, was announced to speak on disarmament. This was cancelled, until after Sir John Simon had spoken—again it was said under pressure from the Government. In both cases, it must also be said, a denial has been issued that the Foreign Office objected to Mr. Bartlett and Lord Lloyd speaking. The denial is what may be expected. But so far as we are concerned we simply decline to accept any official disclaimer, whether made by the Government or the B.B.C., without quite independent confirmation. The assumption that high officials cannot lie is one of those silly superstitions that ought not to mislead anyone of intelligence. If they do not tell the lie direct, they do tell the lie indirect, the lie by implication, or the lie by insinuation. Where would be the use of "secret diplomacy" if officials stuck rigidly to the truth? The very attempt to prevent a quite open discussion of any question is bound to result in lying in one form or another. And while any sort of a censorship of opinion exists one may expect lying—one will get it whether it is expected or not. Of course, politicians, diplomatists, parsons, and others, all have their own codes of truthfulness, just as a "gentleman" has his code of honour, which forbids him disowning a gambling debt, but which does permit his not paying a tradesman whose very living depends upon the debt being met. It is the lie of office, the lie which is masked under such phrases as religious, or official, or national duty with which I am concerned. And these lies are the more mischievous because they are so easily and so readily moralized.

* * *

Opinion and Notes.

The Liberal Central Office found itself left out of those who were asked to give a talk on Disarmament, and requested that a representative should be included. This was refused. The *Manchester Guardian* suggest that this was because the Liberal Party in the House of Commons musters only thirty-two. That may be the case, but it makes the case against censorship in any form the stronger. For in matters of opinion there should be no such thing as majority or minority. You cannot settle the truth of an opinion by a vote. If the B.B.C. wishes to educate on any other plan than that adopted by Herr Hitler, it should see that on any subject where difference of opinion exists a representative of each phase of opinion has his or her say. How otherwise can anyone expect that an opinion worth bothering about can be formed? I do not know of any opinion that was ever suppressed in the name of intolerance. It was because it was wrong, or because it was dangerous, or because not many believed in it, or because it would have harmed those who listened to it, or because it was not held by many.

The right of an opinion to be heard lies in the fact that it is an opinion. No greater or better warranty is possible or should be required.

* * *

Hitler in England.

But in this case it is said that speeches putting the case from the German point of view might misrepresent British opinion. But surely, unless the British people are to be led, literally, like lambs to the slaughter, it ought to know what is the German point of view. Just now Sir John Simon and Baron Neurath are busily engaged telling the world, in polite language, that the other man is a liar. And how is the British and the German public to know which is telling the truth unless they can hear both sides? Of course there are plenty on this side of the North Sea who will say, "Our representative is telling the truth," and there are plenty on the other side who will use exactly the same phrase. From this side it will be said that in Germany it is impossible for the public to know the truth because of the censorship that exists. That is quite true; only let us bear in mind that it is also true on this side just so far as a censorship exists, and so far as it is able to make itself effective. That it is more effective in Germany than it is here is undeniable, but that is not the fault of the censorship. It is just a question of opportunity. Our censorship is not better than that of Hitler's, it is only less effective. In the last thirty years we have gone a long way in the direction of meeting Herr Hitler, and unless some of us wake up we may travel much nearer before long.

But people have peculiar ideas of freedom and fair play. The Manchester public libraries have just banned from their precincts, *Blackshirt*, the organ of those militarized boy scouts, the Fascists. And to show its impartiality it has passed the same sentence on the *Daily Worker*, a Communist paper. But that is not impartiality at all; for so far as the libraries are concerned readers are thereby restricted to views that are opposed to both Communism and Fascism. The Manchester libraries are not showing impartiality, they are only showing their fear of certain opinions, and the desire to keep the public from knowing anything about them. The two papers mentioned have exactly the same right to be placed on the reading tables of public libraries as have the *Times* and the *Morning Post*. If they are doing anything illegal it is the law that should deal with them, not a committee of councillors whose opinions on what is desirable or undesirable in literature are often about as valuable as the opinion of a Hottentot on Einstein's Relativity.

* * *

A Popular Myth.

What is this fear of weakening the force of "British opinion?" Has it greater justification than the policy of keeping German opinion united by beating up any one who dissents from Hitler's orders? For many years I have been protesting against this assumption that there is any such thing as British opinion or French opinion or German opinion in the sense of there being only one opinion on any subject whatever, and in any country in the world. The brutal policy of Hitler cannot prevent there being different opinions in Germany, it can only prevent their finding open expression. To say that Sir John Simon represents British opinion, is not true, save in the sense that the Government has appointed him to be its mouthpiece. But there are plenty of conflicting opinions in the country, otherwise the B.B.C. and the Foreign Office would not need to exercise any sort of a censorship.

Now it would be utterly impossible for anyone to hate, say, a mere million of separate individuals. The

thing has to be made possible and easy by personifying the million as one man. Then when a vast number of individuals, each with his individual and conflicting tastes and appetites and opinions, is personified as one man and we are able to think of this fictional human being as being hateful or untrustworthy or brutal, we are then able to hate him with a proper degree of moral fervour. Whether it is Britain dealing with Germany, or with France, or any other country dealing with us the process is identical. There are no longer *Germans*, or *Frenchmen*, or *Englishmen*, there is only a Frenchman, a German or a Briton. We are back into that very primitive stage where any member of one tribe is, *ipso facto*, an enemy to every member of another tribe. And that I fancy is not far removed from the animal stage in which every member of one pack of animals is suspect to another pack.

Now it seems to me that if we really wish Germans and Frenchmen and Englishmen to understand one another, it is necessary for each of us to know what the individuals in the other group are thinking about—not merely what Baron Neurath on the one side, and Sir John Simon on the other side, tell us they are thinking. For neither of these gentlemen is likely to tell us the truth if the truth conflicts with what he has in view. And, indeed, no one in such circumstances expects them to tell the truth. What we have to realize is that French opinion, and German opinion, and British opinion, as standing for a national entity, is pure myth. It simply does not exist. For in each country there are widely divergent opinions on every subject on which our leaders so confidently and so falsely assure us British, or German opinion says this or that. And once we are assured of this, the case for censorship is gone. We begin to see that it is to our direct interest to find out what the other fellow is thinking about, what are his feelings and inclinations. It will not be so easy to hate Germany or any other country, because there will be no collective entity there for us to hate. We can hate individual Germans, as we may hate individual Britons, but we do not hate the *men* of Cheshire or Lancashire; we only hate a man living in Lancashire or Cheshire. And on this level we have removed that indiscriminate and unreasoning hatred that makes a war such as the last one possible.

* * *

Wanted—Courage.

Now the great thing that stands in the way of this better understanding of peoples living in other countries is the cowardice of our politicians and our military and naval advisers. Like a very timid animal they shy at any unusual shadow or noise. They live in a constant fear of attack. I ought to add to these that number of civilians who are afraid that this opinion may be dangerous, and that publication may lead to demoralization, and who join our politicians and military and naval leaders in wishing to suppress this or that opinion. All of these meet us with the one statement, namely that we run great risks in permitting the kind of freedom and plain speaking I have in view. I admit the risks. But then life is full of risks, and it is not a case of avoiding risks, but the kind of risks we will run. We have run enough risks through living in a state of fear with regard to this or that neighbour. We ran grave risks when we joined with others in trying to keep some seventy millions of people in a state of subjection, and only succeeded in making Germany the virtual dictator of European policy.

We have run so many risks in curbing the freedom of our own and of other peoples, and with such poor results, that it looks as though it might pay to run risks in the other direction. Our diplomatists go on

playing their stupid game of plot and counter-plot, like so many packs of school children playing at "Robbers and thieves," a game that deceives only those who ought to be told the truth. Dishonesty in international relations, secret plots—secret only to those not in the game—orders (or advice) to the B.B.C. not to permit this or that, a general attempt to discourage or suppress freedom of speech and interchange of thought, all are done in the name of national security. Could we run greater risks by a policy of freedom and the encouragement of exchanging opinion on every subject before the public? I think not. And if it will encourage those in high places I venture to prophesy that the first nation that adopts this policy of complete freedom of opinion and publication will deceive, for a time, every other nation in the world. No one will believe them. Was it not Bismarck who said that the only way to deceive diplomats was to tell the truth? We have risked so much in the history of Europe in the interests of what are now admitted falsehoods. Could we not screw our courage to the sticking point by venturing a little in the interests of truth and a greater decency of life?

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Mightier than the Sword.

"New occasions teach new duties, time makes ancient good uncouth,
They must upward still and onward, who would keep abreast of truth."—Lowell.

THE greatest blows that religion ever experienced since the Renaissance were the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* and Spencer's *Data of Ethics*, both the work of Englishmen. These writers were thorough in their methods, Charles Darwin writing after thirty years' investigation, whilst Herbert Spencer was forty years perfecting his system of Synthetic Philosophy.

There have been no grander intellectual achievements since Edward Gibbon took his memorable walk under the acacias at Lausanne on the completion of his memorable *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Spencer, unlike Darwin, never startled the religious world, and his utter want of orthodoxy was not fully realized until his *Data of Ethics* appeared. Then Christian theologians were annoyed to find that the man who had taken his place quietly as the leading English philosopher of the nineteenth century was as thorough a Freethinker as Charles Bradlaugh. Standing outside all churches and all creeds, he built up his own philosophy by science alone.

It is no disparagement to Darwin to say that Spencer's system of Synthetic Philosophy, which puts things together and does not pull them to pieces, is the waster scheme of the two. Darwin's name may have been execrated in every pulpit in Christendom, but Spencer's work was far more comprehensive and far more deadly to Orthodoxy. The two works made a thunderous engine of attack, from which Christianity is still reeling.

Spencer, in his writings, sought to show that all phenomena, physical and psychical, are the natural products of elementary matter and its laws, these being modes of operation of the primal law of what he calls the "persistence of force." His scheme, probably the vastest ever conceived by the human mind, embraced the story of the evolution of the universe from formless stuff into solar systems, the process being the advance from the simple to the complex, from the indefinite to the coherent. This same process was shown to be in operation in the life-history of the earth. No break between things inanimate and

animate being assumed, mind in the lower animals and man, man's social and intellectual development, are in unbroken sequence shown to be part of the eternal order. The Synthetic Philosophy, as the author chose to call it, is nothing more nor less than the law of evolution, as exemplified in nature and in man, in the animal realm and the vegetable and human, the sphere of sense, and the sphere of conscious and moral aspiration.

The glory and triumph of Spencer is that his philosophy rests on ascertained scientific knowledge. While other philosophers have evoked various extraneous agencies to account for the difference between man and the rest of the world, he trusted to evolution, the law which connects the thoughts of a Shakespeare with the obscure movements of an ascidian on the rocks. Spencer had a harder task than Darwin, because he took all knowledge for his province, whilst Darwin specialized.

The general admission of evolution is the death-knell of religious orthodoxy. It sweeps away at once the old Oriental legends which men have been taught to consider a sufficient explanation of all things. The legend of a fallen race disappears, and with it goes the myth of the devil, and all other strange and monstrous explanations that were necessary to harmonize the theological theory put forward by Priestcraft. With it also goes the bibliolatry which, like so many other idolatries, has served to enchain and cramp the human intellect. The Christian Bible, which is so largely the Bible of the Ancient Hebrews, must descend from its lofty pedestal and take its rank on the modest library shelf which contains the many sacred books of other and older nations.

Nothing more momentous has taken place since the Renaissance. Strangest of all, this intellectual lever, which will finally overthrow all existing creeds, has come among us so silently that many have scarcely noticed its approach. Opposition there has been, as there is to all new truths, but compared with the momentous issues at stake, the opposition has been trifling. Silently and steadily, for over seventy years, Evolution has been resistlessly pushing its way till no educated man or woman attempts to contravene it. There has been no "bridal birth of thunder peals," while this "great thought has wedded fact." To the clergy and their congregations, whose very innocence will not permit them to follow intelligently the course of modern scientific thought, the new theory must appear like Banquo's ghost to the amazed Macbeth. They look up suddenly from their crosses, candles, and their prayers, and see the awful shape in front of them. "Adam" and "Eve" and the talking snake are driven out from the fabled Garden of Eden, not by an angel with a flaming sword, but by the scientists.

Since Darwin's death, the clergy who formerly denounced the dead scientist with the whole wicked vocabulary of theological abhorrence, have, characteristically and hypocritically, claimed him as one of their flock. They buried this black sheep among the illustrious obscure in Westminster Abbey, and calmly pretend that the teachings of Evolution are in harmony with the fable of Eden and the story of Jonah and the whale. Only two religious bodies have been reasonably honest in this matter. Poles asunder in so many respects, the Roman Catholic Church and the Salvation Army have remained faithful to ignorance. On no condition will these two bodies part with "Eve" and the apple and the talking snake in "Eden." Romanists and Salvationists alike believe that Darwin and Spencer, and their colleagues, are to-day suffering the tortures of the damned. These uncultured people no more believe in evolution than they

understand the alphabet of science. But those who are trying to effect a compromise between the irreconcilables, religion and science, from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the very glib speakers on Pleasant Sunday Afternoon platforms, are assuring their audiences that the great truths of evolution are all in harmony with the Oriental legends in the Old and New Testaments, and that the discoveries of science are an assistance to religion.

Slowly, with lapses into its "lov'd Egyptian night," men and women are shaking themselves free from the chains of superstition. Bewildered by the new light, missing at first the guiding hand of their erstwhile pastors and masters, they stand amazed on the threshold of the future. The fundamental question of man's place in nature has been solved, and the wide acceptance of evolution has already begun to bear fruit in all practical affairs of life. Sooner or later, in spite of all the priests of Christendom, it will lead mankind to a happier, more consummate condition of life, and to loftier ideals.

MIMNERMUS.

An Unorthodox Doctor.

DURING the Middle Ages they had a proverb "*Ubi sunt tres medici ibi sunt duo athei.*" (Where there are three physicians there are two Atheists). This was only natural, seeing that it was believed that all illness was due to supernatural causes, either divine or diabolical; the only reliable cures were to be obtained through the ministrations of the priest and supplications to God and the holy saints. The secular practice of medicine, therefore, during the middle ages, was carried on mainly by Jews, Arabians, and Mohammedans.

In our own time, for a medical man to proclaim his Atheism would, in most cases, be fatal to his success, at any rate, among the middle and lower classes; so we do not often hear of it. In *Unorthodox Reminiscences*, by the distinguished surgeon, Sir George Turner (published by Murray in 1931), we have an exception. But then Sir George, who is nearly eighty years of age, has long retired from the Navy, in which he attained the rank of Admiral, and was knighted for his surgical services during the war.

The present writer can remember many of the incidents related by Sir George, one of which reveals the intensity of feeling against which Freethinkers had to contend in those days. During the disturbances caused by Christian bigotry while Bradlaugh was fighting for his seat in Parliament, Sir George had to attend the injured brought to St. George's Hospital, where he was house-surgeon. At that time, he tells us: "I regarded Bradlaugh as an offender, and so I attended to his enemies' cuts and bruises before I turned my attention to the Bradlaughites. My opinion now is that Bradlaugh was right, and that in fighting for affirmation instead of oath he was doing the right thing." (p. 7.) When Bradlaugh was interrupted while speaking, as he very often was, he would ask the interrupter to wait until the lecture was over, when he would be invited to come on the platform and make a speech in reply. Those who sometimes came with the intention of breaking up the meeting, never repeated the experiment, for Bradlaugh had the strength of a giant, and could pick the offender up as though he were a child, and place him outside.

We have dwelt, in previous articles, upon the Spartan methods of teaching in the Victorian era; Sir George Turner provides further evidence. After leaving his dame-school, he went to a private school under

a clergyman named Gwynne: "The discipline at this school," he says, "was hard, and we did everything to the tune of the cane. If one made a false quantity on reading a piece of Latin for the first time, the error was immediately corrected by two stripes on the palm of the hand, a barbarous method of punishment that may do permanent injury to the fingers." He is inclined to think that certain swellings of his finger-joints are due to this cause. The present writer suffered from a swelling of the ball of the thumb, due to a stroke from a stout cane, which lasted for over twelve months, and was for a long time thought to be permanent.

Upon leaving this school, Sir George was sent to Uppingham, which had attained such notoriety in the matter of flogging that *Punch* (to the best of his recollection) said it ought to be re-named "Whipping'em School." And, he adds, "the name would not be inappropriate." The head-master was Mr. Thring, who was considered to have been the greatest headmaster since Arnold. Darwin was anathema to him, and he taught that Methuselah actually lived nine hundred years so that he could hand down the facts of sacred history through the centuries.

Upon one occasion Sir George and four others were flogged, and he observes: "I honestly do not know to this day what we were supposed to have done. . . . To this day I boil with indignation at the memory of this gross injustice." The master was always right, the boy always wrong. "He was sometimes an executioner rather than a judge." Upon one occasion a boy named Floodgate was flogged on two successive days; one, or at the most, two days afterwards, he was sentenced to be flogged again. The boy pointing out to the master that he was unfit to be flogged again, a trial of strength ensued in which the boy came off the victor. The boy was threatened with expulsion, but, upon reflection, the master could see that he had gone too far, and the threat was not carried out. "I may mention here," says Sir George, "as a surgeon, that had he been flogged, it is quite possible that he would have had gangrene of the skin, and the boy was undoubtedly right in refusing to submit." Such was the treatment of Christian boys, in Christian schools, by Christian masters—invariably ordained Christian clergymen, in the high schools—in Christian England, under good Christian Queen Victoria! Some indication of the severity of the punishment is afforded by the fact that when the boys bathed, in the summer, those who had been punished resembled zebras.

Sir George was on intimate terms with Professor Romanes, whose latter-end return to faith was so trumpeted in the Christian camp. Sir George says, "Throughout the time that I knew him he was Agnostic," and if he reverted "it was after repeated cerebral hæmorrhages. He told me after recovery from one of these, how painful was the return to life, and that he regretted that he had not died." (p. 148.) While he was still an Agnostic, we learn, "He used to read prayers on Sunday for the benefit of the household and to please his wife. He also read sermons. It is easy to see how, when weakened by disease, and under the influence of his pious wife, he returned to the faith of his childhood. All the while he had his health and strength he rejected religion. It is not much for the Church to boast about, this victory over a sick man.

One rather amusing incident he mentions in connexion with Romanes; he wanted to make some experiments as to the clinging capacities of babies. He was not allowed to do so on his own children, says Sir George: "but I think he had a try on one of mine." Another amusing anecdote relates to Gladstone, who was very much hated by the Conservatives. General

Wood and his wife were invited to a public dinner, and found Mr. Gladstone also there. The General immediately left the room, but going out he met the Duke of Cambridge, Commander-in-Chief of the Army at that time. The Duke said, "Where are you off to?" "Well, sir, I cannot sit down to dinner in the same room as Gladstone." "Oh, nonsense, nonsense!" said the Duke; "you come back with me. I've got to do it, and so you must too." This reminds one of another occasion, when an old Conservative lady, hearing that Mr. Gladstone was in the room, said, "Oh dear! I do hope he won't make a disturbance."

Doctors are always liable to be called up at all hours of the night. Upon one occasion, when called up at 2 a.m., Sir George opened the bedroom window and shouted impatiently to a person on the doorstep, "Well, what is it?" A mild, timid voice replied, "Please, Sir, your house is on fire." And it was, two rooms and his consulting room being gutted.

Sir George gives instances of how injuries to the brain often result in a complete change of character. "An exceedingly genial and popular farmer going home from market, sustained a serious head injury by being thrown from his trap. For three years afterwards he was cross, irritable, and most unpleasant. On his death it was found that this change of temperament was due to pressure of a blood cyst on his brain."

That concussion of the brain leads to loss of memory, Sir George had personal experience. From a fall from a motor-cycle about 1905, concussion resulted. Afterwards he had to perform an exceedingly delicate and dangerous operation. Explaining it to a colleague, he was reminded that he had, with the help of this colleague, performed the same operation before, and repeated the remarks he had made upon it, but all memory of it had been completely obliterated. In conclusion, he observes: "Life is said to be a *mauvais quart d'heure* (a bad quarter of an hour) with some delicious moments; there is much sense in 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,' whatever faith may sustain us."

W. MANN.

Colenso's Jubilee.

It is fifty years since the death of Bishop Colenso, the "patiently adamant" Bishop of Natal, and all the ranks of Christendom withhold the slightest cheer. It was Colenso's peculiar privilege to have antagonized the High Dignitaries of both Church and State, and of such offenders it may truly be said "They have their reward." There are certain conventions which those who hold the "plum" positions in society are expected automatically to recognize in virtue of the fact. To do otherwise either shows disloyalty or stupidity, both unpardonable crimes. Silence upon certain fundamental "understandings" may be tolerated in special circumstances, but outspokenness is always an outrage. It is to Colenso's credit that he had his own scale of values for such loyalties. Loyalty to truth was easily his first consideration; for this all others had to make way. It is unlikely therefore that Colenso will receive anything like his fair meed of praise in this, his Jubilee year. Already this is quite clear. It will be for those who value adherence to "principle," who know the value of the social type that will not be silenced by an appeal to the minor and meaner loyalties, to recognize and hail Colenso as belonging to the "blood royal."

Colenso was a simple man, with the natural healthy reactions of those unspoilt by the many forms of

social pressure which received opinion can always exert from its citadels. Such men are always dangerous to accepted institutions. It is a truism of theologians that God moves in a mysterious way, and in the first "calling" of Colenso from his Norfolk vicarage of Fornsett in 1855, to the Bishopric of Natal he has set a nice little puzzle to the orthodox. For by so doing he was carelessly removed to a great extent from the immediate orbit of influence of all that delicate machinery which exists for closing the mouths of those who feel an urge to speak uncomfortable truths. If this had not happened he would as well never have thought of translating the Bible into Zulu, and consequently he might have remained all his life insufficiently acquainted with its beauties to regard it at its proper value. Apart from this we know that up to that time his favourite writers had been F. D. Maurice and the Unitarian, James Martineau, and that he had given up all belief in a material Hell, quite a heresy of magnitude at that time. "The Heathen Man and a Publican" of later days could therefore be forecasted as the natural climax of this theological "Rake's Progress."

In his early booklet, *Ten Weeks in Natal*, one can see his strong natural humanity struggling against the dead weight of Christian and national traditions. He tells us in that work what happened when a native chief, Ngoza, came to pay his respects to the Bishop:—

I happened to be dressing at the time, and was naturally unwilling to keep anyone waiting, so was making what haste I could in donning my apparel. But I was told there was no necessity whatever for this—that, in fact, it would be quite the thing to keep him waiting for some time—he would as a matter of course, expect it—time was of no consequence to him . . . In due time I stepped out to him, and there stood Ngoza, dressed neatly enough as a European with his attendant Kaffir waiting beside him. I said nothing (as I was advised) until he spoke . . . "Sakubona," I said: and with all my heart would have grasped the black hand, and given it a brotherly shake; but my dignity would have been essentially compromised in his own eyes by any such proceeding. I confess it went very much against the grain . . .

In spite of his Christian advisers, his natural frankness and sense of justice resulted, as one would expect, in his creeping into the hearts of the simple "savages," and when, according to his plans, the Bishop had at length erected his school, nineteen young Kaffir children were brought to it by the Indunas Ngoza and Zatshuge, who left them with the Bishop for education. In doing this they had to run counter to a really serious amount of prejudice of their countrymen, but the Chiefs did not share their alarm. His people had done what they could to shake his purpose, said Ngoza, but he had told them that he would like to be "the last fool of his race." It was, of course, a "Missionary" school, so that the elimination of folly would not, in the usual way, be its prime objective, but in Colenso's school the education was not marred "by any extravagant haste to indoctrinate the children with what are called propositions of dogmatic theology."*

His work of education was however destined to take an altogether unexpected turn. Whilst making the translation of the Bible into Zulu, Colenso was assisted by an "intelligent native," who really appears to have had more than an ordinary share of sagacity and common-sense. When reading aloud the story of the Flood the Zulu interpolated "Is all that true?" Such pertinency would shock even a Bishop. It did more than shock Colenso. It much disturbed him, and

* *Life of Bishop Colenso*, Rev. Sir G. W. Cox.

he "was thus driven—against my will at first, I may truly say—to search more deeply into these questions." A climax was, however, to come when he came to Ex. xxi. 20, 21: "If a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money."

I shall never forget the revulsion of feeling with which he first heard these words said to be uttered by the same great and gracious Being whom I was teaching him to trust in and adore. His whole soul revolted against the notion, that the Great and Blessed God, the Merciful Father of all Mankind, would speak of a servant or maid as mere "money" and allow a horrible crime to go unpunished, because the victim of the brutal usage had survived a few hours.

With the normal cleric at that date such an exhibition of "sentimentality" would have occasioned terrific reproof. "Do you not know that the most enlightened Christians (with white skins) in our and other countries have never found anything revolting in such a passage? Then what more befits a benighted Zulu (with a coffee-coloured exterior), than submitting to his superiors and apologising for ever having entertained such blasphemy?" Then he would be reproved for "intellectual pride," and a few tactful remarks made as to a God that loves a soul who believes in spite of difficulties, and to whom unbelief is the one unpardonable sin. The closure would then be applied effectually by referring to the dreadful fate reserved for the unbelieving and the premium on credulity in the shape of eternal bliss. The odds would then be on the Zulu's Christianity coinciding with that of his superiors and being henceforth a useful quantity—but if not, as a last resort he could always be expelled from communion with the saints.

Colenso, we have already learnt, although having none of the proper pride of race which should have made him feel the natural reluctance to shaking hands with a person of different coloured skin, had already been convicted of "intellectual pride" by having given up the idea of "Eternal punishment," so we are not surprised to read that his "own heart and conscience at the time fully sympathized with that of his servant." He determined to take in hand an impartial and scientific examination of the Pentateuch. He had one special faculty to help him in this task. He was a mathematician, and had enjoyed the distinction of being Second Wrangler. He was widely known to myriads of schoolboys for his disagreeable "Arithmetic" and "Algebra." Guided by his mathematical aptitude into a system of criticism at once precise and accurate he was not long in discovering "that the Books of the Pentateuch contain such plain contradictions and involve such remarkable impossibilities, that they cannot be regarded as true narratives of actual, historical matters of fact."

T.H.E.

(To be continued.)

Since almost all who are taught any morality whatever have it taught them as religion, and inculcated on them through life principally in that character, the effect the teaching produces as teaching, it is supposed to produce as religious teaching, and religion receives the credit of all the influence in human affairs which belongs to any generally accepted system of rules for the guidance and government of human life.

John Stuart Mill.

Acid Drops.

Armistice Day is approaching and official orders have gone out that the nation is to express its grief at a particular time and for two minutes. We have nothing but the greatest respect and sympathy for those who mourn the loss of some one dear to them, and we know that time while it leaves the wound less raw does little or nothing to make good the loss. But to such feelings the idea of a public order to mourn is more or less of a mockery. Sorrow and gladness must be spontaneous or they are a sham. They do not need maroons, and parades and massed bands to evoke it or to honour it. The whole thing becomes simply ghastly when one reads every year of assaults on individuals here and there who will not take a public part in the display. For a year or two there was an element of naturalness about the proceedings; now it is little better than an empty ceremony. It is more than time that it should be abolished.

We were almost alone when we first protested against the continuation of this ceremony, but year by year the number who have taken the same attitude has grown. We hope to find more followers this year. The continuation of the ceremony is the more ghastly since it has become, not a genuine expression of grief for the dead, and of horror at the beastliness of war—the cause of their death—but a vast recruiting ceremony, and this year with the shadow of another war over the world we expect that element to be stronger than ever. But one recent protest is worth noting. It appears in the *Manchester Guardian* for October 19, and is from the Rev. D. Fletcher, Senior Chaplain of the 42nd Division. He protests against the "growing sense of unreality" which must "pervade the Armistice observances," and "too often the observance of November 11 is marked by military display, parades of troops and other reminders that the glittering sword is not yet sheathed." It is this last feature that is the most detestable, and this year it threatens to be more evident than ever. If every parson who preaches on that day, instead of glorifying the dead, which is a veiled invitation for the living to following their example, were to dwell on the iniquity of the deaths of these men, and denounce the forces that sent them to their deaths, November 11 might be used to advance the cause of peace, instead of serving to keep alive the superstition of the grandeur and glory of militarism.

One of those timid, fire-eating creatures who is afraid of everyone he cannot knock down, and who, even when he has knocked him down, lives in deadly fear that he may get up again, writes in the *Morning Post* for October 20:—

The basis of man's existence on this earth is efficiency achieved through competition.

That is used as a basis for continued and increasing armaments and recurring wars, and the author of this clotted nonsense is stated to be Rear-Admiral A. H. Norman. The basis of human efficiency is not competition, but co-operation. Man is essentially a co-operative animal, and the competition that is carried on is that of groups. The most aggressive man that exists, whether he be aggressive in a physical, mental, warlike or a commercial sense, is only able to do his fighting so long as he can get others to co-operate with him. It is the efficiency of the group, not the mere efficiency of the individual that is of importance in human society. Perhaps we ought to apologize for taking Rear-Admiral Norman out of his depth, but most of our readers will follow what we mean.

We are assured by the Duke of Atholl that the method of distributing the gifts in his latest, anything but Lottery, Scheme, was vouchsafed to him by Heaven. We are not surprised to hear this. No earthly tribunal would have thought of transmitting Twenty-five Pounds to Lady Houston so as to remove for a few hours the spectre of want hovering over her cottage. This is Providence all over. When we read of her "luck," we know it to be the finger of God.

Roman Catholicism lays great stress on its Patron Saints. Special Saints have special functions. St. Christopher guides your motor car; St. Antony guides your letter through the post; other Saints cure you of toothache, rheumatism, cancer or clergyman's sore throat. In Catholic countries, the press insert advertisements in large quantities (at special rates) giving thanks to Little Flower, St. Jude, Holy Face and the numerous other Saints who have been invoked, amulets, candles and medals and bits of printed paper which it is important to note, have been purchased from the Church. The whole celestial machinery—and tricky and complicated machinery it must be—is set in operation for the purchaser's benefit. Nothing can be clearer than that the arrangement is useful both to the Church and, if we are to believe them, to the customers.

Strange to say, the celestial branch establishments seem to have better staff management than prevails at the Head Office, presided over by the President of the Immortals himself. From the *Montreal Daily Star*, we learn that the fine Cathedral, Convent and School, at Valleyfield, Quebec, have been reduced to ruins. The loss caused by fire is estimated at a million dollars, and is believed to be the most disastrous in the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Canada. One would have thought that the prayers of the specially consecrated Priesthood would have availed something. They availed nothing. Fortunately, we read, the buildings are well insured.

Homer nods occasionally, so one might allow the Uncriticizable an occasional siesta. But this somnolence is getting beyond a joke. This is the sixth Roman Catholic Church in Canada to be destroyed during the past year.

The first church to be destroyed was at Lanoraie, on October 5, 1932. Approximate loss, \$70,000.

Others were:—St. Louis de France Church, Montreal, January 12, 1933. Approximate loss, \$500,000.

St. Genevieve de Batiscan Church, January 14. Approximate loss, \$200,000.

St. Jacques le Mineur Church, Montreal, March 26. Approximate loss, \$300,000.

Clarke City, Saguenay, church rector's house, \$60,000. in loss.

Valleyfield Cathedral. Approximate loss, \$1,000,000.

The Basilica at Quebec is regarded as the greatest loss from the standpoint of historic and ecclesiastical associations. The cost of that fire, in 1922, was placed at 750,000 dollars. It looks as if, in spite of all their care, some little heresy has crept into the Roman Catholic soul-saving formulas, for, if we are entitled to judge by appearances at all, God is extremely annoyed.

This question of orthodoxy is, of course, all important, and any man who is worried about saving his soul must not neglect any opportunity of avoiding heresies. Otherwise when he meets Peter he may be handed the "frozen mitt," which we feel sure would be a poor reward for his efforts in clearing theological jungles. We commend to him the work just published by Bumpus, *The Greek Orthodox Church in London*. Perhaps the correct soul-saving formula lies with this Church, for it is only a geographical accident which keeps them out of the intellectual (!) picture in England. It is beyond question a substantial theological House, and the conclusions of the Orthodox Greek Church are accepted by huge numbers of people. Moreover they have age, and lay claim to the Only True Orthodox Faith quite as vehemently as does the Holy Roman Church—and vehemence counts in these matters. We wonder if Messrs. Chesterton and Belloc have paid these contentions the respect they deserve. If not, the risk they take appears to us to be quite appalling.

Since writing the above, we have learnt of another similar instance of the Divine negligence or displeasure—have it as you will. A fire has practically destroyed St. Joseph's University, a French-Canadian institution con-

ducted by the Roman Catholic Order of the Holy Cross. The damage is estimated at £200,000. We really think there *must* be heresy somewhere. Even if the fires are the work of incendiaries, which is suspected, a little of the medicine for the culprits as was administered to Uzzah is not beyond the power of the All Powerful.

Suppose after all the truth is that God does not like Churches. Nothing could be easier than to make out from parts of the New Testament that Jesus didn't like priests and Churches and Ecclesiastical institutions of any kind. Temples made with hands did not seem to cut much ice with him. Renan in his *Life of Jesus* has a celebrated chapter in which he makes beautiful use of the interview of Jesus with the woman of Samaria. Jesus told her that the day would come when God would be worshipped not in this temple or that, but in spirit and in truth. We repeat it is quite on the cards that God doesn't like Churches.

In the *New Clarion*, Kuklos, the well-known writer on Cycling and Walking and Open-Air pursuits, administers physic on like lines to a disgruntled cleric, the Rev. C. P. Pitt of Manchester. Dismayed with empty tabernacles this gentleman tells the open-air devotees that there are better things to do than "meandering about the world's surface." A better world, is not made up this way, he says. Kuklos reminds him that on the Reverend Gentleman's premisses, it is God's world, and when he (God), looked upon it he thought it was quite good; and that Jesus had small patience with temples and priests. He might have said that Jesus spent much of his time as well meandering about the world's surface, and when he did on rare occasions, enter a Synagogue, there was a pretty how-d'ye-do.

The *Universe* rules:—

It is not necessarily wrong, but certainly undesirable, for a Catholic to play for a Wesleyan football team. A sporting decision!

Recently there appeared as one of the Thoughts of the Week, in the *Observer*, a reminder that those who trust to the "Inner Light" are apt to mistake for its dictates any or all of their personal idiosyncrasies. This very apt comment was directed against "Buchmanism." An application can be found in a big meeting at the Central Hall, in connexion with the Buchmanites' London Campaign. Dr. Westcott, Bishop of Calcutta, said, "The Bible says that priests can give absolution." "Liar," came from different parts of the hall. The Inner Light speaks in many voices and that's just the trouble. Guidance to be of use must have some uniformity.

From the *Observer* we learn that "large crows" assembled at St. Edmund's Church, Northampton, to see the Mayoress safely married. Not without "caws," we presume. Large as the "crows" were they do not appear to have been large enough.

Association of ideas brings us to the fact that our new edition of *Infidel Death-Beds*—for which we have been receiving repeated enquiries—is just about to see the light. There one will be able to refresh ones memory with the fact that round the death-bed of every famous Freethinker have gathered the unclean birds of superstition—"large crows," and carrion crows at that.

From the *Bloemfontein Mercury* we learn that Dr. Carey, the Bishop of Bloemfontein, advised the electors to vote for General Hertzog and General Smuts and their Coalition candidates. He said:—

I have made up my mind that we ought to say "Yes," and I should vote for the present members, whoever they are, even if the Archangel Gabriel came and stood against them.

Well, the only recorded message of Gabriel, we also have rejected, and we strongly suspect that Mary believed

it only because she was unconsciously a pragmatist, considering that whatever was useful was true. Still if the Bishop is prepared to turn down Gabriel, the Church is no place for him. No wonder that he has been, temporarily, at any rate, removed from his normal ecclesiastical duties, and given the whole-time job of collecting funds for the S.P.G. He seems to be more likely (in a "Church" sense), to be useful in that direction than in puzzling his head over the "Queen" of the Sciences.

Mr. James Douglas wants Christianity to be supreme in this country but not being a Roman Catholic, he doesn't want Roman Catholicism. So naturally he does not like the Pope's latest query, "Is England heading for Rome?" and after the usual Douglasian farrago in the *Daily Express*, describing "certain aspects of Catholic devotion," says, "These things are unthinkable in England. Our passion for religious freedom is unconquerable." Why Protestant "devotion" is so much better than Catholic "devotion" when both are based on absurd fables, is not quite clear, but one of the Roman Catholic papers is very very angry, and says, "We hopefully believe that writers of this sort are incapable of serious thought, mere creatures of surface impression, whose minds the shallowness of popular journalism has debilitated, and whose heads the limelight has turned. Otherwise we should be obliged to conclude that they are thoroughly dishonest." Poor Mr. Douglas! And how these genuine Christians love one another!

Another *Punch* picking:—

The main floor of Cochrane St. Church was pretty well filled on Saturday evening when the Rev. John E. Brown delivered a sermon on the subject "Hell here and hell hereafter," which was very encouraging."—*Newfoundland Paper*.

To whom?

Another sweet example of Christian brotherhood and love is shown by what recently happened in Eltham. It seems that a new Church called the Church of St. Saviour, has been built there at a cost of £11,000. The architect is a believer in "futurism," and so a number of the local residents, who hated anything like "futurism," promptly broke the windows with stones and disfigured the new walls—a touching example of how Christians love one another. However, we are glad to say that their religious needs have been met by building another church, called the Church of St. Barnabas, at a cost of £13,000, more in keeping with old traditions. This church has just been consecrated by the Bishop of Southwark, who reminded the people that "it was intended for daily prayer and worship." Thus for a mere beggarly sum like £24,000 in these prosperous times, the people of Eltham can worship and adore Jesus in peace and comfort; and we are cheered by yet another example of how easy it is to obtain almost any sum of money so long as it is used for religion.

"I am not likely to ill-treat it; I am a local preacher," said Robert Craven, dairyman, of High Melton, when he appeared before the Doncaster magistrates for ill-treating a horse. The magistrates thought this did not follow. What did follow was a fine of Forty Shillings.

Some of the dear clergy are getting remarkably humble in these days when so many people cold shoulder the special chums of God. Thus the Bishop of Bristol remarked recently: "Please do not call me 'My Lord'; we may surely greet one another in simple human ways." We must say that this request sounds rather unnatural, coming as it does from one who claims to be a specially appointed representative of Almighty Power. Assuming the Bishop's humility to be real, we would warn him that there is danger in his request to be addressed as an ordinary person. Much of the power and influence which the clergy enjoy, and always have enjoyed, is due largely to the fact that the duller-witted Christian accepts them at their own valuation—that is, as individuals quite dis-

tinct from the rest of the people and under divine guidance. Therefore they have always been greeted in other than "simple human ways." If the Bishop of Bristol wants to be regarded as just an ordinary human being, then he must be prepared to lose much of the prestige which his class has enjoyed for hundreds of years. He should even be prepared to hear people asking why bishops, if they are ordinary men, should be granted seats in the House of Lords, whereas, ordinary men have to get elected in order to take part in the government of the country. But we cannot help wondering whether we should ever have heard of humble bishops and humble parsons, if the Christian religion and Church had not, in recent years, suffered so severe a set-back. We are afraid that the priests of God assume the virtue of humility only when arrogance no longer is a paying proposition.

The blithe spirits in Liverpool University have been letting themselves go:—

Students dressed up as an angelic choir and parodied the angels who heralded the birth of our Lord.

Not satisfied with the mocking garb, they went to the length of singing a garbled imitation of the *Adeste Fideles*, one of the most beautiful Christian hymns, but sang it to the words "Oh, Come, all ye Faithless."

The Rev. Rowland Jones, Vicar of Audenshaw, read of these "goings on," and was not amused. Is there no blasphemy law that can be evoked? he asks. There is.

The Rev. Charles H. Yatman preached in New Jersey. For his sermon he contented himself with saying "Don't worry; it's wicked!" and sat down. We admit it to be a fair epitome of the pot-luck policy of Jesus Christ.

"Sir," writes the Rev. F. G. Breed of Clayton-le-Moors to the *Times*, "I have an easy way of putting myself to sleep. I say over to myself in bed the sermon that I propose to preach next Sunday, and I am asleep in no time." He says no more and neither do we.

Fifty Years Ago.

SOME say that Jesus must have been a supernatural being, or he would not have made such bold pretensions. There was no hesitancy about him. He spoke as though he knew everything. But nearly all religious enthusiasts do that.

Dr. Parker, Mr. Spurgeon, Dr. Talmage, and Mr. Booth are all little god almighties to their respective followers. Sydney Smith once satirically remarked: "I wish I could be as cock sure of anything as Tom Macaulay is of everything." And Christians to-day take the strong declarations of Jesus as being sufficient guarantee of their truth, because they are foolish enough to imagine that his boldness would have been tempered with a little discretion if he had not been certain of their truth. But when Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned," he laid the foundation-stone of a religion that is degrading to humanity.

It is the first duty of every man to think for himself and examine the credentials of whatever system he is asked to accept. To be threatened or intimidated into the acceptance of a religion is a crime—humiliating alike to all concerned. Every man must do his own thinking and express his own thoughts. The priest is not a better thinker than the layman, and religion is a subject that can be as well understood by the common folk as any other, if intelligibly stated. Why, then, should the layman allow the clergy to think for him? Why should he allow his mind to rust or decay to please the priest? Again. Why should Jesus state the whole truth which persons must not disbelieve, in an obscure corner of the earth, to a number of ignorant and fanatical followers, and leave mankind without a written statement of them, except that which was supplied by persons who never saw, or heard him, or even lived until years after he was dust?

The "Freethinker," October 28, 1883.

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE.

EDITORIAL:

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2412.

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A. F. WILLIAMS.—Copies will be sent you.

A. MILLAR.—Thanks for the amusing account of your friend of the debate. We are glad he managed to get in after travelling so far for the purpose.

A. F. LEE.—We do not recollect having had any encounter with a Christadelphian since our very early days. That gentleman—we forget his name—left us with the impression of a fearful and wonderful theory protected from a great deal of criticism by its sheer absurdity. The question of prophecy is hardly worth troubling oneself about, although we quite appreciate the fact that these early superstitions may cause some people considerable mental trouble.

R. B. KERR.—Sorry we have to hold over your letter till next week. We sympathize with your point of view although not entirely endorsing it.

RECEIVED Twenty 1/2d. stamps, Acton postmark, dated 23rd inst. No letter or any indication as to disposal.

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Sugar Plums.

To-day (October 29) Mr. Cohen will visit Hull and will lecture on "Charles Bradlaugh," in the Royal Institution, Albion Street. The meeting is an afternoon one, at 2.45. It has been well advertised, and there will be a Bradlaugh exhibition in the Institution before the lecture. It is some years since Mr. Cohen visited Hull, and a good muster of Freethinkers is anticipated.

Mr. Cohen has been asked to meet a number of friends in the Metropole Hall at 7 o'clock on Sunday evening, and will do so. It will give an opportunity for an exchange of views on Freethought propaganda in the district. We believe that another meeting has also been arranged for the Saturday evening, but at the time of going to press no definite information is to hand.

The new edition of G. W. Foote's *Infidel Death-Beds* is now ready. The work has been greatly enlarged by Mr. A. D. McLaren with a number of biographies of famous men—men who have died since the appearance of the first

edition of this work; and some earlier ones inserted. *Infidel Death-Beds* is more than a mere dictionary of deaths of famous Freethinkers; it is a miniature encyclopedia with notes of their lives and work. It will, we are sure, prove of interest to all, and of special value to many. The book extends to about 200 pages, and is issued by the Secular Society, Limited, at 2s., neatly bound in cloth, postage 3d. extra. We anticipate a very large sale.

A very good report of Mr. Rosetti's recent lecture in Burnley appears in the *Burnley News*. We are not surprised to learn that Mr. Rosetti's audiences increase in size with every visit, and that he leaves behind him each time a larger number of friends than he had before.

There is also a good report of the Bradlaugh meeting at Stockport in the local papers. For once in a way there is less hesitancy in mentioning Mr. Cohen's name. The boycott in English papers of Freethought leaders is very old and is well sustained. The consolation is, as G. W. Foote used to say, that Freethought owes nothing to the press and cannot, therefore, be injured by it.

The *Bradford Telegraph and Argus* prints two good letters, from H. L. Searle and L. H. Robertshaw, in which Lady Snowden's bigoted objection to the B.B.C.'s light music on Sundays during the period of Divine Worship, is mercilessly dealt with. Mr. Robertshaw well says:—

These people, not content with their ascetic opinions, endeavour to deprive others of a little human pleasure, and why we, in these enlightened days should be dominated by the superstitions of dead barbarians and living fanatics is beyond my comprehension.

The Secretary of the Ashington Branch N.S.S. in reporting the activities and influence of the work done draws attention to the library connected with the Branch, which is gradually growing in books and members. A speakers' class will be held during the winter, and in that connexion it is pleasing to know that four members are already doing platform work, and the oldest of the four is only twenty-one. Information concerning the Branch may be had from the local secretary, Mr. T. Holliday, 89 Ariel Street, Ashington, Northumberland.

Farmers are by no means taking the mean and despicable attacks upon them by representatives of the Church and their hirelings in the spirit so beautifully inculcated by Jesus. A very vigorous protest in a Church paper was recently made by Mr. A. G. Mobbs, the Vice-Chairman of the National Tithe-payers Association, and he makes a sorry mess of his religious opponents. Here are a few extracts:—

Why cannot the Church and its press meet agriculturists on the level instead of representing them to the public as agitators, confiscators, law-breakers, etc? There are no more law-abiding citizens or greater lovers of peace than the farmers. They and their men have been pumping up these hundreds of millions out of the soil for the benefit of the Church, centuries after all other sections of the community have refused to submit to compulsion, and now that the soil of this country will no longer provide the standard of living demanded by all those who endeavour to live out of it, including the clergy, I contend that it is nothing but base ingratitude on the part of the Church and its press to adopt such a one-sided attitude . . . You appear content to advertise the fact that concessions will be made if farmers will cringe for charity and expose their poverty . . . Farmers to-day are offering to buy their freedom from the slavery (of tithe) by the payment of even more than the £20,000,000 which was paid to the British slave owners a century ago. Why not tell your readers of this, and ask whether they consider such an offer generous? . . . Again and again we have invited the clergy and the Bishops to attend our meetings, but with little result . . . I have repeatedly offered to debate the question in public, but no one has accepted my offer . . .

It is all well said, but Mr. Mobbs is dealing with the Church of Christ, and he must be very optimistic if he imagines any fair play can come from that!

Some time ago we referred to the excommunication by the Roman Catholic Church of Professor Alfarié of Strasbourg, who had written on the *Problem of Jesus and the Origins of Christianity*, and we ventured to remark that the Professor would lose no sleep about it. We are indebted to the *New York Truthseeker* for some remarks of Monsieur Alfarié on the subject which, by the way, we have noticed in no English newspaper or periodical:—

I cannot tell you, he writes, how indifferent I am to the sentence of the Holy Office. The Church has no longer the right to excommunicate me. I withdrew from its communion long ago. I did so in full knowledge of the cause and after ripe reflexion. The intimate convictions which I thus obeyed have become only the firmer. I hold to them more than ever. I cannot entertain the question of denying them.

Let the Holy Office, then, feel no embarrassment. Let it hasten to give orders that I am to be *avoided* because of my "errors." Such a measure, coming from it and for such a reason, will do me great honour.

To show my gratitude, I shall not fail to tell the public what the court that condemns me is. I shall relate in detail its long history, abounding in crimes against the mind. Then will it be seen which of us is to be avoided.

As we anticipated, Professor Alfarié has lost nothing in serenity.

A Savage Psychology of Sex.

THE customs of the uncivilized appear curious and absurd to the European mind. The manners and customs of the white races strike the savage as equally astonishing and irrational. Yet, fundamentally, there persist many marked resemblances between primitive observances and those of cultured communities.

A great poet tells us that the world of life is dominated by hunger and by love. Certainly the sexual passion is little less powerful than that of desire for solid and liquid nourishment. But while appetite for food is practically constant, the reproductive passion is more periodic in its nature. This, in conjunction with its closer association with our mental and emotional experiences, seems to have shrouded sex and the functions of sex in mystery and fear.

In every phase of human culture there is apparent an almost instinctive desire to perform the periodic acts of nature, such as the discharge of the waste products of the body, and sexual congress in some silent or secluded retreat. This preference for privacy may have originated from pre-historic man's necessity for ensuring greater protection from beasts of prey when, in the nature of the case, he was most exposed to danger.

Moreover, this seclusive instinct is common in the lower animal domain. After a prolonged period of domestication cats and dogs still retain the habits of their wild ancestors in this respect. Indeed, kindred phenomena are general throughout the whole mammalian series.

Some anthropologists are of opinion that the savage is more reticent with regard to sexual and excretory processes than civilized mankind. That some uncivilized stocks are more secretive is unquestionable. In Ceram and several other places all natural functions are performed in the strictest seclusion, while in New Guinea custom compelled a husband completely to ignore his spouse in any place of public resort. In Fiji married couples penetrate the depths of the forests to perform the act of coition. Bowdich assures us that in Western Africa, if a native consorted with a woman outside his hut they could be reduced to slavery by any informer who reported against them. Even in conversation, many savages are more refined than some of the superior white races. In the Bismarck Archipelago, for example the reproductive

organs are invariably referred to in euphemistic terms and "there is a widely established alternative vocabulary used for sexual matters."

With the lower races as a whole a sense of mystery and fear surrounds the female sex. Many profound philosophers, both in ancient and modern times, have admitted their inability to fathom feminine depths. A great poet and psychologist, George Meredith, opined that woman will be the last creature to be civilized by man. He also tells us in *Lord Ormont* that women of the type providing wives are boxes of puzzles—often dire surprises. The eternal feminine is, perhaps, an unending enigma. What marvel then that untutored children of Nature watch women with wistful, if apprehensive, eyes? To them the voice of the siren may conceal danger to be dreaded. During the Dark Ages and beyond, Christian Europe was much more affrighted by the evil powers of the witches than by those of the wizards.

There is a widespread superstition that women are endowed with special facilities for intercourse with the spirit realm. The weird sister's close intimacy with Satan was the common belief in Christendom for centuries. Hysteria, so general in female sexual life, seemed to prove this fancy. In Barro hysterical women are supposed to have been guilty of carnal intercourse with evil spirits. As Crawley notes in his *Mystic Rose*: "This idea further develops into the widely-spread belief that women, especially about the time of puberty, have communication with gods, a belief emphasized by the common practice of secluding them at this time. This idea has been made much of by various systematized religious cults, and has resulted in many phenomena of religious parthenogenesis." And, of course, the virgin birth of Jesus is a fundamental dogma of orthodox Christianity.

Frazer, in the *Golden Bough*, has furnished many instances of girls at the period of puberty being forbidden to see the sun or even a fire lest these illuminants should cause their impregnation. We recall the Greek myth of Danaë, the mother of Perseus, who was made pregnant by the golden shower of Jove.

That women are usually more susceptible to sacerdotal influences than men is an old-time truism, and the gentler sex has always been victimized by the clergy. Women have also made highly efficient priestesses, and frequently officiate in savage rites. It is notorious that priestly vestments are markedly effeminate. In the lower culture priests are quite commonly arrayed in feminine garments. Some of the Bornean priests masquerade as women, and prefer to be treated as females. Patagonian sorcerers are chosen from children who are afflicted with St. Vitus' dance and dress in women's clothes.

Frazer's excellent summary of these strange customs runs as follows: "The unsexed creatures often, perhaps generally, profess the arts of sorcery and healing, they communicate with spirits, and are regarded sometimes with awe and sometimes with contempt, as beings of a higher or a lower order than common folk. Effeminate sorcerers or priests of this sort are found among the Sea Dyaks of Borneo, the Bugis of South Celebes, the Patagonians of South America, the Aleutians and many Indian tribes of North America. In the Island of Rambree, a set of vagabond 'conjurers,' who dressed and lived as women, used to dance round a tall pole, invoking the aid of their favourite idol on the occasion of any calamity. . . . In Madagascar, we hear of effeminate men who wore female attire and acted as women, thinking thereby to do God service. In the Kingdom of Congo, there was a sacrificial priest who commonly dressed as a woman, and glorified in the title of grandmother."

With many races there persists a fear that a woman's touch makes men weak and effeminate. This belief was shared by the ancient Greeks and other early races. Underlying this fancy is the almost universal belief that the qualities of animals may be transmitted by touch or assimilation. Dyak lads are not allowed to eat venison, or they would display the timidity of deer. Everywhere in savagery menstruous women are debarred from male society, for this would make men vulnerable in warfare. In Central Australia a medicine-man at the time of initiation must not sleep with his wife or his magic art would vanish for ever. During her menses a woman's touch infects all food and drink. To remove feminine enfeeblement the Gallas even amputate the nipples of boys in early infancy, for they declare no warrior with *mammæ* is capable of courage in combat.

American Indian braves refrain from women both before, and immediately after, war. They say that intercourse with women renders a warrior laughable and lessens his bravery. Then there is the custom of degrading, as they view it, impotent and homosexual natives to the low level of women. In some Californian tribes men are attired in female raiment, and are dubbed *i-wa-musp*, i.e., man-woman. Masturbation and a desire to escape the liabilities of full masculine life are considered the cause of these abnormal types. The Omahas term a boy hermaphrodite, if he seeks girls' society. Even in Europe, the Brandenburg peasantry aver that a man-child must not be wrapped in a woman's apron, or, in later life, he will merely run after the wenches.

T. F. PALMER.

Bradlaugh Exhibits.

At the Bradlaugh Commemoration Dinner, held at the Trocadero Restaurant on September 23, there was displayed a collection of highly interesting mementos of Charles Bradlaugh. These were a source of great interest to the guests, and at times it was impossible to reach the tables on which they were arranged. They were loaned for the occasion by Mrs. H. Bradlaugh Bonner, and we have been favoured with a full list, which we reproduce, as we know it will be of interest to our readers.

Addresses from the Reform League of Ireland (1868), The Northumberland Miners (1874), and the Sailors' and Firemen's Union (1889).

Walking stick, presented by the working men of New York (1873).

Silver salver, presented by the National Secular Society (1880).

Two medals struck to commemorate the Northampton Election (1880).

Certificate of Membership to the Societa Atea of Italy, of which Garibaldi was the President of Honour (1880).

Large Platinotype Photograph (Elliott and Fry) (September 26, 1890).

From various parts of India:—Caskets in silver, silver gilt, ebony and ivory, and sandalwood; bamboo, polished and unpolished; green velvet and tinsel bag: all containing addresses; small silver tea-set and tray with address; satin and tinsel address; grass mat, with "Charles Bradlaugh, the Friend of India," woven into it in red silk; an illuminated letter of condolence on Mrs. Bradlaugh's death, from the Indian National Congress, enclosed in a blue leather case, inscribed "To Mrs. Hypatia Bradlaugh Bonner."

LIST OF LETTERS TO CHARLES BRADLAUGH, IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER.—English: T. Allsop (1869), H. H. Asquith (1880), Arthur James Balfour (1880), T. Burt (1876), J. Chamberlain (1885), W. K. Clifford, Jos. Cowen (1878), Henry Fawcett (1870), Sir Michael Foster (1884), W. E. Gladstone (1881), Herbert Gladstone (1891), Lord Hob-

house (1888), Lord Houghton, W. A. Hunter (1883), Wm. Lovett (1876), Justin McCarthy (1890), J. S. Mill (1869), John Morley (1877), Francis W. Newman (1871), Chas. S. Parnell (1880), Sir Arthur W. Peel (1889). *About India*: Lord Dufferin and Ava (1889), note in Charles Bradlaugh's writing for speech on the Indian Councils Bill, Lord Harris (1890), Sir John Gorst (1891). *Foreign*: A letter of thanks from the Government of National Defence of the French Republic, signed by Leon Gambetta, A. Cremieux, Emanuel Arago, etc. (October, 1870), G. Garibaldi (1877), Wm. Lloyd Garrison (1873), Yves Guyot (1880), Jos. Mazzini (186-), Prince Jerome Napoleon ("N.") (1876), Wendell Phillips (1873), Elie Reclus (undated).

The National Liberal Club and the National Portrait Gallery kindly lent their portraits of Charles Bradlaugh by W. R. Sickert, R.A. The Northampton Public Library sent photographs and cartoons. Mr. Chapman Cohen, President of the National Secular Society, lent the N.S.S. hammer which was first used by Julian Hibbert, given by him to Richard Carlile, then used by James Watson and Henry Hetherington, and given by Mrs. Hetherington to Charles Bradlaugh, who had a silver plate put on it with "N.S.S." engraved and the names of those who had used it. Since the Presidency of Bradlaugh the name of G. W. Foote has been added.

The Immortality of Tripe.

THERE is a most amusing review in the *British Weekly* of an egregious volume written by that one-time leading Congregationalist, the Rev. Dr. Orchard, describing his "spiritual" pilgrimage in three spasms, which pilgrimage has finally landed the said Orchard in Rome as a faithful disciple of Papa, the Head of the Roman Catholic Church. The review is by a Dr. Micklem; and one is mischievously provoked to put as a sub-title to this article—"Micklem Can't Stickle Him." Poor Dr. Micklem wrings his hands over the apostasy of the Congregational orator and leader of his sect, and describes the final translation of said Orchard to Rome as a "painful" episode.

It was a single apple that originally played the devil with the human race, according to Holy Writ; and in Micklem's view evidently Orchard cultivation is going to play hell with Protestantism; or at least the section of Protestantism with which Dr. Orchard was particularly identified. It is very, very sad. But doesn't Dr. Micklem and those who think with him realize that Dr. Orchard's translation to Rome is merely symptomatic? Charles Bradlaugh prophesied long ago that the final struggle would be between "Rome and Reason." The Protestant Churches have only existed for a matter of three hundred odd years; in point of fact they are honeycombed by divisions and schisms and quarrels between sects which of course are impossible in the case of Roman Catholicism—the Church that is "one, infallible and indivisible."

The case of Dr. Orchard is not merely an additional proof of the failure of Christianity; but it also implicitly condemns the whole system of supernaturalism and ecclesiasticism as being concerned with subjects that are of no vital concern to Humanity—in short with things that do not matter. The multiplication of Josses only makes confusion more confounded. And the solemn blethers of men like James Douglas and Hugh Redwood, who profess to believe in the "divinity" of Christ, merely tickle the risible faculties of the Freethinker. After all how mean and petty is the outlook of the average Christian! We see it in this way. Nationality must perforce have a great deal to do in determining the view of every person who embraces a religious faith. That is to say, a Briton's or an American's God is bound to think and speak in the English language. Likewise an Italian's God must think and speak in Italian; and so on. We have tried

Volapuk and Esperanto with the view of making universal intercourse possible; but in matters religious, Rome has already established an international system of inter-communication. And in this she carries the palm away from Protestantism as regards logic. Rome is quite satisfied that some day her seceding sects which may be lumped together under the convenient title of "Protestant" will return to the original fold, and that there will then be realized the ideal of One Fold and One Shepherd.

The Supernaturalists tell us that Immortality has been brought to light in the Gospel. Presumably they base this declaration upon the Resurrection, the evidence for which, to say the least, is most unsatisfactory. But of the Immortality of Tripe, and especially religious tripe, there is, by all we can see, hear and read, no doubt at all. What after all does it matter to humanity that a person like Dr. Orchard should go through such a series of spiritual acrobatics as is described in his autobiographical record? The superstitious people accepting the supernaturalistic version of life are condemned to a state of existence which cramps and atrophies their intellectual powers. And the pious authors and journalists do their utmost to keep up the credulity! How the international financiers and munition makers must laugh in their sleeves! For Christianity has been their support in ages past, as they hope it will be for years to come. Tripe is said to go suitably with onions; but apparently there is a movement on foot to substitute for onions, apple sauce made from apples from a Roman Catholic Orchard.

IGNOTUS.

"Omniscientists."

This is the cognomen bestowed on a number of eminent but unorthodox writers and wireless exponents by Father Knox, an enthusiastic convert from the Anglican to the Roman Catholic Church, in his recent book *Broadcast Minds*. Among those who are breezily smitten hip and thigh are H. G. Wells, J. S. Huxley, Bertrand Russell and Langdon Davies. These, or some of them, and their imitators, we are told, write books on world-history, which are really covert attacks on religion; by a trick of suggestion they try to make people believe that there is still a conflict between science and religion; confuse us with an excess of miscellaneous and startling information; and so on. It appears, further, that they are not duly acquainted with "Catholic philosophy."

Though it would not be worth while to write or invite people to read a systematic review of the publication, a few points may perhaps be usefully considered.

While there is no serious and patent attempt to rebut the established facts and conclusions of science in general, or of the principle of evolution in particular, we encounter passages which are obvious attempts to belittle both: e.g., if one "pleads that he cannot believe in the inerrancy of Scripture because science has shown it to be full of mistakes . . . the Fundamentalist (*sic*) would reply with equal justice, precisely my own reason for doubting the truth of science." It is stated that the evolution of man from a common stock with the apes is "a theory which still lacks decisive confirmation." But the principle seems to be taken for granted when it suits the author's purpose, as in the statement that organs or structures which are now useless once had their use; for we can scarcely credit him with the egregious belief that the foetal tail, the muscles to move it, the foetal covering of hair (lanugo) and numerous other vestiges were at any time useful except to man's animal ancestors.

Question begging (with which Father Knox charges his opponents) is here and there very conspicuous, e.g., "Magic means something effected by man, not (like religion) something effected by God through the instrumentality of man acting as His minister." And referring to the similarity of the stories of "our Lord's

Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection" to those of Osiris and Thammuz, we are told that this is "comparing something legendary with something which is, or claims to be, historical" (the italics are, of course, mine). Perhaps Roman Catholics may derive some comfort from the added statement that the legendary stories of King Arthur "do not cast doubt on the records, ostensibly historical, of a king called Alfred" (italics again mine). But readers whose rationality has not been swamped by superstitious modes of thought will hardly appreciate the argument.

Following all this we are not greatly surprised to encounter the statement that the present position of theology in relation to science is the same as it was a hundred years ago, and that anthropology, archaeology, psychology and history have all failed to undermine orthodoxy. A sufficient answer to this is furnished by the change of belief that has taken place. We may take it for granted that a hundred years ago, an overwhelming majority of the people of Christendom (whether highly or less educated) held ordinary Christian doctrines. But a careful inquiry made in the United States in 1916 showed a very different state of things. A questionnaire was sent out to a large number of university teachers and others (including some "scientific industrialists") asking them to say whether they believed in (1) a personal God and (2) Immortality. Of those who replied, only 42 and 50 per cent respectively, were believers. For academic specialists alone the percentages were as follows: belief in God—physicists 34, historians 32, sociologists 19, biologists 16, psychologists 13; belief in Immortality—physicists 40, historians 35, sociologists 27, biologists 25, psychologists 8. This indicates an average percentage of about 25. Of course physics has (or had until a year or two ago) very little bearing on the doctrines in question, and much the same may be said for ordinary modern history; and doubtless this accounts for the higher figures for specialists in these subjects than for others. The lowness of the figures for the last three subjects, which bear more weightily on theology, is highly significant.

A somewhat similar questionnaire was sent last year by the Christian Evidence Society to members of the Royal Society of England (497 of them, including a number of foreigners). 200 replies were received. The question about God was, however, of little or no value as an indication of belief, as it merely asked whether science negates the idea of a personal God as taught by Jesus Christ. There were 103 favourable answers, 26 unfavourable, and 70 indefinite. Of course many would think, as one said, that "science can neither affirm nor deny . . ." To the question about belief in personal immortality, 47 replies were affirmative, 41 negative, and 122 indefinite.

It has been pointed out that some members of the Royal Society are aristocrats and statesmen, whose views cannot be regarded as of much value; that there are also an Anglican bishop and several Roman Catholics, who adopt the beliefs of their churches; and that 43 of the 103 who gave favourable answers to the former of the two questions cited were engaged with other sciences than those usually included in the category. (I have for some years been personally acquainted with a professor of engineering whose name has appeared in a religious paper as a Fellow of the Royal Society and a "believer in God"). There were several other questions; but the Christian Evidence Society did not venture on the quest for evidence in favour of Christianity by asking for the views of the scientists on virgin birth, incarnation, bodily resurrection, and the like. The opinion of biologists, psychologists and anthropologists on such points would have been of great interest to Freethinkers.

J. REEVES.

(To be concluded.)

WHEN readers write and writers read
The world were upside down indeed—
But better 'twere, in their despite,
If fools could neither read nor write.

HERBERT SHELLEY.

For Our Youngsters.

ABOUT LITTLE JESUS.

If you read the story of the birth of Jesus without troubling over the silly miracles, it is quite a good tale.

A newly-married couple are on a journey in cold weather. The wife expects a baby pretty soon. The hotel or inn is full up. They have to sleep in a stable, where the child is born that very night.

When you think of some of the awful slums in our big cities—yes and even in little villages sometimes—there are many much sadder stories than that of a child born in a stable.

As to the rest of the birth-story, it is all mere myth. A "myth" is a sort of fairy tale: no myth is a true story, or it would not be called a myth.

The idea of a star leading anybody to anywhere in particular could not by any chance be a fact.

If a bad King tried to find out where the child was to be born, he must have been a Hitler seeking to kill off all the Jews in his realm: but King Herod at least consulted a few "wise men" before doing anything about it.

The Bible story about Jesus is very disappointing because it says so little about his childhood. Jesus was circumcised a week after birth—that is to say, a little operation was performed on his sexual organ. This is done to all the sons of pious Jews (and to many others as well). This operation shows us that Jesus was a human boy, formed exactly like anyone else.

Jesus was fussed over by his Aunts and others, but while we read long accounts of what Anna and Eliza and the rest of them said, we are told nothing about what Jesus said and did.

I imagine Jesus was like other boys at that time. He enjoyed visiting Uncles and Aunts if they were nice to him, and said rude things to them if they were like some of the Aunts I have known.

But when he was turned twelve, Jesus is said to have had his first adventure. Reading between the lines it is safe to guess that Jesus was rather tired of the constant "hiking" which his parents very sensibly enjoyed.

They had been to the big city of Jerusalem. Jesus had seen the bazaars, and all the fun and novelty of crowded streets. He had most likely made friends with boys and girls of his own age there.

Suddenly Father and Mother packed up and started away home. Jesus simply stayed behind to play. There was no Cinema in Jerusalem, but there were Menageries, Circuses, Street Magicians and Musicians, and Camel races and the like.

For three days Jesus played truant. Three nights he slept out with real boy friends like himself. After long days and late hours crowded with fascinating interest, Bethlehem (or was it Nazareth?) where his parents lived seemed dull, dreary and deadly monotonous, but *here* was life.

A very tired boy, Jesus looked out for somewhere to take a nap, and naturally went into the nearest Church to sleep. Here, however, he was disturbed by hearing a lot of priests arguing about something or other.

Jesus asked them a few questions about the weather, and how far it was to the seaside, and where old Simeon lived. Just then his mother came on the scene. His romantic adventure was finished.

His mother felt a bit annoyed at having to hunt for Jesus for three days, and Jesus replied that he had been looking for a job. It seems he wanted to follow his father's business: carpentering. But his mother "didn't understand" him at all. It looked to her like a very ordinary case of "City Lights," which were no doubt just as attractive in Jerusalem as they are to-day in London or New York to boys of twelve.

UNCLE GEORGE.

SPIRITUAL CONFUSION.

The noble red man, when asked if they have the common Indian belief in a spirit, shows us something that almost amounts to emotion, thinking whisky is referred to.—Mark Twain.

Correspondence.

IN PURSUIT OF A MYTH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—My attention has been called to an article in your paper replying to some comments I made on the financing of the *Freethinker*. Regarding its tone I make no comment; it is what one would have expected. Critics are very intolerant of criticism.

But really, my remarks were not an effort at romance. You admit that I may have met you as I described. Whether my Jewish acquaintance were true to his reputation as French we will leave—say he came from Alsace-Lorraine—with difficulty he spoke broken English. He openly espoused your cause, and introduced you in your official capacity. The Firm he founded is still in existence, though he was an old man when I knew him fifteen years ago.

You do not deny that money from Jewish sources is received by the *Freethinker*. It would be interesting to know how much Jews have contributed to it during its now long Jewish management. Perhaps you will be good enough to tell us in your next issue, giving also a list of your most generous subscribers. That, I think is a fair question to ask. I can then tell you if my acquaintance's name is in the list. In any case I will then send it along for your information.

GILESA SALISBURY.

[We are not surprised that the Rev. G. Salisbury having written the clumsy and obvious falsehood on which we commented last week, should have lacked either the honesty to apologize or the intelligence to remain silent. He now seeks to cover his falsehood by an impudent demand for a list of subscribers so that he may see if the name of his mythical French Jew is among them. The lists of subscribers were published, and the files of the *Freethinker* are in existence.

Mr. Salisbury's statement was explicit. He met me in the office of a French Jew, who financed the *Freethinker* and "largely the forces of Atheism in this country."

(1) I did not admit that I had met Mr. Salisbury. I certainly deny ever having met him in the offices of a French or even an Alsatian Jew, who subsidized the *Freethinker* and *Freethought*. That is a sheer invention.

(2) The *Freethinker* has never been subsidized by any one individual. It has been subsidized by the finances of hundreds. And if Mr. Salisbury had taken the care to read the lists of subscribers he would have seen what a clumsy lie he was fathering.

(3) There is a very simple way of Mr. Salisbury proving that he is not of the tribe of Ananias, and that is by giving the name of the man in whose office I met him. I do not think that he is restrained from doing so for fear of hurting the feelings of this particular Jew. But I fancy he will not himself help at the complete exposure of his lie.

Some of my readers may remember that G. W. Foote once exposed the religious lying of Hugh Price Hughes, under the title of *A Lie in Five Chapters*. Up to the present we have had only "A Lie in Two Chapters." Will Mr. Salisbury try to complete the series?—EDITOR "FREETHINKER."]

CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

SIR,—In the last issue of the *Freethinker* Mr. Victor Neuburg calls attention to three errors of dates in the Bibliography of the Centenary Volume, *Champion of Liberty*. As I am responsible for compiling that Bibliography perhaps you will permit me a word of explanation.

1. As to the date of my father's first pamphlet. On this I followed his own statement in his Autobiography, but after careful examination I have come to the conclusion that he made a slip, and that the date should have been—as Mr. Neuburg has it—1849 and not 1850. Considering that he was only sixteen years of age on September 26, 1849—an age at which so many of our boys nowadays are still at school—it is remarkable that he could have written so trenchant a criticism of "The Christian's Creed."

2. The date of the first number of *The Bible: What it is*. Here I am badly at fault, for elsewhere I had already given the correct date as 1857.

3. The Editorship of the *Investigator*. As to this I have some small excuse. My volume of the last issues of the *Investigator* was given to me by our honoured friend, Edward Truelove, forty-one years ago, and both on the outside, and on the inner flyleaf, below the title are the words, "Edited by Iconoclast." The date of the first number is March 15, 1858, and I not unreasonably, but certainly with lack of care, assumed that the whole volume was edited by "Iconoclast." Examining it today, however, I find that his editorship did not commence until November, 1858.

I am much obliged to Mr. Victor Neuburg for his correction of my errors.

H. BRADLAUGH BONNER.

SOUTH PACIFIC SLAVERY.

SIR,—I should like to throw some light upon the conditions of the natives out in New Ireland and New Britain; two Islands in the South Pacific—formerly the Bismarck group annexed from the German Empire.

As an engineer on board a ship which trades round these Islands for copra, I say that the labour of the natives producing copra is nothing else but dire slavery under the cloak of Christianity.

These poor natives are brought in to the white settlement by so-called missionaries after attending a school for six months—and these schools are like Sunday Schools at home. After completing their period at a school, they are made to work producing the copra, and, when a ship arrives, loading up this cargo. The hours are from 6 a.m. till 6 p.m., but more often to p.m. I have seen these boys, as they are called out here, beaten by big Australian bullies with sticks across the bare back, and hit over the head with shovels, kicked and called names which would be shocking to mention. At the end of the day's work they are marched back to sleep in a shed—no beds, just the soil—where they are locked up for the night. Their meals consist of a handful of rice, about three times a day. There are no plates even for them to take food from, they hold the rice in one hand and eat from the other. Their wages are 3s. 6d. a month! Think of this! This is their reward for taking Jesus as their personal Saviour.

Their more "unfortunate" brothers are living in the bush, a thousand times happier than their Christian brothers. At any rate I have seen them diving from our ship into the water across a shark-infested river to escape from this slavery and get back again to their natural life!

The copra is discharged in New York and New Orleans and sold at £11 a ton.

HARRY KIRK.

CHARLEMAGNE AND THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE.

Charles the Great, universally known through legend and literature as Charlemagne . . . had been king of the Franks for thirty years before the grateful and astute Pope Leo III. was (by his own account) inspired to crown him Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire at Rome on Christmas Day, 800. Charles himself is the most striking if not the greatest figure, as the birth of the Holy Roman Empire is the most striking event, in the whole course of medieval history.

During those thirty years he had been conquering, organizing, evangelizing at the sword's point, educating, building up the widest dominion ever ruled in Europe by any one man except Russian Czars or by Napoleon at the zenith of his power. Out of his system, though in changed form, was developed feudalism, the political and social framework of Europe for centuries to come.

The revival of the Roman Empire in the West, associated by its very title with the Church of the West, begot the unrealizable idea of a Christendom united under two heads, the spiritual and the temporal, the Pope and the Emperor, which, in fact, eventually brought an almost unceasing conflict between the two instead of unity, between the spiritual and temporal functions. And all this strife, instead of unity and peace, was born, we may say, on that fateful Christmas morning.

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LONDON.

INDOOR.

STUDY CIRCLE (N.S.S. Office, 62 Farringdon Street, E.C.4) : 8.0, Monday, October 30, Mr. Holdup will open a discussion on "Soviet Russia."

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Reggiors Restaurant, 1 Euston Road, opposite King's Cross Station) : 7.30, Janet Chance—"The Legalization of Abortion."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1) : 11.0, John A. Hobson, M.A.—"Democracy in the Nineteenth Century."

OUTDOOR.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead) : 11.30, Sunday, October 29, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Aliwell Road, Clapham Junction) : 8.0, Friday, October 27, A Lecture. Brockwell Park, 3.30, Sunday, October 29, A Lecture.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (The Grove, Hammersmith) : 8.0, Mr. Paul Goldman. *Freethinkers on sale.*

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park) : 12.0, Sunday, B. A. Le Maine. 3.30, Platform 1, Messrs. Wood and Tuson. Platform 2, B. A. Le Maine. 6.30, Messrs. Collins, Hyatt and Bryant. Wednesday, 6.30, Messrs. Collins and Wood. Friday, 6.30, Messrs Bryant and Le Maine.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Bristol Street Council Schools) : 7.0, Charles H. Smith—"Why the 'Deist' is Dead in Philosophy."

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Godwin Commercial Hotel, Godwin Street, Bradford) : 7.0, Mr. W. Stoyles—"R. J. Campbell and Secularism." Members please attend.

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley) : 2.30, Fred Hill (Brier Field)—"Buddha and Asoka."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (East Hall, McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow) : 7.0, Mr. A. McDonald, Whiting Bay, Arran—"The Value of Freethought in the Everyday."

HETTON (Assembly Room) : 7.30, Monday, October 30, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

HULL : BRADLAUGH CENTENARY COMMITTEE (Royal Institution, Albion Street) : 2.45, Mr. Chapman Cohen (President of the N.S.S.)—"Charles Bradlaugh." Admission Free. A few Reserved Seats 6d. and 1s.

NORTH SHIELDS (Labour Hall) : 7.0, Tuesday, October 31, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate) : 6.30, Mr. Charles Bradlaugh Bonner (grandson of Charles Bradlaugh)—Lantern lecture on "Charles Bradlaugh."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, Islington, Liverpool, entrance in Christian Street) : 7.0, Sam Cohen (Manchester)—"The Intellectual Crime of Christianity."

NEWCASTLE SECULAR SOCIETY (Socialist Club, Pilgrim Street) : 3.0, Members' Meeting.

SUNDERLAND BRANCH N.S.S. (Co-operative Rooms, Green Street) : 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

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