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

Views and Opinions.

The Case for Polygamy.

THOSE who wish to know the best that can be said in favour of Polygamy as a system, will find it clearly stated in *The Case for Polygamy* (J. E. Clare McFarlane, Search Publishing Co., 5s.) Mr. McFarlane writes with reasoned passion and restraint, but I am afraid that his thesis will not convince many. Personally, I have no greater belief in "sacred" institutions than I have in sacred books and holy coats, and I think I am tolerably free from an unreasoning attachment to an institution merely because it is established. The recent criticism by Sir Stafford Cripps on "Buckingham Palace Influence," and its prompt withdrawal, when it was found to promise danger to his political position, is an example of what little progress may be made so long as any institution is considered above criticism. Everyone knows that there is an influence from the throne, whether it be good or bad, and such a work as that of Guedalla's *The Queen and Mr. Gladstone*, shows how sinister and underhand that influence may be, and the type of public insincerity it tends to develop when an opinion on it may not be freely expressed.

Every institution should rest upon considerations of social utility, and on that alone. This is as true of marriage as it should be of everything else; there are and have been all sorts of marriage customs in the world, and human nature with its acquired adaptability has endured and lived through them all. It should be said that Mr. McFarlane does not write as a wicked Atheist, a Mohammedan, or even as a polygamous bachelor. (Please pass the last expression.) He writes as a religious man; he would probably say as a "true" Christian, and—judging from his work being dedicated to his "courageous wife and Comrade"—he is happily married.

* * *

Will it Work?

Mr. McFarlane's plea for polygamy rests upon the disproportion between the number of males and females in the world, upon the evils of the perversion

and frustration of function of women resulting from compulsory spinsterhood, and also from another consequence, the economic position of the unmarried woman. There is no denying the existence of the evils pointed out by Mr. McFarlane, the question is the value of the proposed remedy. It might be that if polygamy were to be established some women might be made content, but I fail to see that the economic and other troubles would be at an end. Some women would voluntarily remain single, unless they were compelled to marry, and if they were allowed to remain single the economic problem would remain; even the evil of promiscuous sex-relationships would remain, although in the case of adultery, Mr. MacFarlane is willing to make it a capital offence. Nor do I see satisfactorily dealt with the question that is so often set aside, or slurred over, the question of the family. It is, after all, the family, around which the social fact of marriage centres. A husband might be on good, even affectionate terms with a number of wives at once, but so may he be on good terms with a committee. But one does not, because one cannot, make a companion of a Committee. Moreover, a great many of the evils depicted might be considerably modified, and some even destroyed by the existence of a reasonable facility for divorce, a healthy understanding of birth-control, and some change in our economic system. One day, we may, perhaps, take a view of a man and a woman other than of a mere cog in the machine, to be thrown aside as "scrap" when a new piece of machinery is introduced. Mr. McFarlane states his case earnestly and as reasonably as it may be stated, but he is, I believe, fighting a forlorn hope.

* * *

Is Polygamy Un-Christian.

The author of *The Case for Polygamy* cannot be told that his book is irreligious, for polygamy has too good a religious basis for this, but he is almost certain to be told that it is anti-Christian, and that statement will be as far from the truth as the other. Mr. McFarlane has a whole chapter on "The Testimony of the Bible," and presuming that some fair-minded Christians read it, they will probably pass a very uneasy quarter of an hour. The Old Testament is a polygamous work through and through, and the author might have pointed out that so far is the man "the head of the woman" there, that the phrase "congregation of the children of Israel" does not include the women. There are denunciations of adultery, but this refers to having intercourse with other men's wives; and the discussions on marriage in the New Testament, as Mr. McFarlane points out, are mainly concerned with whether a man should marry or remain celibate. Of Paul's opinion there is no question. Marriage was accepted as the lesser of two evils, bishops should have no more than one wife, that being nearer celibacy than having a number, but

in other directions the question was left as it was. Paul's view of the relative impurity of marriage became the dominant view in the Christian Church, and it is powerful even to-day. The attitude of the early Christian Church was well put by the Rev. Principal Donaldson. He said that if we define man as a male human being, and woman as a female human being, what the Church did was to take "male" out of the definition of man, and "human" out of the definition of woman. This left man as a human being and woman as a female animal, and one whom the devil used to inflame the passions and destroy the soul of man. The effect of this Christian conception on the position of woman was of the most disastrous description. But it is quite certain that monogamy is neither a Biblical, a Jewish nor a Christian ideal. It comes to us from Rome, and in a lesser degree, from Greece. It is firmly established in Roman law and custom, and it was the influence of Roman law that made it a fixed feature of European culture.

* * *

Christianity and Polygamy.

The support given by Christian history and by Christian writers is far stronger than that indicated in Mr. McFarlane's book. It has been a recurrent phenomenon right through Christian history. It has been formally adopted by Christian sects, and championed by leading Christians. It is significant, in this connexion, that the writer on Christian Marriage in Hasting's *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* is driven to admit, in the attempt to relieve Christianity from the charge of supporting polygamy, that the only text in the New Testament which can be cited in favour of monogamy is "Let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband." But that rule applies equally to polygamy and monogamy. It is merely saying that a woman must "belong" to one man, and that a man must not have intercourse with another man's wife. It leaves the question of the number of wives untouched.

Those unacquainted with the backwaters of Christian history, and most Christians come into this category, are unacquainted with the extent to which unusual and pathologic sexual phenomena have figured in Christian history. In the revolt against the Roman Church in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries polygamy was formally adopted by some of the dissenting bodies. In the nineteenth century we have had Mormonism, which can hardly be called un-Christian, besides other lesser-known bodies which have claimed the sanction of Christianity for the practice. Among writers one may note the support given to polygamy by two of the principal figures of the Reformation, Melancthon and Luther. Both were convinced that it was sanctioned by Christianity, and Melancthon wrote to Henry VIII., when he was experiencing difficulty in securing his divorce, that there was nothing unchristian in a man having two wives. In the case of Philip of Hesse, a formal document was sent him, signed by both Luther and Melancthon, that there was nothing unlawful or unchristian in a man having two wives. Our own Bishop Burnet, in a pamphlet issued after his death, argued also that polygamy was lawful to a Christian, and that if Jesus had wished to abrogate so well established a custom he would have done so in express language. John Milton in his essay on *The Special Government of Man*, was still more distinct. He said:—

I have not said, in compliance with the common opinion, one woman with one man, lest I should by implication charge the holy pillars of our faith . . . with habitual fornication and adultery . . . Either,

therefore, polygamy is a true marriage, or all children born in that state are spurious, which would include the whole race of Jacob, the twelve holy tribes selected by God. . . . On what grounds, however, can a practice be considered dishonourable or shameful which is prohibited to no one, even under the Gospel. . . . It appears to me sufficiently established that polygamy is allowed by the law of God.

Sir William Hamilton, the celebrated philosopher, thus summed up the general attitude of the Protestant Churches in the sixteenth century:—

Polygamy awaited only the permission of the civil ruler to be promulgated as an article of the Reformation, and had the permission not been significantly refused, it would not have been the fault of the Fathers of the Reformation if Christian liberty had remained less ample than Mohammedan licence. As it was, Polygamy was never abandoned either by Luther or Melancthon as a religious speculation: both, in more than a single instance, awarded the formal sanction of their authority to its practice . . . and had the civil prudence of the imprudent Henry VIII. not restrained him, sensual despot as he was, from carrying their spontaneous advice into effect, a plurality of wives might now have been a privilege as religiously contended for in England as in Turkey.

Of course this close alliance between the Christian religion and polygamy will not prevent Christians denouncing Mr. McFarlane's book as anti-Christian. "Unchristian" the book certainly is not; for not merely is polygamy accepted in the Bible and the New Testament as settled practices, but it has been endorsed by some of the foremost names in Christian history. It is worth noting that while the writings of the early Christian Fathers are full of counsel and denunciation concerning the relations of the sexes, polygamy is nowhere condemned. Marriage may be, but not polygamy.

I think, as I have said, that Mr. McFarlane is fighting a losing fight. I do not think the less of him for that. The test of a man is as often what he fights against than what he fights for, and there is far more often a *man* behind a losing cause than there is behind a winning and a popular one. But I cannot picture a polygamous State without at the same time visualizing it introducing greater evils than it removes, and in matters of social legislation the choice lies not between bad and good, but between relative evils. It is the family around which the whole question centres; it is their nurture that really matters. Otherwise the association of men and women might well be left to their own tastes and judgments. Children are still the product of the union of men and women, and for some time after birth are dependent upon the nature of that union.

All the same, Mr. McFarlane has given us a very interesting book, and those who wish to read all that can be said in favour of polygamy will know where to find it. And the work is not anti-Christian. It might almost be described as an attempt to revive "Pure Christianity."

CHAPMAN COHEN.

TRUTH THOUGH THE HEAVENS FALL!

On the inquest it was shown that Buck Fanshaw, in the delirium of a wasting typhoid fever, had taken arsenic, shot himself through the body, cut his throat and jumped out of a four-storey window and broken his neck; and, after due deliberation, the jury, sad and tearful, but with intelligence unblinded by its sorrow, brought in a verdict of death "by the visitation of God." What *could* the world do without juries?

Scotched, not Slain.

"Rough work, iconoclasm, but the only way to get at truth."—O. W. Holmes.

"Speedy end to superstition, a gentle one if you can contrive it, but an end."—Carlyle.

THE present decline in the quality and number of newspapers and periodical publications should be a matter of interest to all those who are interested in the propagation of Freethought. A few years ago there were eight evening newspapers published in London; to-day there are but three; and the Labour Movement is quite unrepresented. A generation since, the leading monthly and quarterly reviews were given over largely to the discussion of intellectual subjects, and some of the ablest men and women were engaged in stating the case for and against religious Orthodoxy. Huxley crossed swords with Gladstone in *The Nineteenth Century*. Ingersoll trounced Cardinal Manning in *The North American Review*. John Morley illuminated the pages of *The Fortnightly Review*. Grant Allen showed in popular magazines, that science could be made as readable as the latest book of travel. Robertson was editing the *Free Review*. Even the great newspapers threw their columns open to disputants on such subjects as "Is Christianity a Failure?" All this is now changed for the worse, and it is a rare circumstance to find an article in any of these papers and publications worth more than the most fleeting attention. Unfortunately, the trouble does not end here, for the reviews are nowadays largely given over to the contributions of society nobodies, and the newspaper editors take heed of little besides the rankest and most blatant sensationalism. The net result is that the reading public is left in almost entire ignorance of the intellectual position at a time when it is most imperative that it should be known widely.

Christian organizations spend annually tens of thousands of pounds in furtherance of their faith, and, incidentally, no small part of their propaganda is nothing more nor less than the grossest misrepresentation and vilification of Freethought. A glance at the capacious catalogues of such publishing houses as The Religious Tract Society, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the Catholic Truth Society, the Christian Evidence Society, and the many other publishers who cater for the orthodox public, will be sufficient to show how complete are their methods, and how widespread their influence. These books, periodicals, and pamphlets, addressed to persons of both sexes, of all ages, including children, are distributed throughout the English-speaking world, and they penetrate into countless homes where Freethought works are never seen.

Nor is this state of affairs entirely confined to the newspaper press and periodical publications. The clergy are past-masters at circumventing any movement likely to prove dangerous to their own sorry profession, and they have rare noses for heresy. The original Sunday Schools were initiated by laymen with the sole and laudable desire of imparting ordinary education to children of the poor on the one day in the week on which, in the dark days prior to the passing of the Factory Acts they were free to receive it. Nowadays, these Sunday Schools are concerned mainly with theological education.

The same thing happened with regard to the public library movement, which men like Andrew Carnegie and Passmore Edwards hoped fondly would be the means of bringing informative literature within reach

of the poorest citizens. We know what has happened. The clergy, of whom there are no less than 40,000 in this country, have attained great influence on the local committees of these libraries, and their one and constant aim is to render such institutions, from their narrow and sectarian point of view, entirely harmless and innocuous. So long as the shelves of these libraries are stocked with the harmless volumes of Edgar Wallace, and other purveyors of "the smooth tale, generally of romantic love," they are quite content. The instant any attempt is made to place before the reading public works which make for sanity or for ordered thought, they at once display their animosity. The boycott is introduced, and the modern *Index Expurgatorius* contains the name of almost every author worth reading from Chapman Cohen to Bernard Shaw. Few, indeed, of the "intellectuals" escape the ecclesiastical net, and Robert Blatchford has suffered in the august company of Eugène Brieux.

Freethinkers must see to it that Freethought publications are circulated in ever-increasing numbers. Humility is a rare and a fragrant virtue, but Freethinkers can hardly be expected to surrender their rights at the behests of the clergy, however gaudily they may be appalled. Let Freethinkers everywhere exert themselves, and not only show their gratitude for the work of the pioneers who suffered so much in the past, but that they, in their turn, are determined to extend their principles far into the future.

Facts such as these should make Freethinkers pause and reflect that their own propaganda has to make headway not only against gross ignorance and prejudice, but against a most heavily endowed superstition. The Christian publishing houses, the Bible Societies, Missionary and other organizations, have enormous incomes, which are spent lavishly in the service of superstition. In fighting the Christian Religion, Freethinkers are opposing a gigantic vested interest, an enemy entrenched behind mountains of money-bags. In money lies the power of the clergy and their fetish-book, and so long as ecclesiastics can control millions of money, men will always be found to treat their abracadabras with a respect which it does not deserve. The blunt fact is that superstition is scotched but not slain. Fortunately, the black army of priests no longer has poor and isolated Freethinkers to deal with, but is now confronted with a compact army, upon whose banners is inscribed the stirring and significant phrase of the great Voltaire, "Écrasez l'Infâme." Such an army is not easily to be quelled by the priests of Christendom, those social anachronisms, preaching a dying creed with the help of money provided by dead men. And it cannot too often be repeated that this dead-hand in religion means more than a comfortable livelihood for tens of thousands of priests. It means also a restricted intellectual life for whole nations.

MIMNERMUS.

The Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse assert the existence of the Devil, of his demons, and of Hell, as plainly as they do that of God and his angels and heaven. It is plain that the Messianic and the Satanic conceptions of the writers of these books are the obverse and the reverse of the same intellectual coinage.—T. H. Huxley, "Collected Essays 5."

The actual fact, strange though it may seem, is that no persons are so little likely to submit to a passage of Scripture not to their fancy, as those who are the most positive on the subject of its general inspiration.

John Ruskin.

The Story of a Strange Sect.

WEIRD and wonderful are the Mormons or Latter-day Saints. Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, was born at Sharon, in America, in 1805. The son of a farmer, the lad, at the period of puberty, became obsessed with a craving for religion. His readings and reveries concerning the Scriptures, his constant prayers and occasional supernatural visions, seem to have partly deranged a brain and nervous system never normal. In any case, heavenly messengers are alleged to have led him to discover a precious volume enclosed in a stone chest on a hill near Manchester in the State of New York. This remarkable work contained an account of American history from the time of Babel's fabled tower to the year 420 A.D., and its authors were revealed as the seer Mormon and his son Moroni. But while its authenticity is fervently championed by the Latter-day Saints, scoffing unbelievers have asserted that the Book of Mormon is merely a travesty of the Jewish Bible and may be traced to an unprinted story, *The Found Manuscript*, composed by Solomon Spaulding (1761-1816), that was plagiarised and passed on to Joseph Smith by one Sidney Rigdon.

Be this as it may, Joseph Smith zealously proclaimed this new evangel to an incredulous generation, but he soon found converts, despite the ridicule and persecution they experienced. The Mormon Church rapidly increased its membership, and branches were formed in several States. A temple was built at Kirtland, Ohio, while the State of Missouri became their principal gathering ground.

Public opinion, however, continued bitterly hostile. The Saints' novel doctrines and devotions proved utterly alien to the rabble who were encouraged in their crimes and misdemeanours by orthodox religionists, and the harmless, if misguided Saints, were relentlessly expelled from their homes and driven to wander in pitilessly Arctic weather, destitute alike of food, clothing and shelter. Hundreds perished from starvation and cold. Children and adults were exposed without mercy to the most horrible outrages by their fellow-Christians. Not only were the Saints starved; they were tortured and murdered too. All these things were possible in nineteenth century America, in the land of the free.

After many harrowing experiences some 12,000 Mormons who had managed to escape the brutal fury of the mob reached a temporary haven in Illinois, where they built the city of Nauvoo. But their refuge was soon disturbed and the conventional Christians, in close association with the criminal community, subjected the Saints to maltreatment and murder. It is true that the persecuted people sometimes turned on their assailants, but can this be condemned? Six years had scarcely passed after their exodus from Missouri, when their leader, Joseph Smith, was shamefully murdered by an infuriated rabble while under detention in Carthage Prison. This happened in 1844, and the cry of the frenzied multitude who shot the Prophet was: "The law cannot reach him, but powder and ball shall!"

With the death of its prophet it was popularly predicted that this pestilent heresy would soon expire. This hope, however, was completely falsified, for the Mormon leadership devolved on twelve apostles with Brigham Young, a capable man, as President. Incessant persecution aroused and sustained enthusiasm among the Saints, while the polygamous practices the Mormons had adopted from Abraham, Solomon, and David, proved repugnant to the ordinary Christian. Charges of the most reprehensible character were hurled against the Saints. Numerous misdeeds for

which the dregs of society were responsible were laid to their charge, and this deepened public resentment.

The Saints sought an armistice to enable them to depart from Illinois in peace. This was agreed to, but the fanatics and hooligans were bent on mischief, and it became apparent that the spoliation of the Mormons' property was contemplated. A few families were allowed to depart unmolested, but the others were plundered by armed gangs and sent forth utterly destitute. An impartial witness, General T. L. Kane, who was in the district at the time, in an address to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, related his experiences of this tragic affair. After describing the dreadful suffering and misery these strange sectaries endured, their storm-beaten, starved, half-naked, diseased and bitterly forsaken state, he said: "These were the Mormons, famishing in Lee County, Iowa, in September, 1846. The city—it was Nauvoo, Illinois. The Mormons were the owners of that city, and the smiling country around. And those who had stopped their ploughs, who had silenced their hammers, their axes, their shuttles and their workshop wheels; those who had put out their fires, who had eaten their food, spoiled their orchards, and trampled underfoot their thousands of acres of unharvested grain—these were the keepers of their dwellings, the carousers in their temple, whose drunken riot insulted the ears of their dying."

The victimised but undaunted Saints moved on. Worn, weary, and sad, they persevered in a protracted pilgrimage of 1,500 miles till they came, directed as they believed, by the hand of God, to their place of refuge in the valley of the Great Salt Lake. This was in 1847, and three years later Congress created the Utah Territory where the saints have resided ever since.

In Utah the Saints have prospered exceedingly. Indeed, they were beginning to reap the reward of their enterprise and industry, when in 1857 the American Government, misled by the mendacities of zealous Christian officials decided to dispatch an armed force to eject them from their new home. Preparations were therefore made for another Exodus, but while the expeditionary force was being formed the State Authorities discovered that they had been misinformed and their project was abandoned. The cost of this abortive undertaking amounted to 37 million dollars, which the American taxpayer was compelled to pay.

The Saints were ever mistrusted and maligned, but the violent antagonism of earlier times has subsided. The main cause of conventional dislike was the Saints' long adherence to plurality of wives. Attempts were made to obtain legal sanction for polygamy, but the Courts decided against it, while the majority of Mormons were quite willing to obey the law. Still their Church property has been confiscated by the State, property devoted to the service of the poor, the erection of temples and similar purposes.

So long ago as 1851, the *Reorganized Church of the Latter-day Saints* protested against polygamy and seceded from the main body. To these dissentients the Nauvoo Temple erected in 1841 has been assigned by law. *The Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants* furnish the foundations of a faith which awaits a resumption of the revelation and miracles, a millenium, an American Zion, and the regeneration of the earth under the Saviour's personal rule and supervision. Other tenets are that all modes of faith should be tolerated, that the dead arise in bodily form, and that baptism by immersion is indispensable.

In 1830 the Mormons were six in number. To-day there are approximately half a million. In Utah, in 1892, the population was 210,000, seventy-five per

cent of whom were Mormons. According to the Mormon Elder, J. H. Anderson, 90 per cent were resident in their own property and on their own estates, and their "fruitful orchards, rich fields and farms, successful industries, and beautiful cities, towns and villages" testify to their secular labours.

Divine authority is claimed for the entire body of the priesthood, from the Saints' Commissioned Apostles down to the church deacons themselves. For a long period polygamy was recognized as a divinely sanctioned institution, and during the years 1852-90 ten per cent of the denomination were the partners of pluralist wives. For this illegality under American law over 1,000 were fined or imprisoned, 12,000 disfranchised and property valued at eleven million dollars confiscated by the authorities. In 1890 the prevailing system of monogamy was adopted by the President and Mormon Church Conference. In 1904 President Smith pronounced against polygamy, but prior to this official condemnation measures of amnesty were passed into law in 1893-4, and Utah was admitted as a State of the Union in 1896.

The Latter-day Saints form a sect utterly oblivious to the march of modern thought. The epoch-making revelations of science, the higher and lower criticism of the Scriptures, the philosophical conceptions of the Universe necessitated by the progress of natural knowledge make no impression on their adamant minds. In the last century, the evolutionary philosopher, Herbert Spencer sadly confessed that he had long lost all faith in human rationality. This melancholy conclusion seems justified by the persistence of such senseless cults as Christian Science, the Salvation Army, Spiritualism and Mormonism, not to mention the most invincibly obscurantist of all—the Roman Catholic Church. These survivals from a primitive past display every evidence of longevity. Those who imagine that the conflict between faith and reason has been definitely decided in favour of the latter fail to understand or estimate the latent power of deep-seated superstition still resident in the great majority, even of the most advanced European peoples.

T. F. PALMER.

The Sword of Supernaturalism.

"I'm right—you're wrong!" God is on my "side"! "Nay, he is on mine!" How often have we listened to these childish contentions and how often has the mass of the people been crushed between the upper and nether millstones of powerful factions, each contending for supremacy! As in the beginning so is it still. The credulous acceptance of and submission to the authority of the supernatural has sent a sword upon the earth and kept it unsheathed and keen. Was Cromwell's God the same as Charles I's? Well, there is, according to the Christian Faith, in all ages only one living and true God. If so, what pleasure does he derive from setting his creatures by the ears, and from watching them hack one another to pieces in the horrible brutality of war?

And even in the intervals of peace human beings who call themselves Christian are for ever subjecting their fellow men, if not to physical, then to mental or moral torture, which is even worse. It is piteous, painfully piteous and poignant to see the inmates of Hospital or Workhouse getting their Annual Christmas "treat," while the ubiquitous dog-collared gentleman prays for a blessing from on High upon the human wrecks around him. Prayers to God in such circumstances, are not only futile but insulting! It is not prayers that are needed but *Protests*—PRO-

TESTS in vehement flames of Red—in loud denunciation—in magnificent indignation—because of the dishonouring of Truth by the ambassadors of a pretended God—because of the degradation of the manhood of man and of the womanhood of woman.

Humanists are railed at by the Pulpiteers because they are "self-sufficient"—because they are possessed by "intellectual pride." Oh, shallow-pated pulpiteers, Oh, Reverend Imbeciles, is not the sea salt? Is not honey sweet? And is not the ocean of knowledge, open to all to traverse, though you hold people back from approaching it? Is not freedom sweet and the birthright of every child born unto the world? But you have turned freedom into "feedom" and, supported by your wealthy and powerful allies and constituents, have shut up millions to an existence of slavery and subjection, and barred and bolted the great door that leads to Liberty. You have overlaid the primal and elemental and essential things with the excrements of superstition and fear.

In that lurid drama of Cromwell against the King, who shall deny that in actuality, apart from all question of personal beliefs, Cromwell was in the right of it. Let it be that he attributed his victories to the God of the Puritans; he was still asserting the demand for the Light of Truth and Freedom—he was still fighting the battle of the oppressed against Tyranny—he was—under tremendous hazards—raining hammer-blows against that traditional belief of orthodoxy that the King ruled by Divine appointment, by Divine authority, by Divine right—that the King could do no wrong. From that galling obsession he relieved the British people for all time. He released them from that heavy yoke. As an old Scots laird said: "He taught Kings that they had lith in *their* necks!"

Was it really the God of the Puritans that won Cromwell's fights for him? Well, was it the Stuart's God that made Richard Cromwell a weakling and brought about the Restoration and set Charles II. on the throne? What is God's real function in all these shifts and changes in human destiny? Oh—oh, there's the rub! has he any function at all in them? Verily this question brings us to a pass for it raises the further and bigger question: Does he exist at all? Were it not better that men should resolutely turn to the task of establishing their intellectual fortifications in defiance of these cheap clerical gibes about "intellectual pride," and "human self-sufficiency," and grasp the significance of the vital facts of their existence, and of the natural phenomena that surround them? When men do that courageously and in despite of all the unjustifiable inhibitions of ecclesiasticism, they will acquire an outlook and a vitality which will make their pride and sufficiency noble attributes and equip them for a successful resistance to all tyranny, from whatever quarter and in whatever form or shape. Then will they be wide-eyed, unfeared, brotherly, compassionate—spurning the muck and stubble of clerical fictions and priestly pronouncements.

It would recompense mankind handsomely to pay a big price for the abolition of the clerical profession. Were there no priest, there were no God. Yet if a number of our fellow-beings need a God and belief in a God, shall anyone deny them the right to believe in him, and worship him as and when they choose. Nay verily—a thousand times nay! But neither shall any fellow-being or number of fellow-beings have the right to compel me or any other unbeliever to bend the knee to his or their God! And so the great task that looms before us who claim freedom of thought is to disestablish and disendow all State Churches. The governance of the State in which prelates participate is ever fated to fall into a quagmire of cant and hypo-

crisy. The wedding of State and Church is a corrupt union, and the offspring thereof can only be monstrosities. Cunningly, all too cunningly (because often effectively) do the leaders of the State Church affect to minimise the authority of the State pleading—so, falsely that a State uninfluenced in all its legislation and administration by “religious principles” will sacrifice individual liberty and prevent the enactment and execution of “righteous” laws. Even Cromwell himself was in advance of these oily liars. For what do we find him saying in a letter to Major-General Crawford in 1643 (well nigh 300 years since!) This: “Sir, the State in choosing men to serve it, takes no notice of their opinions; if they be willing faithfully to serve it, that satisfies. I advised you formerly to bear with men of different minds from yourself: if you had done it when I advised you to do it, I think you would not have had so many stumbling blocks in your way.” And the worst stumbling blocks to efficient and impartial government in any State are those interfering busybodies of priest and parsons. Truly Cromwell had no love for Cavaliers and Episcopalian parsons; but he loved the Presbyterians less—for he found them a vacillating and unreliable crew—strong in wordy protestations of ardour for reforms; but ever and anon going behind his back to treat with Charles. So Presbyterian vacillation at length procured for Scotland a taste of the rigorous rule of the conquering Oliver! Did not Buckle read things aright? When will the students in theological colleges be enjoined to take a course in Gibbon and Buckle to widen their sympathies, extend their understanding and bring them out of the murky and bat-invested twilight of supernatural myths into the broad sunlight of freedom; of self-discipline, self-government, self-expression, ay, and of self-sufficiency—with reason—and right to be proud of their intellectual emancipation and independence?

IGNOTUS.

Acid Drops.

Soon after the war began we published an article, “The Kaiser’s Blunder,” in which it was pointed out that Germany had gone the wrong way to work. Instead of taking his example from ourselves and extending the German Empire in the name of morality, and civilization with a desire to spread the influence of the Cross, the Kaiser talked of the mailed fist, and the shining sword, and Germany’s place in the sun, etc. Result—collapse. Now Japan goes more intelligently to work. She announces that she too is working in the interests of morality, and stability, and civilization. And her only way to do this is to “stabilize” China, and induce peace by—not the conquest, but the control of China. She is not doing it in the name of Christianity, because Japan is not a Christian country, but morality and civilization are better cards to play than religion nowadays. Japan is, of course, mistaken, Britishers know that God has committed the welfare of civilization to them, and God cannot have made such a blunder as to select Japan as well as Britain. But we congratulate the Japanese on knowing a good example when it sees one.

If the fools—it is no use recommending anything to the other class who follow Lord Rothermere in his glorification of Fascism—will read some of the articles that have been appearing in the *New Statesman* on the state of things in Germany, they will realize the confidence with which Rothermere counts upon their stupidity being impregnable. Hitler and Mussolini being his ideals, Lord Rothermere, who is in himself a fine example of the evil of money in the wrong hands, shows us what evil kind of thing to expect if ever Fas-

cism gains control in this country. The torture of children, the ill-treatment of men and women who show the slightest desire to think for themselves and to order their own lives, is the ideal that Fascism sets itself. We do not say the ideal that Lord Rothermere sets himself, because we have no evidence that he has any ideal other than that of satisfying his own craving for notoriety. If his public had any memory for things, it might remember the many stunts which the Northcliff press has foisted on the country from time to time, and which when exposed have been dropped without a single word of regret or apology.

The extent to which the Rothermere press feels it can rely upon the stupidity of its readers is seen in an article which appeared in the *Evening News* for January 25. It assures its readers that “no dictatorship is possible in this country,” and whatever changes take place must be “within the framework of the constitution.” But there is simply no other meaning for Fascism but dictatorship. And what and where is the constitution of this country? Everyone but Rothermere’s followers knows that this country has no fixed constitution, and that this is the condition of its flexibility. Parliament is supreme, and can make or unmake anything. But there is no court that can say of an Act of Parliament that it is contrary to the constitution.

The pretence that Fascism aims at reform within “the framework of the parliamentary system,” is just so much deliberate bunkum. Fascism is dictatorship or nothing. “Within the parliamentary system” means that having secured a majority at the polls by questionable methods, Hitlerism and Mussolinism would be set up. Anything that went contrary to the wishes or the opinion of the Dictatorship would be suppressed as contrary to the welfare of the State, and the ideal of a Totalitarian State in which everyone shouted alike, dressed to order, lived to order, and died by order would be accomplished. And one of the first things to be suppressed, we can make no mistake about this, would be (as with Rothermere’s ideal, Hitler) freedom of thought, speech, and publication. If the British public value freedom they will think of this. Free thought in a Fascist State is impossible.

One other comment may be made. It is one of the many silly cries by which the cunning elder men lead the unthinking younger ones in the Fascist movement that “Democracy has broken down.” But that is not true. There is not one of the serious evils now troubling the world that is a product of democracy, or with which a democracy could not deal if it had a free hand. The evil of war and international hatred is not a product of democracy. The maladjustment of our economic system to modern conditions is not a product of democracy. Democracy does not exist anywhere in a complete and unhampered form; and to the truncated and half-developed form that does exist here and there, there has been bequeathed a bundle of problems and a host of evils that are an inheritance from older and other systems. There is no more miserable lie than “Democracy has broken down!” It is the invention of knaves made to impose on fools.

One of Lord Rothermere’s papers remarks that to induce people to think is difficult. Having made this discovery, Lord Rothermere will probably feel that the disinclination of the people to mental effort is the way in which Providence takes care to secure the success of his chain of newspapers. He might even adopt the motto “God with us.”

Answers to prayers for rain, because of the water-shortage, have arrived. But need a benevolent God have sent it so hastily, destroying life and property? In future, the prayists would be advised to add a postscript—“Please Lord, do send it gently!” The only thing to be admired about Providence, is its splendid impartiality. The just and the unjust are alike benefited, or drowned,

or ruined. We wonder how the pious explain that. It doesn't seem to fit in with what they have been taught to believe. But, of course, there is a possibility that what they have been taught to believe isn't true.

The prominent heading in a Nonconformist paper—"The Drift of Young People from the Church," hardly suggests that a great revival is about to erupt. But it might possibly suggest that there is an outburst of critical intelligence among the religiously-trained young. The only way in which the young people can be brought back into the religious pen, would be for the parsons to prayerfully beseech the Lord to prevent this outbreak of intelligence.

In a laudatory notice of the Oxford Group, the *New York Times* mentions the following as converts to the Yankee Buchman religion, or as giving it their blessing: Mr. A. J. Russell as editor of the *London Referee*; Mr. Hugh Redwood (night editor of the *News-Chronicle*); the Bishop of London (and many other bishops); and 130 Members of Parliament. The extraordinary feature is that only 130 M.P.'s belong to this weird humbug. It is incredible that there are about 500 M.P.'s who abstained from a meeting recently held in a Committee Room of Parliament itself.

One of our religious contemporaries is very hurt at the refusal of the State in France to allow religious propaganda on the wireless. It, however, confidently predicts a great religious revival in France, and hopes that "if the opposition to this new tyranny is organized, and the demand for fair-play is boldly expressed, the Government will reconsider its decision." We like those words "tyranny" and "fair-play" in the mouths of a religious person. What he really means is that only religious views should be broadcasted, and that under no circumstances should the least hint of anything anti-religious be allowed. How afraid these people are of opposition! Perhaps they are afraid with reason. A fair statement on religion by a competent lecturer would "blow the gaff," and every effort to secure such a statement should be made by listeners. We do not object to regular orthodox lectures or sermons, so long as a similar number of "anti's" are allowed. And that will come one day.

We have said something like the following so frequently of late, that when we saw the following in a displayed article in the *Daily Telegraph*, we felt we were meeting an old friend.

The longer one watches the making of contemporary history, the more one is driven to see that most of our troubles arise from the habit, on all sides, of suppressing or distorting what we know quite well is true, because its admission does not seem to suit our purpose.

And a B.B.C. speaker, lecturing on Welsh Characteristics, said "The Englishman does not lie, except for a practical purpose, as during the war." So we feel that we can repeat quite safely, that official statements and official histories should never be trusted in the absence of independent corroboration.

The Queen was driving to Cambridge. On the way her car broke down. Mr. P. Titmous was driving by with his wife. He stopped his car, enquired if he could be of assistance, then the Queen got out of her car, stepped into his, and so to Cambridge. Those who wish to get a complete "thrill" out of this rare adventure will find a portrait of Mr. Titmous and his car on the front page of the *News-Chronicle* for January 30. We believe that a picture of the car that broke down, one of the trees near which the car broke down, portrait and brief autobiography of a cottager who lived less than half a mile away from where the Queen's car broke down, will appear in later issues of the *News-Chronicle*. It is also reported that a noted Cinema Corporation has approached Mr. Titmous with a view to the production of a film, under the title of "How I took the Queen for a Ride."

The actual car, will, of course be used, and will be kept on view in the entrance hall of the building in which the film is shown.

At last the Church of England issues an official annual *Churchman's Handbook*. The 1934 edition is the first of its kind. Over 200 pages of small print tell the world many things about the Episcopal Church—mainly things nobody wants to know or things everybody knew. It omits most of the information the public needs to know. It says emphatically that "Clergy incomes" are "no charge on public funds," but it gives no particulars of "the eleven Parliamentary grants," which it mentions (on page 124), nor does it reconcile its statement with the grant of "about £17,000 a year," made by Queen Anne, and still called "Queen Anne's Bounty."

The Government is steadily pursuing a policy which apparently aims at creating a governing class, that shall be mainly recruited from the "superior" classes, with as little admixture from the lower orders as is possible. For some time it has been a settled policy in education to lower the standard of education so that what educational plums are going may fall into the hands of a greater number of students belonging to the private and public schools. The reason for this is that, as things stand at present, children from the elementary schools who have been through County or Municipal Secondary Schools beat the others hollow in any genuine educational test.

Then we have the move of Lord Trenchard, himself not a very brilliant specimen of first-rate intellectuality, to develop a cultural background, and also, so far as is possible, to keep the police, as a class, separate from the general public. We shall not be surprised if in the near future an attempt is made to establish police barracks, and for the same reason that military barracks were established—to prevent the soldiers becoming too familiar with the general public. A police force, the members of which live with the general public, and leading the life of the general public, apart from their hours of duty, is a very different thing from a police force which leads a life apart.

The latest move in this general policy is being taken by the report of the Departmental Committee, presided over by Sir Henry Hadow. They recommend that provision be made in local government administration for a "certain proportion" of clerical officers to be appointed from those having more advanced education. That, we may take it, means men from the big public schools and universities. Indeed, it is recommended that a greater proportion of University graduates be appointed, and that local authorities ought systematically to draw a larger proportion of their officials from the Universities. There is evidently a well-thought-out plan on foot. A certain proportion of officials are to be appointed, and the essential thing is that they shall have had a university training! Intelligence takes a back seat. John Stuart Mill, or Herbert Spencer, or Charles Bradlaugh would have been ruled out as ineligible.

The Bishop of Winchester told the Upper House of Convocation that he would not oppose Sunday games, provided no money was taken at the gates, and no labour was employed. That means that he will agree to Sunday games so long as they are attempted under conditions that make them impossible. He also said that recreation is harmless on a Sunday, provided it does not crowd out opportunities for worship. But how can it? Anyone who wishes to go to Church may, and if he prefers a game to going to Church, why should this impertinent person in gaiters decide that he must not be allowed to indulge in his fancy? Shakespeare said something about the insolence of office. It is nothing to the bumptiousness of bishops.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, at the same gathering said that when he saw "long rows of extremely healthy

young men going into the country for fresh air and stimulating recreation, he could not but rejoice and contrast the picture with the spectacle one used to see in the towns of young men loafing about the street corners." These young men might well reply, "Thank you for nothing." It was men in such positions as the Archbishop, who fought against Sunday games, and who told the country of the terrible things that would happen if these young men lost the attraction of loafing.

There are actually three relics of the "True Cross" in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and quite a number of other relics. For example, there is a cross made in the thirteenth century and on it are blood from the Wood of the Cross, a hair from the Blessed Virgin, and a fragment from her clothes, and quite a large number of things from various holy saints. Other reliquaries contain or contained a finger of St. Theodore and parts of St. Firmus and St. Rusticus, St. Catherine and St. Scholastica. In the present exhibition at the Royal Academy, there is an exhibit containing a thorn from the Crown of Thorns. We give this little list so that readers can see we are dealing with the same old Church. The present year is 1934, but the ignorance, superstition and credulity of real believers baffles all understanding.

The Rt. Rev. Abbot Hunter-Blair, O.S.B., is quite sure that there is a strange unknown beast in Loch Ness. He has known the Loch for over fifty years, and his opinion is that "the beast belongs to a species dating back some hundreds of millions of years." This takes our breath away. Where does he get his hundreds of millions of years from? If Bible chronology is worth anything at all, this puny planet of ours was created about 6,000 years ago, and the Abbot knows that his Church backs up every Biblical statement as coming direct from the Lord. Perhaps, however, he prefers the findings of modern science to Biblical accuracy; in which case he is running a great risk—Hell, or perhaps Purgatory for an indefinite period. Be that as it may, we must put on record that the Abbot and one of his antiquarian friends are both convinced that the "monster" approximates to the type of the Plesiosaurus, and that he is a true amphibian, furnished with lungs, gills, four rudimentary legs and a strong flat tail. It will be beastly luck if the animal turns out to be a mere seal.

Curates in the Diocese of Manchester are to have their salaries cut. In future new appointments will commence at £200 and rise to £240. Not an extravagant salary, but they may console themselves that their Lord and Master had to get along with much less. One effect of this cut will certainly be that there will be fewer candidates, and that also means that the mental calibre of the clergy will sink at a more rapid rate than it does at present.

Charles Bradlaugh predicted that one day the whole Christian Church might unite—the Roman Catholic Church will have swallowed all the others. The *Churchman's Handbook* (under the heading "Foreign Relations") pleads for "a reunion of Christendom," arguing rightly that any reunion which excluded a Church claiming the allegiance of much more than a third of the professing Christians in the world would be a poor affair."

"Unspeakable" seems to be the favourite word of Rev. George Jackson, who writes a page in the *Methodist Recorder*, proclaiming his love of it. "Unspeakable experiences and unspeakable truths" are "spoken" at great length, so they must be like the Negro parson's "unscrewing the inscrutable." Mr. Jackson likens his own "unspeakableness" to "the very dog in our home who looks up into our eyes. Do you suppose he has no more thoughts than a bark can speak?" A sort of "unbarkableness" apparently. It seems a little unfair to refer to the patient Job's three "friends" as always silent ones! The Book of Job is nothing but a "Shavian," or wordy play, in which poor Job is almost

talked to death by three of the noisiest loud speakers ever reported. If Job called them "unspeakable" he must have been sarcastic indeed.

The Biblical fairy-tale of the Fall of Man is still necessary to the Christian religion. Anyway, the Rev. A. E. Whitham, a Methodist writer, thinks so. To understand the Incarnation, he says, we must go back to the Fall. "We shall not see the meaning of the one without the other. Man has fallen." Mr. Whitham then proceeds:—

But you say, Have not the scientists exploded all that? Have they not proved that man never fell, but has climbed slowly, painfully up out of the primeval shadows, that the only fall has been from a tree where probably he disported himself with his arboreal cousins, and that fall was a rise? Yes, some—not all—have talked thus. When they remember they are scientists they will debate the Fall; but when they doff the garb of the scientists, and sit clothed only as men—simple, tempted, falling men—they have spoken in another tone and way.

In other words, we presume, when scientists think critically and apply ascertained knowledge to the primitive theory of the Fall, on which the Christian religion is based, they reject that theory. It is only when their intelligence and intellect are at rest—in their simple-minded moments—that they can be induced to consider the Fall favourably. It doesn't seem much to boast about—that Christian dogmas receive the assent of scientists only when they are no longer thinking! But presumably this is another instance of being thankful for small mercies.

Fifty Years Ago.

It is high time that Freethinkers recognized that, despite the boasted enlightenment and religious toleration of our age, we are still aliens before the law, debarred by statute from all offices and liable to punishment for the simple expression of our opinions. Such opportunities of meeting and of speech as we possess are only ours, because the bigots who would suppress us cannot rely on a jury to convict. They are not rights but permissions. Such tolerance is intolerable. Contracts are legally void and legacies of no effect if designed to propagate views in opposition to the Christian religion as by law established. We have seen how bad old laws, the offspring of an age of intolerance and persecution, have been revived and severely enforced by a judge worthy of the olden time. Honest men, whose only crime has been too bold a challenging of the legends and creeds which all cultured people have outgrown and ceased to believe, have for their want of hypocrisy been doomed to a punishment befitting only the worst malefactors. The imprisonment of Messrs. Foote, Ramsey and Kemp will be a sign by which future ages will judge of the boasted tolerance of our time. This though the most striking effort of the persecuting spirit, is by no means all. Every disgraceful artifice possible to malignant opposition has been put into play to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh from taking the seat in Parliament to which he has been thrice elected, and this avowedly on the ground of his heresy. His daughter has been debarred from attending a so-called free college; and worse, still, Mrs. Besant has had her daughter taken from her. These penalties falling so strikingly on our leaders are only the more prominent effects of a persecution which more or less visits all who dare openly oppose the popular creed. Under such circumstances it behoves every one who has the interests of freedom at heart to bestir himself, and be unceasing in his efforts until religious equality, extending to all, becomes a reality, and not, as at present, a sham. No dissenting sect has gained this justice till they have taken up a position to demand it, and it is time that Freethinkers showed they are a party whose just demands cannot be overlooked with impunity.

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THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- E. VENTON.—Will come in better at a later date.
- G. H. McCLUSKEY.—Sorry we shall not see you at the Dinner. We must remember the toast of absent friends.
- H.L.—Such statements as the one that Freethought speakers are content to go along dealing only with mistakes of the Pentateuch and the unhistoricity of the gospels is an expression of either ignorance or malice. It is not worthy of a serious reply.
- S. BROOKING (Newcastle, N.S.W.).—Pleased to know that reading Mr. Cohen's sketch of Ingersoll has aroused a new and deeper interest in America's greatest Freethinker.
- H. M. MEAD.—Merely telling us what you believe is of biographical importance only—symptomatic not diagnostic. The value of an "I believe," or an "I do not believe," is in exact proportion to the knowledge and understanding on which either happens to be based.
- H. H. WINTER AND ATHOS ZENO.—Next week. Crowded out of this issue.
- "REGULAR READER."—Sorry we cannot give you the information you require.
- J. O'CONNOR.—Thanks for booklet. If the traffic in miracles by "Saints" was being worked apart from religion, the operator would stand a good chance of imprisonment.
- TO ADVERTISING THE "FREETHINKER."—Mrs. Lee, £1.

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

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Sugar Plums.

We referred last week to the activities of a new Secular Society in Dublin. The *Irish Catholic* for January 20, with that mixture of intellectual indecency and sheer intolerance that characterises Roman Catholic advocacy acts towards Freethought as one would expect. We gave the programme of the Society last week, and readers need only turn to that to note the deliberate lying and calculated blackguardism of this Catholic newspaper, circulating it where the Roman Catholic Church can play a strong hand. This is what it says:—

The programme of the Society as given in the *Irish Times* (from which our own report was taken) runs the full gamut. . . . what its members choose to denominate "Science" . . . and all modern hateful and unnatural practices are enthusiastically endorsed. . .

The liberty of the debauchee is to them the most sacred of all liberties. . . . Did the landlord of the premises know the kind of foul birds to which he was giving a roosting place?

There is only one thing to say of this kind of thing, and that is Roman Catholic, in defence of which every possible kind of lying is looked upon as justifiable. In this country we have only to deal with a Roman Catholicism that dare not avow its full objects, or speak as it would like to speak. In Ireland we have Roman Catholicism with a freer hand. And there we see it for what it is. We shall be surprised if other things do not happen with regard to the Secular Society of Ireland.

The Social being organized by the Executive of the N.S.S. for March 3, in Caxton Hall, Westminster, should be an attractive item for all London saints and their friends. Those who have attended the previous Socials will only need reminding of the date. A splendid band, dancing, musical items, a few words from the President, and refreshments all for 2s. 6d. should make for a record gathering and thoroughly enjoyable evening. Tickets from the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, or the N.S.S. 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

The copies of *Ingersoll's Works* are now to hand, and will be delivered to those who sent along their orders as soon as they are received from the binders—which should be by about February 3. It is a wonderful bargain, about 1,000 large pages, and is almost a complete edition of Ingersoll's works as published in the Dresden edition at about £8 per set. The work is bound full cloth, gilt lettered, and contains not only the replies to Cardinal Manning, Gladstone and others, but the articles and essays to which he replied. There is also a biography and appreciations. The number of copies is strictly limited, and we advise those who wish to possess one of the greatest bargains ever offered to Freethinkers to order at once. The price is 7s. 6d., postage 9d. extra.

To-day (February 4) Mr. Cohen will lecture in the Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester. The lecture will commence at 6.30.

A reader of the *Freethinker* has copies of the paper for about twenty years, which he will give to any saint who would wish to acquire them. Application should be made to Mr. S. E. Beardall, Quaker Lane, Farnsfield, Near Newark, Notts.

A Library is being formed in connexion with the West Ham Branch N.S.S. and the local Secretary, Mr. I. Greenhouse, 9 Stapleford Avenue, Newbury Park, Ilford, Essex, would be grateful for the gift of any book or books which friends of the movement might wish to contribute. An effort is being made to strengthen the Branch, and as there are a large number of Freethinkers in the district there should be no difficulty in achieving that object.

At a meeting of the "Law Society," on January 20, one of the members submitted a motion that "Incurable insanity is a justifiable ground for divorce." That seems a proposition with which every decent-minded man and woman should heartily agree. But a number of solicitors present objected to the motion on "religious grounds." The motion was, however, moved, but by a large majority "next business" was carried.

One can scarcely conceive a more cowardly situation. According to the mover of the resolution, there were 168,219 persons confined as incurably insane. Surely if ever a man or woman is entitled to a divorce if they wish it, it is husbands or wives of these insane. But religious bigotry says, No. And even at that, many of the opponents to the proposition had not the courage to vote! After all, no one need get a divorce against his or her will. But your religious bigot is never satisfied with being permitted to do as he pleases; he must prevent others doing as they wish. We hope our readers will remember that here is one case in which the evil influence of religion is clear and unmistakable.

Heresy in Literature.

I.

THOSE who still support the orthodox religious faiths of our day are very fond of declaring that all the greatest brains of the ages are on their side, adding that there can be no reason for a smaller mind to refuse to accept what the leaders of every generation have believed without demur.

At first sight, there may seem to be something in this plea, until we begin to think the problem out for ourselves, and to compile lists of the great men on both sides of the argument, and we are then enabled to see that there is, in fact, as little to support it as there is to support the other and more pretentious "proofs" which believers in religion have adduced to bolster up decaying faiths.

The present essay, then, is an attempt shortly to review the evidence in one great branch of human endeavour—literature. To take the whole world for our province would be to make the essay of inordinate length, and we shall therefore confine ourselves in the main to those who have written in English, although writers from other countries may occasionally be considered, when they provide apt examples to illustrate the general argument.

Many, of course, of the most unorthodox writers of the past hundred years or so have devoted the best part of their lives to dispelling what they have felt to be the very grievous errors into which their contemporaries have fallen, but with these we shall not attempt to deal. Charles Bradlaugh and G. J. Holyoake, G. W. Foote and J. M. Robertson, forcible and accurate writers though they were, yet made, on the whole, their definitely literary work subsidiary to their anti-religious propaganda, and in the present essay we shall devote ourselves exclusively to those who can be described as purely artists in words. But if we refuse to consider J. M. Robertson, the greatest Shakespearian scholar of his day, as a man of letters, or Charles Bradlaugh, one of the few really outstanding orators of the nineteenth century, as an author, neither must opponents bring forward the names of bishops and clergymen who were churchmen first, and writers as an afterthought.

We shall not here consider in any detail, either, those acute philosophic thinkers who have declared against the religious ideas of their day—G. H. Lewes, John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, Bertrand Russell and the rest. Their evidence, of course, is of considerable value, but we wish to place the emphasis on the literary *artist*. And philosophers, however great their ability, are apt to consider the doctrine more important than the language in which it is expressed.

It must be remembered, when attempting such a task as the present one, that in past ages there has always been a great premium on orthodoxy. The heretic, even if he had not always to face the fate of Galileo or Bruno, has always had to suffer political, economic and social ostracism. It is only in very recent times that these things have been altered, and a man enabled to make a success of his life, no matter whether he be Jew or Gentile, believer or unbeliever. And even to-day, the old prejudice continues in many spheres of activity. Would a politician who was an avowed Atheist have any chance, in this twentieth-century England of ours, of becoming Prime Minister? There is no need to wait for an answer. But in literature, fortunately, the ban is at any rate partly lifted, although, even now, the number of publishers brave enough to risk publishing unorthodox works is deplorably small.

In the past, at any rate, this has been a very strong incentive tending to make all writers orthodox in re-

ligion. Let us not, therefore, too strongly condemn those who in the bad old days found themselves unable to give their whole-hearted support to the task of destroying the evil power which intolerant religion (and particularly the Roman Catholic religion, backed by the sinister terror of the Inquisition) was then exerting.

We must remember, too, that in things artistic the church held the purse until comparatively recent times. The same organization which made it pay for all musicians (even the totally unorthodox Beethoven) to compose masses and oratorios, and for all painters to portray madonnas and saints, also made the production by authors of works of the most rigid religious orthodoxy a very paying game. And, after all, the poor devils of authors had to live. If they wished to make a living by the craft which they loved, they had to produce the article for which there was a demand.

All these facts make it rather a surprising thing that there can be found, in the literature of olden times, even the faintest suggestion of unorthodox thought. Yet it is there, for all intelligent readers to see. That passionate appeal for the Jew which Shakespeare put into the mouth of Shylock, in *The Merchant of Venice*, seems still unheeded in many parts of the world to-day, and, in Shakespeare's time, it must have come very strangely. And can we regard it as altogether an accident that, in *Paradise Lost*, as succeeding generations of surprised critics have pointed out, the real hero is not the great Jehovah, but Satan himself? Old John Milton, we feel, could not have been quite an orthodox Christian for this remarkable result to show itself so plainly in his greatest work. And Dante too, in his immortal *Divine Comedy*, was, as any reader of that great work can see for himself, not fettered by the orthodox ideas of his time. Was not his portrayal of Virgil and Homer, the most honoured writers of antiquity, as languishing in hell, rather his way, despite the stern religious censorship of his time, of showing up the follies and absurdities into which a rigid set of religious rules might lead mankind?

This association of great art with good religious and moral ideas, however, is of very old standing, and it is not until well within living memory that it has been openly and consciously defied. Oscar Wilde was probably the first to declare frankly, in so many words, that there could be no necessary connexion between great literature and good religion, or even between great literature and good morals. "A book is well written or badly written. That is all," he said, but even yet that lesson has not been learned. To-day, when an unusually fine artist in words, who is at the same time a penetrating thinker arises—a George Moore or a D. H. Lawrence—the cry is "Immoral! Indecent! Blasphemous!" And if it so happens that we have a puritan at the Home office (and we usually have) a real work of literary art, consummately planned and meticulously carried out, like Mr. James Joyce's *Ulysses* or Miss Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness*, is banned from this country, so that the small minority of people who prefer real art to the rubbish that fills the bookstalls and the cheap bookshops, have to use underground and illegal means to obtain the reading which they desire.

In the past this feeling of disgust, carefully worked up by the churches, and felt against all men who can be called blasphemers, has resulted in many who were what we should now consider mild religionists being viciously attacked, ill-treated and reviled. In many cases the stigma remains to this day. Leigh Hunt, for example, was a Unitarian, yet anyone who cares to read the chapters of his interesting *Autobiography* which deal with the persecution from re-

ligious people which he had to endure while his *Examiner* was being published, can see the same resort to abuse when argument fails, which Bradlaugh later had to endure, in the days of *The National Reformer*.

But in that steady development of freedom of thought (and, to a lesser degree, of action) which the slow and laggard passage of the years has brought, one class of writer has shown continuous change. The historians of past ages, from the days of Ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome downwards, have usually acted as if they were directly subsidized by the religious interests of their day—as, perhaps, they often were. But, beginning with Hume and Montesquieu, continued through the clever, because unanswerable irony of Gibbon, through the days of Lecky down to Winwood Reade, whose *The Martyrdom of Man* remains one of the few classics of universal history, and on to John Morley and Mr. H. G. Wells in our own time, historians have been gradually changing, until now it is only in the pages of such pseudo-historians as Mr. Hilaire Belloc that one can meet with that curious, incapable twisting of the truth which religious orthodoxy demands.

And it is not merely in the rationalist historians of this type, it is not only in Gibbon and Lecky, in Winwood Reade and John Morley that we can trace the development of these new and—to the authorities—dangerous ideas. Even in such an unusual document as Carlyle's *The French Revolution*, the same ideas can be seen stirring, whilst the biographer of Carlyle, J. A. Froude, was, as is well known, a Freethinker.

No reasonable person could doubt, indeed, that if Carlyle had been writing now, instead of a century ago, he would have occupied a position very like that now occupied by Mr. Bernard Shaw. And Mr. Shaw, at any rate, has never compromised with the clergy. At the beginning of his career he avowed himself an Atheist, and from that position he has never swerved by a hairsbreadth throughout an amazingly long and fertile period.

Historians, then, have become more and more unorthodox as time has moved on. More of them in each generation have declared against religion. And now to-day the pre-historians, led by such men as Sir Arthur Keith, Professor G. Elliott Smith and Dr. T. F. G. Dexter, have begun to show the falseness of the whole sorry scheme of things in which religious folk believe. So now, instead of the anti-religious historian meeting with stern disapproval, as in Gibbon's day (although, as J. M. Robertson pointed out, Gibbon always succeeded in trouncing his opponents) it is the religious historian, of what we may call the Belloc type, who meets with a storm of criticism from his brothers in the craft of history.

JOHN ROWLAND.

(To be continued.)

A Miracle in Swaziland.

The writer has known Christian Scientists suffering from colic, who tried to "cure themselves" by stoically reading the passages from the Scriptures, in the hope that their departure for Heaven might be deferred for a little while thereby. Sometimes the "tummy-ache," the "error" of bowel spasms, passed off while our Christian Scientist was reading the words of the Yankee Prophetess; rarely did it also happen that Nature eased her assault upon the ebbing vitality of a dying Christian muttering some text. Roman Catholics claim that the dying have been given a new lease of life after the administering

of the Last Sacrament. All this is accounted to the glory of the Lord and the confounding of infidels and blasphemers. Natural psychological explanations based upon the force of suggestion are loftily scorned by the grateful believers in the crucified God.

It is one thing to banish the unreality of a pain by the incomprehensibility of a passage from *Science and Health*; to bear with fortitude the agony of cancer by repeating "God is Love";—only an individual here and there removed from the public eye is benefitted on such occasions—it is another and far more impressive thing for a drunken man to repeat a phrase from a Swazi text-book he has forgotten the meaning of, and thereby save the lives and possessions of hundreds of people.

Jim was a young Scot in partnership with a man called "Mac," trading blankets and beads for cattle amongst the Swazis. It was at the time when there was a good deal of unrest in the country, for Umbandine, the King, lay sick to death at the royal kraal, and there was great uncertainty as to the future. Jim was a late arrival from England, and Mac was an old, experienced trader with the usual pioneer's contempt for the newcomer. The partnership was not a cordial one, but Jim had provided indispensable capital. Jim had determined to learn Swazi, and had purchased a text-book from which he memorized phrases, in the hope that he would some day be able to use them freely, though as yet he had found little to interest him in examples of past, perfect and future imperfect tenses, and the difference between indefinite and personal pronouns. As they rode along on horseback before the lumbering ox-wagon with its load of goods, Jim vainly tried to glean some idea of the language from "Mac," who, though he spoke Swazi fluently, sullenly refused to impart his knowledge. That afternoon Jim had sought to relieve the homesickness that filled his soul with gloom in this wild and savage country by frequent draughts from a bottle of brandy he had purchased at the last village. As they rode over the top of a hill Mac said suddenly, "There's something going on at Minnebaan's." It was apparent that something unusual had occurred, for a large crowd of Swazis was gathered in the middle of the kraal talking loudly and excitedly and anxiously. "What's it all about?" asked Jim thickly. "Wait a bit and we'll see," was Mac's curt rejoinder. They dismounted and were eagerly welcomed by a group of older men. Then the spate of excited talk, which had been stemmed for a moment, burst forth afresh with frenzied gesture, fierce ejaculation and torrents of voluble argument. Jim sat bewildered by the babel, of which, despite his best endeavours, he could not understand a single word. In vain did he try to make Mac explain. He got no more for his questions than "I'll tell you after." At last he could stand it no longer. With drunken indignation he rose to his feet and shouted, "A te an Dingaani waan gaan a buko Zini, wa wa bulawa onki amaduna." The effect was magical, as if a bomb had fallen into their very midst, and might explode at any moment. There was a moment's frozen silence; then the uproar broke out anew and with increased violence.

When they rode off together, Mac remarked that Jim might have told him, and of course they would do no business here that day; but they would return in about a fortnight. It was Jim's turn to be cold and important now. He had no idea what the sentence he had memorized, and now mischievously expressed, really meant. He felt triumphantly sober.

On their return they heard from a wandering Swazi of the death of King Umbandine. Once more they looked down on the scene of the tumultuous gathering of a fortnight before. Instead of the neat group

of round huts with their trim red fences, of the crowd of excited men and anxious women, there was nothing to be seen but a space of blackened ground with a few small heaps of charred ruins, from one of which a thin spiral of smoke still rose lazily into the clear blue sky—no life anywhere.

"You were right," said Mac, as they rode down to the scene of desolation, "but why didn't you tell me?" "Tell you what?" "That Minnebaan's kraal was to be wiped out when Umbandine died." "Because I didn't know." "Then what did you mean when you said that about the death of Dingaan's father?" Then it flashed into Jim's memory that the sentence on the use of pronouns which he had quoted so haphazardly from his Swazi grammar had run when translated, "When Dingaan came to the throne he killed all the old undanas (head men)." "When he heard you say that," Mac continued, "Minnebaan knew he was doomed, so he must have run away—or we'd see him and all his people lying here." As he spoke Minnebaan himself came running down from a neighbouring kopje. He fell at Jim's feet, called him his Saviour, and several other endearing names, and told him, through Mac, how the warning he had so diplomatically conveyed had caused him, the moment he heard of the King's death, to collect his people and flee to a prepared refuge among the kopjes. Jim laughingly disclaimed omniscience, and endeavoured to explain the coincidental nature of the whole episode to the awestricken Minnebaan. But can we, bearing in mind Christian parallels, blame that Swazi chief for ranking the Swazi Grammar, which he implored Jim to give him, as least as high as our Christians place their Holy Books?

E. A. McDONALD.

N.B.—The episodes in this sketch are partly based upon fact.

Christian "Happiness."

HUMAN righteousness we know is a pretty "filthy" thing in Christian eyes. "Mere morality" is quite different from that of the religious type. Bible "Truth" is as far from ordinary truth as it well can be.

Perhaps Christian "happiness" is not quite what most of us would call "happiness."

The New Year's number of *The Methodist Recorder* seems conscious of this fact. Mr. Moses Bourne, Vice-President of the Amalgamated Methodists, wishes a "Happy New Year" to the Methodist people. He hastens to qualify or define the "happiness" so wished. It is not just what you and I mean when we utter this expression! Ah no!

"In doing so," says the Vice-President, "what I have in mind is, of course, Christian happiness—joy after the mind of Christ, Our Lord, known to us by the endearing title of 'Man of Sorrows.'"

Mr. Bourne goes on to explain that he is referring to "the invincible gladness," which Christ felt "only a few hours before Calvary, and with the vision of the Cross clearly in His mind." About as cheerful as Bill Sykes having a final half-pint on the morning of his execution.

There seems some sort of misgiving even in Mr. Bourne's optimistic praise of this sort of "happiness," for he adds, "Certainly we shall be helped along the way by the Comforter." We imagine we should need more than an ordinary "comforter" in the circumstances!

The President of the same Church, the Rev. F. L. Wiseman, says, "I do not recall any year which opened with better auspices." But only a Methodist

could feel "happy" glancing at Mr. Wiseman's cheery summer of the 1934 outlook, which he admits includes: "oppressive tyrannies, racial animosities, unstable economics, decaying industries, widespread unemployment, and hanging over all, the dark and threatening cloud of war."

The source of Methodist happiness for so ill-omened a New Year is that "periods of crisis have almost always prepared the way for a further unveiling of the power and glory of the Redeemer."

Apparently what the Methodist needs to perfect his "happiness" is what other people would call "a perfect hell of a time."

Methodist "happiness" delights in queer expressions. Who else would dream that "the Church Prayer-meeting and the Daily Devotional Hour," were naturally associated with jollification? The Methodist President pathetically (and naively) complains, "It is strange how Christian people neglect this source of refreshment."

"Refreshment" at the "Devotional Hour" sounds suspiciously like "Cocktail time." "Methodist exultation" is claimed in the same journal, as a by-product of the use (after purchase) of the new Methodist Hymn Book! In an article headed, "Why Sing?" another fruitful source of happiness is explained.

"Miriam was the leader of the first women's choir," says the *Methodist Recorder*. Yes, she quoted a few words from a song Moses had already sung! Nothing is said however of the instrumental concert (Joshua vi. 12-17) glorifying "Rahab the Harlot" for betraying her compatriots. Deborah too was a lady who led a chorus glorifying the ugliest crime of any war, and declaring (concerning its perpetrator) "Blessed above women shall be Jael," who murdered a sleeping foe who was her trusting guest.

Anyone who could extract happiness from Christian Hymns must be easily pleased. Isaac Watts, highly praised by the *Record*, wrote worse rhymes and more decrepit lines than Martin Tupper's poorest imitator.

If irreverent readers fail to appreciate the "keen relish" which Methodists derive from singing such balderdash, one cannot doubt the popularity of hymn-singing. The explanation is furnished by the *Record*. "When one comes across something one may not like, one should reflect that another may like it." One could enjoy prussic acid on the principle that "one man's meat is another man's poison."

There is even a "funny column"—a full page of it—wherein our pious contemporary jests lightly on the common sources of human merriment. It repeats the usual "comic" allusions to the Bible, to "foolish virgins" who "would have done better with electric light," of "Sadducees who did not believe in spirits and of publicans who sold them." All these and other jokes on the same page might have been copied from our own back numbers.

The really "Christian" happiness is found in the Bible. "He that sitteth in the Heavens shall laugh," because souls suffer the eternal tortures of hell. And Christians are not told to be happy: they are instructed (James iv. 9) to "Be afflicted, mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into heaviness." That is why Christians are called "kill-joys."

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

We have no official knowledge of hell. That the poor souls who dwell there are condemned to read, all day long, the dreary sermons preached here on earth I refuse to believe. It is a calumny. Even in hell it has not come to that.—Heine.

The Sun of God.

KING SOL, doesn't call for a great deal of attention in city life to-day, unless it is a holiday or some other outstanding occasion, but how much notice and speculation must this orb have created in the minds of early men? The vast open spaces, or at least wild places of nature, untouched by the hand of civilized man, must have presented many things to ponder upon, but none surely so continuously associated with the seasons, the crops and the numerous other natural events, so important in the life of primitive man, as the sun.

Pondering, however, would be only the commencement of a process which ultimately aims at explanation, and to the primitive mind, child or savage, explanations most readily come in terms of themselves. When natural forces do things, when inanimate objects move, the undeveloped mind imbues them with reasons and intentions of a human character. Would not we expect early man then, eventually to explain the sun's behaviour in human terms, and to create stories of its rise and decline, akin to birth and death, in short to personify it?

Such, in fact, we know to be the case by reference to some of the earlier cults, but imagine how such stories would take their place and form an essential part of the religion of the time, how the personified sun, at the time of his annual birth, might be represented by the image of a child, the little sun-child, being born the day after the shortest day of the year. As the days commence to lengthen the infant sun is struggling to life, a festival among mankind to celebrate the event, a festival that has played an enormous part in religions, the festival of the winter solstice.

But then comes a parallel study—man had also pondered at night. The numerous star-groups he came to associate with the seasons and with the months of the year, in at least some rough fashion. Certain wise men would become something in the nature of astrologers, and in the course of time associate their art with the story of the now personified sun. The infant sun is born on December 24 or 25, and why not let the wise men who follow stars cast a horoscope, a plan of the stellar regions that will weave round him a story remarkably akin to many now in fashion?

They would proceed much after the style of the present seaside astrologer. First, from their annual data, they must calculate what star or group of stars ascends upon the eastern horizon on this great morning, December 25; they find it is the constellation virgo or the virgin, a sign so-called because when the sun enters into it in August it is the period of fertility, when the fruits of the earth are brought forth. The star group on this occasion, however, merely presides over the nativity of the sun-child. The child is born under the heavenly virgin, the queen of heaven.

But what of the sun's position? Where is the sun in the horoscope at midnight on December 24, which is the very commencement of the 25th? He is below the earth; it is night-time, he is down in the constellation of the goat (capricornus); a portion of this star-group is called the stable, the stable of the goat. This is where the sun-child is really born; but how very like a Roman Catholic crib. Here is the sun, the light of the world, born in the stable, in company with a goat and the heavenly virgin presiding; why, there are only some asses wanted to complete the picture. But wait, they are in the horoscope too, high up overhead are the group of stars known in astronomy to-day as the asses, so our birth celebration is complete. Is this just a coincidence, is it stretching facts to fit a theory or is it the key to the absurdities of the Christian mythology?

JOHN V. SHORTT.

A great many people put nothing into marriage and they are disappointed when they get out of it—nothing.
Mrs. W. Gallichan.

"Rain."

(Not by SOMERSET MAUGHAN.)

"We published alarming diagrams to show how far below the normal mark Manchester's water supplies are. No sooner had they appeared than rain began to fall in torrents over Thirlmere and, giving good measure, followed suit over Longdendale."—From a Manchester Daily Paper.

So there you are. The secret's out.
We've now discovered all about
How people ought to pray.
No wonder that we got it wrong
And struggled vainly for so long
Before we found the way.

To think that through the toiling years
We knelt, perplexed with hopes and fears,
In every kind of church!
And though we sang Jehovah's praise
Before we asked for rainy days
He left us in the lurch.

But how could mortal e'er have guessed,
No matter with what wisdom blessed,
That to adjust the capers
Of wind and cloud, Almighty God
Would choose a means so very odd
As reading Daily Papers?

TWINKLE.

Correspondence.

IS THERE A PRIMAL SUBSTANCE?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I asked Mr. Cohen to substantiate his assertion that Spinoza makes substance and modes two independent things. He refers me to Prop. I., Ax. V. and Prop. III. They read:—

Prop. I.: Substance is by nature prior to its modes.

Ax. V. and Prop. III.: Things having nothing in common cannot be one the cause of the other.

If Prop. III. were applied to Prop. I., Mr. Cohen's point would be substantiated. But Spinoza does not so apply it. On the contrary, he says "its modes" (Prop. I.). He does NOT say, one thing, modes, are separable from another thing, substance. He says substance is prior to its modes, and also uses the expressions, "modifications of substance," and substance becoming "constituted by modes." The words "its" and "of" indicate possession, and so modes cannot at the same time be possessed by substance and yet be separable from it. Substance prior to mode, certainly; but subsequently modes appear out of it.

Out of it. Derived from it. But Mr. Cohen asks how. I hope to show the question is invalid, resting on an inadequate conception of the character of substance.

I quoted authorities for substance, and Mr. Cohen demurs, preferring to treat them as expressions of opinion. Now if this be right, it should be possible to find some other scientists who disagree with them. I therefore ask Mr. Cohen to name one scientist who avows that the postulate of substance is unnecessary.

Mr. Cohen does not care much for those I mentioned. I will now add, then, Bertrand Russell and Joseph McCabe, who both assume primary unanalysable (events for the former, ether the latter), and both may be categorized under what I chose to call Neo-Materialism.

It appears that Mr. Cohen's root objection to substance as the limit of scientific analysis is that it leads to a First Cause. Now this first cause idea is obsolete, resting as it did on the conception of causality as a chain. Causality is now conceived as a web, and thus the inter-relatedness of events requires, not First Cause, but web-material. Substance thus functions as "ground," or noumenon. First Cause is replaced by common bedding.

It is incorrect to speak of substance as a "thing." Though for metaphysical purposes it has to be treated as a unity, it is, for science, "radically pluralistic."

Mr. Cohen then asks, assuming its existence, how does substance generate variety? How can we get anything out of one factor? The answer is, by its inherent activity, bringing creativity. No one ever regarded substance as a dead, inert block (cf. *Freethinker* No. 4, 1932, "Can Monism account for Variety?")

The difficulties are thus avoided by the conception of substance as universal, radically pluralistic, impersonal, and active and creative (perhaps electric). Here is a working metaphysical datum for Materialism.

I said the qualities of heat and colour do not depend on immediate human awareness for their existence. Mr. Cohen could have ignored this as irrelevant, but he preferred, apparently, to nibble at the bait. As he wants to negate the assertion I now ask: is it not a known fact that heat existed long before the first organism? Did not the nebular heat preclude the possibility of life? Can we not, then, speak of heat as existent independent of immediate human awareness? Quit a heated room, leaving a thermometer to register heat which no one feels.

Then as for colour. Mr. Cohen posits colour-blindness. But was I not insistent on the quality of colour, and is not Mr. Cohen confusing this with *perception* of colour? All qualities are conditioned in being rendered significant to the organism.

To sum up, the case is:

(1) That Mr. Cohen's criticism of Bradlaugh is based on fake premises, as shown by quotation from Bradlaugh.

(2) That in view of the fact that the same stuff constitutes different phenomena, substance is a necessary postulate of science and philosophy.

And incidentally, (3) Spinoza's modes are no more independent of substance than the egg is of the hen.

(4) Heat and colour are *not* dependent on us for their existence, but only for their perception.

G. H. TAYLOR.

[There seems little use adding anything here to what I already said. The matter must rest, so far as I am concerned, until I can deal with the subject in the articles to which I referred last week. I really have not the foggiest idea as to what is meant by either the "inherent activity" of a simple substance, or by a substance that is "radically pluralistic." I fancy that *would* have made Bradlaugh shiver. His comments on what I said about colour shows that he has failed to grasp my meaning. Mr. Taylor appears to be mistaking words for things.—C.C.]

Obituary.

MR. M. J. KHAN.

READERS of the *Freethinker* on Tyneside, and many other parts of the country, will learn with regret of the decease of Mr. M. J. Khan, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, on January 22. Deceased, an Indian by birth, and an eye specialist by profession, arrived in England over forty years ago, at that time an adherent of the Mohammedan Faith. His residence in Manchester brought him in contact with Freethinkers, which resulted in his becoming a member of the National Secular Society. During his many years residence in Newcastle he became a zealous member of the local Branch of the N.S.S., usually attending the lectures with pamphlets and books in his pockets to give or lend to any Christian he could induce to read them. Being of a genial and kindly disposition he made many friends, and despite a prolonged attack of diabetes he could usually be found, until within three weeks ago, around some of the various meetings in the Market Place. Interment took place at Jesmond Cemetery, on January 25. A Secular Address was read by Mr. Allan Flanders. Mrs. Khan and her two daughters will have the sympathy of all who had the pleasure of Mr. Khan's acquaintance.

MR. JOHN HOBBS.

ON Friday, January 26, the remains of John Hobbs were interred in Streatham Cemetery. Death took place at the early age of forty-four from Thrombosis and complications. Although not a member of the N.S.S. he was a convinced Freethinker, and lived up to his principles.

A feature in his character was that where he was concerned justice must prevail, which meant he was continually fighting in the cause of justice. His sterling qualities drew a large circle of admirers, whose respect was shown in many ways during the journey to the cemetery. In accordance with his wish, a Secular Service was read at the graveside before a large gathering of relatives and friends by Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

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

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

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Sunday, B. A. Le Maine. 3.30, Platform 1, Messrs. Collins and Bryant. Platform 2, B. A. Le Maine. 6.30, Various speakers. Wednesday, 7.30, Messrs. Collins and Le Maine.

INDOOR.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (New Morris Hall, Hall No. 5, 79 Bedford Road, Clapham, S.W.4): 7.30, Mr. A. T. Connor, F.N.S.C. (Hon. Sec. British Spiritualists Lyceum Union)—"A Human View of Spiritualism."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.): 11.0, John A. Hobson, M.A.—"Can Dictatorship Survive?"

STUDY CIRCLE (N.S.S. Office, 62 Farringdon Street, E.C.4): 8.0, Monday, February 5, Mr. A. D. McLaren—"Christian Ethics a Candid Examination."

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Reggiori's Restaurant, 1 Huston Road, opposite King's Cross Station): 7.30, Mrs. Janet Chance—"How to be Happy tho' Atheist."

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

ASHINGTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Socialist Sunday School): 3.0, I.L.P. Hall, 4 Bolsover Street, 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Bristol Street Council Schools): 7.0, Miss M. Marsh—"More about the U.S.S.R."

CHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Peoples' Hall, Delamere Street, Chester): 7.0, H. Lancaster (Liverpool)—"Shakespeare."

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley): 2.30, Mr. Jack Pickford—"Has Christianity been an Aid to Social Progress?"

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (East Hall, M'Lellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow): 7.0, Mr. J. Harrison Maxwell, M.A.—Lantern Lecture—"The Cult of the Bull." *Freethinker* and other literature on sale at all meetings.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Mr. Chapman Cohen—"Is Christianity Played Out?"

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, Islington, Liverpool, entrance in Christian Street): 7.0, Mr. F. R. Jones (Rock Ferry)—"The Duties of Man."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Angel Hotel, Dale Street, Liverpool): 7.0, Saturday, February 17, Merseyside Freethinkers' Second Annual Dinner. Reception 6.30. Tickets 6s. each. Evening Dress Optional.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Clarion Cafe, Market Street, Manchester): 7.30, Mr. J. Clayton (Burnley)—"The Road to Eu-Dor."

NORTH SHIELDS (Labour Social Hall): 7.0, Thursday, February 8, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH N.S.S. (Plymouth Chambers, Hall 5, Drake Circus): 7.0—Christian Apocrypha."

SOUTH SHIELDS BRANCH N.S.S. (Central Hall, Chapter Row, South Shields): 7.0, A Lecture.

SUNDERLAND (Study Circle): 7.30, Tuesday, February 6, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

SUNDERLAND BRANCH N.S.S. (Co-operative Rooms, Green Street): 7.30, Councillor A. Hildreth—"The Menace of Fascism."

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