

# THE FREETHINKER

• EDITED *by* CHAPMAN COHEN •  
— Founded 1881 —

Vol. LIV.—No. 28

SUNDAY, JULY 15, 1934

PRICE THREEPENCE

## PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

	Page
<i>The Nature of Sedition—The Editor</i> . . . . .	433
<i>Renan the Rebel—Mimnermus</i> . . . . .	435
<i>"The Bible must be Right"—C. S. Fraser</i> . . . . .	436
<i>Greener Pastures—D. Stirling</i> . . . . .	437
<i>A Pious Rip Van Winkle—W. Mann</i> . . . . .	442
<i>Women and Freethought—G. W. Foote</i> . . . . .	443
<i>Freethought and Politics—G. H. Taylor</i> . . . . .	444
<i>Religion and Science—J. Reeves</i> . . . . .	445

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

## Views and Opinions

### The Nature of Sedition

It was only to be expected, in view of recent events, that the prosecution of Tom Mann on the charge of making seditious speeches should break down. It should never have been initiated. As Mr. Justice Talbot said, there is no law in this country against expressing an opinion on any subject, so long as it is not directed towards an illegal act. I think he should have said, "no law at present," for if some people in power, or who exert influence, have their way, there will be one very soon. There are plenty of people, besides the British branch of the Nazi movement, who openly express their desire to suppress opinions which they regard as socially injurious, or "seditious," or "blasphemous." Unable to agree on any single thing that is reasonable or just, these people meet on a common ground of stupidity and injustice. But at present one may attack the "capitalist system," or the institution of the Crown, or the being of a parliamentary system, as often as one likes, or where one likes—always with the qualification that it must not lead to an "illegal act." This is rather a vague sort of protection, since whether a speech leads to an illegal act depends so much upon circumstances. The prevailing conditions of the moment, the exact form of words used, even the intonation, above all, the construction placed upon the words by a jury, or a magistrate, who may have very strong prejudices, all exhibit possible forms of danger. But the law as stated by Mr. Justice Talbot is sound, and it is well that the liberty which exists, at least theoretically, under existing law should be noted—and preserved. And its best preservative is the maintenance of a public opinion that will not brook its destruction, or even its curtailment.

\* \* \*

### The Goose and the Gander

All the same, I think that Tom Mann owes some thanks to our English Nazis for his discharge. It would have been too glaring to send Tom Mann to

prison for using the language attributed to him, when these people promise to tear up our parliamentary system, suppress this and that newspaper (I see the *Sunday Referee* has been promised suppression so soon as Fascism is established) and are allowed to drill and train their own army. No change threatened by Tom Mann could be more "revolutionary" than that promised by the Fascists, and events in Germany—a country which Lord Rothermere regards as the best governed country in Europe—have given ample illustration of what they have in view. Unconsciously, Tom Mann's enemies gave him a helping hand. Mann's conviction would have been too glaringly a case of partial justice, when one bears in mind the relatively tender manner in which the powers that be have treated the Fascists. Those who remember the outcry over the "plots" of a handful of Communists, without money, or influence, the wild stories retailed by some of the papers of concealed arms, and plans to blow up this and that, a few years ago, and contrast it with the almost fatherly treatment of the Fascists, cannot refrain from drawing comparisons. It is quite certain that if Mann and his friends had arranged to mount guard over some place threatened by a descent from the police, had dug trenches, and threatened all sorts of opposition, they would hardly have been let off with the kindly admonition to go home and be good boys, as were the Fascists in the tithe-war incident. We have not yet achieved the excellence reached so early by Hitler and his friends, and therefore I think Tom Mann must, to some extent, thank the Mosleyites for his discharge.

\* \* \*

### Our Policemen Guides

Of course, if the Incitement to Seditious Teaching Bill becomes law, and if those who are in opposition to it now, cease an active opposition to it the moment the Bill becomes law, instead of making that the point for a more determined resistance to it, we may soon improve upon the interpretation of the law given by Mr. Justice Talbot. Then our liberties will be entrusted to the safe keeping of a policeman and a Justice of the Peace, and a lot of nonsense such as men like Mr. Justice Talbot talk when they say there is nothing wrong in advocating revolution, will be impossible. In one of the cases that arose out of the Mosley Olympia row, one of the non-Fascists was charged with insulting behaviour and speech to the police. When asked by the defendant's lawyer what this was, it turned out that he had said, "This (the Mosley plan) means starvation and war." In the Mann case one of the policemen who said the speaking was "seditious," was asked what he understood by "sedition." He hesitated to give a reply. Policemen are not used to being asked to give reasons for the belief that is in them. The counsel suggested that he meant "things with which he did not agree."



The policeman agreed that in his mind this constituted sedition. So we have here a good example of the Incitement to Sedition Bill. Policeman XY 123, believes that John Smith has in his possession some literature with which he does not agree. He applies at once to Mr. Jones, undertaker, or cheesemonger, for a warrant, and Smith's house is raided. The damning documents are discovered, and a learned, a very learned, magistrate does the rest. The man who has the impudence to treat soldiers as though they were grown up men, capable of weighing arguments and making up their minds for themselves, is sent to learn in a prison cell that the opinions of soldiers, like their uniform, must be decided by their superior officer. Sedition must be put down with a firm hand. The British constitution must be preserved, so long as its promised alteration is not in the direction of a greater and a more enlightened liberalism.

\* \* \*

### Sound Philosophy

But, after all, there was a very sound philosophy at the basis of the policeman's statement that by sedition he meant ideas with which he did not agree. He ought really to take rank as a first-class philosopher. He said in a few words, what many a man has written a whole volume to say, and at the end has failed to put the matter as clearly. He ought to rank as the Newton of sociology, the Darwin of politics, the one man who in the humble guise of a policeman, pierced at once the sophistries of the politician and the confusions of the teacher, and who when asked, what are seditious teachings, replies, "teachings with which I do not agree."

Of course he might have said that by Sedition he meant teaching dangerous to the welfare of the State. But that is only begging the question. What is dangerous to the State is just a point of view. The Communist regards as dangerous to the State the very thing the Tory takes to be its greatest blessing. A. is ready to suppress the thing that B. wishes to encourage. The policeman rose above such miserable evasion. He said outright, "I regard as seditious things with which I do not agree." I hail with all respect so brave, so clear and so penetrating a mind. The Mann trial should pass into history as being the occasion when for the first time an official gave a clear and indisputable interpretation of sedition.

\* \* \*

### A Matter of Opinion

Now I beg my readers not to think that I am pulling their respective legs, or indulging in mere sarcasm. I am writing in my most sober mood. What else can seditious teaching be but an opinion with which I, or others, do not agree? If we agreed with it we should not call it sedition, we should call it patriotism, or loyalty, or by some other name which covered the same ground. When Cromwell created a republic he was seditious; when the Stuarts planned to get back the throne, they were seditious. It was seditious when "Dutch William" was invited to ascend the English throne. It became sedition afterwards to question his right to be there. Any country, and any time will provide analogous examples.

It is the same with "blasphemy." Here it is entirely and avowedly a matter of opinion. "Blasphemy" in every country in the world, and with every class within a country, is fundamentally the expression of an opinion with which someone disagrees. It is not altogether a question of law; it is universal. My opinion that Mahomet was an impostor, is not blasphemy to a Christian, and my opinion that Jesus Christ was not the son of God is

not blasphemous to a Mohammedan. Bruno was burned for a difference of opinion; Carlile spent over nine years in prison for a similar offence. Blasphemy, like sedition, is "saying something with which I do not agree," and it is a matter of small consequence who is the "I" who pronounces a verdict of guilty in the case of either sedition or blasphemy. I raise my hat to the philosophic acumen, the tremendous power of analysis of that Welsh policeman. To Tom Mann it should be full compensation for all the annoyance that his trial gave him, that it brought to the forefront so philosophic a specimen of the police force.

\* \* \*

### Freedom

But if Sedition is fundamentally a matter of not agreeing with what is said, what are we to do? The answer is—Nothing? If so many people were not incurably stupid, they would have learned long ago that the most fruitless of all policies is that of trying forcibly to suppress something with which "I do not agree." It has been tried in religion for hundreds of generations, it has never anywhere met with more than a temporary success. Sooner or later the teachings that were suppressed, because "I did not agree" with them have found a voice and sometimes acceptance, while their attempted suppression has often led to a more impassioned and a more determined advocacy. In intellectual matters force is always the refuge of the weak, and the favourite weapon of the coward. In politics and in religion that country is most peaceful where opinion is freest, and where "I" cheerfully give to opposing ideas the freedom of expression "I" claim for myself. I do not want the State to interfere in the propaganda of ideas, whether it be in religion or politics. I do not believe in the "crime" of sedition, whether it exists in Russia, in Italy, in Germany, or in orthodox Britain. Opinion should be free, not treated as something that is so weak, and so ineffective that it needs the supporting arms of a policeman in order to maintain a precarious existence. Let opinion be free—not mine merely, but, quite emphatically that of the man who says things with which "I do not agree." Hats off to our policeman philosopher"—even though he spoke philosophy without knowing it. If he will not take it as an insult, one might wish he were Prime Minister.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

### ONLY WORDS!

The power of words is the most conservative force in our lives. Only yesterday did students of anthropology begin to admit the existence of those intellectual coils by means of which so much of our thought is encompassed. The common inherited scheme of conception which is all around us, and comes to us as naturally and unobjectionably as our native air, is none the less imposed upon us, and limits our intellectual movements in countless ways—all the more surely and irresistibly because, being inherent in the very language we must use to express the simplest meaning, it is adopted and assimilated before we can so much as begin to think for ourselves at all. And from the structure of our language we hardly ever think of escaping. Tens of thousands of years have elapsed since we shed our tails, but we are still communicating with a medium developed to meet the needs of aboreal man. And as the sounds and marks of language bear witness to its primeval origin, so the associations of these sounds and marks, and the habits of thought which have grown up with their use, and with the structures imposed on them by our first parents, are found to bear witness to an equally significant opportunity.—From "The Meaning of Meaning," by Ogden and Richards.







## "The Bible must be Right"

IN spite of those Christians who profess to have little sympathy for the extreme attitude of Fundamentalists, there are still thousands, if not millions, who regard the Bible as infallible. These people, when speaking of the Bible, will not use the term "infallible" because, by reason of its use in connexion with the Pope, it has acquired a somewhat derogatory meaning. Nevertheless, the Scriptures, and especially the New Testament, being "God's Holy Word," are regarded by them as containing divine advice and authority for every possible human contingency. "When in doubt, see what the Bible says," is their motto. And to this motto is added the further motto: "What the Bible says must be right." In other words, the Bible is infallible.

When it comes to discussing the ethical or moral values of any question, it is a favourite practice of the evangelical Christian to quote some Biblical passage in support of his view or in contradiction of the views of his opponent. And if the latter should prove to be equally apt at quotation, the former will use one or more of the following arguments in refutation. (1) He will say that his opponent's quotation does not mean what his opponent thinks it to mean, and he will give the correct interpretation. That is to say, he will give the interpretation which he personally favours. (2) He will maintain that his opponent's quotation is not to be understood literally, but metaphorically or allegorically. Or *vice versa* if it suits his argument better. (3) He will declare that his opponent is misapplying the quotation, which only refers to the special context from which it was taken. The Christian's own quotations are, of course, always of general or particular application, according to whichever point of view may suit his argument best. The fact that each one of these arguments can be advanced with exactly the same force against himself will fail to upset our earnest evangelical.

Since the Bible cannot be wrong, any inconsistency or contradiction must be due, not to the fallibility of "God's Word," but to human fallibility. And, be it specially noted, he will say "human fallibility" rather than "my fallibility." The errors of other people will not convince him of a similar capacity to err himself. If that suspicion were ever really to penetrate his conceit, then the whole edifice of Biblical infallibility would collapse like a house of cards. For obviously the most divinely infallible book would be utterly useless unless *somebody* were *sometimes* right in his interpretation of it. Who, then, is more likely to be right than the Christian himself? And who is more likely to be wrong than the other fellow, even if he says he is a Christian too? Is it not written: "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth." (2 Thessalonians ii. 11, 12.) Clearly it is he, the Christian, who has the truth; and they, his opponents who believe the lie and shall be damned.

Thus, by attributing divergencies of opinion to human error, the Christian invents what he considers to be an impregnable argument for Biblical infallibility. By claiming the Bible to be infallible, the Christian invents what he considers to be an absolute warrant for his own beliefs. Then by shutting his eyes to the fact that his own views are as disputable as those of any "schismatic" or "heretic," and by ignoring the validity of his own arguments in the mouth of an opponent, the Christian completes a vicious circle of dogmatic bigotry which makes reasonable discussion futile.

To those of us who realize that the Bible is a jumble of repeatedly altered writings, full of ambiguities, absurdities, and inconsistencies, the existence of thousands of incompatible beliefs, all labelled Christian, is a matter of no surprise. Nor, in view of the vicious circle referred to, are we astonished at the stubbornness with which the various sects maintain the truth and finality of their respective beliefs. For it makes no difference whatever whether it be the Bible, the Pope, or the individual's own "inner light" which is held to be the final authority. Yet, in spite of their pretended finality and God-given origin, Christian beliefs continue to change with time. The spread of education and Freethought since the Reformation has done much to humanize Christianity and to push its more brutal elements into the background. Nevertheless, it is well to bear in mind that, as long as the superstition exists that "the Bible must be right"; humanity is still threatened with a fresh outbreak of those poisonous germs of doctrine with which the Bible is infested and which are for the moment so harmlessly quiescent.

Whatever may be argued against the validity of Old Testament doctrines, Christians will not allow the smallest shadow of doubt to be cast upon the authority and pertinence of those teachings based upon the New Testament. History and experience both bear witness to the manner in which passages from this part of the Bible have been quoted in extenuation of the most abominable beliefs and actions. Yet the human mind is prone to forget past evils. Indifference to religion has brought a spirit of greater tolerance, but it has also resulted in a widespread ignorance of what Christianity really implies, and of the legacy of intolerance which it has left us in our modern laws and social outlook. Added to this we have the pharisaical protestations of modern clergy, whose claims on behalf of their religion carefully omit all the evil potentialities which are still inherent in their Holy Book.

It is my purpose, therefore, to drag some of these uncivilized features of "divine inspiration" once more into the light of day, both as a reminder to Christians of the true nature of their infallible idol, and as a warning to all and sundry of what Christianity has meant, and may still mean, unless it be effectively choked out of existence.

(1) On the strength of the following passages the vileness of the human body, the uselessness of healthy exercise, and the need for mortification of the flesh, are taught, thus resulting in dirty habits and justifying self-mutilation. Rom. vii. 18, and viii. 13; Phil. iii. 21; 1 Cor. xv. 50; Col. ii. 23, and iii. 5; 1 Tim. iv. 8, etc.

(2) Celibacy, with its consequent lowering of sex morality, is advocated in 1 Cor. vii.; while verses 37 and 38 justify concubinage.

(3) Male dominance and the subjection of women are insisted upon in numerous passages. 1 Tim. ii. 11 to 13; 1 Cor. xi. 3, and xiv. 34, 35; Eph. v. 23; Col. iii. 18, etc.

(4) Slavery, so long upheld by the Christian Church, is excused on the strength of 1 Pet. ii. 18; Titus ii. 9; 1 Tim. vi. 1; Eph. vi. 5; Col. iii. 22.

(5) Disagreement with the current Christian dogmas is condemned off-hand, thus giving rise to the terrible evils of persecution and the forcible suppression of opinion. Titus iii. 10; Gal. i. 9; 2 Cor. vi. 14; Mark xvi. 16; 2 John 7, 10.

(6) Ignorance is held up as a virtue, and wisdom set at nought, thus acting as an effective bar to the spread of science and education. Matt. xi. 25; Luke x. 21; 1 Cor. i. 19 to 27, and iii. 18.



(7) Injustice, pretence, cunning and craftiness are justified in Luke xvi. 1 to 9; 2 Cor. xii. 16; Phil. i. 18.

(8) That the end justifies the means is supported by 2 Cor. xi. 8; 1 Cor. ix. 22, and x. 33. Even lying to the glory of God is justified. Rom. iii. 7.

(9) The value of good deeds is frequently set at nought in favour of mere faith; while a life of sin, with repentance at the end, is better than a wholly just life. Luke xv. 7; Rom. iii. 28, and iv. 4, 5; Gal. ii. 16; Eph. ii. 8, 9, etc.

(10) Family affection is made of little account, and the ruthless severance of family ties is advocated. Matt. x. 35 to 37. Mark iii. 31 to 34; Luke ix. 59 to 62, and xiv. 26, etc.

(11) Unfair, immoral and brutal conditions of married life have been perpetuated on the theory that marriage is indissoluble. Our present marriage and divorce laws still bear witness to the evils of this teaching. Matt. xix. 6; Mark x. 9; 1 Cor. vii. 39, etc.

(12) Warfare is justified in Matt. x. 34; Luke xii. 49 to 53, and xxii. 36.

(13) The impossibility of abolishing poverty, resulting in a lackadaisical and indifferent attitude to the problems involved, and to the sufferings of the poor, is argued from Matt. xxvi. 11; John xii. 8, etc.

In addition to the foregoing, the following irrational and superstitious beliefs are maintained, resulting in various forms of cruelty or indifference to suffering, and to a contempt for science, knowledge and practical measures for improving man's conditions. The passages are too numerous to mention. (14) Sorcery, witchcraft and demoniacal possession were firmly believed in by Jesus and his disciples. The appalling consequences of these beliefs are matters of historical fact. They still continue to be held in many parts of Christendom to-day. (15) Predestination and its resultant conceit and self-flattery of the "saved" or "elect" Christian is too much in evidence to need further comment. (16) Prayer can produce any result; it can cure diseases and insanity; it can even move mountains and revivify a corpse! The enormous waste of time and energy due to this belief is incalculable.

And lastly, the spite, vengefulness, cruelty and unfairness of the Christian deity is openly acknowledged in the following passages. Luke x. 11, 12; Rom. ix. 18; Matt xxii. 1 to 14, and xx. 1 to 16; Mark iv. 25, and xi. 13, 14; Luke viii. 31 to 33, and x. 38 to 42, and xv. 11 to 30; Heb. xii. 6 to 8, and x. 31; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.

I am fully aware that other passages may be found, here and there in the New Testament, which contradict or tone down some of the unpleasantness enumerated in the foregoing list. These, however, have never prevented Christians from justifying themselves for holding the horrible beliefs and theories emanating from the passages I quote. And I do not need to remind Christians, who no longer hold these horrible beliefs and theories, that any arguments against them must be levelled not against myself, who reject the Bible wholesale, but against those of their fellow-Christians who maintain that "the Bible must be right." The latter have as much authority for holding their beastly views as other Christians have for insisting upon those humaner aspects of their religion, whose prominence nowadays is entirely due to the very Freethought which they so readily despise and condemn.

C. S. FRASER.

## Greener Pastures

God went into the heavenly armoury to get a few thunderbolts. He was angry with the peoples of the earth.

"You can never depend on the Old Man," said the angel Gabriel to a minor saint. "Sometimes it is the light of his countenance, and sometimes it is a kick. He sent them manna yesterday."

Just then God came back. He was empty-handed.

"Suppose I've got to work another miracle," he remarked peevishly. "I remember I hurled the last of those thunderbolts at Sodom and Gomorrah."

"You can't pull that on me, Lord," said Gabriel smoothly. "Everybody here knows that you aimed them at Jerusalem."

"Forget it," said God. Gabriel was always referring to that blunder.

He was about to call into being a brace of thunderbolts, when his eye lighted on Nathaniel Brackendoodle, who was driving his chariot along the streets of Syracuse. All at once God had an idea, his second in three million years.

Rushing from heaven he appeared unto Nathaniel as a burning tenement.

Nathaniel, like a good citizen, was about to run for the fire brigade, when God, mistaking the cause of his excitement, called to him.

"Be of good cheer," he said. "There is something I desire of thee."

"If you are talking business start at the beginning," suggested Nathaniel.

"I am angry with the peoples of the earth," said God, "and I'm going to give them the works. Can you book an order for a thousand high-explosive shells?"

"Cash on delivery?" asked Nathaniel.

"Sure," said God.

"What about ordering a million and making a regular job of it," said Nathaniel, taking out his notebook. "There's a lot of unemployment just now."

"O.K.," said God. "Make it a million."

And it came to pass that everything in the world, with the exception of Nathaniel and his family, perished.

"What are you doing up so early?" God asked Gabriel next morning.

Gabriel shook his celestial fountain pen.

"I'm writing about Nathaniel and the firework display," he said.

"Nix," said God. "Forget it."

"But I've got to explain the mess you made down there," replied Gabriel.

God thought for a while. "I've got it," he said at last. "Call him Noah and say there was a flood—see?"

Then he looked down at the earth. Amid the ruins of a shattered city Nathaniel was already laying the foundations of another munition factory.

"That lad's got guts," said God admiringly. "He'll wreck the world every hundred years without any help from me. Say, Gabriel; guess I can retire now!"

And he did.

D. STIRLING.

## THE CHURCH IN SPAIN

The policy of the Church in respect of education was that it should be reserved as far as possible to the religious, and restricted for others to religion. . . . No doubt the Church was actuated by the assumption that an uneducated electorate would be more amenable to ecclesiastical authority. It had not learned that a semi-educated electorate are far more amenable than the illiterate. For such a semi-educated electorate as now exists in Europe, though it would not be moved to massacre reformers by the reported blessing of a Sister Patrocinio or by faked writings on a Sacred Picture, could be marched to the poll *en masse* by rumours of a bloody conspiracy of Jews, or by the forgeries of Red Letters. Moreover, such semi-literacy produces shallow minds and short memories; so that all the people can be fooled all the time with a slight variation in the fooling.

From "The New Spain," by Sir George Young (1933).



## Acid Drops

In West Africa the Government has deported 700 witch-doctors, in order to put an end to their "evil practices." In this country we have 40,000 of the same order, but we note that no deportation has been made against them. There is a kind of voluntary and temporary deportation in the shape of the Foreign Missionary movement, but that is all. If the native witch-doctors wish to get back, however, there is one easy method of doing so. Let them join the British branch of the world-wide brotherhood of witch-doctors and medicine-men, and their troubles will be at an end.

Quite seriously we should like to know what the Bishop of London is going to do about it? In the most public manner he asked all the clergy to pray to God for rain. No one can say that his prayer has been satisfactorily answered. In an "I-could-if-I-would" kind of a spirit, the Lord having heard the prayer did a little sprinkling. Then in a way that can only be described as contemptuous, he cut off the water supply, turned on the heat again, and left the country worse off than ever. Clearly the Bishop thought God would pay some attention, or he would never have risked making a public appeal. Now God has done nothing, or worse than nothing. What will the Bishop do? Will he have the courage to tell the Lord what he thinks about it? Or does he *think* about it? Perhaps not. As a bishop the less thinking he does the better for his job. Others of his flock might follow the example.

In these days of the "menace" of under-population (which means, in many countries, the fear of less human cannon "fodder") a photograph of a family of nineteen was reproduced in some of our national journals. They were all laughing, to show how happy and united they were, and, needless to add, they are all Roman Catholics. What a beautiful example for our childless young couples or one-child families! Nothing was said, of course, what bearing nineteen children meant to the unfortunate mother—or what it would mean to millions of other women. We wonder how women generally like to be thought of as primarily "breeding" machines?

Dr. Underhill, the Dean of Rochester, tells us that "the number of persons who desire to pray intelligently continually increases." *Intelligently* indeed! Does Dr. Underhill seriously want us to believe that anybody—even a Dean—can pray intelligently? Is blessing the sea, or praying for rain, intelligent? Can anyone really contend that the average prayer, uttered in that awful whining tone which seems to be the prerogative of parsons, and a stock joke with music-hall comedians, with the widest stretch of imagination could be called *intelligent*? How these parsons bamboozle themselves and each other!

Dr. Underhill claims that the art and science of prayer should be taught by professors who are experts. These professors must study the "innumerable" books on the subject and, in particular master the latest of them. "Ours," says the Dean, "is the day of experts, not of amateurs." He quotes Dr. Illingworth's famous gem: "The Christian religion refuses to be proved first and practised afterwards; its practice and its proof go hand in hand," and adds, "Don't stop to have scruples and doubts; get to work in earnest, and proof will come by practice." And this kind of nonsense is called praying intelligently!

According to Mr. C. R. W. Nevinson, the English are probably the only people to-day who are keeping civilization together. Despite, we presume, the fact that four-fifths of the nation are "pagans," as the clerics so often sorrowfully declare. Perhaps the moral from this is that nothing ought to be attempted in the direction of converting the "pagans," lest it undermine their ability to keep civilization together.

Nazi-ism, asserts Her Hitler, will last a thousand years. It is to be sincerely hoped that the supply of Jews required for the general amusement and moral development of young Nazi thugs will not run short in the period mentioned. If there should come a time when no Jews are available for murdering, torturing, or persecuting, the moral character of Nazi stalwarts is certain to degenerate for lack of material on which to exercise and develop their noble Aryan qualities.

A reader of the *Daily Herald* seems to fail to appreciate the wonderful adaptability of the Christian Churches and the Christian religion to existing circumstances. He indignantly remarks: "During the war the Church allowed its pulpits to become recruiting platforms and dragged Christianity in the mire." Apparently he cherishes the illusion that the Churches and Christianity ought to have nothing to do with war. Yet the Holy Bible, which is the Christian textbook, is full of praise of a God who assisted in righteous wars. And, as everyone knows, the last large war was nothing if not a righteous war. If otherwise, the Allies would not, with God's aid, have "won" it.

A cathedral, says the new Dean of St. Paul's, should be not merely a treasure-house, but a lighthouse. However, we can assure the Dean that there is no danger of Cathedrals becoming lighthouses. A Cathedral is merely a museum for preserving the antique ideas and ways of thinking which obscured the mind of man in pre-scientific days. A lighthouse can no more be made from that kind of museum than silk purses be made from sow's ears. However, so long as there is a sufficiency of fools who are unable to perceive the real nature of a Cathedral, the Dean's job and salary are safe enough.

What did the first Christians find in Jesus? This is a conundrum which a reverend writer sets out to answer, by means of the Epistles. This, of course, will seem to the pious believer the only logical thing to do. We deeply regret to say that the first Christians *might* have "found" something in Jesus or they might not. For there is no independent evidence that Jesus ever lived. There is, however, good reasons for believing that the myth of a Sun-God was widely prevalent in Eastern lands.

*Everybody's Weekly* is responsible for saying that Hollywood is preparing a "Bigger and better version of the Last Supper." It seems a Producer was dissatisfied with the smallness of the "cast." He said, "I'm gonna have a hundred and fifty disciples. We want a crowd in this pitcher, and ten of them disciples is goin' to do the betrayin'. It's never been done on a big scale before!"

Rev. Eric Waterhouse asks, "Do Science and Religion conflict?" His answer is that, of course, each has a different function. "Science is concerned with the explanation and Religion with the interpretation of life." This is not wholly inaccurate. If Science can correctly and fully "explain" life, it has done all it be asked to do. Anybody can "interpret" life in the sense that one can moralize about anything on earth. If Mr. Waterhouse implies that life has a "meaning" which faith or anything else can reveal, he is unscientific, that's all.

A Bolton (Lancs.) artist, who is said to be the organist at the Methodist Church in Tottingdon Road, has drawn a "life-like-likeness of Jesus of Nazareth." Five hundred copies were sold in eleven days, so it must be easily recognized by "Jesus fans." We are sorry to learn from the *Methodist Recorder*, that the artist is seriously ill. We hope he will soon recover and give us a life-like portrait of the other two members of the Trinity.

The Rev. Henry Carter writes "urging Londoners to write to their representatives on the London County Council, requesting them to vote against this retrograde



and perilous proposal." At first we feared it was proposed to put back the old Waterloo Bridge again. No, Mr. Carter wants to stop Sunday games in the London Parks. He says he fears that "Sunday would be turned into another Saturday," or does he mean it would be "knocked into the middle of next week?" He can't possibly mean that the L.C.C. should have two pay days a week, can he?

Mr. Ernest H. Jeffs writes in the *British Weekly* lamenting the decline of liberty now pretty apparent throughout the world. While he, as a Christian, naturally casts aspersions on "the old materialism," which somehow is inferior even to "the ignoble hypothesis of Freud," he accuses the Free Churches of a "cooling of the love of liberty." That sort of love must be frozen indeed, if it is less cold than usual. The fact is we are suffering to-day from the one-sided ideals of liberty, which have characterized all Christian protests against those tyrannies which affected them as Christians. They have been either hot persecutors themselves or at the very highest they have been supremely indifferent to persecution, which did not touch their own religious "brethren."

"I know a clergyman," says the Rev. John Bevan, M.A., "who believes that at the judgment-day people buried in his graveyard in Saxon times, will rise from it, being able to speak only Anglo-Saxon and not English." Quite a good joke—for a cleric. But Mr. Bevan seems to think there is no joke in his own belief that God understands modern English. In Shaw's *Saint Joan*, the Englishman discredits Joan's "revelation," when he learns that God didn't speak in English to this French "maid."

Mr. Jack Lawson, M.P., helps us to understand why our Parliament is a monumental futility. He narrates how Christ gave him "Peace of mind." And what a piece! And what a mind! "The great wonderful old Bible has done its work in me!" "This thing," he adds, "goes deeper than Acts of Parliament." Well, we know where Mr. Jack Lawson "belongs," as the Americans say. Why not join the other sky-pilots, instead of merely legislating by inferior "Acts of Parliament?" The distribution of "great wonderful old Bibles" is evidently his forte. He actually thinks that the world would have been worse "if Christ had not walked Galilee . . . and if I had not been able to sit at the feet of wise men." We wonder what Mr. Lawson's constituents are going to do about it.

Professor McDougall's latest book, *Religion and the Sciences of Life* has incurred some pious criticism by saying that "the churches keep crying aloud their old stories and their old exhortations, but the people heed them less and less." But what does it amount to? McDougall is as benighted as a Primitive Methodist when he talks about religion. Here is his "testimony": "My prolonged studies have led me to a position more favourable to religion than that from which I set out. They have in fact, led me from Agnosticism to religion." What a pity he does not tell us how.

The Rev. B. Iddings Bell of U.S.A., in a recent sermon, referred to William Rufus. He was "so wicked and blasphemous a King that, according to tradition, the tower of the Cathedral fell on his grave." If it is true that Rufus really was "blasphemous," it is quite possible that his memory has been blackened by priests, the only historians of his period. He probably tried to resist the infamous power of the Church, and was assassinated for his pains. The little history that has come down to us about William Rufus, only proves the implacable hatred fostered by Rome against anyone who disputed her power. The fact that he was "blasphemous" is evidence enough that he tried to assert his own power. The real truth about this unfortunate King may yet see the light.

We are not sure whether the two Idealist Italian philosophers, Croce and Gentile, are Freethinkers, but we are pleased to note that their works have just been consigned to the Roman Catholic *Index of Prohibited Books*. They there join a worthy company, for many of the world's greatest writers and thinkers are in the *Index*. There can be no greater honour, for almost all authors who teach genuine liberty of thought and ideas, get on the *Index* at some time or other. Croce and Gentile must be proud men to-day.

The Annual Conference of the Catholic Truth Society was, after all, held in Protestant Belfast. "Bigotry," we are told, "was smothered, temporarily at any rate, by prayer." One hundred thousand people assisted at Mass in Beechmount Park, and in addition, there were held also a diocesan Eucharistic Congress and a Missionary exhibition. It is true that special police forces, all armed with revolvers, were provided by the authorities to patrol Protestant areas; but the real reason why bigotry was smothered, was prayer—the thousands of prayers wafted to the All-Highest by the Faithful, and not the revolvers.

But, according to the Bishop of Down, Catholics have only one enemy—Paganism—not Protestantism; and in the vast task Catholicism was undertaking—converting the 1,800,000,000 people of the world to the one true Faith—they had no animosity towards anyone. For which the 1,800,000,000 inhabitants of our earth are truly grateful. How terrible it would have been if Catholics had shown animosity towards them! Cardinal MacRory echoed the kindly sentiments of the Bishop of Down, and he thanked God that the Irish people were always ready to recognize the teaching authority of their Bishops, which he took pains to point out was "Divinely-conferred authority." Finally the Bishop of Down thanked the Commissioner of Police and all his officers (and revolvers) that everything went off so well. We are left wondering about one thing though. Would a N.S.S. Conference be allowed full liberty in Catholic Dublin—or even the Protestant Alliance? Would police with revolvers be necessary?

The Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office has just declared its disbelief in the apparitions of Our Lady at Ezquioga, a Basque Village. It has also prohibited three books written to prove their reality, and "strong measures" have been taken to suppress local devotion to these apparitions. The evidence is, however, just as good as the evidence for any other apparitions of Our Lady—according to the suppressed books—and so we are forced to conclude that the real reason why the Holy Father objects to Ezquioga is that, if it became popular, it might prove a serious rival to Lourdes. And that would be a calamity too grievous to contemplate.

There is nothing like leather of course. The General Secretary of the London Missionary Society, the Congregational division of the "United" Church of Christ, is very angry because the Baptists, the Methodists, the Presbyterians and other sects spend more per head than the L.M.S. on foreign missions. The L.M.S. has cut down its expenditure by £18,000. Mr. Chirgwin says it should INCREASE its contribution by £50,000 instead of decreasing it. An insane rivalry in an idiotic crusade. Meanwhile we are amused to read of increased expenditure on Buddhist and Moslem Missions to England. In France too these missions are advancing. The Moslem Centre in Paris bids fair to rival our biggest Cathedral.

The *Modern Churchman* says, "It does not require very much knowledge to be a robust secularist." No, of course it needs more commonsense than anything else. The amount of knowledge required to make a "Modernist Churchman" may be gauged by a summary on another page of the same magazine, of what "Most Modern Theologians" believe. The Summary says that these remarkable believers "feel compelled to abandon the Deity of Christ, but not His Divinity." They also



reject "Christ's physical resurrection," while retaining a belief in some other kind of resurrection which isn't physical. No amount of "knowledge" can account for back-summersaults of this kind.

Canon Harold Anson is a Modernist. He thinks that "God has hidden His greatest secrets from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes, and it is good for the Modernist to remember that it is not to the intellectual or the critical that God reveals those secrets on which the religious life is truly based." This consideration accounts for so much in religious teaching that comment is superfluous. If "modernists" are thus, why worry about the "ancients."

We often hear of the wonderful power of religion to "unite" mankind. The Rev. F. W. Shaw, a Methodist Missionary from India, bears rich testimony to this Christian fellowship. Speaking of his "brethren," the Roman Catholics, he says: "Wherever the Roman Church is strong throughout the world there is corruption and a low level of moral life." "It is like a blight on the earth." How terrible it must be when people are "without religion," if religion can be as bad as that.

*Headway*, the organ of the League of Nations' Union, in the editorial of its current number discusses "God's Commonwealth." There is nothing the matter with the article, except its language, but then language is everything, because it is our only means of expressing ideas. As the Union aims at creating an international force of opinion for peace, would it be asking too much to suggest that "the Kingdom of God, as conceived by Jesus," is as likely to create new wars as to get rid of old differences? Many of the latter were the direct result of Christians "seeking first the Kingdom of God," and denying toleration to those who disagreed with them.

It is great fun to read what an Archbishop thinks—sometimes. Dr. Temple is quite well-meaning when he pleads that Income Tax payers should think of the claims of the unemployed before they ask for any relief. There are a million good reasons why the unemployed should come first. But the good Archbishop says he would not join in any demand by the unemployed. If you want anything, it is very bad taste to say so. Leave it to somebody else to ask for you. The worst of it is there is only one Archbishop of York, and there are ever so many unemployed. Besides they might starve, or at least their children might, if the unemployed didn't mention that the dole is inadequate. How else indeed did the Archbishop learn it? Must a drowning man leave others to notice his danger, or should he be selfish enough to shout his S.O.S. aloud?

Lord Moynihan says that all Prescriptions bear a very ancient hieroglyphic meaning, "Bless us Jupiter." It is no doubt about as effective as "God help us," or a Prayer For Rain!

*The White Ribbon* (organ of the British Women's Total Abstinence Union) devotes a page of its latest issue to an announcement headed:—

FOR GOD AND HOME AND EVERY LAND  
NOONTIDE  
WORLD HOUR OF PRAYER

Is the Lord to have even His Lunch Hour interrupted? And as noontide happens to be different in different lands, all the boasted "uniformity" of the bombardment of heaven with prayer at "noontide" straggles along to the Throne of Grace at every hour of the day and night. Poor Divine Ear!

*Spiritual Life*, July number, devotes a full page to holy wise-cracks. Here is one of them: "There is no feverish haste in God's methods." Absolutely true! Mark Twain's Glacier was an express train compared with the "Chariot of God." "The Mills of God"

grind exceeding slow. Generations of Christians prayed "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." Two thousand years seem to be God's idea of "Coming quickly," and then not coming!

Another exploded myth? *The Record* reports a Sermon from the text, "One thing thou lackest." They omit to tell the old story of the young lady who read this passage and found it was headed, "The Rich Young Man." *The Record* assures us that "the call does not come to all" to live a life of poverty. We are surprised this Church magazine does know only one living person, and he a preacher, who lives in absolute poverty. The "call" has evidently come to some millions of unemployed in all parts of the world.

*The Lord's Day Magazine* for July, boasts of its "victories," but laments its utter failure to convert anybody to its doctrine of "God's Day: A Whole Day." It asks, "Does the Lord's Day consist of only 2 or 3, or 4 hours?" It goes the whole hog-wash and wants 24 hours for the observance of Sunday. It repeats the funny story of Jehovah "resting" all day long on His Sabbath. We conclude that to be dead or drunk or asleep for twenty-four hours is far more noble than to be alive, awake and rational part of the twenty-four hours.

*The Tablet*, opposing Bishop Barnes' fine declaration in favour of disarmament says, "there seems to be an unconscious Sadism in his desire to see his fatherland stripped of her possessions, not excepting her honourable sword." Trust a Christian journalist for distorting what he disagrees with, for believing vile things of his opponents, and for expressing his criticisms in the most atrocious language.

*The Churchman*, an American Episcopal Journal, has begun a serious agitation against the "Common Communion-Cup." It calculates that over a million Episcopalians in U.S.A. run grave risks of disease by drinking wine from cups which may have been contaminated by other Christian's lips. The only amusing feature of the case is that the "separate cup" is a "heresy" condemned by the authorities. *The Churchman* is said to be supported by a multitude of "hygienic Christians." The others, we suppose, are "unhealthy Christians."

## Fifty Years Ago

HEAVEN is our home, say the sky-pilots. Why, then, don't they go home? Razors are cheap enough, and strong rope can be bought for a penny a yard. But razors gleam and ropes dangle in vain. The black gentry love *this* world too well to leave it for another. They prefer the bird in the hand to any number of birds in the bush. They prefer a nice snug rectory or vicarage here to any mansion in the sky, and they would take a well-carpeted drawing-room on earth for the golden flooring they may inherit in the New Jerusalem. Love not the world nor the things of the world, is a doctrine they honour more in the breach than in the observance. No class of men adhere to the world more tenaciously than they do. They stick to it like a limpet to its rock. When they fall ill, are they glad? Do they rejoice? Do they sing hymns of praise and thanksgiving? Do they long to be at home with the Lord? Oh, no. They pull a long face and rush off to the doctor, as anxious as though they were leaving Heaven for Hell instead of Earth for Heaven. They pray lustily for a speedy and perfect recovery, and cry out, "Oh Lord, not yet, not yet." Not satisfied with this petition, they frequently get their congregations to make up a purse for them, and scuttle off to the seaside or some fashionable watering-place. Prayer is the same in town and country, but the air is different, and that is the important matter after all.

*The "Freethinker," July 13, 1884.*



# THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE.

## EDITORIAL:

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No. : CENTRAL 2412

## TO CORRESPONDENTS

D. MATTHEWS (S. Africa).—We do not know whether the Maskelynes accepted all the challenges made by Spiritualists, and we do not think it is of much importance. As for a book to be written containing refutations of all modern Spiritualistic claims, this would entail enormous work and run into thousands of pages; with possibly few purchasers in the end.

F. J. GOULD.—*Paganism in Christian Festivals* sent to Mr. J. Hayward. Thanks for your help.

J. CRAIG.—Thanks for cuttings, will prove useful.

G. WESTON.—We should be very pleased indeed to do as you suggest, but we cannot increase our expenses at present. If our existing subscribers would work with a will to enlarge our list of subscribers, we could do many things in connexion with the paper we are at present unable to do.

FREETHINKER ENDOWMENT TRUST.—W. J. Lamb, 108.

E. ASHWORTH.—We have read your letter with considerable sympathy, but our space is too limited to permit discussion of every subject, however important it may be.

E. LECHMERE.—Many thanks for your letter. It is what we should have expected from you.

A. FORBES.—Thanks for what you have done. The matter is receiving attention, as you will see.

W. ROGERS.—We cannot spare further space to defend the proposition that a dictatorship ceases to be dictatorship, or is anything other than dictatorship, in view of whether its aim is a "good" or a "bad" one, or whether it is exerted in the interests of a few or in the interests of the many. You can argue that a given dictatorship is good or bad, but it is too much to argue that it is not a dictatorship because it is either good or bad.

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

*The offices of the National Secular Society and the Secular Society Limited, are now at 68 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Telephone: Central 1367.*

*Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and not to the Editor.*

*When the services of the National Secular Society in connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, R. H. Rosetti, giving as long notice as possible.*

*The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):— One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.*

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

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

## Sugar Plums

The evil influence of the English law of blasphemy extends to wherever our law carries authority. At present we fancy that some parts of Canada show this ill-influence most decidedly. From a report in the *Montreal Star*, a Mr. Gaston Pillon was found guilty of "Oral Blasphemy," and sentenced to one year's imprisonment with hard labour, to find sureties for good behaviour for a further year, or in default, to go to prison for another year. The "oral blasphemy" was committed in the course of some lectures on the "History of the Popes."

No religious doctrines were attacked, but the Popes were described as being often blackguards, a statement we should have thought was one beyond dispute in even a court dominated by Roman Catholics. The Judge laid it down that:—

The whole question was whether the statements uttered by the accused were of malicious intent designed to influence the religious beliefs of others.

It will be noticed that in this case it is not a question of outraging the religious feelings of others, but of *influencing* the religious beliefs of others. So that in the opinion of a Montreal Court, any attempt to influence the religious opinions of a Roman Catholic is legal blasphemy.

One of the jury asked whether it made any difference if the indicted statements were "quoted from history." The Judge said that "Any person is responsible for any utterance, whether quoted from history or not." That reply, formally correct, but actually misleading, was worthy of Mr. Hilaire Belloc. The jury was thus left with the ruling that any attack on the character, say, of the Borgias, and to which a good Roman Catholic might object, comes under the heading of blasphemy. Freedom under the British flag has its qualifications.

We are now supplying free copies of the *Freethinker* to a number of public libraries. The latest on our list is the Stockton Public Library, in the reading room of which, the *Freethinker* will appear in the future.

The fresh outbreak of gangsterism in Germany, Lord Rothermere's best governed country in the world, may serve as an object lesson to those people in this country who are toying with the British section of the Nazi movement. Mr. Wickham Steed is quite correct when he says that Fascism begins everywhere in fraud and force, and continues in brutality and murder. There has hitherto been no exception to this, and in England the Fascists are pursuing the path marked out by their Italian and German teachers—or masters.

It is illuminating to note that no condemnation of the German barbarities has come from the British Fascists. Sir Oswald-Hitler-Mosley, asked at Ipswich, and in the absence of the gangster methods practiced at Olympia, replied that in his opinion Hitler saved his country. A country that can only be saved by being handed over to the sexual degenerates, and generally pathological degenerates who now hold power in Germany, seems as near being damned as is possible. But we hope that people here will not take the Hitler-Goebel-Goering mob as being representative of Germans in general.

Mr. G. Whitehead will be in the Ashington District this week, and with the co-operation of the local N.S.S. Branch, some good meetings are expected. Unattached local saints are asked to introduce themselves to the Branch officials, with the view of joining up and helping those already at work in the district. A list of fixtures for the week will be found in the Lecture Notice column.

Friends of Mr. B. A. Le Maine will regret to hear he is undergoing treatment for a painful affliction, which will confine him to his bed for several weeks. A friendly note on such occasions is always very acceptable, and any communications for Mr. Le Maine, addressed c/o National Secular Society, 68 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, will be forwarded to him.

Messrs. Allen and Unwin will publish, towards the end of the present month, a new book by Mrs. Janet Chance. The work consists of an exposition of Mrs. Chance's philosophy of life, and from what we know of her it should prove interesting reading. Mrs. Chance always writes well, and in the best sense of the expression always writes truthfully. Such writers are none too common nowadays.



## A Pious Rip Van Winkle

WHEN we saw the publisher's announcement of a book bearing the title of *This Progress: The Tragedy of Evolution*, by Captain Bernard Acworth (Rich & Cowan, 7s. 6d.), we thought it was a book of a similar type to that of Winwood Reade's *Martyrdom of Man*, in which the progress of man was shown to be founded upon, and indeed, the result of, the agonies of the past. It turned out to be something very different: no less than a violent attack upon the theory of Evolution, and all modern science, including Einstein's doctrine of Relativity; together with a defence of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation as scientifically correct in every particular. It might well be described as "The Fundamentalist's Handbook." It is a feast of unreason. We are told:—

The author, with tens of thousands of other men and women, believes the story of origin contained in Genesis to be absolutely true. Not only is it perfectly rational, and in accordance with common-sense to all those who believe implicitly in a personal God, but it is the only conception that is rational. The Order of Creation as there set forth is confirmed by scientists who reject, or set little store by, the reality of the existence of God. (B. Acworth, *This Progress*, pp. 290-291.)

In order to explain the shortness of the time accorded for the creation in *Genesis*, compared with the enormous demands of modern geologists, and the dying out of one species, and its continuance by another; the author reverts to the old discarded Catastrophic Theory of the early geologists, and observes: "We are thus impelled to the old-fashioned and discredited, though not discreditable, conclusion that vast and almost unimaginable catastrophes overtook our cooling planet, extirpating and burying the creation adapted to the environment which immediately preceded our own. All former creations were, in truth, living on the top of a vast and always impending planetary upheaval." (p. 267.) As, after every catastrophe, there must have been another act of creation, for the author will not admit evolution in any shape or form, God must have been kept busy causing catastrophies and creating new species. And as for the antiquity of man, Sir J. W. Dawson, the old Victorian geologist, who was born one hundred and fourteen years ago, is cited to the effect that the known remains of man cannot be older "than from seven to ten thousand years."

By one of those strokes of irony which occasionally happens, concurrently with this book there has just been published a book which gives a great extension to the already vast antiquity of man, entitled *Adam's Ancestors*, in which Dr. Leakey records his search for, and success in finding, near Lake Victoria in Africa, the fossil remains of man, along with stone implements; which he agrees with Professor Osborn in placing in the Pliocene, and dating a million years ago. More than that, as fossil man of the same age has now been found in Java, in China, and at Pilt-down in England, Dr. Leakey holds that we must now seek for the origin of man in the Miocene, which will probably add another 500,000 years to his antiquity, and possibly more, for the Miocene lasted 900,000 years!

We have, in our title, described the author as a pious Rip Van Winkle, but that mythical person was only said to have slept for twenty years, but our author is living in the mental world of a hundred years ago. The old Catastrophic geology was overthrown for ever by Sir Charles Lyell's Uniformitarian theory of slow changes during unimaginable periods of time, which is the belief of every living geologist to-day.

Some of Captain Acworth's attempted explanations are really very funny. For instance, the explanation of the story of the sacrifice being consumed by fire sent down from heaven, in spite of its being soaked with water, is that the priests, with characteristic subtlety, poured paraffin over it! In the words of our author: "We now have learnt that the account is strictly accurate, and that the priests, during their captivity, *struck oil*." The italics are the author's; he is very fond of them, they are distributed in profusion throughout the work, scarcely a page being free from them. It is a poor style that needs such crutches.

Again, we are told that the miracles of Moses were performed by the natural laws of dynamics known to the ancients, and "Moses, unlike Professor Thomson, Professor Julian Huxley, Professor Patten, Darwin and others, was perfectly aware of the causes of migration, and irruption, whether of birds and insects." (p. 303.) According to this, Moses knew just when the migration of the Locusts, Frogs, and Lice was due, and arranged for his miracles to take place at the same time. How, by natural means, he managed to turn all the water in the land into blood, and to slaughter all the Egyptian first-born, our author gives us no information.

In arguing against evolution, Captain Acworth uses a brand new objection, which we are sure the author will be pleased to see presented to the readers of the leading Freethought paper in the Empire. Who knows but that a brand may be snatched from the burning by the startling novelty of it? If Evolution is true, says our author, Reason staggers at the infinitely varying states of evolved, whether of form or reason, and a sense of humour: "should come to our aid in helping us to reject the contemplation of spiritual cliques and snobberies, as such an order, or lack of order, of necessity conjures to the mind. Would Mrs. Smith, deceased in 1934, take spiritual tea, so to speak, with Mrs. Mumbo Jumbo, who departed this life in 50,000 B.C.? Of course she wouldn't, and little blame to her, for, apart from a very natural distaste for hobnobbing with a semi-beast, the two good ladies would be at cross-purposes in all spheres." (pp. 220-1.) We are sure that this argument will appeal to every sensitive and feeling mind, especially to those who regard heaven, as Captain Acworth apparently does, as run on the lines of a high-class conservative club.

As a Captain in His Majesty's Navy, our author does not approve of Pacifism; he complains that fathers of families: "are compelled to spend a portion of our holiday conversation in countering the doctrines which feminists of both sexes, or the new single sex, have instilled into our children's minds," and laments that a generation has been trained up "to regard war and death as the most terrible misfortunes that can overtake a nation or a man." He also complains of the Atheist, whom, he says, we might reasonably expect to be in favour of war because it acts like "natural selection" as nature's sieve; but no, inconsistency (we are told) is the hall-mark of the naturalistic creed. From his tone one would think that the Captain had a suspicion that the Atheist only assumed Pacifism out of pure aggravation just to embarrass and annoy Christians, who, he says: "must feel uncomfortably aware that the Pacifist camp is full to overflowing with self-confessed and militant Atheists." No sincere Christian can be a Pacifist, because: "Our Lord assured us, as has proved to be the case, that He came to bring, not peace, but a sword. Our Lord never reproved a soldier for being a soldier, or exhorted him to be a Pacifist." (p. 320.) Christian Pacifists, indeed, in this matter are quite as inconsistent as the Atheists, according to Captain Acworth, for "Christian



Pacifists lustily enquire of death where lies its sting, and chant light-heartedly, if not light-headedly, the miseries and evils of this present world and the unspeakable joys of the next." And then by their attitude to war, "they roundly recant the first principle of Christianity and make a mock of the culminating act in the life of the Founder of their faith." (p. 321.) We have derived much amusement, if little instruction from Captain Acworth's book, and we hope he will write some more defences of the Faith. We promise to give them all a hearing.

W. MANN.

## Women and Freethought

We have a special work to do in this journal, and we have always kept to it. Between a wooden platform and a mental platform there is an essential difference. The wider the wooden one is the more people can stand upon it; the wider the mental one is the less people can stand upon it. One principle may have a million adherents; add another to it, and the adherents of both together may be reduced to half a million; add another, and the adherents of all three together may be only a hundred thousand; and if you go on adding you will come to a handful in time, and finally to a single person.

Attempts were made, many years ago, to drive the Freethought party into the adoption of Socialism. This was met by attempts to drive it into the adoption of Individualism. Both efforts were mistaken, and the success of either would have been disastrous. The Freethought party would have been divided at once; some other effort would have been made to commit it to something else, which would have caused another division, and the last two members would eventually have wished each other good-bye.

Freethought, in relation to politics and sociology, is not a dogma; it can never be more than an attitude. Huxley and Spencer were opposed to each other, but they were both Freethinkers, and they carried on their controversy with good taste, good temper, and mutual respect. Nor was that all. They both appealed to reason, and to nothing else, in the dispute between them. Freethinkers cannot be expected to see eye to eye with each other in relation to the vast variety of questions that have to be settled in civilized communities. Differences of capacity, temperament, training and knowledge will naturally assert themselves. All we have a right to expect is that Freethinkers will be more reasonable, and consequently more humane, than their superstitious fellow-citizens. Whether they are Conservatives, Liberals, Radicals, or Socialists, they will be so with a certain difference. They will not be fanatical; they will not be the mere slaves of a shibboleth; they will not assume that all who differ from them are necessarily rogues or fools; they will keep their minds open to argument and information; they will not try to cut the gordian knots of public affairs with the mere sword of party passion. Hobbes was an Absolutist, Hume was a Tory, Mill was a Liberal, Bradlaugh was a Radical; yet they had something in common which differentiated them from other men of the same parties—a faith in human reason and an enthusiasm for human welfare.

Those who have read this article so far will understand why we do not discuss politics in the *Freethinker*. They will not expect us to deal with the question of women suffrage which is now agitating the public mind, or at least the public emotions. Whether women, or men either, should possess votes, how they should possess them, and when they should

possess them—are political questions, with which we have no special concern. The present writer may have his private opinions, but they have nothing to do with the public policy of this journal. We are not going to be drawn, therefore, into the present heated discussion. We may observe, however, for this is outside the sphere of party politics, that too much importance may easily be attached to voting in itself—while security exists for the freedom of the platform and the press. While that freedom obtains all questions are settled—as far as they are settled—through the growth of public opinion and sentiment, of which voting is only a mechanical and temporary expression; and the greatest rulers of any civilized country are, after all, its men of genius who lie in their graves.

What we desire to do in this brief article is to point out the relation which the Freethought party has always borne to the female sex. In one sense it has borne no such relation at all. It has never made any distinction between the sexes—having wisely left that business to Mother Nature. We must know whether members are men or women in order to address them properly. Beyond that we never trouble. Women have always had seats on our committees when they seemed entitled to them. They have not been voted in because they were women, neither have they been kept out for that reason. Women have always been welcome upon our platforms. Long ago women like Frances Wright and Emma Martin expounded our principles with eloquence and acceptance. Later we had Mrs. Harriet Law and Mrs. Annie Besant. And if we have no lady advocate on the platform just now it is not because of any barrier to her approach, but because we are not fortunate enough to possess one. The National Secular Society has a lady secretary at headquarters, and its Branches in such important centres as Manchester and Liverpool have lady secretaries likewise. Evidently then, we do not warn women off the course. We welcome their co-operation. There is complete equality of opportunity between the sexes in work for Freethought.

We do not say that this has any definite relation to the political question of woman suffrage; but we do say that it is calculated to lead to a discussion of that question—if it must be discussed—without brutality on one side or hysteria on the other.

It appears to us that Shelley's great cry, "Can man be free if woman be a slave?" goes far higher and deeper than any political proposal. The poet of poets and purest of men, as James Thomson beautifully called him, meant something vital, not something mechanical. Whether woman should or should not drop her voting paper in the parliamentary ballot-box—which either for woman or man, is perhaps not the sublimest task in the world—it is of great and constant importance that she should exercise her intellect as well as her emotions, even if the balance of these be somewhat different in the two sexes that jointly, not severally, make up the unit of human life. Whatever nature, time, and experience declare her social function to be, it must be better performed, and of higher value to the race, in proportion as it is illuminated by an active intelligence. The flatterers and the insulters of either sex are the enemies of both. There is no real friendship without truth and courtesy; and the love which is without friendship is only an animal passion.

(Reprinted) G. W. FOOTE (1906).

### THE "RACE" ABSURDITY

The Prejudice of race is just an energy of mere animal passion, surviving unpurified from the stage of sheer barbarism.

John M. Robertson, "The Saxon and the Celt."



## Freethought and Politics

In his well stated article Mr. Egerton Stafford pursues an important topic. Many of us can probably go a long way with Mr. Stafford, the social reformer, but I write now as a Freethinker, and aim at purifying, rather than denuding, his doctrine. Freethought applied to politics can only purify; politics applied to Freethought may contaminate.

As Freethinkers we should, naturally, only express an opinion about Communism after careful investigation, but I rather question what Mr. Stafford says in par. 2, that it is as capable of being subjected to the test of truth as religious notions are. The test is of value, surely. We ask, not if it is true, but whether it is advisable. The test is of value, not truth, and in case the distinction should seem unimportant, let me hasten to add that it accounts for Freethinkers not taking a definite line, and acting *as a body*, as they are able to do on questions of fact, such as the falsity of Christian doctrines and the origin of religious beliefs. I mean, I can demonstrate the falsity of omnipotent omnibenevolence, but I can only urge a political programme and rely on others having similar feelings and preferences.

For example, two Freethinkers, myself one, recently discussed whether the present proletariat are the best guardians of the welfare of a classless society. I hope Mr. Stafford would not assert that our disagreement should entail that one of us should forfeit the term "Freethinker" for "not having sought truth in the political sphere."

Or again, Mr. Stafford says Communism is essentially in touch with the present position, and that it supports a temporary proletarian dictatorship. Now I strongly question whether the present position encourages the view that the present proletariat is the citadel of wisdom. Indeed, is not the fight of the Freethinker *against* the apathy and credulity of the proletariat? The unpopularity of Mr. Stafford's own political teaching should convince him of the fact.

The present proletariat buys the *Sunday Express*, not the *Freethinker*.

But, holding such a view, I do not fear to forfeit the name of Freethinker, and in fact the view is actually *compatible with oligarchic socialism*.

So that in adopting, as a body, a non-committal attitude to party politics, the N.S.S. of Freethinkers runs no risk of degenerating into what Mr. Stafford terms an "intellectual pastime." The effectiveness of its secular policy is a sufficient reply. Propaganda which affects the intellectual outlook of tens of thousands of homes *is* effective.

I take it that we are all on common ground in the acceptance of Paine's exposition of the natural and civic rights of man. The Freethinker's job is to defend the natural right of free (*i.e.*, unrestrained) expression of opinion. Of social and historic utility, it must not be surrendered in the accomplishment of any political programme. This has nothing whatever to do with whether that programme is palatable to the individual Freethinker or not.

Mr. Stafford classifies both the Russian and German régimes as dictatorships (which, by the way, necessitates that he has abstracted features in common, and therefore has a definition, or principle). But he sees an essential difference between the two. Now does he see this difference as a Freethinker or as a Socialist? Seeing it as a Socialist he is quite in order. But can a Freethinker, interested in the safeguarding of intellectual freedom, recognize the difference between two régimes which, Mr. Stafford says, are both intolerant (par. 26)?

No. If intolerance is common to both, the Freethinker sees the similarity *in that respect*, and his political preferences play no part in his judgment.

Now, like Mr. Stafford, I, too, see essential differences between the two, not only because I have a political preference for the Russian, but ALSO on grounds of Freethought. That is, I have the assurance of Christians in Russia that they are not denied freedom of expression, and, if we make the distinction between confiscation and restoration, persecution apparently does not exist.

Mr. Stafford's analogy of the prison is apt enough, but if some distasteful quality were included in the functioning of both good and bad prisons they would be similar *in that respect*, just as the quality of intolerance would render any form of dictatorship vicious *on that account*.

In justifying temporary intolerance and suppression in the building-up of a Socialist state Mr. Stafford seems to be making a *faux pas*. If Socialism must be defended in that way its case must suffer, and I feel there are many Socialists in the N.S.S. who have a higher opinion of their political creed than to suppose it requires such a prop, even as an expedient. And in any case, in the long run it is no prop at all.

What Mr. Stafford brings out effectively is the danger of thinking all will be well if we can only get people to be reasonable. Rationalism is a method, not a creed; powder, not shot. What is wanted is an active programme, which the influence of the Freethinker will purify.

The question arises, should a Freethought Society be satisfied with championing intellectual freedom, or should it strike out for what is considered economic freedom, in the abolition of capitalism? In this country, at least, Freethought as a body confines itself to the winning of intellectual freedom. However, as a consequence of Mr. Stafford's amendment to a Motion at the Bolton Conference, the N.S.S. renounces its connexion, not with political doctrines, but with political parties.

As for the winning of economic freedom, it is obvious that Freethought cannot assume a united front on matters in which there is internal disagreement, especially if that disagreement is genuinely based on study, which, however, Mr. Stafford is not prepared to assume (par. 4). And even if the members were unanimous, the official adoption of a political creed (1) would be irrelevant to the object of defending intellectual freedom; (2) would unnecessarily reduplicate the work of the particular political party, and (3) would be without the guarantee that future members would have the same political ideas. Why make a rift in the N.S.S. when there is already a Socialist Party to belong to? Why split two policies between three bodies of people, to wit (1) Socialists; (2) Socialist Freethinkers; (3) the residue of pure Freethinkers, a situation which would make the second body redundant.

What is certain is that the attainment of economic freedom by any means—let us assume by the abolition of capitalism and the achievement of a classless society—even though it would remove many chief historic dangers to intellectual freedom, would not obviate the need for the Freethinker. A classless society is not therefore an opinionless one, and the element of dictatorship could creep into any scheme short of Anarchy, which is definitely out of the range of present consideration.

### Conclusions.

Mr. Stafford conceives it the Freethinker's function to fight for economic, as well as intellectual, freedom, on the grounds that the way to economic freedom can be scientifically posited, *i.e.*, Communism, leaving no more room for debate than the falsity of Christian



doctrines. The transitional period will involve a temporary limitation of intellectual freedom (last par.), as in Russia.

In a fraternal spirit my contentions are: (a) that Mr. Stafford does Russia an injustice in suggesting Freethought is there in suspension; and (b) that politico-economic doctrines are not susceptible to the factual test in the way that Christian doctrines are, and that therefore the maintenance of a society of Freethinkers with common objects depends on its political activity being confined to the safeguarding of intellectual freedom therein, and would be frustrated by the OFFICIAL adoption of a programme which could not guarantee the support of every present or future member, which would have no logical relationship with the existing objects, and which in any case would have as its criterion a world of changing values.

G. H. TAYLOR.

## Religion and Science

THOUGH we cannot hold that the fall of ancient (mainly Greek) science was directly and wholly due to the establishment of Christianity (as we found to be the case with history), we must nevertheless attribute the débâcle to religion in the wider sense; and the disaster was consummated, and perpetuated for more than a thousand years, by Christianity, including the establishment of the Bible as a correct record of cosmic and mundane events.

The conflict between Biblical legend and astronomical science proceeded in earnest with the old monk Cosmas (about 515 A.D. and onwards) who wrote *Typographia Christiana*, "a Christian typography of the universe, established by demonstrations from Divine Scripture, concerning which it is not lawful for a Christian to doubt." This work, writes Lecky (*History of Rationalism*) "proceeds to censure with great severity those weak-minded Christians who had allowed the subtleties of Greek fables, or the deceitful glitter of mere human science, to lead them astray, forgetting that scripture contained intimations of the nature of the universe of far higher value and authority than any to which unassisted man could attain." So he erected a great cosmological system, including a world shaped like a flat parallelogram, with the inhabited earth in the centre, surrounded by an ocean, and this by another earth, in which men lived before the flood, a sky glued to the edges of the earth, with high walls and a roof, and a firmament between them. And so on. Cosmas, among other things, refuted to his own satisfaction, the "anile fable" of the antipodes. And when in the eighth century an Irish Saint, Vergilius, ventured to assert their existence "the whole Christian world was thrown into a paroxysm of indignation."

Then a thousand years or so later, when the "plurality of worlds" and the motion of the earth were emerging, we have the sorry story of the ecclesiastical censure of Copernicus, the condemnation of Galileo, the burning of Bruno, and the like features. And, as Lecky says, "everything was done to cultivate a habit of thought the direct opposite to that of science." He continues: "The constant exaltation of blind faith, the countless miracles, the childish legends, all produced a condition of besotted ignorance, of grovelling and trembling credulity that can scarcely be paralleled except among the most degraded barbarians. . . . Superior knowledge excited only terror and suspicion. If it was shown in speculation, it was called heresy. If it was shown in the study of nature, it was called magic. . . ." Even a Pope (Sylvester II.) was believed to be a magician, owing to the learning he had acquired in Moorish Spain in the tenth century; and Roger Bacon, who was also "profoundly versed in Arabian philosophy, was . . . repaid by fourteen years' imprisonment."

The triumph of astronomy and of physical science in general was in course of time followed by that of biology, geology and archaeology. The Greeks had virtually arrived at the principle of evolution, though it

was not sufficiently proved. They had noted fossils, but did not arrive at a true explanation of them. And their significance did not appear until that great artist and "universal genius" Leonardo de Vinci said that they must be the remains of animals which had lived where the objects were found in the distant past. (This was after many generations of people had held that the fossils were elf-shot, things created by the devil as a stumbling-block to believers, and the like.)

But in spite of the fact that the Greeks and Romans did not make these advances, correct general conclusions as to the initial barbaric state of man and his subsequent progress had emerged, and had routed the old Egyptian, Hebrew and Greek notion of the degeneration of mankind from an original condition of superiority. This appears in some very interesting passages in classical poetry and drama.

In the *Prometheus* of Aeschylus we find the following:—

"And let me tell you—not as taunting men—  
How first beholding they beheld in vain,  
And hearing heard not, but like shapes in dreams,  
Mixed all things wildly down the tedious time;  
Nor knew to build a house against the sun  
With wicketed sides, nor any woodwork knew;  
But lived like silly ants beneath the ground,  
In hollow caves unsunned. . . ."

Again, in the *De Rerum Natura*, of the Roman poet Lucretius (98-55 B.C.) we find the following:—

"Yet man's first sons, as o'er the fields they trod,  
Nor crooked plough shares knew they . . .  
Nor knew they yet the crackling blaze t' excite,  
Or clothe their limbs with fur or savage hides . . .  
Man's earliest arms were fingers, teeth and nails,  
And Stones and fragments of the branching woods,  
Then fires and flames they joined, detected soon;  
Then Copper next; and last, as latest traced,  
The tyrant Iron. . . ."

The words italicized, and their order, display an astonishingly correct idea (based no doubt on tradition) of the three prehistoric stages, the Stone, Bronze and Early Iron Ages.

Horace (65-8 B.C.) has a similar passage, which is to be found in a translation of the *Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*:—

"When men first crept from out earth's womb, like worms,  
Dumb speechless creatures with scarce human forms,  
With nails or doubled fists they used to fight  
For acorns or for sleeping holes at night;  
Clubs followed next; at last to arms they came,  
Till words and names were found wherewith to mould  
The sounds they uttered and their thoughts unfold;  
Thenceforth they left off fighting, and began  
To build them cities, guarding man from man,  
And set up laws as barriers 'gainst strife,  
That threatened person, property or wife."

But these ideas, which in general represent common-place facts of anthropology were swamped by the onrush of superstition; the Western world fell back into a more primitive condition; and we now contemplate with amazement the "terrible spectacle of human imbecility" that dominated the West during medieval and earlier modern times, and deplore the loss of fifteen centuries or so of intellectual, moral and social progress.

J. REEVES.

## THE EGOTISM OF RACE

All racial self-glorification, it is clear, is an irrational play of instinct. It is habitually indulged-in, tolerated, and applauded in civilized countries, where individual self-praise is regarded as a clear sign of fatuity when not resorted to in self-vindication against blame. Yet praise of one's nation is certainly a product of self-regarding vanity, and is at the same time, in the eye of strict reason, more absurd. Self-praise, though unpleasing to others, may be just—may be such as another could justly bestow. But to take personal pride in vaunting one's nation is, rationally speaking, the merest inconsequence. If our nation has in any way distinguished itself, we are individually no more entitled to plume ourselves on the fact than is a single undistinguished person to plume himself on being descended from a famous man.—J. M. Robertson.



## Correspondence

### REACTION IN FREETHOUGHT

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I don't know whether songs at twilight are better than songs at any other time; but, no doubt many people think they are. At any rate Medicus seems to be happy while singing his song to the twilight of Freethought. Perhaps he is happy in the thought that the twilight will be followed by the dawn.

The burden of his song seems to be that of the brotherliness of being in the wrong; which he thinks has been so sadly neglected. I can hardly think he is singing a Swan Song, but just one at twilight.

There used to be a time when Freethought stood for scientific thinking and a search for the truth which, of course, involved the desire to be in the right. Now we are to descend to hell, where "everyone is unquestionably wrong," or at least may be wrong. When we arrive we shall find such a hub-bub as will allow everyone to get a look in, and we can leave truth and right along with happiness, to come in their own way. Now, as hell is likely to contain more people who were wrong, but thought they were right, when not in hell, as it contains people who were right, the place is not likely to be too brotherly. People who are wrong, but think they are right, prove often to be very troublesome. So what are we going to do about it? If the Freethought movement is like hell on earth, and we agree that we all may be wrong, are we sure those who are unquestionably wrong have not upset the genial tolerance by insisting that they are right?

Again, if the hub-bub created by those who agree they may be wrong is going to end in everyone getting a look in, must we not expect the twilight of Freethought to be very prolonged?

Perhaps, after all, the thesis of Medicus is wrong, and he is singing in the twilight in the belief that he will soon see the risen dawn. It may be Medicus really believes, in the words of Edward Pellatan, that "the day is at hand when we shall behold the flowering time of minds set free from bondage." (Foreword to *The Unrisen Dawn*, by Anatole France.)

Some of us don't think it is quite so near, but we do keep on looking forward in the hope of seeing the dawn of social right and all that it implies.

E. EGERTON STAFFORD.

SIR,—As Mr. Ready is obviously unable to refute my article on "Reaction in Freethought," and must needs descend into misrepresentation, scurrility about lip-service, and a pose about a clear cut issue which I must meet without evasion, I can only conclude that he is mainly concerned with gaining points in debate.

I did not sneer at "their low level of thinking," but expressed regret that the level of thinking attained by a large number of Freethinkers was lower than I expected because, out of many letters, the three published did not touch my main contentions by putting up a reasoned case against them.

Does he not realize that what he calls my irrelevant reference to "vulgar clap-trap" (a phrase torn from its context) was a generous dismissal of his libellous suggestion about my character as a Freethinker of twenty odd years standing? He should know that the charge of paying lip-service to a cause should have some foundation. Is that kind of charge the outcome of his superior kind of Freethought without restrictions?

I am willing to reply to a reasoned criticism of my article, but must decline to discuss the subject any further with Mr. Ready, until he can refrain from trying to gain a point by such tactics.

E. EGERTON STAFFORD.

### THE TRIBAL SPIRIT

The spirit of Nationality is a sour ferment of the new wine of democracy in the old bottles of Tribalism.

Arnold J. Toynbee, "A Study of History."

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

### LONDON,

#### INDOOR.

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

#### OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCHES N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.0, Mr. E. C. Saphin.

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

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 7.30, Sunday, July 15, Mr. Campbell Everden. Rushcroft Road, near Brixton Town Hall, 8.0, Tuesday, July 17, Mrs. E. Grout. Stonhouse Street, High Street, Clapham, 8.0, Wednesday, July 18, Mr. L. Ebury. Alival Road, Clapham Junction, 8.0, Friday, July 20, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST HAM BRANCH (Corner of Deanery Road, opposite the Library, Water Lane, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. P. Goldman.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Sunday, Mr. W. B. Collins. 3.30, Platform No. 1, Messrs. Wood and Bryant. Platform No. 2, Messrs. Saphin and Tuson. 6.30, Platform No. 1, Messrs. Collins and Hyatt. Platform No. 2, Messrs. Saphin and others. Wednesday, 7.30, Mr. Campbell Everden. Thursday, 7.30, Messrs. Wood and Saphin. Friday, 7.30, Two Lectures.

### COUNTRY.

#### INDOOR.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (Socialist Club, Arcade, Pilgrim Street): 3.0, Members' Meeting.

#### OUTDOOR.

ASHINGTON BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. G. Whitehead will lecture in the following places from July 14 to 20: Morpeth (Market Square): 7.0, Saturday, July 14. Blyth (Market Square): 7.0, Sunday, July 15. Ashington (Grand Hotel Corner): 7.15, Monday, and Tuesday, July 16 and 17. Blyth (Market Square): 7.15, Wednesday July 18. Ashington (Grand Hotel Corner): 7.15, Thursday and Friday, July 19 and 20.

BLYTH (Market Place): 7.0, Monday, July 16, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Bank Street Car Park): 7.0, Mr. Thos. Green.

BRIGHTON BRANCH N.S.S. (The Level): J. T. Byrne—"Dictators v. Democracy."

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Corner of High Park Street and Park Road): 8.0, Thursday, July 12, Messrs. J. V. Shortt and C. McKelvie. Queen's Drive, opposite Walton Baths, 8.0, Sunday, July 15, Messrs. Robinson and W. Parry.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S. (Bigg Market): 7.0, Mr. A. Flanders—A Lecture.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Platt Fields, Rusholme): 3.0, Mr. J. V. Shortt (Liverpool). Alexandra Park Gates, Moss Side, 7.30, Mr. J. V. Shortt (Liverpool).

SEAHAM HARBOUR (Church Street): 8.0, Saturday, July 14, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

SOUTH SHIELDS (Would Have Memorial): 7.0, Wednesday, July 18, Mr. Allan Flanders.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES (Market Cross): 7.0, Tuesday, July 17, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

SUNDERLAND: 7.0, Sunday, July 15, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

FOR SALE—9 Volumes (bound) of the *Freethinker*, 1881-1889 inclusive. Contains comic sketches, prosecuted and seized numbers. Will accept £7.—Box 429, c/o "FREETHINKER," 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

## The Christian Sunday: Its History and Its Fruits

By A. D. McLAREN

Price 2d.

Postage 1d.



# THE MIRACLES OF ST. MARTIN

By  
C. CLAYTON DOVE

With  
*Introduction by Chapman Cohen*

This is a booklet that should be read by all Freethinkers, and by as many Christians as can be induced to do so. It offers a scholarly illustration of the genesis of the miraculous, and the use made of that belief by the Christian Church.

*Price Post Free - - 7d.*

220 pages of Wit and Wisdom

## BIBLE ROMANCES

By G. W. Foote

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

Price 2/6 Postage 3d.  
Well printed and well bound.

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

ACADEMY CINEMA,  
Oxford Street. Ger. 2981

*The Gay Masquerade*  
"LIEBES KOMMANDO" (U)  
*Delightful Viennese Music. And*  
"THE ROAD TO LIFE" (A)

## UNWANTED CHILDREN

In a Civilized Community there should be no  
UNWANTED Children.

An Illustrated Descriptive List (68 pages) of Birth Control Requisites and Books sent post free for a 1½d. stamp.

N.B.—PRICES ARE NOW LOWER.

J. R. HOLMES, East Hanney, Wantage, Berks.

ESTABLISHED NEARLY HALF A CENTURY.

## The Secular Society, Ltd.

CHAIRMAN—CHAPMAN COHEN.

*Company Limited by Guarantee.*

Registered Office: 68 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Secretary: R. H. ROSETTI.

THIS Society was formed in 1898 to afford legal security to the acquisition and application of funds for Secular purposes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

*A Form of Bequest.*—The following is a sufficient form of bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—

I give and bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited, the sum of £..... free from Legacy Duty, and I direct that a receipt signed by two members of the Board of the said Society and the Secretary thereof shall be a good discharge to my Executors for the said Legacy.

It is advisable, but not necessary, that the Secretary should be formally notified of such bequests, as wills sometimes get lost or mislaid. A form of membership, with full particulars, will be sent on application to the Secretary, R. H. ROSETTI, 68 FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

## DETERMINISM OR FREE-WILL?

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

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

Half-Cloth, 2s. 6d.

Postage 2½d.

SECOND EDITION.

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



**Christianity, Slavery and Labour**

BY

**CHAPMAN COHEN**

Paper 1s. 6d. Postage 2d. Cloth 2s. 6d. Postage 3d.

**DEFENCE OF FREE SPEECH**

BY

**G. W. FOOTE**

Price 6d. Postage 1d.

**Letters To a Country Vicar**

BY

**CHAPMAN COHEN**

Paper 1s. Postage 2d. Cloth, gilt 2s. Postage 3d.

**Infidel Death-Beds**

BY

**G. W. Foote and A. D. McLaren**

Price 2s. Postage 3d.

**GOD AND THE UNIVERSE**

BY

**CHAPMAN COHEN**

Paper 2s. Postage 2d. Cloth 3s. Postage 3d.

**SELECTED HERESIES**

BY

**CHAPMAN COHEN**

Cloth, gilt 3s. 6d. Postage 3d.

**BRADLAUGH AND INGERSOLL**

BY

**CHAPMAN COHEN**

Price 2s. 6d. Postage 3d.

**Footsteps of the Past**

BY

**J. M. WHEELER**

Price 3s. 6d. Postage 3d.

**The Crucifixion and Resurrection  
of Jesus**

BY

**W. A. CAMPBELL**

Cloth 2s. Postage 2d.

**THE REVENUES OF RELIGION**

BY

**ALAN HANDSACRE**

Cloth 2s. 6d. Postage 3d. Paper 1s. 6d. Postage 2d.

**ROME OR REASON**

BY

**R. G. INGERSOLL**

Price 3d. Postage 4d.

**Shakespeare & other Literary Essays**

BY

**G. W. FOOTE**

Price 3s. 6d. Postage 3d.

**MOTHER OF GOD**

BY

**G. W. FOOTE**

Post Free . . . . . 2½d.

**Paganism in Christian Festivals**

BY

**J. M. WHEELER**

Price 1s. Postage 1½d.

**History of the Conflict Between  
Religion and Science**

BY

**Prof. J. W. DRAPER**

Price 2s. Postage 4½d.

**PRIESTCRAFT**

BY

**C. R. BOYD FREEMAN**

Cloth 6s. Postage 3d.