

# THE FREETHINKER

EDITED by CHAPMAN COHEN  
— Founded 1881 —

VOL. LVI.—No. 17

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 1936

PRICE THREEPENCE

## PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

	Page
Sabbatarianism—The Editor	257
The Empty Pews—Mimmermus	259
The Freethought Conference at Prague—H. Culner	260
Things Worth Knowing	261
The World of Books—Quondam	266
Supernatural Authority—Ignotus	268
A Great Danger—L. H. Borrill	268
Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor. etc.	

## Views and Opinions

### Sabbatarianism

THE *Christian World* recently offered its congratulations to a Mr. J. Woodford Causer, who had achieved the not unknown feat of living long enough to celebrate the eightieth anniversary of his birthday. It is quite likely that few of our readers will know who Mr. Causer is, what he did, and why he was selected from the moderately large army of octogenarians for special congratulations. Be it known, then, to everyone, that Mr. Causer was the Secretary of "The Imperial Alliance for the Defence of Sunday." The *Christian World* further explains that Mr. Causer had spent the whole of his life—except, of course, the harmless early period of non-walking and toddling years—to "the cause of preserving Sunday for rest and worship." We expect that this is the way in which Mr. Causer would have defined the purpose of his life. But it is quite wrong; it is as misleading as the purpose of Mr. Causer's misguided life was sinister and objectionable. The real object of his life was to prevent people enjoying their Sundays in a quite harmless and even beneficial manner, to drive them to Church or Chapel by force if possible, or by the power of social ostracism or disapproval where force could not openly be applied, and in general to make for the demoralization of character all round. Mr. Causer's Sunday may have made for worship, it never made for rest, still less for education and elevation. No one, so far as I know, ever wished to prevent Mr. Causer and his kind from spending Sunday how or where they pleased. On the contrary they would have offered him the choice of the Chapel, the public house, the museum, the garden, the broad highway, the country road, the cheap excursion, or—when such things were available—the bicycle and the motor-car. But Mr. Causer wanted none of these. His motto was, "Spend Sunday as I would have it spent, or look out for trouble." So Mr. Causer lived his misguided career as an active, if un-

conscious, advocate of drunkenness and ignorance and social demoralization. Let us hope that Mr. Causer will spend his remaining years in genuine repentance for the evil he must have done.

\* \* \*

### Charles Dickens and Sunday

This is a Dickens Year, and on all hands Charles Dickens has been eulogized as a great novelist, a man who hated cant, injustice, hypocrisy, with all his heart, and who held up to deserved scorn the humbug that was active in religious circles. And if there was one thing that Dickens hated more heartily than another it was religious cant. It is no real credit to Dickens that he should have hated religious humbug more than any other variety, because it implies a faith in what people call "true religion" which usually is the greatest humbug of all. He thought it was an outrage on religion, whereas religion is the greatest manufacturer of humbug and hypocrisy that exists in a civilized society. But while Dickens heartily hated the religious humbug, he hated the Sabbatarian variety most. He saw Sabbatarianism as one of the great demoralizing forces of his time.

When Dickens was writing *Pickwick*, British Sabbatarianism was in its most nauseous stage; and in the same year that the *Pickwick Papers* appeared, Dickens also published one of his least known works, a small pamphlet of 49 pages, with woodcuts, entitled, *Sunday Under Three Heads. As it is; As Sabbath Bills would make it; As it might be made.*

The pamphlet was issued under the pen-name of "Timothy Sparks." Dickens knew the power of religious bigotry, and paid it tribute, as so many have done, and as so many still do, by not exposing himself to its attacks. It is a great pity that this should be so; it is a great pity that men who are not religious should go through life doing homage to a creed they despise, and by tricks of suppression, perversion of terms, and silence, posing as admirers of a creed they reject. But all are not built to meet with a laugh the power of religious animosity, and one must take the world as one finds it and make the most of it. Dickens in his fear of Christian bigotry and in assuming another name when attacking orthodoxy, only acted as many thousands are acting to-day.

\* \* \*

### Sunday under Three Heads

I happen to possess a copy of the first edition of Dickens' pamphlet, as bibliophiles would say "as issued with uncut edges," and as it is among the less known of Dickens' works, and as, even in these days, not too much notice is taken of the essay, it may be worth while outlining its contents. The pamphlet is dedicated to the Bishop of London, who had expressed "horror" at the non-observance of Sunday by many, and whose "elevated station" Dickens explains, "affords countless opportunities of increasing the comforts and pleasures of the humbler classes of

society—not by the expenditure of the smallest portion of your princely income, but by merely sanctioning with the influence of your example, their harmless pastimes and innocent recreations.” First, the reader is taken into a fashionable church and asked to observe the preacher:—

The graceful emphasis with which he offers up prayers for the Royal Family, the King and all the nobility; and the nonchalance with which he hurries over the more uncomfortable portions of the service, the seventh commandment for instance . . . the sleek divine who succeeds him, who murmurs, in a voice kept down by rich feeding, most comfortable doctrine for exactly twelve minutes, and then arrives at the anxiously expected, “Now to God,” which is the signal for the dismissal of the congregation. . . . Those who have been asleep wake up, those who have been kept awake look greatly relieved . . . (all) congratulating themselves on having set so excellent an example to the Community in general, and to Sunday pleasers in particular.

From thence to the Nonconformist chapel to listen to a preacher, “a coarse hard-faced man of forbidding aspect. . . . The congregation fall upon their knees,” and then listen while “he denounces Sabbath-breakers with the direst vengeance of offended Heaven.”

From Church and Chapel to the open-air, with the more comfortably circumstanced taking their pleasures between services at Hampstead, or Highgate, or in short journeys into the country.

But Dickens’ main consideration was the poor, and of their Sunday he writes:—

There is a darker side to the picture on which, so far from its being part of my purpose to conceal it, I wish to lay particular stress. In some parts of London, and in many of the manufacturing towns of England, drunkenness and profligacy in their most disgusting forms exhibit in the open streets on Sunday a sad and a degrading spectacle. We need go no farther than St. Giles, or Drury Lane, for sights and scenes of a most repulsive nature. Women with scarcely the articles of apparel which common decency require, with forms bloated by disease, and faces rendered hideous by habitual drunkenness—men reeling and staggering along—children in rags and filth—whole streets of squalid and miserable appearance, whose inhabitants are lounging in the public road, fighting, screaming and swearing—these are common objects which present themselves.

Why this state of things? Dickens answers by depicting the conditions under which these people live and work, and says that if proper opportunities were given for healthy recreation and intellectual enjoyment on Sunday such scenes would, for the majority, no longer exist:—

But you hold out no inducement, you offer no relief from listlessness, you provide nothing to amuse his mind, you afford him no means of exercising his body. Unwashed and unshaven, he saunters moodily about, weary and dejected. In lieu of the wholesome stimulus he might derive from nature, you drive him to the pernicious excitement to be gained from art. He flies to the gin-shop as his only resource; and when, reduced to a worse level than the lowest brute in the scale of creation, he lies wallowing in the kennel, your saintly law-givers lift up their hands to heaven, and exclaim for a law which shall convert the day intended for rest and cheerfulness into one of universal gloom, bigotry and persecution.

Dickens ends his pamphlet with a plea for the opening of museums and art galleries on Sunday, opportunities for recreation and enjoyment, for a time when “Sunday might be looked forward to as a recognized day for relaxation and enjoyment.” But

before this he has a picture of Sunday, “As Sabbath Bills would make it.” He does this by calling attention to a Bill brought before Parliament by Sir Andrew Agnew. Charles Peace gained a measure of immortality by burglary and murder. Sir Andrew Agnew, so far as I know, lives in the pages of Dickens only because of his championship of one of the most primitive of superstitions upheld to-day by believers in the most stupid form of religion. According to this Bill, says Dickens:—

All work is prohibited on the Lord’s Day under heavy penalties, increasing with every repetition of the offence. There are penalties for keeping shops open—penalties for drunkenness, penalties for keeping open houses of entertainment—penalties for being present at public meeting and assembly—penalties for letting carriages and penalties for hiring them—penalties for travelling in steam-boats, and penalties for taking passengers—penalties on vessels commencing their voyages on Sunday, penalties for the owners of cattle who suffer them to be driven on the Lord’s Day—penalties on constables who refuse to act, and penalties for resisting them when they do. In addition to these trifles, the constables are invested with vexatious and most extensive powers. And all this in a Bill which sets out with a canting and hypocritical declaration that “Nothing is more acceptable to God than the true and sincere worship according to His holy will.”

The Bill, says Dickens, was “from beginning to end a piece of deliberate cruelty and injustice. . . . It is directed exclusively against the amusements and recreations of the poor.” In about a dozen pages Dickens lashes this Bill and its supporters, exposing its penalizing of the poor and the care taken to preserve the amenities of the rich. One realizes why Dickens, who was not cut out to play the part of a martyr, published this anti-Sabbatarian pamphlet under an assumed name.

The Bill was thrown out, but by a majority of only 32. The rest of the members could remain unmoved in face of the wrongs done to millions of people under the then prevailing laws, but it was too much to permit an infraction of the Lord’s Day.

One hundred years after Dickens wrote this pamphlet the Sabbatarian laws are still with us. There are still a number of Sir Andrew Agnews alive. There are still scores of towns and cities, where, so far as the authorities are concerned, there is no choice save that of Church or public house. There are still thousands of museums and galleries, still thousands of recreation grounds, to which boys and girls are denied admission on Sunday. There is even a Sabbatarian Bill before Parliament while I write, and that Bill may become law. It is true this Bill says nothing about the will of God, but this is not because the spirit of Sir Andrew Agnew is not active, but because Sabbatarians have become more cowardly and hypocritical. The work of several generations of Freethinkers has had its influence; the people have inherited a boon which they perhaps do not fully appreciate because they have known nothing worse.

But there are still these Sir Andrew Agnews with us, still these people who in their mental outlook are the embodiment and the expression of the mentality of the cave-man when he cowered in his lair trembling because of the phantoms created by his ignorance and fashioned by his fears. We have one of these types in the man to whom the *Christian World* wishes “God-speed” for the years that remain to him. It would have been better to hope that he would spend his remaining days in repenting him for the misery he would have created, and for that which he helped to perpetuate.

## The Empty Pews

"Education makes a people easy to lead, but difficult to drive."—*Brougham*.

"A worthy discontent is an essential element of social well being."—*Havelock Ellis*.

Two London newspapers, as widely divergent as the *Morning Post* and the *Daily Herald*, have been noting that the attendances at places of worship are becoming less and less. Not only does this criticism apply to ordinary churches and chapels, but to such well-known temples as St. Paul's Cathedral, which is as much a showplace as the Tower of London, or as *Mdme. Tussaud's Waxworks*. Nor is this "beggarly array of empty benches" in churches peculiar to London alone. The disintegration is going on all over the country, and it is as noticeable among the Free Churches and tin-tabernacles as within the fold of the Anglican Church.

"What a fall is here, my countrymen!" A generation ago all the leading churches and chapels attracted eager congregations. Farrar, and other eloquent preachers, drew crowds to Westminster Abbey. Spurgeon was at the Newington Butts Tabernacle, Parker held forth at the City Temple, and Newman Hall orated at his church at Westminster. People were so interested in religion that even the stodgy May meetings at Exeter Hall, Strand, lured enthusiasts from all parts of the country. In Lent not a solitary London theatre opened its doors, and blatant American revivalists, such as Moody and Sankey were actually welcomed. The latter half of the nineteenth century may not have been an age of faith, but religion was still taken seriously by very large numbers of people. Dr. Parker actually thrilled pious folk with his theological theatricality. Preaching at the City Temple on the Armenian massacres, he shouted: "God damn the Sultan," and the sentiment was not unpopular. Pious people used to tell one another of a dreadful infidel named Bradlaugh, who used to take out his watch and challenge God, if there were such a being, to strike him dead within five minutes. It all seems remote and even fantastic to us to-day, like seeing one's face in a distorting mirror.

This decline in church and chapel attendance, which has been going on for many years, is one of the most remarkable facts in contemporary society. Yet, except the thousands of clergy, nobody seems particularly astonished at it. To account for the slump in religion the clergy pretend that it is all due to the industrial depression, or to the increasing love of pleasure, or to the loosening of priestly control of education. Doubtless, all these factors play a minor part in the dilemma in which they find themselves, but the real reason lies elsewhere. It is the growth of Freethought which is the prime mover in this silent revolution. People no longer attend churches and chapels because they no longer believe the priests' abracadabra. This widespread scepticism in all sections of society is due to the propaganda of the Freethinkers, and to no others, for "the glorious free press" has been a real hindrance and not a help in this matter.

There have always been Freethinkers, but organized Freethought is hardly a century old. In the bad old days Christian priests used brute force in dealing with occasional sceptics. They simply exterminated them by fire and sword, rack and gibbet, and, in more modern times, by heavy fines and imprisonment. But the moment the priests were confronted with a Freethought Army, these methods of barbarism became inoperative. Christianity began

to decay. The very triumphs of Freethought indirectly contributed to this end. Every Christian who became a Freethinker assisted in this process. The more brains that were drawn out of the Christian Churches the more did the huge mass part with its intellectual leaven, and tend to flatten down to a mere mass of superstition and intolerance. To-day men of real ability do not choose the Churches as a profession, and religion is in the hands of fourth-rate and even fifth-rate men.

Not only are the priests of all denominations thoroughly alarmed at the shrinkage of their audiences, but they have tried most desperately to retain the support of their flocks. Hundreds of Anglican priests have adopted the showy ritual of their Romish rivals. The Nonconformist clergy have gone to extreme lengths to retain their audiences, even importing tame members of Parliament, and other notorieties, to hold their interest. At the City Temple, Bernard Shaw gave the congregation an hour of wisecracks, but once was considered quite sufficient. All the clergy of all the denominations have shortened their sermons, and no one now listens to any preacher saying: "And, seventeenthly, my brethren," as the old Bible-punchers used to do in the ages of faith and fortitude.

The most complete transformation, however, is in the realm of theology itself. Owing to the constant attacks of the Freethinkers, the clergy have so trimmed and altered their views that even their congregations are getting bewildered. Once Christian dogmatism was as rigid as the axioms of old Euclid; now the preachers tell their audiences that black is white, or white is black, on alternate Sundays. Only one religious body, the Roman Catholic Church, is using the dogmatic theology of the pre-scientific world. So far as the other clergy are concerned, the framework of the old theology has gone to pieces, and what is being presented to-day as the Christian Religion has very little to do with historical Christianity. Forty years ago Spurgeon told his brother-clerics that they were on the "down-grade," and the intervening years only serve to emphasize his prescience. We are in the twilight of the theologians. The millions of words spoken in the pulpits are now as ineffective and unavailing as baying the moon, beating the air, or ploughing the sand. Not for present-day hearers are the lucidity of Newman, the passion of Parker, or the spell-binding of Spurgeon. The brains are out of the Christian Religion. Even the Roman Pontiff, the greatest priest in Christendom, is a back number to-day. "He is a helpless old man," says the Catholic Archbishop Hinsley, and he cannot stop war. His predecessors, be it remembered, had such power that at their frown monarchs blanched, and lesser men went to their death. Their successor on the throne of Saint Peter is as helpless as a Chelsea pensioner. Truly, time brings in its revenges.

The real meaning of the empty pews is that the Christian superstition is crumbling. It would have crumbled to nothingness long ere this, but it is a vested interest controlling millions of money. So long as men are paid well for reciting its formulas, so long will men be found dishonest enough to do so. If the Christian Churches were disendowed to-morrow morning, it would be the beginning of the end of a spiritual tyranny which has terrorized a large part of the earth for nearly twenty centuries. "Terrorized" is not too strong a word. Think of the imposition for many centuries of the so-called "sacred tenth" on farmers; recall the bullying of believers on their deathbeds; remember how Priestcraft sent all opponents to the scaffold or the stake. Then think of the

£32,000,000 worth of property belonging to the so-called Church of England, and the millions of money associated with the Free Churches. These institutions are just as much a business as the Drink Traffic and just as dangerous, for there is little to choose between spiritual intoxication and spirituous intoxication.

The strength of Priestcraft lies in the unthinking and uninformed masses. In nine cases out of ten the Christian to-day is a man who left school at fourteen years of age, who does not understand his own religion, who does not know what he himself believes or disbelieves, and who has never given a single hour's study or thought to his own or any other faith. The Christian religion batters upon ignorance, and its greatest strength is the very tail-end of civilization. It represents the lowest culture in modern society. But, as Abraham Lincoln has told us, no one "can fool all the people all the time," and some of the people are beginning to realize that the priest's robe covers a huge imposture. The pews are emptying, and fewer men and women are deceived by "the lie at the lips of the priest."

MIMNERMUS.

---

### The Freethought Conference at Prague

---

As readers are aware there took place at Prague this Easter an International Conference of Freethinkers. No details have, at the time of writing, reached me; but whatever the result of this meeting may turn out to be, one thing is pretty certain, and that is, the fright it is already causing to organized religion. Our contemporary, *The Universe*, devotes a leader of three columns denouncing it, and similar conferences, and calls upon the faithful to rally round the old flag and make clear what this "world-wide Atheism" really means. One would have thought there was no need to make it any clearer. It must be quite obvious even to Catholic converts, that the fight has always been between Secularism on the one side and the God-idea on the other. The *Universe* proclaims that the "Easter International Conference at Prague is a declaration of world-wide war on Christian Catholic culture, on the Christian social order, on all the foundations of civilized human existence, on God himself."

Now it must be admitted that Atheism, as a reasoned revolt against Theism, is an attack on "God Himself," if by God is meant one of the deities produced so often by Theists. These representations are by no means alike. "God Himself" is quite a different God to different people. The old Jewish God differs considerably from the New Testament God, not only in exclusive features but in size. The Jews insist that he is a solitary being, rather difficult to comprehend in his entirety. The Christians insist that there are two other parts to him, namely, the Holy Ghost, and his own Son. And the quarrel between Jews and Christians as to which is "God Himself" still persists. Moreover, even Christians differ widely among themselves as to their own God. Some claim that he can only be approached through his Viceroy—that is, the Pope. Others that he is approachable to everybody who believes in the Bible. And this quarrel as to who is right, is as bitter as it ever was. It has been going on for centuries and will—unless Freethought prevails—go on for more centuries.

When it comes to the war on "Christian culture," it is difficult to suppress admiration for the writer who makes the statement. It is just the kind of thing which he knows will be swallowed without examination by his Catholic dupes. What exactly is meant by "Christian culture"?

If we asked the *Universe* writer, we would discover that he means everything that is most pleasant and agreeable in civilization. All the great scientific and medical discoveries, all the immense strides that have been made in the transport services, in lighting and heating, in the building of homes, in the standard of living generally, all the progress in the cultivation of the arts and the better appreciation of them by the masses—these and many other minor things are all "Christian culture." And conversely, all the defects of our modern life—such as war, for example—he would call "anti-Christian" culture. It is all so beautifully implied whenever a good Christian has to deal with a "blatant" Atheist.

Readers of this journal, at all events, know how much Christian writing of this kind is worth. They know that this assumption that Christians are all for culture, while Atheists are not, is not only just mere bluff, but a piece of downright impertinence. For if there is one thing which history can prove without any difficulty, it is that the genuine Christian culture which permeated Europe for over 15 centuries was little but a foul mass of barbarity and crime. There is hardly a bright page in it. Even Winwood Reade's appellation, the *Martyrdom of Man* can give but little idea of what the mass of the people went through under Christian domination. Most decent people have read with loathing the way in which Christian Italy has invaded a "savage" country, and slaughtered its inhabitants—men, women and children—with the worst and latest diabolical war-weapons that science has invented. And while it may be true that some Catholics have protested in a general way against war, it is none the less true that, following the "Holy" Father, they have said very little against Italy's wanton slaughtering in particular. They daren't. The Pope might fall foul of Mussolini, and that would never do.

The truth is that the Atheist, the genuine Atheist, by which I mean the Freethinker and the Secularist, has always been a great protagonist of culture in its widest sense. It is not enough just being anti-religious, for example. I do not see why merely denying "God" or the claims of Christianity, should make a man much better than a Christian. The word "Secularism" was coined with a definite object—to make men and women realize that, as this was the only world they know anything about, it was their duty to make the best of it. Art, poetry, music, the drama, science, all form part of life and should be cultivated as far as possible. Happiness is almost impossible without bodily well-being. Self-culture, indeed, brings a joy not measured in terms of money. The reading of such a work as Dr. Har Dayal's *Hints on Self Culture*, will prove that the only true culture must of necessity be divorced from all religions; that indeed *Christian culture* is a contradiction in terms. Whatever, therefore, the Freethought Conference in Prague may or may not do, it is a fact that genuine culture has nothing to do with Christianity as such. If Christianity, indeed, were completely obliterated, the culture of the race would still go on, and be even better for its disappearance.

As for a war on "the foundations of civilized human existence," if there is one thing Freethought has always stood for, it is the betterment of social conditions everywhere. It has always bitterly protested against inequality and injustice. It has been in the forefront of all humanistic movements. In the

## Things Worth Knowing\*

XXXVIII.

## THE CHRISTIAN ETHIC

OUR civilization is much more artificial than that of Greece or Rome; and the main cause for that is the Christian ethic. Where romance enters the sphere of morals is at the gate of sex; and nearly all the diabolism (helping itself to the traditional sadic and invert machinery), springing up so eagerly in a puritan soil, can be traced to a sex root. It is even extremely easy in the modern West to *sexify* everything, in a way that would have been impossible in the Greek world, for instance. To see this you have only to consider the fact that the Athens of Socrates was notorious, as his dialogues witness, for what is (for us) the most obsessing sort of sex-cult. Yet it did not interfere at all with Greek philosophy; life did not become the rival of thought, the life of the intellect and that of the sense co-existed harmoniously; and philosophic speculation for the men who disputed with Socrates, was evidently as exciting as any of their other occupations. The dialogues of Plato have not an Alexandrian effluvia of feminine scent, nor do they erect pointers on all the pathways of the mind, waving frantically back to the gonadal ecstasies of the commencement of life. They are as loftily detached from the particular delights in fashion with the Athenians as it is possible to be; the core of the mind was not invaded, or even touched, by the claims of that group of glands, in spite of the fact that the puppets who used to conduct the intellectual contests were often conventionally epicene. The psychological composition of the mind of such a philosopher as Socrates, or Democritus, showed no trace whatever, such as you inevitably find in a Wilde or a Pater—that Alexandrian enervation and softening of all the male chastity of thought.

... When Revolution—that is simply the will to change and to spiritual transformation—ceases to be itself, and passes over more and more completely into its mere propaganda and advertisement department, it is apt, in the nature of things, to settle down in the neighbourhood of sex, and to make the moral disease its main lever. But revolution in Europe and America must in the nature of things centre around "sex," owing principally to the over-sensitive "repressed" sex-psychology of the post-Reformation man. No Western revolution would be complete without its strident advertisement. In the Pagan world the facts of sex had no undue importance. That they have derived, as we have said, from the Puritan consciousness. The whole bag of tricks of sex, simple and invert, reduces itself, on the physical side, to a very simple proposition.

... It is necessary if you are to understand it, to put out of your head all analogies with Antiquity, or with other periods. What you are confronted with always is *forbidden fruit*; that is what sex has meant persistently to the post-Reformation European. The delights of sex have been built round for us with menacing restrictions; and a situation has been created which a Greek or a Roman would with difficulty have understood.

The result is that every licence where sex is concerned has been invested with a halo of an awful and

\* Under this heading we purpose printing, weekly, a series of definite statements, taken from authoritative works, on specific subjects. They will supply instructive comments on aspects of special subjects, and will be useful, not merely in themselves, but also as a guide to works that are worth closer study.

Freethought ranks will be found reformers of every description, "cranks" if you like, but men and women who have put the service of man as the greatest and highest possible duty. It is not surprising, therefore, to find among us people who are dissatisfied with the existing economic order, and want to change it for what they believe to be something better. A large number of the delegates at the Conference will undoubtedly be socialists and communists, but their onslaught on present social conditions must be met with reasoned argument if any be forthcoming, and not abuse. And whether one agrees with them or not, surely there cannot be many people completely satisfied with things as they are? Surely there is room for all of us who value human happiness, to advocate a "world-war" not on the good things in life but on the bad; to bring about such conditions in human society that there will be work for all, and food, and holidays, and good housing and those other necessities of life which together, to use a hackneyed phrase, make life worth living?

In how much of this work has Roman Catholicism played a part? Let the history of the Dark and Middle Ages answer. Let the history of the Papacy show to what vile depths a body of men can descend, in the way of crime and outrage. Let the history of Catholic Kings and their ministers, and the barbarities they enacted against helpless people, be recounted. The stake, the rack, the gibbet and the executioner's block were favourite weapons employed by and through the Holy Church. For over 15 centuries the prisons were full of men and women guilty of no crime except opposition to a church which rose to power on the blood of its victims. This is no mere rhetoric. It is, alas, a fact which almost any historical work will corroborate. And it was not because the Church wished to cease its suppression of Freethought that it did cease. It was because eventually great men and women exposed its preposterous claims to supremacy, and publicly derided its rites and ceremonies as gross and absurd superstitions.

The *Universe* does its best to excite horror in its readers by repeating, I don't know how many times, the words "anti-God forces," or "anti-God campaign." Well, it is good to find that at least these readers will realize that there is a campaign being fought against the whole God-idea by millions of people. We want them to realize that grovelling on their knees in front of priests, or statues, or even before the *idea* of a God, is childish, and revolting to human decency. We want them to take their eyes off "heaven" and look on the earth on which they live. Are they satisfied with the condition of things here? Never mind wasting time upon imploring a mythical God to change these conditions. Here and now is work at hand, and never more necessary than in this atmosphere of war-mongering, distrust, and hate among races of men who ought to be bound by their common humanity. And I think that, whatever resolution may be passed at the Prague Conference, none could be better than Voltaire's immortal words, "*Il faut cultiver notre jardin.*"

H. CUTNER.

Take heed of being sharp, or too easily sharpened by others, against those to whom you can object but little, but that they square not with you in every opinion concerning religion.—*Cromwell*.

In age, just because we have material for comparison, we become less critical, less dictatorial, and more hopeful. We learn, among other things, that nothing is ever finally lost, and that it is always worth while to begin again.—*Lord Oxford*.

thrilling lawlessness. If it were not for the superlative sweetness of lawlessness of a sex order, all lawlessness would lack its most exciting and hypnotic paradigm and principal advertisement. How this applies to-day is evident. If you are desirous of showing your "revolutionary" propensities, and it is a case of finding some law to break to prove your good-will and spirit, what better law than the dear old moral law, always there invitingly ready and eager to be broken. So it is that "Sex" for the European is the ideal gateway to Revolution, that no one but a sex-snob can enter, any more than a camel can go through the eye of a needle. And so it is that the will to change, or impulse to spiritual advance, which is the only meaning of spiritual revolution is confused and defeated.

. . . . The levity and even lack of interest with which the Greeks usually treated these things is so much more healthy, it is quite evident, that it is a pity from any point of view that it should not be expected of a "broad-minded" and "modernized" person as a *sine qua non* of modernity. If you believe that such things as revolutionary propaganda of "original" vice are socially undesirable, then all the more should you seek to apply to them the chill of this moral indifferentism. For they would certainly wither at the touch of it.

The most unlikely and incongruous things are dragged into the emotionalism of "right" and "wrong," backed up by the sex impulse; a host of militant passions are let loose on both sides; and in the ensuing tumult, the blood-and-thunder, brimstone and blue fire, there is nothing that cannot be instantly submerged once the business is started. The mob of the senses, as Plato called them, are let loose and our rational constructions founder.

So it is not *sex*, properly speaking, and in its simple and natural appeal that is in question at all; it is the diabolics locked up in the edifice of "morals" that is the arch-enemy of the artist. To circumvent that ridiculous but formidable enemy of the spirit is a necessary but difficult enterprise.

*Time and Western Man,*  
by WYNDHAM LEWIS, pp. 31-4.

## The Modern Defence of Christianity

"In 1926 the Communists drove her away for six months, but the school went on, its pupils of their own accord refusing to be drawn into strikes and anti-foreign demonstrations, even when they were threatened for refusing to join their fellow students."—*The Very Reverend C. A. Alington*, Doctor of Divinity, Dean of Durham, writing of a Christian Missionary in China.

WHO says that Christianity's outworn and void the lather of its softest soap? Behold, you scoffer! No more laugh to scorn this helpmate of big-business, and its dope.

Missions do more than police in breaking down the claim to earthly justice. They're a dyke against the flood of workers white or brown. The hope of heaven annuls the right to strike.

Therefore, you men of commerce, do not mock, but write a cheque with reverence and good will. Although the Church may no more be the Rock of Ages, it's a good investment still.

JACK LINDSAY.

## Acid Drops

It is quite clear now that Italy has won her war with Abyssinia, and she has done so in very much less time than was expected. But the gallantry of Italian airmen is such that had Abyssinia been filled with infant schools, instead of with men armed with such deadly weapons as old swords and old guns, the war might have been over in a much shorter period. Italy has now demonstrated her unquestionable claim to be one of the greatest nations in the world.

Our readers know our interest in the significance of words and phrases, so we note one other phrase which has now come into general use. This is the phrase used by our statesmen, "Gentlemen's agreement." In operation this means saying one thing in public and another in private, promising one thing in open council and signing an agreement in private that runs in quite the opposite direction, lying like hell in every possible way and all the time standing with one's hand on one's heart, and professing one's devotion to truth and justice on every possible occasion. It means, in current statesmanship, doing everything in the name of devotion to country, everything that a man of thorough decency would be ashamed to do. We hope everyone will remember the significance of "Gentlemen's agreement." It is the modern analogue of Punic faith and Christian truth.

We are pleased to find ourselves in agreement with the *Church Times*. In a leading article, it is said that the Resurrection is as literally true as the Incarnation. We agree, and have said the same thing—in a different way—scores of times. There is precisely the same amount of truth in the one story as there is in the other. We hope the editor of the *Church Times* was not poking fun at his readers.

It is almost inconceivable, but it is true. There is no opening of the British and other museums after dark, because the Treasury cannot see its way to granting the pitifully small sum to pay for lighting and attendance. So the people who cannot get to the museums in daylight, are to be deprived of healthy and educational occupation during the evening. The Government cannot afford it. It can throw away millions in other directions; it can and will raise the salaries of Cabinet Ministers because £5,000 annually is not enough; it will presently be spending some hundreds of thousands on Coronation festivities. Surely enough could be saved in these directions to pay the very small amount required for light, heat, and attendance at the museums! Revolutions are not made by "agitators"; they are usually the work of very Conservative Governments or of very Conservative elements outside the Government.

We have no objection whatever to anybody and everybody celebrating the birth and death of their saviour as they think fit. But need they indulge in the footling kind of talk as that of the Rev. F. C. Spurr, who says that when he looks round and finds men spending Easter in holiday fashion, he finds it "as decent and courteous and human as if a man should look up the calendar to find the day on which the woman who bare him died in giving him birth, and select that day as a day of wanton festivity." But it is the Christian who named the Friday before Easter "Good" Friday, instead of calling it Black Friday or Bad Friday. It is the Christian who rejoices when decent men and women would be in tears; it is the Christian who dances with joy at the thought that someone has been punished for his sins, instead of realizing what a cowardly and humiliating thing he is saying. And in any case, those who wish to pull a long face on Good Friday, and who believe the monstrous story of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ may be just as miserable as they please to be and as they ought to be.

But why does Mr. Spurr blame other people for taking advantage of a holiday and making the most of it? Why can't the Christian be content to be miserable and stupid in his own way, instead of insisting that other people ought to be miserable and stupid with him.

Who says that fetish worshipping is dead? We see that the gun carriage on which the body of George V. was carried at his funeral is to be exhibited on the parade ground at Woolwich. The Gun, also is to be placed on the parade ground daily, except Saturdays. It will be drawn to and from the ground by a special detachment consisting of an N.C.O. and seven gunners, each of whom will wear a special arm-badge for the occasion. We suggest that all persons passing the gun carriage should go on their knees, and that sick people should be allowed to touch it for the recovery of their health. And people laugh at Mussolini civilizing the Ethiopians by means of poison gas.

We have referred to the systematic Royalist propaganda that has been carried on in this country for some years, and of which the above incident is part—as is also the advertisements that are beginning to appear in the press with regard to the coronation, next year, of Edward VIII. We see that "Plebs," a Socialist monthly, announces that with regard to an article on "Labour and the Glamour of the Throne," "In consequence of the success of post-war monarchical propaganda, two printers have refused to publish what, prior to 1914, would have been regarded as ordinary Socialist propaganda." We are getting on! What with the advancing influence of Roman Catholicism, the worship of a gun carriage on which a dead King was carried, the miraculous virtues of the late King, and the equally marvellous qualities of the present one, we may find ourselves with the divine right of Kings re-established as a kind of British reply to the divine right of dictators, with incapacity and stupidity enthroned supreme over both.

A letter signed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Dean of St. Paul's and others appeared in the *Times* addressed to those who are troubled with doubts concerning religion. May we add to the letter the information that if these poor people who are troubled with doubts about religion will pay a visit to the *Freethinker* office, take away with them a selection of our publications and read the *Freethinker* regularly, we think we can say with certainty that their doubts about religion will soon disappear. We have been for many years doing this kind of work and can, therefore speak with some confidence.

Roman Catholics, who are complaining of the persecution of their faith in Germany, naturally attribute this to the fact that Germany is reverting to "Paganism." They ought now to try and explain the savage persecution of Jews taking place in Poland—for the persecutors this time are Roman Catholics. Mr. Christopher Dawson (or the *Church Times*, we are not sure which) thinks that the nations can only be saved if "they kneel in penitence together," after which "they must rise from their knees for service together." Why these religious people always want some grovelling before "service," is a mystery. But as nobody kneels quite as much as do Catholics it would certainly be interesting to know how much of it has stopped any "evil" in the world. Has it ever stopped war—or even anti-Semitism?

Canon Lindsay Dewar has written another book on God, and, of course, being a Canon, he ought to be able to reply to its title—*Does God Care?* Well, does God care? Has he raised a finger to stop any atrocity whatever at any time? If the Canon, or anybody else, could give one event, testified in history, to show that God has ever cared, or even that he has ever done anything whatever on this earth, we should like to hear about it. As a matter of fact a book on God and Jesus will nearly

always find a publisher. What other use books of this kind have, we simply do not know—unless eventually to discover a happy resting place in an "All these books a penny" box.

The Rev. F. G. Price has been lecturing at Croydon on the subject of "Britain without God." He complains of the "insidious ways" in which "many publishers were publishing only books which put forward apparently convincing proof that God did not exist." We do not know who these publishers are, and we are sure that Mr. Price doesn't, so that their existence we surmise can only be demonstrated by methods similar to those he uses to prove the existence of God. We ask Mr. Price, however, this question: How can an attempt to demonstrate convincingly anything be considered as insidious?

Insidiousness we are also informed has permeated the film industry, and we are told, "The very story of Noah, which illustrated the Lord's disgust with the heathenism of a former age, was used to further the Anti-God Movement." Mr. Walt Disney is evidently in the Revd. gentleman's mind. It is a grave pity that this eminent artist should not have been equally impressed by the Lord's rather intemperate steps towards reforming the creatures of his own fashioning. Then he would have held his hand, and left the story of Noah to those like the Rev. F. G. Price who, in some occult way, derive nutriment from it and kindred stories.

From the *Women's Mirror*, Sydney, there comes news of Pitcairn Island. This is the island first occupied by the British sailors who forcibly objected to the savage discipline of Captain Bligh on board the "Bounty," and has always, on that account, been very much in the public mind. Pitcairn Island, it appears, is suffering very acutely from that affliction known as "The Lord's Tenth." Every tenth pig, sheep, fowl and so on, is marked "L.X.," which registers unmistakably the claim of the Lord's Agents. In this way we can see how God, in his inscrutable wisdom, uses such contemptible material as Captain Bligh so as to be a humble instrument towards increasing His honour and His glory.

By the tithe, we are informed, "The Islanders have been able to give up to £60 a year to work of foreign missions." Their great joy in being able to do this will be without doubt. We even are inclined to doubt the wisdom of making the tax on such a small scale, when it seems clear that if the scale of the confiscation were increased, the happiness of the population would be increased *pari passu*.

The special Good Friday and Easter articles in our "national press" nearly always deal with "Our Lord" and the sad story of his "crucifixion"—as if, modern criticism is not considering more and more that the whole story is a myth. But it always makes good reading especially when "Christ's enemies, Annas and Caiaphas, and the chief priests," and the Jews, can all be dragged in and made responsible for his death. Year after year the story is trotted out as if it were really the truth when in point of fact it is only "gospel" truth, quite another thing. It cannot be too often repeated that there is no evidence whatever for the crucifixion; but it will never be given up by Christians. That would mean too sad a blow at Christianity.

The saving grace of religion was proved once again the other day in Chicago. A gunman boarded a car, and threatening the conductor with a revolver, demanded all his money. The conductor reprimanded the gunman—"Don't you know this is Lent," he said severely. So abashed was the robber that, after staring a moment, he fled. This proves what a good Catholic the gunman was; though it is only fair to add that we never doubted the religious fervour of most of the gangsters in America.

That the pressure of the Jesus "non-historicity" school is beginning to tell, in spite of its supposed contemptuous dismissal by "experts," can be seen in a recent sermon by the Rev. F. Biggart. He said:—

History incontrovertibly witnesses to the fact of Jesus Christ. He is an historical figure. Never allow yourself to be driven out of that position. . . . History witnesses to the life of Jesus of Nazareth, to His teaching, to His miracles, and above all, to His Resurrection.

That is all—which means history testifies to every foolish story and myth recorded in the Gospels. But Mr. Biggart would not be quite so insistent if he did not know the rising body of opinion that, not only is there no evidence whatever for a single gospel miracle, but there is no evidence that even the *man* Jesus ever lived. And Mr. Biggart's own congregation will one day very reluctantly have to admit it.

The Bishop of London, with that originality of outlook on current affairs he is so famous for, envisages Jesus Christ getting shot by the Italians if "Our Lord" denounced poison gas in Italy; or suffering the same fate in Germany or France if he denounced their "hatred and suspicion." This picture of Jesus, always on the Bishop of London's side, or thinking like him, surely is no compliment to "Our Lord"; and one gets a little tired of always being told what would happen to God's Precious Son if he did not agree nowadays entirely with "reformers" of all kinds. Dr. Ingram does not like the spectacle of Christian Italy attacking Christian Abyssinia, nor the future of religion in Russia. And all we ask is what in heaven is "Our Lord" doing about it? Nothing?

At the Christian Endeavour Conference held at Pontypool, the Honourable John Bruce, at the evening meeting, told his hearers that "Your primary purpose is to win souls for Christ." This was the remark of a Christian with a creed to preach, and possessed of some modicum of logic. At another of the big meetings, however, Dr. Harold Moody said:—

At one time in our religious history the human side was neglected for the spiritual side. . . . Religion must have something to say about unemployment, international affairs, race prejudices, and many more kindred subjects.

Why Christianity *must* have something to say on these matters is, of course, because the speaker wishes Christianity to live. He sees that Christianity as *Soul-saving* cuts little ice nowadays, so is prepared, in order to keep the Church going, to whittle down the Oracles of God to suit the particular exigency of the moment. Religion must live, he would say, but there is no necessity that it should do so. Just as far as the spiritual life enthralled, the human side tends to become neglected.

Cardinal Verdier, the great church builder, has just blessed the new parish church of St. Gabriel, in the newly-built part of Porte de Vincennes. This is an up-to-date church. There is a slot machine and, according to the coin pushed into the slot, 20 sous or 5 francs, one receives a taper or a candle. God loves candles and rewards in thousands of ingenious ways, those that purchase them. God's Church really loves francs.

At a recent meeting of that comic body, the Knights of Columbo, Major Taggart suggested that schools should be open at night so that boys could spend their time there instead of in cinemas or on the streets. His reason is that 50 per cent of Catholic boys drift away from the Faith two years after leaving the school. This is rather cheery news in view of the fact that Catholics are always boasting of their triumphal progress in converting the world. We think the best way to keep the boys from drifting paganwards is to provide free cinemas with all day services to "Our Lord." The proportion should be one picture lasting, say an hour, and one service lasting three hours. We offer this suggestion quite freely.

Mr. J. W. Poynter whose changes to, from, and back to, and return from the Roman Catholic fold is not happy yet. He writes to the *Christian World* praising "Ecclesiasticism" rather than "agnosticism" as the proper alternative to orthodoxy. He favours "seeking the common elements in the great faiths of the world" as "more likely the right path." The fact is that while some religions have taught some truths embedded in a mass of imbecilities, it is the imbecilities and the exclusiveness which have been their "common elements." There is not a single moral principle which is dependent on any religion even if some religious teachers occasionally recommend the current moral ideas in addition to the prime essentials of faith in some irrelevant myths.

The Bishop of Woolwich is hard to please. The churches used to say, "Let us get hold of the children and we have won the world for Christ." And now after sixty years of forcible training of the schools, the Bishop declares it was all in vain:—

In the day schools children get a lot of religious knowledge very well taught, but religion is not a thing in the head, it is a thing in life. They get some knowledge, but are not really religious at all, because their parents are not practising religious people.

So it's the parents they want after all. Will they never make up their pious "minds." The dear Bishop is perfectly right in his assumption that religion is "not a thing in the head"; we have rarely heard a better definition. "Not a thing," my Lord!

More Christian love, or is it Christian patronage? The Rev. Harold Shephard assures his flock that "Professed Atheism is nothing new, but the real Atheist is undiscoverable." This is not mere lying. Mr. Shephard says, "I have spent time in search of him. . . . Once on Tower Hill" . . . Once! And on Tower Hill! Why not have tried the *Freethinker*, or the N.S.S.? Of course the obliging Tower Hill orator "admitted when questioned, that he too believed in 'Something behind all this.'" Why did not this Seeker after Atheists (real ones), try the Pope or the Bishop of London. He would have found that they too were not "real" Atheists.

We admire the agility of the Dean of St. Paul's. His use of the word "perhaps" is novel and notable. In a sermon on the "Resurrection and Immortality," he says, "I agree that it is, perhaps, impossible to harmonize the accounts of the Resurrection appearances of Jesus." The word "perhaps" is meaningless in such a sentence. So it is in another part of the same sermon where Dr. Matthews says: "Christianity without it (the Resurrection) would perhaps not cease to exist." And again, in claiming that in Paul's stories "we have the first-hand evidence of St. Paul. . . . Paul was perhaps more highly favoured than any since his time." Paul's "evidence" of the Resurrection is either the merest hearsay, or it is the kind of "evidence" that any nightmare or sunstroke gives anybody at any date anywhere.

At Deptford, evening services are arranged for the deaf and dumb, even for the deaf-dumb-blind. The average attendance is 167. We are informed that the minister does the attendants "all manner of good turns," such as finding work and interpreting at labour exchanges, hospitals, police courts, unemployment assistance boards and public assistance committees. After the sermon, a cinema is thrown in gratis. This is useful enough work, and it seems a pity to spoil it by throwing in a Gospel service gratis. Still the unfortunate attendants have probably an hour or two in a warm room, and the deaf-dumb-blind are freed from some of the troubles which beset church attendants more fortunately treated by Providence. Social work, with a relish of salvation in it, is always to be viewed with mixed feelings.



# THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2412.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

F. H. CURLE.—Thanks for your efforts to circulate *Humanity and War*.

S.W.W. (Jaggan, Australia).—Like the inhabitants of Pitcairn Island, British farmers are not in love with tithes. It is interesting to see in what shape the Church has "arrived" in the land colonized by the "Bounty" mutineers. Thanks for cutting.

P. E. LYONS.—Much obliged for cuttings. Always welcome.

H. WILLIAMS.—The question of republishing in book form the series of excerpts "Things Worth Knowing," is under consideration. Pleased to find that you have found them so helpful and interesting. As our only share in them is the selection, we can say quite plainly that we consider this one of the best series that has ever appeared in the *Freethinker*.

FOR Advertising and Circulating the *Freethinker*.—Dr. Har Dayal, £10; A.W., £1.

F. MUSTON.—One must not expect too much of our "Free" press, but some good is done by reminding these office-boy editors, that the nature of their policy is observed by others.

T. D. SMITH.—Thanks. Will be used next week.

W. R. ENGLISH and R. E. WAY.—Sorry did not reach us in time for this issue.

J. T. BRIGHTON.—Your letter will appear next week.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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

## Sugar Plums

Next week we hope to print the Agenda for the Annual Conference of the National Secular Society, so that this year Branches and individual members will have it in their hands in good time. As previously announced, the Conference will be held in London—the business meetings at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, and the evening Demonstration at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. Will visitors from the Provinces who are staying in London, and who wish information concerning hotel accommodation, kindly write the General Secretary as early as possible, stating length of stay and the kind of accommodation required.

We have received the following from Mr. H. N. Brailsford, in reply to our comments on his *Herald* article on William Godwin—

Your comment on my article on Godwin in the *Daily Herald* was correct as to fact, but if you will turn to my book on *Shelley, Godwin and Their Circle*, in the Home University Library you will find a full recognition of

his position as a Freethinker. He reached Unitarianism by a process of spontaneous development: his friend Holcroft made him for a time a militant Atheist. Later in life the word "Agnostic" would best describe him. One cannot say everything in an article of 1,200 words. I had to omit much more of the first importance. Godwin's essay on religion failed of its due effect, because he lacked the courage to publish it in his lifetime. His daughter, Mary Shelley, also suppressed it, and it appeared a whole generation after his death.

We are quite aware that one has to leave a number of things out when writing an article to fit a limited space. But we did not complain of things being left unsaid, but that the things that were said gave a quite unnecessary misrepresentation of Godwin's opinions with reference to religion. To have said that Godwin drifted from Calvinism to Freethought, or even "militant Atheism," to use Mr. Brailsford's own phrase, would have taken no more room than to have penned the misleading statement that he drifted towards Unitarianism. It is not enough to remind us that Godwin was treated with greater frankness in one of Mr. Brailsford's books. I was dealing with the article, and in the light of the policy of the English press never to permit a prominent man's rejection of religion to be known, if the fact can possibly be concealed. One looks to men like Mr. Brailsford to help break down this very contemptible form of censorship and misdirection. Unconsciously, I hope, Mr. Brailsford was supporting it. And for one reader of Mr. Brailsford's book there are a thousand readers of the *Herald*.

In a kindly notice of our illness, the *New York Truthseeker* remarks that we are suffering from hæmorrhage of the lungs. That is a mistake, the trouble was in the stomach, our lungs are quite good. The *Truthseeker* also remarks that we commenced lecturing in 1890. We used to think so, but found the actual year to be 1889. We are also reminded that this year sees us achieving twenty-one years of editorship of this paper. Officially this is the case, as many of our readers have reminded us, and many congratulations are already reaching us. But as a matter of fact we were actually editing the *Freethinker* for several years before the death of G. W. Foote.

The Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, in an address on Work and Leisure, at the Study School of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology at Exeter College, Oxford, said:—

I have thought for a time there ought to be no objection to people who find difficulty in getting exercise on other days of the week doing what they like in the way of games on Sundays.

Freethinkers have thought that for quite a long time, not being hampered in their thinking by what was supposed to have been written on tablets of stone, and other happenings down in Judæe. Still "values" in theological circles being what they are, this shows both common sense and a degree of courage.

The *Vanguard* is shortly to become a monthly, under the title of the *Socialist Vanguard*. We are not with the political work of the *Vanguard*. But it has always been straightforwardly, uncompromisingly Freethinking, and on that side of its work we recommend it to those of our readers whose social views will not be outraged by its militant politics. Its current number reviews the new Education Bill, and incidentally says:—

The Government's Bill raises considerations for Socialist policy which are now completely ignored by all the workers' parties which are represented in Parliament. For very good reasons it was once generally recognized that to strive for the separation of Church and State, and Church and School is an integral part of the Socialist aim. In the scramble for Christian votes these aims have been dropped and now are almost forgotten. Yet they are vital. Church schools exist primarily to further the ecclesiastical training of the young. That training is based on certain features which are incompatible with both educational and Socialist prin-

ciples. Usually fear of supernatural punishment is used as a whip, and the promise of heavenly reward as a prize, to secure submission to ecclesiastical authority and to mould the child mind in accordance with the "moral" dictates of the churches. Even where this is no longer the case, the teachers' authority is used to instil into the young a blind acceptance of religious creeds. Such instruction crushes healthy self-reliance and generates a state of mental and moral dependency dominated by the repressive burden of authority and fear.

We see that one of the Radio Stations in the U.S.A. has broadcasted a debate on the subject, "Is Mexico's Religious Policy Justified?" with the well-known Free-thinker, Mr. Joseph Lewis, taking the affirmative. We have noted several instances of this kind in the United States, which show far greater liberality and regard for freedom of expression than exists in this country.

## The World of Books

"EVERYONE thinks. Not everyone thinks clearly. Most people imagine they think clearly. Those who know they don't think clearly, are thinking clearer than those who don't." There is a solid truth in this opening passage of *Thinking*, by Professor H. Levy (Newnes, 5s.), that not a few readers should find illustrated in their own persons. For most people appear to be under the impression that to think about thinking is either quite unnecessary, or a quite fanciful indulgence in that bugbear of the lazy and muddle-minded,—splitting hairs. Yet, as each of Professor Levy's chapters well illustrates, there is not a serious problem before us to-day that would not be nearer a satisfactory solution if more people were capable of careful thinking, and if they appreciated all that careful thinking involves.

Professor Levy covers many aspects of life and his analyses of the problems to be solved are both stimulating and suggestive. But all the chapters are not on the same level of thoroughness, and taking one at each extreme of our liking and disliking we would name that dealing with the *creation* of scientific laws and that dealing with *Determinism and Free-will*. The first is a model of clear and careful reasoning. The latter illustrates a fault which is manifest more than once. This is, that in his desire to be simple, Professor Levy often becomes prolix and even obscure. Had Professor Levy set himself to the task of determining the meaning of such a word as "Free," he must have noted that it has no application at all in pure science, but that it is imported from sociology.

It began with the distinction between the slave and the free man, and, as was pointed out by Alexander Bain, passed from sociology to philosophy, in which department it had no legitimate place. In the end, Professor Levy appears to confuse the determination of choice with freedom of choice. Of the fact of the latter, as Hume said long ago, there could never have been with reasonable men any question whatever. That man has a choice, and that choice is *free*—so long as it is not subject to external coercion—there is no room for doubt. The determination of choice, why I prefer this to that, is another question, and the dispute with the indeterminist begins at this point. Professor Levy's explanation of a limited choice only serves to confuse the issue. When science borrows such a term as "free," it uses it in its sociological significance, as anything operating without coercion from other forces or substances.

We have emphasized a point of disagreement, but we strongly commend the work to all who appreciate the importance of fundamental thinking in all walks of life.

A new series of books from the firm of Chapman & Hall, under the general name of *Modern Sociologists*, makes an excellent start with two volumes, one on E. B. Tylor, by Dr. R. H. Marett, the other on a less known writer, Pareto, by Dr. Franz Borkeneau. For the book on Tylor one can have nothing but praise. Dr. Marett writes in terms of almost affection of Tylor's scientific bent of mind, and of the inestimable service Tylor rendered as the founder of the modern science of anthropology. And whatever modifications in the position of Tylor more recent investigation has demanded, there is no question of the soundness of the foundations laid by the Father of Modern Anthropology. The mere perusal of this study of a really great man and his work ought to send a great many of our arm-chair anthropologists travelling along the right road, and also a great many young men to the study of the "Master's" works. For it still remains true that whatever the student of social and religious evolution does not read, he cannot afford to miss Tylor.

\* \* \*

Professor Borkeneau's book will, with many, serve as an introduction to one whom we suspect is not well-known outside the ranks of close students of economics and sociology. An Italian holding a professorship in a Swiss University, he is, to us, mainly interesting because he offers one of the better reasoned defences of Fascism. We say the better reasoned, because there is here less of mere assertion and bombast and mere verbiage, than is common with Fascistic statements. And like many who take the economic field, either for or against Fascism, there is with Pareto the tendency to take the mere contingencies of economic situations as presenting one with a scientific law of social development. It may be true to say that, given a certain economic situation, such and such may result, or even has resulted, but it is a very different thing to assert that this happening presents us with a definite scientific "law" of social development.

Pareto hated both democracy and humanitarianism very heartily, and it is this hatred that, one is led to think, lies at the root of the theory of "élites." In sharp distinction to the Marxian who believes that social domination is a consequence of economic differences, Pareto holds that social domination is the expression of groups of "élites"—a number of individuals who are in some semi-miraculous manner gifted with the power of domination—and who emerge as a consequence of sheer biological superiority. Against this, Dr. Borkeneau quite properly urges the consideration that if this be true, how comes it that a ruling class, or ruling individuals, once the summit of domination has been reached, does not continue, but straightway begins to decay. On the other hand, if Pareto's generalization means no more than that domination is a consequence of certain individuals possessing certain qualities of mind or character, it seems to amount to no more than saying that people who dominate possess the qualities that make for domination. And that leaves out of sight cases, such as that of Hitler, where domination is secured by a mere figurehead who is used by others. Apart from this, Pareto's argument may be held to point to a conclusion quite different from the one he draws, namely, the desirability of a reduction of class influence to the point that would permit qualities socially developed to be applied to the general service of society. That would, of course, strike at the roots of social or class domination, and would tend in favour of some sort of Socialism; but, like his pet aversions, the Marxians, we fancy that

Pareto was often expounding a political or economic programme under the guise of a scientific discovery.

Still, Pareto, because of his ability to arouse "violent" opposition is an author to be read, and a good introduction to him is supplied by Dr. Borke-neau's excellent study. Both the studies of Tylor and Pareto are published by Chapman & Hall, at 6s.

\* \* \*

*Signs of the Times in Religion*, by Horace J. Bridges (Watts & Co., 7s. 6d.) consists of ten lectures delivered to Ethical Societies in the United States. They range over a variety of topics, and form pleasant enough reading. But there is not very much with which a Christian of the "advanced" type would find real fault, and much will probably be found "soothing" to those who fear that to part with the cruder form of the supernatural may lead to individual and national disaster. Dr. Bridges falls into the common error of believing that the world stands in need of mere "liberal" thought. It does not. What it requires most, and requires all the time, is accurate thought and strong thought. To champion the right of every opinion to expression, is not inconsistent with attacking an opinion without mercy when it has gained expression.

\* \* \*

The evident desire of Dr. Bridges to be as tolerant as possible to religious beliefs, leads to an uprightness that causes him to lean away from a scientific freethought. This is particularly noticeable in the lecture on "A Rational View of Mysticism." Dr. Bridge's "rational view" (what a question-begging phrase that is!) of "mysticism" is to extend it to all kinds of imaginative thinking, and by so extending the word, making it quite useless to anyone. But "mysticism," in the religious sense, has a fairly definite connotation, and, in the religious sense, the explanation given by Dr. Leuba, and many others—an explanation from which Dr. Bridges dissents—is strictly and demonstrably scientific. To read into an opponent's case a meaning which that opponent repudiates, as does Dr. Bridges, is not a very satisfactory procedure; this is not liberality; it is at best no more than an amiable desire to be on good terms with everybody.

\* \* \*

One consequence of this is to breed a likelihood of doing an injustice to one's friends. For instance, Dr. Bridges, in dealing with Leuba, falls back upon that very much abused phrase, the difficulty of setting hard-and-fast limits to what is possible. He thinks this is an expression of the scientific instinct. We doubt it; for it is the measure of our scientific progress to be able to say what is possible and what is not. "The scientific instinct" (again a very loose phrase) consists mainly in the conviction that increasing knowledge will permit us to say what is possible and what is not. Knowledge *must* substitute impossible for possible, otherwise it is mere fantasy.

Another illustration of the evil of trying to make terms with an enemy with whom no honourable terms can be made, is seen in a mis-statement of Hume's position with regard to miracles. Dr. Bridges says that Hume's argument against miracles would "render impossible any enlargement of experience." It would do nothing of the kind. It would only keep belief along lines of experience, and ask for increased evidence when the thing we are asked to believe runs counter to previous experience. That is in accord with both the "scientific instinct," and also with common sense.

Two novels issued by Messrs. Watts & Co., each at 7s. 6d., again raise the question of the use of the novel as a vehicle of propaganda. There can be no *prima facie* objection to this, but it may safely be said that the propaganda, while it may be pervasive, must not be obtrusive. The book must not, if it is to be a good novel, read as though the sole purpose for writing it is the propagation of a particular set of ideas. When this is the case character drawing suffers, and the play of circumstances on a supposed character loses most, if not all, of its scientific character. A writer who is skilled in the art of dialogue and can use his dummies as the mouthpiece for witty and lively conversations and topical "preachments," may get it away with it, as so often does Mr. Bernard Shaw, but it requires great skill and a natural capacity for depicting dramatic situations. When these qualities are not evident then the novel suffers, and the reader is left at the mercy of a series of somewhat detached situations that are obviously invented for the purpose of "putting over" certain ideas.

\* \* \*

It cannot be said that either of the two books before us can successfully claim to pass the test of a good propagandist novel. The first one, *A New Earth and a New Heaven*, by W. B. Hill, is mainly concerned with a suspiciously wise teacher—for whose wisdom and general profundity we have to take the author's word, as the specimens provided are sonorous or pompous without being profound or impressive—and a young man who is terribly surprised at being told things about science and religion with which any moderately read person should be well acquainted. There are also a number of "occult" occurrences, that are impressive until one recalls the fact that we have no evidence that they ever happened. As to the "New Earth," it is rather risky to challenge comparison with such writers as H. G. Wells. There are quite a number of well-known things that are said about the character of orthodox religious belief, and the tyranny and obstructive character of the Churches, and to some this may compensate for other things.

\* \* \*

The other novel *Gods Divide* (by A. D. Howell Smith) reaches a rather higher level of workmanship, but it is also marked with the fault of a too obtrusive propaganda. It is the story of a young man, originally intended for the Church, but who is led into grave doubts as to the reliability of Christian doctrinal teaching. In a rather curious pilgrimage the hero of the book makes acquaintance with Spiritualism; with Buddhism, which is very sympathetically treated; and for some reason, not made quite clear, the pilgrim finally lands in the Roman Church, and dies at the end of an impassioned sermon. One would like to have seen the principal character made of sterner stuff, and there does not seem any sufficient reason why he should not have been so fashioned. Still, there is about *Gods Divide* a certain air of reality, and much of it reads as a record of an actual experience. As the story of the struggle of a mind not over robust in character, and torn this way and that by domestic and other ties, the book has its interest. There must be a large number of such tragedies where common sense has to struggle against the influence of home and social standing in the effort to lead a life that is intellectually sane.

QUONDAM.

---

There is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less.—*Bacon*.

## Supernatural Authority

HOWEVER etherealized, an alleged supernatural state is simply a projection of a human state; and an alleged supernatural being is simply a projection of a human being. Thus, for example, God is advertised as the occupant of the Great White Throne—as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. What is this but a resultant of the process whereby human beings have made their earthly Kings and Lords? The Heavenly State is the perfected human political state; and the God who governs it is but the perfected projection of the most powerful human being known on earth. Ultimately the most powerful personality subjects all others to his sway, and the Throne of God like the Throne of any Earthly ruler depends for its permanence upon Force.

In all theological teaching, we find the recognition of this projected naturalism into perfected supernaturalism. The human being who embraces the dogmas and doctrines of theology, and practises what he is told to practise in conformity with such dogmas and doctrines finally evolves into a sanctified supernatural being fit to serve as a subject of the occupant of the Great White Throne in Heaven. And from the economic standpoint the subject has to find the means of maintaining the Ruler and his State. Thus we have the line of the hymn:—

To his feet thy tribute bring.

When we reflect, we cannot but realize that the supernatural system is in the estimation of religious leaders just a perfected political system of which they approve; and until the Great War (with a few notable exceptions) the King of any Kingdom on Earth was regarded as a sub-God—that is, an accredited deputy of the occupant of the Great White Throne in Heaven.

Most theological teachers, if they had their way, would restore the "divine right" of Kings. In a Republic they are faced with the difficulty that the general opinion of the people is against Royalty for governmental purposes; but even in America, Christians sing the same hymns that they sing here; and very many of these contain adulatory references to the "King of Kings." It was a secularistic conception and outlook that founded and established Republics. It is a theological conception and outlook that longs for the re-establishment of regal authority in every land because that is in line with the theological proclamation that all human beings are (or should be) subjects of a supernatural monarch; and to achieve that condition they ought first of all to undergo the experience of being the subjects of a regal sub-god on earth. When the American Colonies rebelled, there can be no doubt that the most emphatic supporters of George III., in his blundering policy were priests and parsons. These black-coated reactionaries had the majority of politicians inoculated with their pernicious ideas. The result of acting on them was a very humiliating one for Britain.

Lord Auchinleck (Jimmy Boswell's father) told Dr. Johnson that Cromwell taught Kings that they had a lith in their necks. But there are still to-day many people who share the point of view of that wonderful conversationalist, but cringing and abject believer in the supernatural, Dr. Samuel Johnson. After all, it is force that maintains monarchy—that is in so far as monarchy lays down the law to the people. Napoleon is an outstanding example of a powerful personality sprung from obscurity, who made himself Emperor and created many Kings.

Religion in the struggle between the Authoritarian and the Libertarian is ever on the side of the former.

And in essentials even the most non-conforming churches (so-called) copy the oldest Established Churches in their garb, formulæ and ritual. The most advanced Protestants if shut up to a choice between Romanism and Secularism would undoubtedly choose the former. They cannot think of anyone who is not subject to authority of some kind. And at any rate everyone in their estimation must for their soul's salvation and eternal well-being be systematically subject to supernatural authority—whose existence has never been proved.

Limited and mediocre intelligences are unable to conceive of human betterment without the supervision of a supernatural being because they have been poisoned with the dope of traditionalism. But a careful reading of history shows that ethics have never been advanced by a profound belief in supernaturalism. On the contrary! A greater kindness and consideration for others are the fruits of secularistic endeavour and humanistic propaganda.

IGNORUS.

## A Great Danger

In the last few years the social reforming zeal of the churches has become powerful. The problems of peace, housing, poverty, and the like have received earnest and sincere attention from religious leaders and Christian people. Critics have rightly pointed out the lateness of the awakening, but they concede that there has been an awakening. The present writer's intention is not to deny this renaissance, but to assess the worth of it.

It might be advisable at first to inquire the reason for it. It may be argued that it is due to the clergy itself feeling the crisis by diminution in some cases of its income, or to a demand upon the part of churchgoers for guidance upon social matters. Or, more to the mark, I think, it may be said that the churches are trying, by means of adding concern for the material welfare of their flocks to their concern for their spiritual welfare, to increase the benefits of being Christian, and to regain their ascendancy over the people. Certainly, only now could it happen that a high church dignitary like the Archbishop of York could urge Christians, as he did at a recent meeting of Christian social welfare workers at the Albert Hall, to make themselves "public nuisances" if necessary until certain social abuses had been removed. And only now could he be applauded and echoed by his fellows as he was. Again, strange coincidence, it is only now that the churches have felt the attack from Rationalism and Freethinking so severely as to make them anxious to do anything which will hold the people.

Apparently then, the churches mean to present themselves as leaders in sociological thought by trotting out the old ideas on social matters, and persuading people to accept them and their dominion in return for this "leadership." Clever exploitation by ambitious clergymen of the revival of interest in sociology, for church ends, is largely responsible for the relatively small decrease in churchgoing in this country. This criticism of Christian social leadership is not saying that the clergymen who have taken a strong stand on social problems are rascals: some, I believe, are honest men ready, perhaps, to face martyrdom for their convictions. Unfortunately, it is rationalism in the broadest sense, that the world wants, not "strong stands" or "martyrs," both of which give birth to fanatic opposition and adherence,

terrible twins whose growth leads to eventual dictatorship.

This new social interest of the church is fraught with extreme danger. Clear thinking has never been a prerogative of Christianity. Almost always it has come out on the side of the big battalions. Primarily emotional, it derives its creed from the social ideas of the Roman Empire which embraced and moulded it, and it has in it, therefore, nothing seriously inimical to the ideas of that time, only a preaching of social justice to the poor coupled with support in any crisis, of the economic masters. Its interests are set in the present system; in the main, the money for its upkeep as well as its privileges come from people who are upholders of things as they are. Its supporters, where not conscious reactionaries, are pious believers in Christianity and this world with a slight leavening of social justice. This social justice is not, of course, to disturb any of the fundamentals. It is a strange mentality. In a modern, mechanized civilization it has a strange and dangerous outcome.

An example of what it produces is afforded by the programme of the Christian Pacifists in this country. They have no thought-out policy for preventing war: they simply refuse to fight, which declaration is accompanied by much emotional explanatory trimming. In the political sphere, there are Christian groups like the Industrial Christian Fellowship. Their work is confined to preaching the necessity of brotherly love between economic classes, in place of the abuses which they expose by propaganda. The membership of these societies is drawn from Christians of all sorts, progressives as well as extreme reactionaries, which makes their policy vacillatory and a mere pious philanthropy. Most of the people in these societies are concerned for a little reform to restore law and order and respect for authority. The Christian Social Party in pre-Hitler Germany, which contained a large number of clergymen, and was largely supported by Christians, had a similarly simple and emotional policy of social reform. It was quite easy for the Nazis to delude them with vague promises of social reform to obtain their support. A similar fate overtook all the German Christian political parties. But for the tactlessness of the Nazis in trying to manufacture a racial religion to effect social cohesion, the German Christians would not be making their present protests against Hitlerism. It was remarkable with what equanimity German Christians accepted the destruction of everything dear to a civilized community as it is equally remarkable with what determination they are now resisting the establishment of another religion.

In the United States of America, an infant democracy like Germany was, the Churches have emerged more prominently as leaders in social reforming movements than they have in this country. President Roosevelt had a large church backing two or three years ago, but on account of his move towards conservatism, this is being steadily lost to men like Father Coughlin, the radio priest-politician, and the late Senator Huey Long of Louisiana. These men are being financed by the big banks to fight Roosevelt, but their opinions are, in their origins, genuine expressions of the lower middle classes who have been severely hit by the depression, and who form a large proportion of churchgoers. Their political opinions, as Father Coughlin enunciates them, are very crude and are violently held. They dislike high finance, big business and all forms of advanced political theory. They advocate a re-distribution of wealth with a fierceness that is equalled only by their ignorance of social problems and the mechanics of civilization.

Father Coughlin, who is a Roman Catholic priest of a middle west church, obtained by some means, sufficient money to buy broadcasting time on one of the many commercial stations of the American broadcasting system. At first he was solely a radio evangelist. Then he acquired views on social problems, a shade only removed from those of Fascism. His political broadcasts, resounding with the cries of his class and religion, brought him a huge following, computed by competent observers to be about ten millions. His influence is proved by the responses given to his appeals for various charitable objects. He has only to broadcast for a few minutes to receive many thousands of dollars next morning for his funds. By these means he has bought his own radio station, and thereby made himself a power in American politics. His power now is equal to big things. His broadcast propaganda against America joining the World Court of the League of Nations was largely contributory to the storm against America's entry which prevented it.

It is a sad commentary on the state of politics that such men as Coughlin should be threatening intelligent progressive forces everywhere. What is of more importance, however, is the fateful charm which such people and their programmes exercise upon church people. Middle-class mainly, in origin and religious by intellect, they are ready victims for demagogues like Hitler, Dollfuss, Mussolini and Coughlin, who know how to clothe their political ideas in Christian patterns. They appeal to Christian ideals of social justice, and they defend religion against its radical detractors.

Their appeal is stronger because it does not involve clear thinking and its concomitant self-examination and relinquishment of cherished ideals. They do not deal with the mechanical problems of a society but remain, ostensibly, within the field of pure morals. They distinguish between good and bad capitalism, and that distinction is dear to the heart of every pious moralist. It is a necessary function from a moral point of view, but it is confusing in politics.

Their political programme, designed to accomplish social justice, proposes to do this without making any basic changes in the present scheme of economic and industrial production. It aims at the satisfaction of two prominent characteristics in the religious temper, resentment against present-day injustice and fear of a thorough-going re-organization of our economic life. With this programme they hope to preserve the privileges of their position on earth, just as they would secure through religion, their privileges in heaven. Briefly, their programme is simple enough to appeal to the imagination of simple people.

The churches and church-people stand for these simple and dangerous social ideas, mainly because Christian leadership, orthodox and liberal, has preached for decades on problems of social justice without understanding that justice in human society is only partly the consequence of moral intention, and largely the product of adequate instruments and mechanisms of social life. A good man can only slightly improve, through philanthropy and kindness, the injustices which flow from our society. Every moral problem becomes a problem in social mechanics when it comes to its application. But it is in this application that the religious mind, Christianity in this case, fails always, for while its intentions may be good—to make all men sinless is a praiseworthy enough ideal—its method of doing it is faulty, because of its distrust of reason.

The Fascist defence of religion against its radical critics is a natural source of strength to it in the religious world. It is obviously not interested, genuinely, in the maintenance of Christian values. It is

only shrewdly aware of the fact that historic religions still have power in the western world, and it therefore seeks to harness this force to its political chariot. It couples with this an emotional outburst against injustice, and thus provides a creed to which Christians can quite honestly subscribe if, as seems likely, they do not initiate a political creed very much like it on their own, as they are doing in America. Therein lies a great danger to civilization.

L. H. BORRILL.

## Correspondence

AS OTHERS SEE US

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—I am glad to see that Medicus so far agrees with what I wrote on "Medicine and Freethought." As some weeks have elapsed, however, many readers may—like Medicus—not now see the bearing of my criticism on his article. To understand that, we must look back.

The "affair" began on November 24, 1935, by a letter on "Magic and Medicine," by Mr. Don Fisher. On December 1, 1935, W. L. English, M.B., accused Mr. Fisher of destroying "the whole structure of modern Medicine." Then, on December 8, 15 and 22, 1935, appeared one further letter from Dr. English and two from W. Don Fisher. On January 12, 1936, the article "As Others See Us," by Medicus, followed.

I read that article three times; and the idea it gave me was that Medicus somewhat resented the manner, if not the matter, of W. Don Fisher's criticism. So, he said to himself, if I feel like that about such criticism of the Medical Profession; what must an educated clergyman think about similar criticism of religion? "If our accounts of clerical life compare in their general tone, in the spirit of their outlook at the accuracy of their representation, with Mr. Fisher's account of the medical world, what must the more educated section of the clergy think of us?"

Medicus seems to adopt quite a "superior" tone and attitude towards poor Freethought propagandists. He excuses them—partly—by the fact that they are propagandists. This doesn't hit me; because Medicus acknowledges my "good humoured way": besides, my criticism of religion is always mild in manner; if incisive, dialectically! Whether Mr. Fisher be right or wrong—and he needs no help from me—there is nothing in his letters to merit the implications of Medicus. Further, when I think of the Freethought "Propagandists" whom I am proud to call "friends," I consider my criticism not only justified, but having a direct bearing upon the article by Medicus.

ATHOSO ZENOO.

## Society News

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S.

At the Annual General Meeting held on April 5, the following were elected as Officers and Committee for the ensuing year. President, Conneillor George Hall; Secretary, Wm. Collins, "Rosamund," Andrew Lane, High Lane, near Stockport; Propaganda Secretary, Mr. B. Dunstan; Literature Secretary, Mr. C. McCall; Committee: Messrs. Bayford, Black (C. H.), Blaney, Atkinson, Freeman, Monks, Newton and Mrs. McCall. A Propaganda Committee was elected consisting of Messrs. Atkinson, C. H. Black, Blaney, McCall and Mrs. McCall, with Mr. Dunstan as Secretary, to arrange for outdoor lectures during the Summer. Mr. C. E. Turner was again elected Auditor, and Messrs. Hall, McCall and Collins Conference Delegates.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON

OUTDOOR

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Mr. L. Ebury. Highbury Corner, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury. Monday, April 27, South Hill Park, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.30 and 6.30, Messrs. Bryant, Gee, Wood and Tuson. *Freethinker* on sale at Kiosk. Should be ordered in advance to avoid disappointment.

INDOOR

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"Democracy, Discipline and Force."

COUNTRY

INDOOR

LEEDS BRANCH N.S.S. (Trades Hall, Room C, Upper Fountain Street, Leeds): 8.0, Mr. Searle (Bradford)—"The Ice Ages and the Evolution of Man."

SUNDERLAND BRANCH N.S.S. (Co-operative Hall, Green Street): 7.0, Mr. Charlton—A Lecture.

OUTDOOR.

BLACKBURN MARKET, 7.0, Sunday, April 26, Mr. J. Clayton. BLYTH (Market Place): 7.0, Monday, April 27, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

BURNLEY MARKET, 7.30, Tuesday, April 28, Mr. J. Clayton. SOUTH SHIELDS (Market Place): 7.0, Wednesday, April 29, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

STOCKTON BRANCH N.S.S., 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

## PRIMITIVE SURVIVALS IN MODERN THOUGHT

By

CHAPMAN COHEN

Cloth, gilt, 2s. 6d. Postage 2d. Stiff paper  
1s. 6d. Postage 2d.

THE PIONEER PRESS,  
61 Farringdon St., London,  
E.C.4.

## LETTERS TO THE LORD

Chapman Cohen

This work shows Mr. Cohen at his best  
and his wittiest.

Price 1s. By post 1s. 2d. Cloth, by post 2s. 2d.

Issued for the Secular Society, Limited by  
the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon St., E.C.4  
LONDON

# ARMS AND THE CLERGY

BY

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH

Price 1s. By post 1s. 2d. Cloth, gilt, by post 2s. 8d.

The Pioneer Press,  
61 Farringdon Street, London,  
E.C.4

# Letters To a Country Vicar

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

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

# History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science

BY

Prof. J. W. DRAPER

Price 2s. Postage 4½d.

# The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus

BY

W. A. CAMPBELL

Cloth 2s. Postage 2d.

# Paganism in Christian Festivals

BY

J. M. WHEELER

Price 1s. Postage 1½d.

## ACADEMY CINEMA,

Oxford Street. Ger. 2981

The gayest film of the season!

MARTA EGGERTH in "LIEBESMELODIE" (A)

Music by FRANZ LEHAR

# UNWANTED CHILDREN

In a Civilized Community there should be no UNWANTED Children.

An Abridged List (16 pages) of Birth Control Requisites and Books sent post free for a 1½d. stamp.

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

ESTABLISHED NEARLY HALF A CENTURY

# NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY.

President - - - CHAPMAN COHEN.

General Secretary - R. H. ROSETTI.

68 FARRINGDON STREET, LONDON, E.C. 4

THE National Secular Society was founded in 1866 by Charles Bradlaugh. He remained its President until shortly before his death, and the N.S.S. has never ceased to live up to the tradition of "Thorough" which Bradlaugh by his life so brilliantly exemplified.

The N.S.S. is the only organization of militant Freethinkers in this country. It aims to bring into one body all those who believe the religions of the world to be based on error, and to be a source of injury to the best interests of Society. It claims that all political laws and moral rules should be based upon purely secular considerations. It is without sectarian aims or party affiliations.

If you appreciate the work that Bradlaugh did, if you admire the ideals for which he lived and fought, it is not enough merely to admire. The need for action and combined effort is as great to-day as ever. You can best help by filling up the attached form and joining the Society founded by Bradlaugh.

### PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTS.

SECULARISM affirms that this life is the only one of which we have any knowledge, and that human effort should be wholly directed towards its improvement: it asserts that supernaturalism is based upon ignorance, and assails it as the historic enemy of progress.

Secularism affirms that progress is only possible on the basis of equal freedom of speech and publication; it affirms that liberty belongs of right to all, and that the free criticism of institutions and ideas is essential to a civilized State.

Secularism affirms that morality is social in origin and application, and aims at promoting the happiness and well-being of mankind.

Secularism demands the complete secularization of the State, and the abolition of all privileges granted to religious organizations; it seeks to spread education, to promote the fraternity of peoples as a means of advancing international peace, to further common cultural interests, and to develop the freedom and dignity of man.

The Funds of the National Secular Society are legally secured by Trust Deed. The trustees are the President, Treasurer and Secretary of the Society, with two others appointed by the Executive. There is thus the fullest possible guarantee for the proper expenditure of whatever funds the Society has at its disposal.

The following is a quite sufficient form for anyone who desires to benefit the Society by legacy:—

I hereby give and bequeath (*Here insert particulars of legacy*), free of all death duties, to the Trustees of the National Secular Society for all or any of the purposes of the Trust Deed of the said Society.

### MEMBERSHIP

Any person is eligible as a member on signing the following declaration:

I desire to join the National Secular Society, and I pledge myself, if admitted as a member, to co-operate in promoting its objects.

Name .....

Address.....

Occupation .....

Dated this ..... day of ..... 19...

This declaration should be transmitted to the Secretary with a subscription.

P.S.—Beyond a minimum of Two Shillings per year, every member is left to fix his own subscription according to his means and interest in the cause.

## ABYSSINIA AND SLAVERY

*for* the whole question on the  
historic relations between  
Christianity and Slavery and the  
general attitude of the  
Churches towards Labour *read*

### Christianity, Slavery and Labour

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

Cloth 2s 6d.

Postage 3d.

## HISTORICAL JESUS AND THE MYTHICAL CHRIST

NEW EDITION

GERALD MASSEY

Price 6d. Postage 1d.

Issued for the Secular Society, Limited, by  
the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon St., E.C.4

## Realistic Aphorisms and Purple Patches

By ARTHUR FALLOWS, M.A.

320 pages.

Paper Covers 3/6.

Postage 4d.

(All Cloth copies sold).

## MOTHER OF GOD

BY

G. W. FOOTE

Post Free

2½d.

## THE MIRACLES OF ST. MARTIN

BY

G. CLAYTON DOYE

Price post free

7d.

## BRADLAUGH AND INGERSOLL

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

Price 2s. 6d.

Postage 3d.

## SELECTED HERESIES

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

Cloth, Gilt 3s. 6d.

Postage 3d.

## Footsteps of the Past

BY

J. M. WHEELER

Price 3s. 6d.

Postage 3d.

## FOUR LECTURES on FREETHOUGHT and LIFE

By Chapman Cohen.

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

Price - One Shilling. Postage 1½d.

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