

THE FREETHINKER

• EDITED by CHAPMAN COHEN •

— Founded 1881 —

VOL. LVII.—No. 20

SUNDAY, MAY 16, 1937

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

	Page
<i>God Save the King!—The Editor</i> - - - -	305
<i>Big Business and the Bishops—Mimmermus</i> - - - -	306
<i>God and Man—T. H. Elstob</i> - - - -	307
<i>Black and White in Southern Africa—T. F. Palmer</i> - - - -	309
<i>The Church and the People—L. M. Angus Butterworth</i> - - - -	310
<i>Saints and Angels—H. Cutner</i> - - - -	314
<i>Henry Hetherington—1792-1849—Ambrose G. Barker</i> - - - -	315
<i>Hunting. "Ecrasez L'Infame!"—G. Todhunter</i> - - - -	316
<i>To Widen the Freethinking Front—Jack Lindsay</i> - - - -	317

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

Views and Opinions

God Save The King!

MANY people are under the impression that the Coronation ceremony at Westminster Abbey is an essential part of the function of creating a King of Great Britain. This is altogether wrong. Whatever the character of the King or the wisdom of hereditary succession, the new King is there the moment the old King dies, or abdicates, and functions fully so soon as he has taken the accession oath as prescribed by law. The people living have nothing to do with it, Parliament—until it passes a law altering the method of creating a King—has nothing to do with it. One King automatically follows another. Edward VIII. was King the moment George V. died. George VI. became King the moment Edward VIII. abdicated. He was not even King by "the grace of God"—that comes later, at Westminster Abbey. The throne is never vacant; the country is never without a King; and when the accession oath is taken, the installation of the new King is complete. Nothing is added to the earthly and human character of the King by the Coronation Service. What the Coronation Service does is an altogether distinct thing. If it never occurred George VI. would be no less King of England than he is to-day. It is necessary to bear this consideration in mind, properly to understand what follows.

But I must point out that while the King in his secular aspect is an elected King, he is not elected by the people of to-day. The wisdom of our ancestors in 1688 determined who should be King in 1937, as well as who should reign before and after that date. The people living at any time after 1688, as Edmund Burke explained, have nothing whatever to do with it—the King is King, "in contempt of their choice." This relieving of the people of the power to choose a King, when one looks at the character, mental and moral, of many of our Kings since the Act of Settlement, certainly clears them of a heavy responsibility. But in the opinion of our ancestors of 1688 the office of

the King was too important for contemporary peoples to decide who should fill it. We owe George VI., as we owed Edward VIII. and previous monarchs, to the spiritual vision of the Government of 1688, a Government that was not very remarkable for wisdom in any other direction. No Government in these degenerate days would dare to lay down rules in perpetuity for the clearing of garbage from the streets; the greater should be our admiration for the supreme wisdom of these people of 1688 for their prescience and courage in so admirably arranging for the Kings of all future times, and for the head of an Empire long before that Empire comes into existence. When we have this example of foresight before us, a foresight which on our own confession, makes us the best people in the world, with the best country in the world, the best judges in the world, and the finest Government in the world—without which we might become as are the poor French or American people—there is little grounds for anyone objecting to the marvels of Biblical prophecy.

* * *

The Coronation

We must then get completely out of our heads the idea that the Coronation Service has any essential connexion with the recognition of the King, or with the creating of the King. In the proper sense of the word he does not represent the people at all, for representation implies appointment, and the King of England is not appointed by any person or by any group of persons now living. He stands for that kind of representation which existed in the days of "pocket boroughs." The "big shot" of the district decided who was to "represent" the constituency in Parliament, and it was the duty of the people so represented to applaud the selection. The only people the King can be said to represent are those who lived in 1688. Our duty as loyal, intelligent citizens is to applaud their choice, and to admire their foresight in the unavowed assumption that the people of subsequent times could not be trusted to choose for themselves. But the performance at Westminster Abbey, with the theatrical rehearsal of all the actors, from the principals down to the horses, adds nothing whatever to the status or power of the King as head of the State.

The Coronation, as the Archbishops and Bishops have taken great pains to assure us, is a purely magical ceremony. It converts the King who is, until the Coronation, a mere man, into the voice of God, to whom the peers and people promise "earthly worship." There are certain material considerations connected with it, and which a cunning priesthood takes care are always present. But omitting the promise of the King to "preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England, all . . . rights and privileges," without which the Archbishop would wash his hands of the whole business, the essence of the whole performance is the repetition of the very primitive ceremony of converting the King into an incarnation of the tribal god.

It is found in use to-day among primitive peoples, and the essentials of the Westminster Coronation service may actually be found in the tribal ceremonies of the Fiji Islanders.

* * *

A Royal Gallery

We are trying to understand by what method a Royal Family which, a little more than a century ago, actually stood lower than any other Royal Family has ever stood in this country, finds its recent representatives almost deified. Never did a succession of monarchs offer less promising material for this transformation than did the House of Brunswick, now the House of Windsor. From George I. to William IV. they were treated with contempt by the larger portion of the inhabitants, and some of the brightest names in the literature and public life of their times made no secret of their feelings. The first George was unable to speak English, and was noted for his taste for elderly and ugly mistresses. No one has claimed that George II., III., IV., and William IV., stood very high in the estimation of the people. Dr. Johnson gave it as his opinion that if a vote of the country were taken the people would recall the Stuarts. And, indeed, Charles II. and William III. were the last English monarchs in this country for whom one could feel any genuine intellectual respect. The author of *Coronation Commentary*, which makes out as good a case for the Royal Family as can be done with decency, and which follows the plan of saying all that can be said against Edward VIII. with the design of exciting sympathy for his successor, says of the standing of male members of the Royal Family at the beginning of the nineteenth century:—

Their country loathed them. For their sordid and quarrelsome lives; their vices, their venality; their debts which an impoverished and over-taxed nation had to pay, and pay, and pay again; for their brutal reactionary politics. The Duke of Wellington declared that the Royal Dukes had "insulted, personally insulted two-thirds of the gentlemen of England," and that they were "the damnedest millstones about the neck of any Government that could be imagined." To the common people, to moderate decent men, to idealists like Godwin and Shelley, they made it nightmare plain that royalty was tyranny, oppression, beastliness.

Maybe the Prince of Wales had taste and charm; the Duke of York courage, the Dukes of Clarence and Kent good nature; the Duke of Cumberland, the horrible one-eyed man with the Moustaches, ability. In the eyes of the English people they were a crew of thieves, bullies, scoundrels, sots and rakes.

And of George IV. :—

Unlike the rest of the Hanoverians he was a coward. To his people the First Gentleman in Europe looked more like its last blackguard. On his gross person he spent literally millions of the country's money. He betrayed the liberalism he had affected. He was fat, false, bestially selfish, dissolute, drunken. He was hated savagely. The best proof of his frightful unpopularity is that he could confer a measure of popularity on so frightful a person as his wife.

Despite even George the Fourth the throne survived. . . . William Fourth inspired less hatred than his brother—he was a friendly old fool, and doted on his ten illegitimate children—but not more respected. His half-draft speeches were the terror of the Ministry and the joke of the country, while behind him loomed the shape of the ogreish Duke of Cumberland, who might well become the next King; whose accession, commented a member of the upper class, would be the occasion for suppressing the post altogether. King Billy was jeered at in public, hooted and pelted as he came back from the play.

At the beginning of Victoria's reign the outlook was not very promising for the monarchy. She was too

young to have scandals connected with her name, but her mother bore none too good a character, and later the prudery of the time was angered over the fact that the Prince Consort's mother had been divorced. Victoria began her reign burdened with the character of her family, and the traditions of the last five English Kings, and it was openly said in all sorts of directions that the days of the English monarchy were numbered. One of Victoria's achievements was that of commencing as a very poor woman and ending her life as, reputedly, one of the wealthiest women in Europe. Certainly the time had not arrived when the semi-deification of the King was possible. In any case the deification of a Queen was impossible, minus a King. In the primitive form of the Coronation of a chief, it is, as we shall see, the *man* that is the first figure.

Of course the same Coronation Service was in use. Nearly every paper in the country, to say nothing of the heads of the Church, has reminded the people that the Coronation Service remains unchanged in substance, and goes back a thousand years in our history. The "thousand years" is an unusual piece of modesty on the part of the priesthood. It goes back for hundreds of thousands of years. It comes to us direct from the jungle; and but for the greater cost, the glittering diamonds and the claim to be cultured by those taking part in the ceremony, through the silk and satins of the women, and the gorgeous pantomimic dress of the King and the peers, Westminster Abbey is repeating the ceremony by which the primitive King assumed the power to send rain, to make the earth fertile, and to give his people victory in war.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

(To be continued)

Big Business and the Bishops

"Our reformers knock off the head from Jupiter, but thunderbolt and sceptre still stand."—Landor.

OWNERS of mining royalties are to be bought out by the British Government for £66,450,000, thus ending another unjust imposition against which reformers have fought for so many years. It has always seemed odd to miners that coal should be taxed to provide incomes for the owners of the top-soil, but vested interests are proverbially long-lived, and landlords hard to dislodge. Titled and landed gentry make up the bulk of the owners, but the largest individual royalty owners are the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, acting for the Church of England, whose total income is £370,000 a year from the product of the coal-miners' labours. This huge revenue is to be bought out at fifteen years' purchase, and the Anglican Church modestly adds a few more millions to its accumulated and ill-gotten wealth.

This smart financial transaction follows the redemption of the title, or "sacred tenth," imposed for ages on the unfortunate farmers, which was bought out recently for £60,000,000 by the Government. It will be seen that, even under the shadow of coming disestablishment, Mother Church is still actively engaged in the pleasant pursuit of feathering her nest. And, unless the reformers are very alert, this most reactionary church will become even more wealthy, and more capable of mischief as the years roll by.

Flushed with his victory over Royalty, and emboldened by the bishops' interference in home and foreign politics, the Archbishop of Canterbury is now leading a crusade with the object of recalling people to religion. In other words, he is seeking to strengthen the power of his Church. So adroit is he that he has already enlisted the sympathies of leading

Nonconformists, who think, in the innocence of their hearts, that those hereditary enemies the Anglican Church and Dissenters can trot amicably side-by-side in double harness.

Let us not fall into the error of under-rating our enemies. When the Church of England and the Nonconformists do agree their unanimity is wonderful and injurious in the extreme. Recall the clerical coalition in 1870, when Secular Education was sacrificed to make room for a bastard system, known as the "compromise," which satisfied neither the Churchmen nor the "Intellectuals," and has retarded real education for three generations.

This inclusion of the Christian fetish-book in the school official curriculum gave priestcraft an extended lease of life in this country, which was all that the Black Army wanted. Priests do not care for education, except as a means for furthering their own ends. When a national system of education was introduced in 1870 by the State, the bulk of the population was illiterate, although priests had almost absolute power for centuries. When free and compulsory education was enforced by the State the clergy promptly had their own sectarian schools supported by the taxpayer, and there they remain to this day, the scandal of the teaching profession and the despair of all true educationalists.

To make frequent presents of millions of public money to a Church which has always proved herself the determined enemy of Democracy is to lay up a plentiful store of future trouble. The sacred title was a most unjust tax, and ought never to have been imposed on the unfortunate farmers. It should have been terminated without compensation. The royalties on coal, which mean a tax on miners' labour were as unjust and as iniquitous. Neither should ever have been levied at all. What makes the matter worse is that the money was used by this church for the furtherance of superstition and the upkeep of an army of charlatans, who are the bitterest and most determined enemies of Democracy. The old Radicals knew this, and were to a man Anti-Clerical, but the present Socialist Party, in their intense desire to seek new voters, "lays low and say nuffin'." The present position is worsened by the presence of so many Nonconformist clergy and ex-clergymen in the Labour ranks. On matters affecting religion these priests and ex-priests are as reactionary as the Tory Die-Hards, and the Labour opposition, instead of fighting with the strength of an army is as impotent as a corporal's guard, whilst the Church is entrenched behind millions of money and enjoys State support.

Priests like people to think that religion is without money and without price, as something utterly remote from commercialism. Yet the balance-sheet of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners shows, beyond all cavil and dispute, that the so-called Church of England is one of the biggest businesses in the whole country. In its latest financial report Government and other securities amounted to £32,474,654 and cash assets to £34,516,233. These two amounts added together make this Anglican Church one of the wealthiest of religious organizations, and justifies the sneer of Dean Swift that religion is nothing but a trade.

This money, together with the support of the State, is the secret of the Church of England's power. Take both away and this powerful Anglican Church sinks at once to the level of other sectarian bodies, which rely upon the offerings of the faithful. As she now stands Mother Church is not a benevolent grandmother, but a greedy wolf bent on plunder and mischievous to a degree. That the House of Commons fails to realize this state of affairs is remarkable, but the circumstance recalls George Eliot's sarcastic

remark that "the depths of middle-aged gentlemen's ignorance will never be known, for want of public examinations in this branch."

It is equally strange that people generally are only now beginning to see that the Freethinker's attitude to religion is actually forced upon them. They have no burning desire to fight the clergy and their satellites; they do not want to waste valuable time arraigning the mistakes of Moses, or laughing at such absurd legends as Noah's Ark or Jonah and the whale. But Freethinkers have sufficient intelligence to perceive that Priestcraft is the bulwark of tyranny. It is precisely because the Christian Religion is the shield of injustice and ignorance that Freethinkers challenge it. If they seem to those outside of their influence mere iconoclasts, they have in this only shared the fate of the world's greatest reformers. Those who are trying to make England into a paradise for all and not only for a select few, must be told that this Anglican Church simply exists to maintain the rights and privileges of the existing order of society. Even if this Church should be disestablished, this concentrated point of view will be maintained. When the day of reckoning comes, as come it must, this church must be disendowed as well as disestablished.

Many centuries ago three hundred Spartans stood on the narrow causeway, between Mount Ceta and the Sea, to guard the liberties of their country against an innumerable army of invaders. Their conduct on that day has been remembered through the centuries, and will live in the hearts of brave men while the world lasts. The cause of Democracy is just as precious as the liberties of all Greece. Let every Democrat who realizes the reactionary nature of this Anglican Church resolve that they will defeat this Black Army of priests, who are the hired mercenaries of Privilege and Wealth. By doing so they will hasten the day when "the world will be one country" and "to do good the only religion."

MIMNERMUS.

God and Man

AN APOCRYPHICAL CHAPTER

IT was the day after the Sermon of the Mount had been delivered and Jesus was awearied. Along with him on the scant grass reclined Susanna, Philippa, Mary Magdalene, Joanna (the wife of Chusa, Herod's steward), and about another half-dozen women. Some of them could not be called beautiful, but they could not have been correctly described as unattractive. There was evidence in every case of much attention having been paid to personal appearances. After their exertions as stewards the day before, the twelve disciples had been sent on holiday by their Master for a day's fishing in the Pool of Siloam, the exact position to be occupied by them on this lake for a good day's sport having been minutely pointed out by Jesus. Siloam was a full day's journey from the place whereon they were picnicing.

"Ladies," said Jesus, "Leave me, I beseech you, for a little while." Reluctantly, they prepared to obey him. "Stay, Philippa," said Jesus, "I would have speech with you." "You get all the luck," whispered Joanna to Philippa. (Joanna was a wayward, if alluring girl. If reports were to be trusted, Chusa had been led a pretty dance by her and her leaving him in the lurch had been considered by that gentleman as a mitigated evil.)

"Philippa," said the Master, when they were quite

alone, "You wish to speak with me." He did not look at Philippa, regarding her only with his mind's eye. "I did not ask for this privilege, Master," said Philippa, "but that I had a desire to speak with you is most true." "Then please proceed, Philippa," said Jesus. There was a long silence. At length Philippa appeared to have decided upon her line of approach. "Lord," said she, "as it is evident that you know all things, why should I unburden myself unto you? Speak to me, rather, and tell me that which I desire to know." "Child," replied the Master, tenderly. "It would be better for you to express yourself in the manner which pleaseth you."

"Well, Master, I think what has just happened will serve as a starting point. It will lead up perhaps to my main purpose. You were aware I wished to speak unto you in private, although I had not said as much to you. Tell me plainly (should it be your will) *if there is anything you do not know.*" "And who think you that I am?" said Jesus, turning to her sharply. "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." "Good," said Jesus, "And therefore, believing as you do, you know that the minds of men lie open before me." "And *women,*" said Philippa, quietly. "And women," repeated Jesus.

"Thank you," said Philippa simply. "It makes matters much easier for me to learn that you know quite clearly the thoughts that are in the minds of all us women." "They accept me as the Messiah, and they wish to demonstrate their faith in me," said Jesus rather curtly. "Yes," said Philippa, "You know that, but you know more than that. You know everything. Amongst us, for instance, is one who was once at death's door. She had cancer, and was reduced to trying all the patent medicines advertised in the *Gothsemane Gazette*. She heard of you; she had faith in you. Faith abounding! She touched the hem of your garment. You spoke to her. You said, 'Your faith has made you whole.'" "I know," said the Master.

"More than that, Master. You know that she is whole. In all this troupe there is none so ridiculously healthy as she. Her faith is prodigious; consequently she cannot be assailed now by as much as a toothache. Now she has found out the way to health, she prays and prays unceasingly, and the prayer of faith heals the sick. She gets damp feet and goes to crowded meetings and there are no after-effects. She is bitten by snakes and the incident leaves her only aggressively triumphant. She is the healthiest woman in the world; no woman could be healthier—and it is all owing to you." "She has her reward," said Jesus. "I am not sure that is the way she looks at it altogether, but you, Lord, know better than I do. Anyway she is a very healthy woman." "And she is a holy woman," said Jesus reproachfully. "Thou knowest, Lord," said Philippa, humbly.

There was another long silence. Then Philippa raised her head. "You know, as well, Lord, that my woman companions are willing for me to have this talk with you. If they had not been so willing I durst not have remained alone with you so long in a position which could be construed as expressing favouritism towards me. But they trusted me to put all our thoughts before you; they thought I had some poor gift of expression that they lacked; they thought also that I alone, among them, had that quality of mind which could put the case fairly. It was in a way, a great compliment to me, Master, but it is far from easy for me. I did not refuse for I was helped considerably when I figured it out that you knew everything that was passing in my mind, whether I told you it or not.

"We all know you to be a God, but we know that in many respects you are a man. We cannot understand how it is that you can be God and Man at the same time, but there is so much we cannot understand, and Priscilla, the only one of us who has any aptitude for theology, is *certain* that you are man as well as God; in short you are a man, just as we are women. You know, Lord, that some of us have had a husband, some more than one husband, some of us hope to have a husband . . . some of us, as you know full well, are considered as hussies. We cannot, many of us, understand your amiability towards the hussies of our company; whether this is a strength or a weakness is one of the things we most canvass when we get alone together. The hussies love you for it right enough, but those of us who have had a different training, though we welcome any sign of humanity in you, wonder at times if the only way of obtaining your full mead of sympathy would be by becoming even as they."

"I understand," said Jesus.

"If you had not appeared, all of us would probably by now have been married. We know we are not unattractive. But no man fills the bill with any of us as long as you are about. We needs must seek the highest! None of us thinks we have more than a teeny-weeny chance; but as long as you are Man as well as God, the possibility of your acting as a man and settling down with one of us and giving the old Jewish custom the benefit of your moral support is not entirely ruled out. That is how Priscilla puts it. She says we are up against a rather nice theological problem—this mixture of God and man."

"It is a Blessed Mystery," says Jesus.

"Just so," said Philippa, crossing herself reverently. "But is it a mystery to you, Lord?" "Well, Philippa, all I can say is that I find my path outlined for me, and taking a wife and founding a home and family is not for me. I like you, Philippa, particularly—more than I choose to tell.

"I admire your courage as well, but to carry out my Mission effectually, matrimony and parentage must be foregone. There are some flowers not for me to pick. It might have been the will of the Father that I had a brief spell of domesticity down below, and so helping mankind by imparting to them that little bit of knowledge on this subject that others haven't got. I might have figured then as the Great Husband and the Great Father (the only rôles of Greatness denied me), and strengthened, for ages to come, the state of Holy Matrimony. But God did not will it so. Why? I know—I don't know. On a matter of this kind Priscilla perhaps knows more than I do."

"Then it is your will also, Master." "Yes, my dear. *For the Son and the Father are one.* Ask Priscilla about it. She may explain. She may explain." "I shall tell them what you say, Master—but they will all be sad. And . . . *I too shall be sad.* I shall not tell them that you, that you—liked me particularly"! With tears in her eyes, she slowly walked away. When she turned again, the Man of Sorrows was standing with his eyes fixed immovably on the earth. She reached the head of the incline, but before descending on the other side, she once again looked round, murmuring, "He said, 'my dear.'" The Man of Sorrows had not moved.

T. H. ELSTON.

AN EARLY ROBOT

The Nuremberg Man was operated by a combination of pipes and levers, and though he could breathe and digest perfectly, and even reason as well as most theologians, was made of nothing but wood and leather.

Black and White in Southern Africa

IN an earlier notice of Dr. Monica Hunter's monograph on Pondoland, *Reaction to Conquest*, her studies of the native religion have been reviewed. This work, which is comprehensive in character, also contains a carefully considered chapter on the tendencies of native life. The Pondo peasant, so long inseparable from the soil, tends more and more to drift to the leading centres of urban activity. This naturally applies most markedly to the younger, more restless and ambitious Bantu. In towns, they discover and soon indulge in European vices, and are apt to disdain the traditional customs and beliefs of their tribe. Thus, the older men complain of their sons' irreverence. Moreover, town life has many attractions. There is far less restraint than on the native farms, and the migrants are less at the mercy of the scandal-monger. The tribal religion soon fades in the new surroundings, while even in rural Pondoland a sceptical spirit is abroad. Dr. Hunter found "the efficacy of ritual killings, the correctness of the diagnoses of diviners, the efficacy of magic for fields and stock, queried by pagans in Pondoland." Still, the critical spirit is more marked in the towns.

Native utensils and attire are being rapidly replaced by articles of European manufacture, and imported beads and blankets are actually being used in religious ceremonies. Fox-trots are superseding the quaint native dances. Agriculture shows some signs of improvement, but the growing population needs more nourishment. The land available to the natives has been sadly diminished, and many are entirely landless. The picture painted by our author is not bright. She states that: "Land in the reserves is deteriorating; in some formerly fertile areas desert conditions now prevail. The majority of those on farms have to work harder and live on poorer diet than their ancestors. Many, both in town and country, are ill-nourished, and the general physique of the people is probably declining."

The social structure has been modified by economic impact, and the younger generation is less subservient to parental authority. The wages received from white employers give the natives greater independence while an increase in premarital pregnancy in the towns, and perhaps in the country, is attributed to lack of control. Native distinctions of social standing are more pronounced, as the educated and better circumstanced look down on their poorer compatriots. African Churches of a separatist character have arisen. Native trade unions have been formed, and there is an increased hostility towards Europeans.

The ancestral cult is declining, but wizardry and magic still flourish. The white man's medicines are deemed useful in several maladies, but in others that are ascribed to sorcery, European remedies are rejected. "There are still spheres in which the Bantu thinks that scientific knowledge alone cannot secure his end—dealings with Europeans, trade depressions, love-making, law suits and the like. In these he continues to use magic."

The Fingo who reside on the borders of Pondoland are more susceptible to foreign influence than the more aggressive Xhosa, for the former were protected when the latter were assailed. The emotional factor so powerful in religion being absent in practical life, mechanical contrivances, such as the plough introduced by the whites, are readily adopted. Still, as women were the chief cultivators of the soil and were debarred from driving oxen, it became necessary for men to undertake the task of turning the earth. Hut

building and thatching methods have been Europeanized. Also, we are assured: "European patent medicines have a wide sale because they are new and powerful magic. European magical beliefs and Christian myth are readily absorbed because they fit in with old beliefs. Sunday observance was quickly taken over because the idea of it being taboo to work on certain days was part of the old culture."

Many of the whites in Africa seem contemptuous towards the natives, but others are inclined to be cordial or at least sympathetic. What the Bantu think of their European masters is not always flattering. While endeavouring to probe the native mind Dr. Hunter encountered many Bantu whose Golden Age departed with the advent of the European. A belief in the coming overthrow of the invader is widely entertained. Those, however, who have benefited from the instruction imparted by the European schools usually consider themselves superior to the untutored tribesmen of the farms and display no desire to return to rural life. While many mourn the departure of native customs, they keenly resent the suggestion that they are raw natives with a veneer. For they are eager to absorb the white man's culture, and are anxious to obtain recognition as civilized people, although few in South Africa are willing to concede this claim. This European disdain is angrily resented, and has led to a slight reaction in favour of a return to Bantu conditions. Native nationalism is rapidly spreading, and the Bantu leaders aim at the same economic and political rights which the whites possess. It appears that: "There is a desire for emancipation from European control, but eager acceptance of European culture. The Wellingtonians (a native sect) preached that Europeans would be swept into the sea, but the stores were to remain to be taken over by Bantu."

The Wellingtonian cult has a curious history. A Zulu adopted the name of Wellington and posed as a doctor. He claimed to have arrived from America, but he had also matriculated at "The University of Oxford and Cambridge" in England. He denied all acquaintance with any Bantu tongue and spoke through an interpreter, but like most charlatans he sometimes forgot this and used native words. He informed his hearers that all the American people were Negroes, and would soon arrive to liberate Bantu from their white oppressors. Wellington's adherents were urged to avoid all European schools and conventicles, and in a few districts so-called American seminaries were opened. These were to be maintained with American money, but were soon closed for lack of capital. An attempt was made to establish a National Church, and Wellington, "held services and even dispensed the sacrament." Promises of a heaven on earth for the Bantu were extensively made, and the movement found many followers.

This imposture became menacing in the Transkei and the sagacious authorities, despite the fact that Wellington announced that the Bantu would be set free by aircraft sent from America, decided to make a display of aeroplanes over the district. Then the prophet told his deluded supporters that their liberators had arrived in aeroplanes painted in the identical colours he had predicted. Of course, money was collected and the collectors soon vanished, but eventually the delusion died down. Wellington was expelled, but churches still stand as a memorial of the movement.

Social and industrial discontent prevail. One native who was interrogated inquired: "Why do you come and ask these things? You have never been ruled and ill-treated by foreigners." A descendant of a Xhosa chief complained that: "When Europeans

first landed they had two things, a Bible and a hymn book. . . . A short time afterwards they deprived us of our land by force of arms. Since the South African War things have gone from bad to worse."

The colour bar causes great heart burning. Natives who possess academic degrees strongly resent the preferential treatment accorded to Europeans in certain towns where the officials are discourteous, and natives are not allowed to travel in public conveyances. Consequently, professing Christians who prate of the brotherhood of man are scorned as hollow hypocrites. Dr. Hunter notes that: "The same Parliament that passed the Colour Bar Bill, inserted in the Constitution the clause, 'The people of South Africa acknowledge the sovereignty and guidance of Almighty God.'" No wonder advanced Bantu are urging their countrymen to disavow Christianity. For they say: "At first we had the land and the white man had the Bible. Now we have the Bible and the white man has the land." Again "They told you to close your eyes and pray, and the other whites came and took away your land from behind your back while your eyes were closed."

After the World War a trade union was formed. The larger cost of living led to considerable unrest, but the seizure of the soil by the whites is the main grievance as "91 per cent of the land of the Union of South Africa is owned by under two million Europeans, 9 per cent by five million Bantu."

To make the cup of the native more bitter, various legal disabilities are imposed. Labour tenants in Natal and the Transvaal have been degraded to a state of serfdom. Favourable treatment is more and more given to Europeans, while the poor Bantu are very heavily taxed, and they have no voice whatever in the administration. Still there has been little disturbance. Indeed, Dr. Hunter observes that the Bantu "continue to laugh and dance even when living on starvation wages. . . . But beneath the cheerful bearing there is keen discontent with existing conditions." T. F. PALMER.

The Church and the People

THE DECAY OF FAITH

At the present time organized religion is facing a crisis greater than any that has gone before. Empty churches and an indifferent or hostile public present a problem of the first magnitude. The view is held by many that faith is not enough in an age of reason. It is felt more and more that the church is the home of intellectual incompetence allied to spiritual insincerity, and that even her bishops too often spend their days wandering along the pleasant paths of pious platitude.

On every hand we meet not only with disbelief in the Christian dogmas, but with the most profound doubt about the existence of a deity, which is clearly something much more fundamental. Associated with this is the growing feeling that the attitude of the church is directly antagonistic to the splendid march of science, which in our generation alone has brought such incalculable benefits to humanity.

Thoughtful people point out that the church has outlived much of its former usefulness. They observe that whereas in the Middle Ages the monks gave much service to the community in connexion with teaching, and the help of the poor and sick, nowadays this work is largely undertaken by others. The growth of our great universities and hospitals has relieved the church of many of the more valuable duties it performed in earlier times.

An even more important factor in the change that

has come about is, however, that the church is no longer looked upon as the guardian of morality. In primitive races the members of the priesthood were often the only educated men, and it was natural that the people should turn to them for their first notions of right and wrong. But with the coming of universal education, in this and other civilized countries, men felt that they were enfranchised, and could judge for themselves in moral matters. They were no longer content to be spoon-fed with an archaic morality by religious institutions that had themselves every appearance of being in the last stages of extreme decrepitude.

With the Great War came a rapid acceleration in the decay of faith. If only the churches all the world over had united to oppose war, there might have been some chance of a great religious revival. But the fact that the clergy forsook their vestments to wear military uniform was very damning. It was a confession of failure on the spiritual side. In effect the Church said, "We can do nothing for your souls, but we will dress up like you and bring you supplies of woodbines." It may have helped the various Governments to know that they had the support of organized religion, although over-adventurous padres could be a sad embarrassment to harassed military authorities, but the Church itself was badly discredited. The men who fought in the mud of Flanders during those terrible years became realists in too full a sense to be able to revert afterwards to the simple belief that those of the cloth were divinely inspired. The talisman had failed to work wonders; the idol had feet of clay.

Conscience frequently causes folk to abjure the religion of the churches because they cannot accept the dogmas upon which it is based. It is a condition of health in every living body that it should be able to rid itself of waste products. As science grows it constantly discards hypotheses which have proved to be unsound. The character of the Church, on the other hand, is so conservative that it endeavours to retain all its primitive doctrines, however fantastic and repulsive they may appear at the present day to anyone with an open mind. The "systematized insanity," as it has been termed, which for so many centuries has formed the framework of religious belief, now causes widespread revolt. Many dogmas must be cut away by the surgeon's knife if the body of the Church is to regain health.

The absurdity of even some of the best known tenets of the Christian Church is evident as soon as we examine them at all closely, although they are of much interest from an antiquarian point of view.

The tradition of the Virgin Birth is one that takes us right back to some dim epoch in pre-history. In the words of Sir James Frazer, "Such tales of virgin mothers are relics of an age of childish ignorance when men had not yet recognized the intercourse of the two sexes as the true cause of offspring."

The origin of the doctrine that during the Mass the bread and wine are turned into the flesh and blood of Christ is also extremely ancient. Exactly the same belief is found in the religion of more than one savage tribe. We have only to analyse it and its revolting nature becomes manifest. To drink the blood and eat the raw flesh of the deity is clearly pure cannibalism. The Eucharist again is non-Christian in origin. Prior to the discovery and conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, for example, it was the custom at the festival of the winter solstice in December for the Aztecs to kill their god in effigy and to eat him. In preparation for this solemn ceremony an image of the deity in the likeness of a man was made from grain and seeds, being kneaded into a dough with the blood of children.

Even more perverted is the strange sacrament of Baptism. Two infants, both equally innocent of all the evils of the world, die shortly after birth. One has been fortunate enough to be baptized, and consequently enjoys everlasting bliss. The other, not having had the advantage of baptism, is condemned to suffer eternal torment. Rather than submit to hocus-pocus of this kind, many parents now refuse to have their children baptized.

Enough has perhaps been said to show the trend of a strong body of modern opinion. Man is coming to realize that he cannot be saved from his sins by the blessing of a priest or the sacrifice of a Christ. If he is to attain happiness and have contentment of mind it must be through his own virtues. The kindly and virtuous man is of the elect, whether or not he attends church or subscribes to any organized faith.

L. M. ANGUS BUTTERWORTH.

Acid Drops

Is it an inexhaustible capacity for cock-eyed reasoning or is it an unshakable confidence in the stupidity of the public? What we have in mind is the statement so frequently made of late by the higher clergy, politicians, and other public men, that when one looks at the state of Europe one realizes that the only safeguard against dictatorship is the monarchy. Well look at the facts. Germany, Austria, Russia, Turkey and Italy, among the greater powers, each had a monarchy before the war. America and France, of the other "great powers," were democracies before the war and remain democracies after the war. We do not expect these plain facts to have any great effect on the people who make the ridiculous statement to which we have referred, but here and there one who has been influenced by such a stupid statement may be led, if only for a little while, along the road of common sense.

A number of Nonconformist ministers have declined to take part in a Coronation Service at Wimbledon. They have done so because they say it is all "military pomp and showmanship." We imagine a very strong contributory reason is that Nonconformist ministers are taking no part in the official magical ceremony at Westminster. Had the Nonconformist Churches been invited to handle the holy oil, or even to hold the sacred spoon things might have been different. But it would have been rather absurd for the Archbishop to have agreed in unlicensed men taking part in the "incarnation" of the tribal spirit in the King.

But there is no mistake in either the militarism or the showmanship. The latter has been perfect. Ten months before the Jubilee of George V. was due the advertising began. This was so successful that the advertising of the Coronation of Edward VIII. began twelve months before it was due, to be transferred to George VI. with redoubled energy after the scandal connected with Edward VIII. Nothing in the way of expense and rehearsals—to which the public were invited—has been spared. A year ago a move was made to induce celebrations in the slums. Councils were prompted, and house to house collections in poor streets were started, all "spontaneous" to such as do not understand how these publicity stunts are worked. And the advertisements have been successful. There is no doubt of that. We are left wondering whether the lesson may not have been learned in what are considered "undesirable" directions. The stunt of scientific sociology may well feel a little perturbed at this demonstration of the easy way in which "public opinion" may be created and manipulated.

Christians have done their best to nobble the Boy Scout movement, and in many things they have succeeded. But they are by no means satisfied with their

success. For example, the Scouts have just published a "Coronation Hymn." The Rev. P. Mayhew, writing to a Church paper "more in sorrow than in anger," has just discovered that this hymn contains "no reference whatsoever to the Almighty," and he "fears that this 'hymn' is typical of 'Scout religion' to-day." For our part, it is a matter of congratulation; but Mr. Mayhew waxes more angry as his letter proceeds.

This clerical busybody has over and over again attempted to interfere with the Scouts on the question of religious services, and he complains that his letters are ignored, particularly when he "tried to explain that scouts have a definite duty of loyalty to their home church." And Mr. Mayhew writes bitterly that the Boy Scouts' Association will not publish *any* plea for "real religion" and he threatens to leave the movement. Well, we are delighted to find such protests as Mr. Mayhew's are ignored, and hope his verbal threat materializes in quick time. The Scouts, in all probability, are continually hampered and harassed by these reverend gentlemen, and it is good news to learn that sometimes at least they and their religion are contemptuously dismissed.

Celebrations in honour of St. George, the great patron Saint of England, seem to have been very few indeed, according to our religious press. In Whitehall, not a single St. George's cross was flying—although there were many bare flagstaffs. Perhaps the reason is that more people suspect that St. George may have been a contractor whose acts led to his being lynched by an angry mob.

Of course, desperate attempts have been made, and are still being made, to show that Gibbon and Emerson, who gave us the story of the swindling contractor, were mistaken, and that there was a real St. George, a Roman soldier, who refused to sacrifice to the divine Emperor, and was tortured and put to death in consequence. There is no dragon or princess, or indeed any of the adventures which usually accompany the hero, in the Ethiopian texts from which the story is compiled. It is as if the tale of Aladdin were absolutely true, only there was no Wonderful Lamp, no wicked uncle, no Chinese princess, and no genii; but, of course, Aladdin really lived. The truth is that the only Aladdin known in story is he with the Lamp; and if one takes away the dragon and the princess from the story of St. George, what is there left? Merely one of the hundreds of "martyrs" invented by Christians to show how their faith was persecuted in its early years.

Wing-Commander P. J. Wiseman, R.A.F., has just published a work dealing with *New Discoveries in Babylonia About Genesis*. According to one reviewer, Mr. Wiseman "believes that the Book of Genesis was originally written on tablets in the ancient script of the time by the Patriarchs, and that Moses, the compiler and editor, plainly directs attention to the source of his information." What the distinguished airman "believes" on the matter is just as interesting, no doubt, as what Colenso believed. But belief is no proof. What he should have done is to produce the tablets and then the original manuscript on papyrus or even other tablets which Moses "edited"—or at least some fragments. As it happens, nothing of the kind has ever been found. Not a single line of the "Old Hebrew" text of Genesis has ever been discovered. And all believers can do on the matter is to declare that they "believe" this or that.

A "lieutenant" of the Salvation Army fell over a coal-bucket at a Salvation Army Hall, and claimed workmen's compensation for the injury. The case went to appeal. The Master of the Rolls found that the Army and its officers were linked together for the purpose of spiritual work, and that the necessary contractual element which is required before a contract of service can be found is entirely absent. Thus do spiritual obligations lag behind ordinary human ones. To damage one's limbs when engaged in spiritual work brings its own reward—for

did not Jesus tell us so? The conscience of mankind, however, has gone a little ahead of Jesus and has expressed itself in favour of the principle of restitution. Spirituality will not for long, we anticipate, stand in its way.

It is a pity that the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church do not take the same view, i.e., that their spiritual duties are of a nature which does not require paying for in coin of the realm. There are so many social services to which their wages could usefully be transferred. A maxim embodied in the old rabbinical tradition was that no rabbi should live by the law, and it was customary for the rabbi to have some other occupation by which he earned his living. With the advent of Christianity, this standpoint was soon lost sight of.

Our sapient daily press, and B.B.C., are daily impressing upon the British people that there is a right and a wrong way of mounting a Union Jack on a stick. The Union Jack is a symbol of something—this something being rarely, and even then grudgingly, denied. If it is disrespectfully mounted upside-down, naturally it may become a symbol of something else. As in all Magic, it is the letter and not the spirit that matters.

It is officially stated that the view of the Spanish Insurgent naval authorities on the sinking of the *Espana*, was that the ship was sunk by a mine which had broken away from its moorings. Franco, so the *Mail* tells us, fights for God, but what is God doing for Franco?

The History and Arts Committee of the British Film Institute has issued a report dealing with the part the cinema might play in schools. Among the Institute's recommendations is the making of a dozen experimental types of history-teaching films. It declares:—

The historical entertainment film is a serious rival to any historical teaching film. It is teaching "history" to more old and young than all the history masters and tutors combined. . . .

It gives human interest, provides material for conversation and discussion, is not didactic, simplifies issues and puts no great strain on the intellect, but the history that it teaches is often absurdly inaccurate. To the producer the fact that his film is a travesty of history may seem of no importance. He may be willing to caricature the past for the sake of the box-office returns.

The Committee have raised a matter of first importance. Their proposal is that a competent historian be called in for consultation before production, to give an opinion whether the general impression produced by the film is likely to be reasonably accurate. We suspect, however, that the opinion of such an expert would be promptly set aside by our official censor if the "general impression" left was one in the least disturbing to national pride. If this should not be satisfied, we are afraid that it would be ruled that "Truth must go." Who in authority, for instance, wants the truth about Drake and Hawkins, those Elizabethan heroes, salutary though it would undoubtedly be?

A glaring instance of the falsification of history is to be seen on a wall of our Houses of Parliament, where an inscription reads: "Charles II. reigned 1649-1685." So, at the seat of legislation, where knowledge should sit enthroned higher than all kings and princes, monarchical snobbery would ignore the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell! Unfortunately, distortions and lies have always been elements of British history as taught in the Schools.

This reminds us of a comical and characteristic incident in connexion with Queen Victoria. This lady, who had an infallible instinct for the things which, to her, really mattered, strongly resisted the use of the term "Commonwealth" when it was proposed to be applied to the Australian Colonies. She had a "class" instinct that the less advertisement given to the word "Commonwealth" the better.

The notoriously leisurely life of the cleric has given us *Alice in Wonderland*, *Ingoldsby Legends*, *Gulliver's Travels*, and other works, the merit of which contrasts strangely with the puerilities of the modern parson. A certain Rev. J. P. Bacon Phillips, long time ensconced in comfort at Burgess Hill, has for many years past been writing little letters to the press on all sorts of trivialities. His very latest is to tell us that "great men of the past left their footprints on the sands of time," by having their names attached to various articles." For instance, "the great Duke of Wellington has left us. . . Wellington boots"; "the great Gladstone is associated with a travelling hold-all bag"; "the great Lord Chancellor Brougham with a coupé carriage"; "the mackintosh by Charles Mackintosh." . . . "Our age does not produce really great men," says Mr. Phillips, all the time leading up to his own "great" brain-wave. This is NO LESS than to suggest that the briar-pipe should be known as "a Baldwin" to commemorate "the greatest statesman and Premier since the days of Disraeli and Gladstone." Mr. Phillips has touched bottom.

Mr. De Valera is to submit the test of the new Irish Free State Constitution for ratification at the coming General Election. It stands for an All-Ireland Republic, and makes no mention of Great Britain or its King. A sinister provision gives "Recognition of the special position of the Roman Catholic Church," although another provision promises the "safeguarding of existing churches (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Presbyterian, Jewish)." We fear the three last mentioned will experience the fate of the "Lady of Riga" should the first-quoted provision stand. And one other provision would, in that event, find fanatical backing—i.e., "No dissolution of marriage." . . . So all the courage and fire expended on the fight for Home Rule looks like fizzling out into, as some anticipated, ROME Rule. Will Ireland submit to the loss of real liberty so far as to allow these provisions to stand? If so—poor Pat!—poor Eileen!

Dr. Townley Lord draws attention to the keen zest with which "eminent theologians" turn from studies of Athanasius, Augustine and Calvin, "in order to seek the company of Lord Peter Wimsey," and other heroes of the detective romances of to-day. Even Dr. Lord does not blame them. The fact is that these famous detectives—just as fictional as the Gods men worship—do at least offer reasonable solutions to the mysteries they investigate. No Bible story is half as convincing as Dorothy Sayers at her best.

Fifty Years Ago

TURNING to the Convocation of Canterbury, we find that the Upper House opened with an address from the Queen. Her Majesty hears "with regret, and the utmost sympathy that many of the clergy and their families have shared in the sufferings unhappily so prevalent at this period of depression." Indeed! And why should they not share in the general suffering? Why should they be exempt from the trials and troubles of ordinary flesh and blood? Do they want front seats in heaven and beds of roses here? Still, if the Queen likes to commiserate their unhappy condition, she has a right to, and we should be the last to dispute it. But what, after all, is the use of "the utmost sympathy" when it is confined to words? Surely Her Majesty might shell out half-a-million or so for the relief of her Black Army. She would never miss it, and it would be a good investment. Her black regiments are the best support of her throne. They guard it in the Sunday School and the Church, the prison and the workhouse, the poor man's cottage and the rich man's hall. They are ready to fight tooth and nail for her prerogatives. They will spend—well, anything but their cash—in her service. But they are human, and if she lets them starve on their paltry ten or twelve millions a year, there may be a revolt of the janissaries.

The Freethinker, May 15, 1887.

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2,412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ANSWERS to several correspondents are unavoidably held over.

FOR Circulating and Advertising the *Freethinker*.—E. Trask, 108.

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

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.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

Sugar Plums

The programme for the Annual Conference of the N.S.S., at Liverpool, will be: (1) On Saturday evening (May 15), at the Stork Hotel, Queen Square, there will be a reception of delegates and members at 7 o'clock. (2) On Sunday the Conference will meet at 10.30, and 2.30, with an interval for Lunch. Tickets for the lunch may be obtained from the General Secretary, price 3s. each (3) On Sunday evening, at 7 o'clock, there will be a public demonstration in the Picton Hall, with the President in the chair. Reserved seats 1s. each. (4) On Monday there will be an excursion to Chester, including reserved saloon seats in train, luncheon and tea, price six shillings per head. Tickets and full particulars from the local Secretary, Mr. S. R. Ready, during the week-end. (5) Admission to the Conference is by production of the membership card. Those members who happen to be without it may obtain one on sending in their names to the General Secretary.

Terrible as was the deliberate shooting of helpless women and children in Guernica, the horror of it can very easily be over-done. It was Abyssinia over again by two of the most brutalized Governments in Europe. But there are several things to be borne in mind. The number of people killed is actually not material to the issue. Each child that was murdered by the assassins of the air brought anguish to parents. Each parent that was killed brought injury to some children. The number simply has nothing to do with it. As the *Church Times* sharply reminded those who shrieked out over the killing of priests, there is no greater offence in killing a priest than in killing a working man. It is the fact that is important. How many times that fact is duplicated adds nothing to the brutality or injustice of the fact. Suffering is always individual. It cannot be collective. It is want of imagination that thinks otherwise. The man who cannot appreciate the enormity of starvation or brutality unless he can see a lot of it is a very undeveloped being.

To call these airmen baby-killers is another curious phenomenon. Every aviator in war-time is a potential, and after that an actual baby-killer. It is stupidity that can see baby-killing in an "enemy's" bombs and only righteous defence in the dropping of bombs by "our own" side. And in all war, particularly in modern war, it is the civilian population that is ultimately aimed at. To stop food going to an enemy country is to starve soldiers and civilians alike. In the European War Germany certainly would not have agreed to providing safe convoy to some neutral country for the women and child-

ren of the Allies, and it is equally certain that the Allies would not have agreed to it for the children of Germany. Bombing-planes are intended to drop bombs, and bombs have not yet developed a sensitiveness as to when and where they explode. Italy and Germany lay down the policy of sheer terrorism with the brutal frankness of its governors, but in substance the form of terrorism with which we have been dealing is part and parcel of warfare.

We have said this much many times, and we are pleased to find it endorsed in a recent editorial:—

To-day acquiescence in barbarities is accompanied by a sickly and wholly ineffective sentiment of humanity. It is true that people are often appalled by instances of wanton outrage and suffering. But let the atrocities be wrapped up in abstract phrases and depersonalized generalities and their rough brutality glides unfelt over the polished consciousness of high-minded intellectuals. The "liquidation" of whole classes, the unspeakable wickedness of bombing and burning the defenceless or the beating up of racial minorities, are passed off under the colour of State or military necessity.

It is when we have the intellectual clarity and courage to reduce the cases of outrage and injustice to individual instances that we are able to see things as they really are.

After attending the Annual Conference of the N.S.S., Mr. G. Whitehead will begin a two weeks lecture campaign in the open at Manchester. With the co-operation of the local Branch N.S.S., a special effort should be made to get the new edition of the *Age of Reason* well circulated in Manchester. Copies will be on sale at all Mr. Whitehead's meetings, although at the price of fourpence the book is more in the nature of a gift.

It is not for us to contradict Mr. Douglas Hacking, the Chairman of the "Coronation Party Organization." But we are rather surprised to find him advising candidates, through the *Daily Telegraph*, to call themselves Conservatives, and not "anti-Socialists" as, through unfamiliarity with a Latin preposition, he considers there is a risk of electors mistaking its meaning, and they may take them (the Conservatives) as not being against Socialism. We haven't a very high opinion of the average voter, but we did not expect a prominent Conservative to place the intelligence of his followers on such a low level.

Several thousand children were taken from Bilbao and landed in France. They received a hearty welcome. Plenty of food was provided and the French Government has promised substantial contributions. In England preparations are also being made, and one sympathizer has purchased a farm where it is hoped to accommodate a hundred. Other arrangements are being made elsewhere. This has greatly annoyed General Franco, and his friends, but Sir John Simon can explain that he did all he dare to stop it. If the people of England tell him and the Government to go to the devil, and will not stand by and see children blasted out of existence while they can help in giving them shelter and food, what is the poor man to do? He has decided that not a penny of public money must go to relieve them, and Franco must rest content with that.

Ex-Dean Inge, whose new book we intend reviewing so soon as we have got rid of other matters that are more pressing, says he is pleased he is not compelled to go to the Abbey to witness the Coronation. He says of the one he was compelled to attend, "If I had not thoughtfully brought a book for my pocket I should have been bored to distraction." He also says that on reading the symbolical acts which the Dean of Westminster has to perform, "I am devoutly thankful not to be the holder of that dignified office at a Coronation." He also adds, "The King has almost always been a kind of priest or medicine-man."

We have always said that Dean Inge was one of the very few clerics to lay any claim to genuine intelligence, and he often left us guessing, when he has been putting

in a plea for religion, how far he has been doing so with his tongue in his cheek. That the Westminster Abbey is a survival of a very primitive practice is the lesson of the "Views and Opinions" in this issue, and full proof of which will be given in the following issues of this paper. And it is about the only paper that will speak plainly about this degradation of a civilized people. One can understand educated men and women going to any kind of nonsensical performance and enjoying it. But when a number of educated adults go through a performance such as the religious Coronation, and profess to be impressed with its solemnity, they forcibly remind us that civilization is very thin indeed. We congratulate Dr. Inge on having spoken the right word on this occasion. And we fancy it is the unconscious bias of class interest that makes him as respectful as he is to these survivals of savagery. We wish he would come out and speak with absolute plainness.

The *Times Literary Supplement*, in discussing the popular literature of the past hundred years, and pointing out the popularity of a number of semi-religious magazines like the *Quiver*, adds:—

Quite a diverse spirit found expression in the Secularist journals like the *National Reformer*, under Charles Bradlaugh's editorship. The Victorian atmosphere is not to be realized unless that sort of popular reading—not easy to get at now—is remembered. Freethought was not less a part of the period than the Oxford Movement; and beside the reprints of the *Christian Year*, there stands the *City of Dreadful Night* (or Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam*). It was in some numbers of the *National Reformer*, that the *City of Dreadful Night* was first printed; and from that medium the fame of the poem originally spread even to America.

It is not often that the great influence of Secularism and its press is so openly acknowledged; and we are glad to see that James Thomson's great poem and its association with Bradlaugh and his paper are also mentioned in this connexion. No account of the nineteenth century could be true without the fullest recognition of the work done by Freethinking papers from the time of Carlile until the days of the *Freethinker*.

We are informed that an advertisement in the press

Seats to view the Coronation, 15s. each.

brought applicants, for each fifteen shillings transmitted, one camp-stool.

Saints and Angels

III.

THE stories of the Saints of Christendom, as given in such books as the *Golden Legend*, are full of the most unmitigated balderdash—unless, of course, one recognizes them as belonging to the same family of fiction as the *Arabian Nights*. Similar stories are to be found scattered through the Bible and the Apocrypha. I once asked an opponent in a debate to tell me the exact difference between Aladdin being carried about by the geni of his wonderful Lamp, and Jesus being carried about in the same way by the Devil. No answer whatever was attempted—and indeed there can be no answer. Adventures of the holy saints with devils or with those who were supposed to tempt them away from the Faith have filled volumes of worthless writings. Here is how an early biographer solemnly wrote of St. Dominic:—

This man of God was writing by candle-light when the devil appeared in the form of a monkey, strutting about before him and making ridiculous gestures with grimaces. Then the saint beckoned to him to stand still, giving him a lighted candle to hold be-

fore him, the devil continuing to make grimaces. Meanwhile the candle was finished and began to burn the monkey's fingers, and he began to lament as if tortured by the flames, whereas he who burns in the flames of hell ought not to fear a bodily flame. The devil stood then till the whole of his forefinger was burnt down to the socket, crying out more and more loudly from the torture. Then the man of God gave him a sharp blow with a cane, which he always carried with him, saying, Depart, thou wicked man; and the blow sounded as if he had struck a dry bladder full of wind. Upon this, casting himself against the nearest wall, he disappeared leaving behind him a stench which discovered who he was. Truly this man is to be extolled among the angelic powers who so powerfully confound and reprove diabolical wickedness.

This is the kind of story which used to be read with avidity by the faithful; but I doubt very much whether our intellectual converts would be too happy if they were expected to believe such drivel in order to become members of the Church of Rome. It should be noted, however, that some of the things they do believe, because in Holy Writ, are just as silly as anything said of the saints.

St. Dominic was, of course, one of the saints who really lived—he was the founder of the Order of Dominicans and died in 1221 A.D. But dozens of other saints, particularly the young ladies whose virtue was always being attacked by Pagan Romans, are just mere myths. St. Agnes is a typical example. She was very rich and very beautiful, and because she refused to marry a heathen nobleman, was condemned to a brothel. Unfortunately every time some of its visitors attempted to get hold of her, a flash of lightning struck them behind, and they fell trembling to the ground. For this unwarranted heavenly interruption she was condemned, at the age of thirteen, to be beheaded, to which ghastly punishment she went as gaily as to a wedding. It is not easy to trace the evolution of the story, but it may be connected in some way with that of the Vestal Virgins of Rome. In Greek the word *agnus* means chastity, in Latin the word *agnus* means lamb; and Agnes, in one of the pictures representing her fate, has a lamb beside her. Brewer thinks the lamb was a "modern innovation and a play on the name." Her special day in the Roman Catholic calendar is January 21, and if, on that day you take a row of pins, pull them out one by one, stick one in your sleeve while saying a paternoster, you will dream of him or her you are going to marry.

St. Bridget was another mythical saint supposed to be connected with St. Patrick in some way. A special cake in her honour is made on St. Bridget's day—just as similar cakes used to be made in ancient Roman days in honour of Ceres, or of the Queen of Heaven. Bridget died at the age of twelve, and the fire which was burning in her cell then was still burning six hundred years after. It would probably be burning now, were not the times against perpetuating this kind of legend. The young lady was probably made into a Christian saint when Ireland became Christianized, for there was certainly a Pagan goddess called Brigid flourishing there. Just as Apollo was made into St. Appollinaris, so were many other Pagan deities transformed into Christian saints. And so credulous were true believers, that it was possible, as Conyers Middleton reports, to show the faithful "an antique statue of a young Bacchus, . . . with a new name, and some little change of drapery," as that of a female saint in the Church of St. Agnes, in Rome—obviously as St. Agnes herself. It was, in fact, one of the regular customs of the early Catholic Church, as Brand in his *Popular Antiquities* points out, "to assign, in imitation of heathenism, tutelary gods to distinct pro-

fessions and ranks of people (some of them not of the best sort) to different trades, etc."

These Pagan gods, once made into saints by the Holy Roman Catholic Church, at once ascended into heaven. They became straight away omniscient and omnipresent. A true believer, first paying the necessary to a priest, could pray to one of the saints in heaven; he would immediately "intercede" with Jesus or God for the pious sinner. There is no reason whatever to doubt the fact that the saint is in heaven, and he can intercede for you. It is guaranteed by the infallibility of the Church of Rome. If you doubt this infallibility, then you are heading straightway for Hell—so Rome has got you anyway.

But it ought to be pointed out that some Catholic theologians have been hard put to prove the saints were in heaven. One of them, Veron, in his *Rule of Catholic Faith* (1833), declares:—

The canonization of the saints is not an article of faith; in other words it is no article of our faith that the saints whom we invoke—for instance, St. Lawrence, St. Vincent, St. Gervase, St. Blaise, St. Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, etc., are really saints, and in the number of the blessed. This is proved—1. From the silence of our creed, and the Council of Trent. 2. It is clear that there is no evidence to prove, either from the written or unwritten word of God, that these persons were saints. Besides, it is not even an article of our faith that such men were even in existence, and therefore much less are we bound to believe that they really lived saintly lives or were afterwards canonized. All these are, undoubtedly questions of *fact* and not of *doctrine*.

Veron declares that the Pope and his General Council may err on matters of "fact"—but never err on matters of "faith." At the same time, the Council of Trent insists that "the saints reigning together with Christ are to be venerated and invoked," and that settles the question for almost all true Romanists. Whether there is any evidence to prove a saintly soul is actually in heaven, that is, whether it is a "fact," really does not matter. You pray to a particular saint, he hears you, and carries your invocation to "Our Lord"; and if it isn't some such request as the winner of the Derby or a sum of a million pounds to be put to your credit in the bank, "Our Lord," through the intercession of the saint, grants your wish, *after* paying the priest of course.

How heavenly saints hear the gabble which some people prefer to call prayers is not very clear. Indeed, Catholic theologians are not at one on the point. Veron thinks the prayers are first revealed to the saints by the Almighty.

From what has been said—and I could multiply my remarks on Saints and Angels a hundred-fold—readers can try and answer the question as to why such beliefs have survived in this age of science and scepticism. To say that it is because the Church has managed to get hold of the children does not altogether explain the fact; as most Freethinkers have managed to grow out of such credulous beliefs in spite of their early orthodox training. Our task then is to continue to inculcate Freethought. We must make Freethinkers and we can only do so by constant effort. It may be slow work, but the reward is glorious. Let us strive to earn it.

H. CUTNER.

It is difficult to see how any thinking man or woman at present could for a moment consider being a Christian if it were not the fashion among us, and convention did not demand it. How many people do you suppose are Christians because the historic claims of Christianity as a system have been brought to their adult attention and have won their intellectual assent?—A. W. Slaten.

Henry Hetherington—1792-1849

(Continued from page 210)

WE must bear in mind that at the commencement of the *Poor Man's Guardian* the Reform Bill of 1832 had not then become law. There were few people who could not see that it was impossible to delay it longer and that any day might see its accomplishment. The Whigs were already getting to work to secure their position and the Whig newspaper organs were busy creating an atmosphere for popularizing certain measures which should come before the reformed parliament when the Whigs would inevitably hold the reins of power. The two chief questions discussed in the Whig organs were the maintenance of civil peace and Poor Law Reform. Both of these at the time were antiquated and out of date; they were clumsy and open to all manner of abuse. But the reforms as advocated by the Whigs alarmed the working classes. Now about this time France had just passed through a revolutionary crisis, during which a body, the National Guards, had been created to assist the forces of reaction and destroy the Revolution. We see the same thing at the present day in Spain, Germany, Hungary, Italy, in fact, in all countries where the working classes are beginning to assert themselves. The National Defence was a similar body in England during the General Strike of 1926. Well might the English working classes take alarm at the proposed Whig police system. The National Union of Working classes led the revolt and threatened to form a Popular Guard should a National Guard be created in this country. The first intimation of this appeared in the *Poor Man's Guardian* of October 1, 1831, where we read:—

We understand that it is in contemplation among the "middle men" to establish a "NATIONAL GUARD" seeing how successful and immediate a power it has been in France to suppress the PEOPLE, and to protect the established institutions of property. Friends, brethren, and fellow country-men, such a *Guard* would ensure your political thralldom, unless you have a *counter-force*. No time is to be lost—you, too, must form your millions into a *GUARD*—a *POPULAR GUARD*: keep yourselves prepared. We say no more at present: but enough to show our *Whigs*, that, at any rate we see through their cunning, and will *endeavour* to overmatch it.

To push their measure the Whigs formed a rival association, the *Political Union of the Middle and Working Classes* which however failed in its object of deceiving the workers of the country.

At a meeting of the National Union of the Working Classes held on October 31, 1831, Julian Hibbert moved the following resolution: "That if any hired assassin or any other person should attack any member of the Union, we will adopt all legal and reasonable means of having condign punishment inflicted upon the offenders." In addressing himself to the resolution he said that he thought that living in the nineteenth century, and enjoying as it was said the blessing of the British Constitution, which was the *envy and admiration of surrounding nations*, the adoption of such a resolution would be unnecessary. He, however, lamented there was a body of 15,000 men of Mr. Peel's creation, who were armed with bludgeons, and who had a knack of going behind a man's back in the street, and of striking him on the head with his staff. He instanced the cowardly and brutal attack of the New Police upon one of their members, Mr. James Savage, and thought it necessary to apprise the public, as well as the New Police themselves, that that union would, as far as the law allowed, protect its members. He recommended the public to

beware of certain aristocrats calling themselves "The National Political Union of the Middle and Working Classes." Will you, the working men, he asked, fight for aristocrats? If you do fight for them, then as soon as they have gained *their own ends*, they will oppress you as much as ever. They say they will "watch over" your interests; but do *you* watch over *your own interests* and trust only to *yourselves* and your *own Union*? At the same meeting a member of the Society of Friends suggested "that Military Schools should be established for the instruction of all persons in military tactics, and that persons so instructed should be requested to come forward and lead the people to resist all tyranny." Julian Hibbert in replying to the discussion on his resolution remarked that it omened well to hear a Quaker recommend military schools and arming the people.

From that time, however, the Government was determined that no demonstrations, no open air meetings of the working classes should be held. Magistrates were instructed to declare all such meetings, as soon as announced, to be illegal.

The National Union of the Working Classes issued a Manifesto on the question which was immediately declared seditious by the Government. A deputation waited upon Lord Melbourne who asked them "whether the persons who had signed the printed Manifesto, which the Government considered highly seditious, and perhaps treasonable, were present." "Yes," said James Watson, "that gentleman, Mr. Moore, and myself are the persons whose names the Manifesto bears." Melbourne was pressed to state that part of the Manifesto, what paragraph, which sentences or words he charged with being seditious or treasonable. He was evidently anxious to get away, and with "Good Morning" made for a side door, but was intercepted by Mr. Watson who told him that he would not be deterred, but would use every occasion and opportunity to inculcate the principles set forth in the Manifesto. With that the deputation left. The Manifesto appeared in full in the next issue of the *Poor Man's Guardian*.

Colonel Francis Macerone wrote a lengthy letter to the *Morning Chronicle* urging the necessity of the working classes to arm themselves. Particulars were given as to weapons, spears, lances, pikes and small arms, prices of the various weapons and where they could be obtained. This was reprinted as a penny pamphlet and had a large circulation amongst the working classes. This encouraged the author to further elaborate the subject into a volume of 72 pages enriched with six folding plates in colour. The title runs: "Defensive Instruction for the People: containing the new and improved combination of arms called Foot Lancers; miscellaneous instructions on the subject of small arms and ammunition, street and house fighting and field fortification." It is now very scarce and difficult to obtain a copy.

At a meeting of the National Union of the Working Classes held at the Rotunda on November 21, 1831, Julian Hibbert moved:—

That as the greater part of the newspaper press had of late frequently recommended the formation of a National Guard, we hereby declare that the National Guard ought to consist of all the adult males of the nation and not merely of a portion of the middle and upper classes.

In speaking to the resolution, he said he did not think they were called upon to protect the present state of things; but if a Guard was to be formed, the working classes should possess arms as well as the other classes, or they would suffer as their brethren were now suffering in France. There had been much talk of the Cholera Morbus, and many specifics were

recommended, yet he would not advise them to waste their money on any specifics, but if they had ten shillings to spare, to buy one of Colonel Macerone's spears; he said this under the fear of the devil and the Attorney-General. He contended that patience ought to be scratched out of their vocabulary. Mr. Lovett seconded the motion. The question was, he said, whether the people would die for want of bread or fight for it; he for one would rather fight for it. If the time was not come for them to arm, the time was certainly come for them to talk about it. (We may here remark that William Lovett was a conscientious objector of the strongest character. He had been called up to the Militia, but had absolutely refused to serve. He had been imprisoned, fined, his goods were sold, and he was left destitute, but he gained his end for he still refused to serve. It gives us an insight into the desperate position of the working classes, when such a person as himself should second a resolution of that nature). James Watson in supporting the resolution remarked that he had that day been to Colonel Macerone to see his weapon, but the Colonel was not at home. But with regard to the question he thought there was no doubt either about its right or utility. If arms were necessary to the safety of the rich man, they were equally so to the poor man. Should every class around them be arming themselves, and the working class only stand still? He thought the plan of Col. Macerone good, and he was determined as an individual to get one of his weapons and learn the use of it. It depended, he said, in conclusion, on their managing this question—on their organization and arming—whether they would be slaves or free.

AMBROSE G. BARKER.

(To be continued)

Hunting. "Ecrasez L'Infame!"

THROUGHOUT its history our nation has been distinguished by a love of "the chase." Up to a certain point in that history, this was a commendable feature in our national life. When food has to be obtained by hunting, when wild animals are numerous, and threaten both men's lives and their food reserves, hunting and killing is a social necessity. If it incidentally provides an exhilarating pastime, so much the better. In some of the "Border" districts, officials called "Tod-Hunters" (Scotch "tod" = fox) were appointed to protect the farmyards against the ravages of foxes. The present writer is no doubt a descendant of one of those officials.

Under the conditions above indicated, there will be nothing but general approval—or even enthusiasm—for a "sport" which, whether practised by a humble "Todhunter," or by the nobility, gentry and farmers of a district, secures both food and safety for the inhabitants.

These conditions, however, no longer exist. They have changed to such an extent that hunting—far from being a valuable social service—is now seen to be a rather barbarous anachronism. The changes have been brought about by new (a) material circumstances, (b) ideas, emotions.

(a) We no longer rely upon Hunting for our food-supplies. Wild animals are neither numerous nor threatening. Some are extinct. Others—such as the stag, deer and fox—owe their survival mainly, if not entirely, to artificial "preservation." For most of us, the word "sport" now connotes not the pursuit of *game*, but of *games*; together with the practice of

many other kinds of competitive amusements—such as racing and athletics. All these activities have grown out of—and would be impossible without—the principle of *fair play*. The love of this principle is a natural and enforced characteristic of our nation. We claim that it rules out Hunting as now practised.

(b) The new doctrine of the animal-ancestry of man has, it is true, not yet penetrated below a certain level of intelligence or culture. Were it possible to secure the votes of *all*, we believe that a “referendum” on this subject would yield—in the British Isles, a small; in Europe, a large; in the world, an overwhelming—majority for the “Noes”! Nevertheless—although only a few extremists would support the full application of the “Golden Rule” to these “distant relatives” of ours—(the animals)—there is no doubt that the doctrine in question has powerfully reinforced the other factors in the movement towards the humaner treatment of animals. It clearly tells against “the hunt” as at present practised.

(c) There is no line of enquiry more fascinating—or perhaps more important—than the tracing of the growth of the “softening-of-manners” and “humanitarian” movements, whether in our own country, in Europe, or in the world at large. In view of the recent happenings in the Continent of Europe, and even the temper of some of our political organizations, it may well be questioned whether these “softening” movements are “real,” or only “apparent”—i.e., a thin veneer on the surface, a skin readily shed on the application of an external stimulus such as a “slogan,” or a crowd shouting one. These matters, however, are beyond the scope of the present paper. Suffice it for us to note that the stream of humanitarian sentiment has overflowed the human field, and inundated the animal quarters. Unless this stream be diverted by violent social disturbances in the near future, we may perhaps look forward to legislation prohibiting the killing of animals (except in self-defence) by other than “humane killer” methods—a provision which, we think, would automatically rule out “the hunt” as now practised.

In conclusion, however, let us set down as clearly as we can, the pleas advanced by our opponents in defence of Hunting; and reply to them—if we can!—

1. The animals are beautiful, decorative to the countryside, and may become rare or disappear unless—
2. Artificially “preserved.”
3. It is a fair inference that they will not be “preserved,” unless Hunting be maintained.
4. Hunting is bound up with the breeding of superior horses, and with the national sport of horse-racing.
5. Some of the animals provide useful food or clothing.
6. The fox has “fair play.” His superior cunning makes him the equal of the cavalcade of horses, riders and dogs pitted against him.
7. Hunting is not inhumane.
8. You ought to think twice—in these drab days of industrial squalor—before suppressing a pageant, so grateful to eye and ear, so picturesque, so beautiful, in its sylvan setting: or destroying an institution so deeply-rooted in our history, so redolent of the perfumes of the past, so interlinked with the lives of our most notable families, that its demise will be mourned by many, as they would mourn the death of an old friend.

1/5. In the interests of brevity, we shall accept pleas nos. 1/5, merely remarking that we consider the case somewhat overstated. In these days of “Zooos,” there is no danger of any species becoming

extinct. Horse-breeding and horse-racing interests can very well look after themselves. Food and clothing can be obtained by “humane killer” methods.

6. As regards “fair play,” we confidently appeal to that vast army of “bloodless” sportsmen to whom we have referred. Those of them who are able to give an unbiassed verdict will certainly come down on the side of the fox, and still more certainly on the side of the deer.

7. To the plea that hunting is “not inhumane,” we oppose a direct negative. We are quite unable to understand, except on the rather precarious hypothesis with which we conclude this paper, how gentle ladies—some of whom are conspicuous for their kindness to domestic animals—can be proud to be “in at the death” of a beautiful animal whose agonized efforts to save his life, against overwhelming odds, have been frustrated by the organized brutality of the company of which the ladies are enthusiastic members.

8. We are by no means insensible to the force of this appeal. Every thrust goes home. We love to watch the beautiful horses and their brightly-clad riders. We love to follow the gay and picturesque cavalcade as it flutters across the fields, perhaps taking the gates or fences in its stride. If we have the historic sense, we cannot be indifferent either to the antiquity of the ceremonial, or to the temporary escape it provides from the colourless monotony of an industrial age; but our backward glance into the past has reminded us of other picturesque scenes of like or greater antiquity. We recall, for instance, a certain picturesque May-Day procession in Mexico which ended in the brutal murder, not of foxes or deer, but of a pathetic host of young and beautiful maidens.

We see at once that brutality cannot be justified even by religious fervour, far less by the pleas advanced in (8).

One last word. The adage, “More evil is wrought by want of thought than by want of heart,” may conceivably have relevance to some of the defenders of “the hunt.” If so, let us beg them to *think* about the ancient and once honourable sport; to think what it has now become—and drop it!

G. TODD HUNTER.

To Widen the Freethinking Front

MAY I make some suggestions about the Common Front, which are, I hope, more realistic than the discussion I initiated last year? I understand, of course, that the N.S.S. is non-sectarian in politics; yet as the sole organization carrying on the militant work of men like Paine, Carlile, Hetherington, it inevitably finds itself dealing with questions that have a social and political bearing. One would like to know what Paine or Carlile would have to say about the strange notion that “rationalism” can be separated from social questions.

Paine, whose pamphlets *Common Sense* and *Crisis*, played a decisive part in creating the American Rebellion—pamphlets that can be compared only with the Communist Manifesto for their historical effect. Carlile, who went to jail for advocating rick-burning.

For Paine action, and revolutionary action at that, was not merely the result of thought, it was an indivisible part of it. Long before Marx had declared the necessary union of theory and practice, Paine wrote, “The period of debate is closed. Arms, as the last resource, must decide the contest. By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new era for politics is struck; a new method of thinking has arisen.” (My italics.) And Carlile demanded that physical as well as moral strength be shown. “Yours is a state of warfare, and your ground of quarrel is the want of necessities of life in the midst of abundance.”

There we hear the tradition of struggle that gave greatness to the English Freethinking movement. Owen, for all the streaks of vagueness in his thought, was magnificently aware that a consistent materialist outlook was needed, not because of any abstraction of "truth," but because only by such an unflinching scientific attitude could human unity be realized. He was thoroughly aware of the way that Materialism and Communism are necessary facets of the same thing, the struggle away from parasitism to human unity and freedom.

These remarks express my personal attitude to the question of the relation of Rationalism to social activity. I am not, however, seeking to force them on my fellow-Freethinkers. I am aware that the splitting-up process of Capitalism has split up the issues further than in Paine's day; and though this means that in one sense we have to strive more than ever for union, in another sense it means that we have to accept the practical limitations forced on us.

The N.S.S. can certainly best function as politically unaffiliated; but I think that the following suggestions of mine do not transgress the limits of non-sectarianism. I advance them then for discussion among Freethinkers.

(1) The elucidation of the relation between the Christian Churches and the vested interests that impede progress. Mr. Chapman Cohen, with "Mimmermus," and other writers, do not lose many chances of dealing with this aspect of the fight against obscurantism, so that I mention it rather for the purposes of congratulation than of exhortation, and only for sake of completeness.

(2) The exposure of the lies and myth-making methods of the daily press. Here again much good work is already done. For instance, Mr. Cohen's exposures of the barbaric magic of the Coronation. Indeed the subject is so vast that only an occasional bit of bare-faced lying can be tackled. For not a day passes without major distortions. An important recent one was the prattle about the "Mystery Fakir" in Waziristan to romanticize the cold-blooded facts of imperialist penetration, economic starvation, and murder in general.

(3) The support of the International Peace Campaign. The I.P.C. is an entirely non-sectarian body; its four peace-points must surely carry the support of all rationalists and free-thinkers; its ranks include outstanding men of all sections of political thought throughout Europe—except Trotskyists and Fascists, the only two bodies of men whose sole hope lies in war and chaos.

I suggest that anyone interested should write to the I.P.C. at 18 Grosvenor Crescent Mews, S.W.1, and that the question of affiliation should be raised. There can surely be no other organization with which the N.S.S. could feel so entirely in accord. A small space in the *Freethinker* might perhaps be allotted to the work of the I.P.C.

(4) More space in the *Freethinker* for the discussion of the developments in materialist thought of recent years. This suggestion can hardly be out of key with the intentions of the Society; yet I see little sign in the *Freethinker* columns, that Freethinkers in general try to keep up with the growth of scientific thought and of materialist formulations. Sometimes the articles are grotesquely "scholastic." For instance, a while ago a writer discussed the problem of rewards and punishment. Not only was there no mention of the entirely new system inaugurated in the Soviet Union—which even antagonists of Communism must admit to be the most humane, the only humane, system yet actualized—there was not even any awareness of the best work done under Capitalist conditions.

In short, I should like to see as much thoroughness of effort applied to the general issues of Materialism as to questions of religion and myth. What reflections in the pages of the *Freethinker* are there of the splendid materialist thinking to be found in men like Professors Hogben, Levy, Gordon Childe, or Geoffrey Crowther, T. A. Jackson, and Roy Pascal? There are several energetic writers who contribute to the *Freethinker*, and who are capable of discussing these contemporary developments of Materialism, so that the blame cannot be laid entirely on the exigencies of running a magazine that will not compromise its integrity for financial gain.

(5) A careful watch to be kept on all attempts to attack or cripple public liberties. This is the most important item of my suggestions. I recommend to all Freethinkers an article by G. H. C. Bing in the present (May) *Labour Monthly* on the subject of Civil Liberty. I suggest that the least which should be done is the detailed reviewing in the *Freethinker* of the publications of the National Council of Civil Liberties. This is a non-sectarian body with which the N.S.S. should be in entire accord; it is doing most valuable work in exposing encroachments on civil liberty, yet I think I am right in saying that none of its pamphlets has been noticed in the *Freethinker*. This should surely be remedied.

I know that the central work of the *Freethinker* is the continual attack on ecclesiastical obscurantism; and with this side of its work I have no quarrel whatever. It is on account of my high opinion of the N.S.S., and of the noble tradition that it upholds, that I make these suggestions; for I would like to see it functioning with a maximum of effect. My suggestions therefore relate only to side-issues; but they are not, perhaps, for that reason any the less worth making.

JACK LINDSAY.

In Memoriam

In never-fading memory of our only child

VALERIE BRADLAUGH TRASK

Born, November 18, 1934.

Died, May 18, 1935.

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

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 6.30, Sunday, Mr. A. Leacy. Rushcroft Road, Brixton, S.O. Tuesday, Mr. H. Preece. Cock Pond, Clapham Old Town, S.O. Friday, Mr. F. P. Corrigan.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.30, Sunday, Messrs. Bryant, Barnes and Evans. 6.30, Messrs. Bryant, Barnes, Leacy, Connell and Tuson. Thursday, 7.30, Messrs. Saphin, Bryant and Tuson. Friday, 7.30, Messrs. Barnes, Perry and others.

MOTHER OF GOD

BY

G. W. FOOTE

Post Free

2½d.

BRAIN and MIND

— BY —

Dr. ARTHUR LYNCH.

This is an introduction to a scientific psychology along lines on which Dr. Lynch is entitled to speak as an authority. It is a pamphlet which all should read.

Price - 6d.

By post - 7d.

The Book That Shook The Churches

The Age Of Reason

THOMAS PAINE

With Critical Introduction by CHAPMAN COHEN

For more than Thirty Years Men and Women went to prison to vindicate the right to publish and circulate this book

This is a complete edition of Paine's immortal work, and covers, with introduction (44 pages), 250 pages of close type, well printed on good paper with portrait cover. Price 4d., postage 2½d., or strongly bound in cloth with portrait on plate paper, 1s. 6d., postage 3d.

This is the cheapest work ever published in the history of the Freethought Movement. No other book ever shook the Churches so thoroughly, and its wide circulation to-day will repeat the effect it produced more than a century ago. It is simple enough for a child and profound enough for a philosopher. Paine's book appealed to the people in 1794; it appeals to the public to-day.

INGERSOLL'S

famous

AN ORATION ON
THOMAS PAINE

One of the most eloquent
tributes to the greatness
of Thomas Paine

Price 2d. Postage ½d.

Shakespeare & other Literary Essays

BY

G. W. FOOTE

Price 3s. 6d.

Postage 3d

Letters To a Country Vicar

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

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

CREED AND CHARACTER

CHAPMAN COHEN

1. Religion and Race Survival
2. Christianity and Social Life
3. The Case of the Jew
4. A Lesson from Spain

Price 4d.

Postage 1d.

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A Public Demonstration

IN THE

PICTON HALL, LIVERPOOL

Whit-Sunday, May 16th, 1937

Chairman: **CHAPMAN COHEN**

(President N.S.S.)

SPEAKERS:

Dr. C. H. R. Carmichael, J. T. Brighton, G. Whitehead,
G. Bedborough, J. V. Shortt, J. Clayton, R. H. Rosetti,
and Others

ADMISSION FREE
Doors Open 6.30 p.m.

Reserved Seats One Shilling each
Commence 7.0 p.m.

THE REVENUES OF RELIGION

BY

ALAN HANDSACRE

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

A New Propagandist Series

Pamphlets For The People

CHAPMAN COHEN

**MUST WE HAVE A RELIGION?
THE DEVIL**

Did Jesus Christ Exist? Morality
Without God. What is the Use of
Prayer? Christianity and Woman.

Each Pamphlet sixteen pages. Price
One penny

HUMANITY AND WAR

By

CHAPMAN COHEN

Forty pages, with cover. THREEPENCE,
postage 1d. extra. This is a Freethinker's
view of the whole subject of war, fearlessly
and simply expressed. In order to assist
in its circulation eight copies will be sent
for Two Shillings postage paid. Terms
for larger quantities on application.

Send at once for a Supply

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