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## Views and Opinions

### Savage And Civilized

MODERN anthropology has made us familiar with the fact that the savage in civilized man is but skin deep. But there is a certain ambiguity about that word "savage." The scientist uses it in one sense; the ordinary man uses it in another and a different sense. The scientist means by "savage" no more than "primitive," and he measures people not by a time scale, but by a scale of culture. It is a value that cannot be expressed in terms of time. A people that lived five or six thousand years ago has been more civilized than many who are living to-day. The man living on one side of you may be centuries older than your neighbour on the other side. A King may be more primitive than a clown, the man driving a Rolls Royce car, speaking in perfect English, and dressed in the latest of fashionable clothing may indicate by the mascot he carries on his car and the ideas that lodge in his head that he is more nearly akin to the members of an African native tribe than he is to thousands of his contemporaries. The scientist deals with essentials, not with superficial differences. Those who took part in the Westminster Abbey ceremony of May 12, which involved the semi-deification of a King by a magical method that is thousands of years old, and who were impressed by its "solemnity," were by a scientific standard very primitive indeed.

On the other hand, the ordinary man when he talks of a "savage" people thinks of them as primitive certainly, but his "primitive" carries with it the notions of brutal, unthinking, illogical. And that is altogether wrong. Primitive mankind is not of necessity brutal—the bulk of them are far less deliberately brutal than are his descendants of to-day. He has fewer of the arts and comforts of civilized life, but he is also free from the influence of those inherited customs, beliefs and interests, which because they are accumulated through many ages, are at constant war with one another, and which so often lead to the brutalities and hypocrisies of civilized life. Primitive

man thinks, as does modern man, and his thoughts are determined as are the thoughts of all men, by the knowledge and the understanding he has of what is going on around him. And in that connexion his thoughts are actually more logical than those of modern man. He simply could not be guilty of the downright absurdities that characterize, say, an Archbishop. Both may be doing the same things, professing the same beliefs, but those of the "savage" are in accord with what is understood, those of the Archbishop represent a horrible mixture of bad logic and childish inferences.

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### Barbarism In High Places

In the three articles that have preceded this one I have been trying to illustrate the persistence of a whole set of primitive ideas in our institution of the kingship. Not, be it noted, in the fact of calling a chief king, that is a matter of political expediency, but in the sanctifying of a King, by which sanctification, via a modern medicine-man, the King becomes the recipient of divine power and wisdom, and is converted into a "sacred" person—that is a "taboo" person. My intention in this article and in what follows is to demonstrate how very primitive is this belief and practice, and that not as a figure of speech, but as an actual fact. It goes directly back to the most primitive forms of "savage" life, and also if we can get rid of the fact that we live with the participants of that ceremony and exercise a small amount of imagination, we can easily fancy that we are looking on at the election of a chief of an uncivilized negro tribe who is being made chief solely because he is the visible incarnation of the tribal god. So far as our ceremony was accepted at its face value, they who did so, whether King or commoner, whether educated or uneducated, illustrated a case of social atavism. If they had, instead of putting on the fantastic clothing, which seen in the streets would have caused roars of laughter, if they had thrown off all clothing except a loin-cloth, and if the King had, instead of promising the things he did such as acting justly, guarding the rights and privileges of the Church, etc., had been made to promise that he would send rain regularly and cause the crops to grow, and if the Archbishop had been daubed with paint and decked with feathers, all would only have been dressing for the part. Nothing can relieve the Coronation of its primitive magical nature, so far as the scientific mind is concerned, however "impressive" it may be to the primitive intelligence that was ready to shed tears over its "solemnity." Those, the majority probably, who went to see and enjoy a pageant, and who would have been as delighted had the same pageant been for any kind of object whatever, need not now be considered.

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### God-Boxes

In giving the evidence for what has been said, it will save repeated references if I advise all who wish

to follow the subject further than these articles to study the following works. These are Sir James Frazer's *Lectures on the History of the Kingship* (1905), *Kingship*, by A. M. Hocart (1927), *Councillors and Kings*, by the same author (1936), *The Magic Art*, by Frazer (1911), and *Christian Myth and Ritual*, by Professor E. O. James (1933). If these books do not lead to further study (there are a large number of works dealing more or less elaborately with the subject) then that person had better confine himself to a study of those weekly journals that manage to give a lot of information without saying anything worth bothering about.

The natives of Mangia (South Pacific) have a name for these god-possessed chiefs or kings. They call them "God-boxes," a term which shows the direct logical nature of the primitive mind. Our Archbishop would use the much more tortuous phrase, "filled with the power of the Holy Ghost." It means no more than does the native god-box, but it is valuable because obscure. It must have come as a revelation to many when Sir James Frazer, dismissing as an idle speculation the popular belief that the primitive chief owed his position to being the strongest and bravest man of the tribe, made it quite plain that the divinity of the chief, headman, or king (the wording matters little) was a common feature of all primitive communities. In passing we may note this as another tribute to the prescience of Herbert Spencer who, in his *Principles of Sociology*, opened a new chapter in scientific sociology by emphasizing the formative influence of ideas in primitive life.

We are not now concerned with the origin of the belief in the supernatural; the main consideration is that all over the world among primitive communities, the chief or king begins as an incarnation of the tribal god, and also it is to the deep-seated nature of this belief that the office of a king is surrounded to-day in this country with a reproduction of the primitive nummery such as the world has just witnessed. The magical nature of kingship, its "sacred" and "sanctified" character, is very obvious when we are dealing with existing primitive communities that have no object in "rationalizing" their beliefs and customs, but the relation of the Coronation of an English King to the Fijian and other primitive ceremonies of anointing the chief is quite clear to the scientific student.

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#### How Kings Began

I can now give but a few specimens of the truth of what has been said, and will commence with the more primitive peoples. The natives of Futuna (South Pacific) believe that their god resides in the person of their king. From this they draw the conclusion that the king, being god, can do no wrong. This has to us a quite "constitutional" ring when we remember that it is part of our own custom. In Tanatua after the king has been duly anointed he is worshipped, consulted as an oracle, and prayers are offered to him. This is a very common practice throughout the islands. At his "sanctification" the king is given a "sacred" girdle by the priest, which at once elevates the king to a god. We again come close to this in our own service when, after the archbishop clothes the king, all the nobles promise him worship. The archbishop promises him *service* in return for the king promising to secure the rights and privileges of the Church. It is a case of a Roland for an Oliver. Among the Igbos of Nigeria, when a king is installed, all the prayer sticks are given over to him, the officials surrender their wands of office and stand bareheaded before him. After the King has been "sanctified" the wands of office are returned, their power having been renewed by the god, the prayer-sticks are given back and the sub-chiefs put on

their head coverings and cry out a salute to the King—now a god. I need not emphasize the closeness with which this follows the Westminster ceremony. It is a recognition that everything comes from the god-king. An Igbo who had come direct from Nigeria would have followed with the fullest appreciation the Coronation of George VI. He would have witnessed the same thing in his native haunts. The ancient Sumerian Kings were born of gods. In the period of Greek life represented by the Homeric poems the kings were clearly divine. The early Babylonian Kings were treated as gods. In official theory the Mikado of Japan is still a descendant of the gods, although educated Japanese will "rationalize" the divinity of the monarch much as our king-worshippers act with regard to the semi-divinity of George VI. In each case the theoretically divine king has become a "symbol," but of what he is a symbol God only knows. But in these cases any formula serves to hide even from believers what are the actual facts. The chief Lama of Tibet is also a "god-box," the god passing from one Lama to another. This last feature is common, but not universal, with primitive peoples, and we get here the real significance of our own formula, "The King is dead, long live the King." The man is unmistakably dead, the god simply passes into the body of the new monarch. All this would be quite clear to our Fijian visitor if he was reading the Coronation Service in his native tongue. In the Colonial Office at Pekin, there is a list of 160 incarnates who have been during past centuries licensed by the State. (Frazer, *Lectures*, p. 160). Our own list of "sanctified" kings looks very juvenile by the side of that of the Chinese.

Among the negroes of the Upper Nile the chief is both medicine-man and king. The Kings of Egypt were always gods, says Foucart, and in Egypt, "we find ourselves in the presence of a conception of monarchy based solely upon the assimilation of the king to the gods"; and another authority, Moret, says "the Kings of Egypt exhausted all the possible conceptions of divinity." At Thebes a woman slept in the temple with the god-king, and the child born of the two was worshipped as an incarnate, just as centuries later there reappeared in the New Testament the same story of the birth of a child from the union of a god and a woman. Robertson Smith, in his epoch-marking *Religion of the Semites* (1889) points out that the identification of the god with the king was general. Had Robertson Smith written at a later date he would most probably have stated the fact in terms much closer to later research. But he does give a list of Semitic communities, each with its own god-king. Of the Melanesians, Codrington, the chief authority on these peoples, says that the whole power of the chiefs rests "upon the belief in their supernatural power derived from spirits or ghosts with whom they had intercourse." And in the Bible the first king is anointed by the priests, and the king rules over "my people" in the name of the god. Here, again, in that expression we have the belief that everything comes from the gods, and to the people through the god-king. We have an echo of this in the king's expression, "my army," "my navy," the "King's courts of law," etc. These are taken as a mere figure to-day, but to the scientific investigator they are as illuminating in their reference as are rudimentary animal structures to the scientific biologist. And like these rudimentary bodily structures, our social ones may represent an element of danger and demoralization in their diminished and often perverted functioning.

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#### The "Savage" To-Day

Dig where we will into the history of humanity we get the same evidence. The King does not begin as

the best or bravest or wisest man of the tribe, and in this feature the kingship everywhere has remained absolutely faithful to its origin. The King develops from the medicine-man, and becomes, in due course, the incarnation of tribal supernaturalism. From neolithic man worshipping his chief because of his supposed power with the tribal gods, or because he is both god and man at the same time, down to the Archbishop of Canterbury pouring "holy oil" over the King, and by means of his incantations, giving the King a power and wisdom and fear that he had not previously possessed, the chain of evidence is unbroken. There is absolutely no difference between the Melanesian chief sitting in the centre of a circle of his sub-chiefs while the chief priest transforms him into a god-king, and the crowd of English peers standing round the King while the Archbishop goes through substantially the same performance, and for, avowedly, the same purpose as was there in the most primitive, and is present to-day with the least civilized of existing peoples. There is no difference but one, and that is the feeling of pity that humanity has developed so slowly, and of contempt that so many who know better can be induced to play a part in so stupid a ceremony.

But, as I have said, the distinction between the original service with primitive humanity and that of to-day is that the "savage" of ten thousand or more years ago acted according to his lights. The modern "savage" is acting against what is known to all who take the trouble to learn. The one is a deed done in the dark; the other is an offence against the light. We have now to enquire why the early savage acted as he did, and to consider the reactions on civilized life of this perpetuated savagery.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

(To be continued)

## Bamboozling Believers

A FAMOUS Christian leader declared that the Christian Bible was a nose of wax, which could be pulled into any shape. If that preacher were alive to-day, his language would, if anything, be even more forcible. For, not only do the old familiar divisions of Christianity still exist, but entirely new fancy religions, bearing the label of "Christian," are constantly appearing. To-day, this Christian Religion is a kaleidoscope, changing colour and complexion under one's very eyes. With the solitary exception of the Roman Catholic Church, whose motto is "Semper Idem" (always the same), the Christianity of our time bears no more relation to the historic faith than a string of sausages to the four-legged animal from which they were originally manufactured.

So much is this the case that even the State Religion is affected. This so-called "Protestant Reformed Church" by Law Established, is sixty-per cent Romanish, and forty per cent, not merely Latitudinarian, but Nothingarian. As for the numerous Non-conformist bodies, the least said the soonest mended. The general trend among Dissenting Bodies shows markedly the ebb-tide of Puritanism, and the incursion of sheer, unadulterated sentimentalism. For example, Methodists, who used to regard the theatres and music-halls as the gateways to "Hell," now permit plays and entertainments to be presented in their church halls. In place of long-winded sermons ("and thirteenthly, my brethren"), on death and damnation, one now hears light-hearted discourses on alleged Socialism, which would cause Karl Marx himself to use worse language than Doctor Martin Luther, and he could outslang a Billingsgate fish-porter.

Freethinkers must have smiled often at the frantic efforts of present-day preachers to make the Christian Superstition more acceptable to twentieth-century men and women. Books and pamphlets, "thick as leaves in Vallombrosa," have been issued with the sole object of camouflaging the barbarities of a creed with its roots in the Stone Age, and resting upon savagery. Countless sermons have been preached to the same effect. And the tame mice of the Labour Movement have squeaked their little pieces in praise of "Christian" Socialism, and tried to identify a cruel religion with the Brotherhood of Man, and other noble ideals of Democracy.

Why is this transformation scene taking place? The Christian Religion is a huge vested interest, and the clergy are very anxious to prepare for the time when the red flag will fly at Westminster. No longer do they put their trust in princes; so they sacrifice principle to interest, as is their usual practice. But vaulting ambition may overreach itself, and the clergy may have greater difficulty in imposing their latest piece of hypocrisy upon partially-educated congregations than in spoofing the innocents of the ages of greater faith and more ignorance.

The brotherhood of man has nothing whatever to do with the Christian Religion, which is concerned with the divine damnation of mankind. Brotherliness is implicit in the watchwords of the great French Revolution—Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity—and in the writings of such Freethinkers as Thomas Paine, Rousseau, Shelley, and their successors. Earlier writers treated the subject academically, but with the Freethinkers it had all the force of an evangel, which aroused men like a trumpet blast. The clergy, at long last, assert that their scripture affirms the brotherhood of man, which, they pretend, implies the fatherhood of God. That is, of course, the Christian God, and not one made in Birmingham.

It is a most impudent assertion. According to the records, the Bible deity damned the entire human race because of a case of petty larceny on the part of "Adam" and "Eve." Later, he is said to have drowned all men and women, save eight, like kittens in a pail. The first couple are described as thieves, and the first baby as a murderer. In the Christian scheme mankind is divided into sheep and goats, believers and unbelievers, and the majority is consigned to an eternity of punishment in a flaming hell. Christ, who is said to be an incarnation of the older deity, endorses the terrors and tyranny of his predecessor in such phrases as "Depart from me ye cursed into the fire prepared for the Devil and his angels."

Nor is this all! Christians not only murdered their opponents, but actually killed each other for differences of opinion. Their treatment of the Jewish people is one of the ghastliest pages in all history. The clergy never denounced the crime of militarism, but actually christened battleships, blessed regimental flags, sang "Te Deums" for victories, and acted as army chaplains.

One knows the sort of people who sit in the pews at churches, chapels and tin tabernacles, and they are not, as a rule, "gey gleg at the uptak." Perhaps some are deaf; perhaps they are thinking about their meals; perhaps they are half asleep. Maybe, most of them left school at fourteen years of age, and did not pay much attention to their studies. But it is difficult to believe that any company of educated people, acquainted with history, could take any preacher, or lecturer, seriously when he declared that the Christian Religion is Socialism without the tiresome details. For the Christian brand of Socialism is neither Christianity nor Socialism.

As for politicians' excursions into theology, they are capable of anything. What these creatures say is

just patter. The important things are what they leave out and not what they say in their public utterances. Gladstone, for example, used to interlard his speeches with oleaginous piety. The worldly-minded Labouchere summed it all up with his cynical remark: "I have no objection to our beloved chief having an ace up his sleeve, but I do object to his saying that God put it there." Mr. Baldwin is in a similar plight. He told the recent Albert Hall gathering to "live for the brotherhood of man, which implies the fatherhood of God," but whilst in power how much brotherhood has he shown to oppressed nations, and to the unemployed and the distressed areas of his own country?

The Archbishop of Canterbury, who wore a £300 robe in the recent harlequinade in Westminster Abbey, to show his sympathy with the "carpenter of Nazareth," pretends that his theatrical performance at the Abbey dedicates this entire British nation to Christianity. He may deceive the sightseers who were charged ten shillings each to view the empty chairs, but facts are awkward things. There are far more Non-Christians than Christians within the British Commonwealth of Nations. Our laws are based on the old Roman jurisprudence, and have nothing to do with "Gospel teaching." Members of Parliament, who make modern laws, have included in their ranks Freethinkers, Parsees, Unitarians, and Jews. But so long as the Archbishop and his satellites are regarded as a sacred caste apart, and have possession of millions of money, they will continue to pose as people of real importance, and pour out oceans of nonsense with extreme unction. Actually, this ecclesiastical Punch and Judy show is a savage survival from barbarous times, and, sooner or later, will be recognized as such, and the clergy will join the ranks of the unemployed.

Despite the whole troublous tribe of clergy, and their mountains of money bags, the undoubted fact remains that Supernaturalism is becoming played out, and men's minds are slowly broadening. Men and women no longer accept upon mere trust the religious, social, and political ideas that satisfied their illiterate and credulous ancestors. Over the pulpits of the fast-emptying churches is inscribed, "To the glory of God," which means, in the last analysis: "To the triumph of Priestcraft." That is the voice of the past. Secularism sounds the voice of the future: To the service of man. With a creed based on fables, supported by brute force, trading on ignorance, the clergy are finding the conscience of the race slowly rising in revolt against their outworn superstition. Religion has long enough darkened the earth, and separated man from man. A new impulse is at hand to make men join hands and hearts. This impulse is Secularism; which embraces the whole world in an ethical fraternity and will, in due time, largely increase the happiness of humanity. For, hitherto, the least wise have governed the more wise.

MIMNERMUS.

The two principles underlying religion are ignorance and danger; ignorance keeping men unacquainted with natural causes, and danger making them recur to supernatural ones. Or, to express the same proposition in other words, the feeling of veneration, which under one of its aspects takes the form of superstition, is a product of wonder and fear; and it is obvious that wonder is connected with ignorance, and that fear is connected with danger. Hence it is, that whatever in any country increases the total amount of amazement, or whatever in any country increases the total amount of peril, has a direct tendency to increase the total amount of superstition, and therefore to strengthen the hands of the priesthood.—Buckle "History of Civilization."

## Calvin's Complicity in the Burning of Servetus

WITH his *Right to Heresy* (Cassell, 1936) Stefan Zweig has issued a splendid vindication of Freethought. The great humanist's Castellio's, conflict with the sour, relentless and autocratic Calvin, Zweig carefully describes, while the Protestant leader's responsibility for the judicial murder of Servetus is conclusively established. Calvin's apologists have tried hard to shield him from blame, and it is still asserted that he pleaded for more merciful treatment for the heretic, but this claim is shown to be invalid. Indeed, Calvin, as Castellio declared at the time, was the constant instigator of Servetus' trial and condemnation, and never left a stone unturned to gratify his hatred of a man who had dared to dissent from Calvin's theological dogmas.

John Calvin established a dictatorship in Geneva, perhaps more repellent than any State tyranny that exists to-day. His first attempt to create a despotism failed, but only for a time. For when in an ill-starred hour the Genevese authorities recalled Calvin, he was still more determined to rule as an autocrat. Even when he married, his main desire was to make himself a more efficient agent of the pitiless fiend he worshipped as a deity. His wife soon died, and henceforth he led a celibate existence, and the sexual starvation thus endured was accompanied with chronic ill-health. A man of powerful will, his industry was amazing. His correspondence alone must have equalled that of a dozen average statesmen, as his interests embraced both temporal and religious affairs.

In Calvin's Geneva, life from birth to death was subjected to a terrible trial. Everything deemed evil, from the narrow-minded outlook of Calvinism, was remorselessly suppressed. As Zweig states: "With one leap, Calvin outdistanced the Catholic Inquisition, which had always waited for reports of informers or denunciations from other sources before sending out its familiars and spies." No citizen was safe from the attentions of the spiritual police either by night or day. "The members of this moral Cheka thrust fingers in every pie. They felt the women's dresses to see whether their skirts were not too long or too short, whether these garments had superfluous frills or dangerous slits. From the bedroom they passed on to the kitchen table, to ascertain whether the prescribed diet was not being exceeded by a soup or a course of meat, or whether sweets or jams were not hidden away somewhere. Then the pious policeman would continue his examination of the rest of the house. He pried into bookshelves on the chance of there being a book devoid of the Consistory's imprimatur. . . . The servants were asked about the behaviour of their masters and the children were cross-questioned as to the doings of their parents."

No display of cheerfulness was permitted. Christmas and Easter were abolished. What was once a free city was plunged into unspeakable sadness and gloom. Still, a modicum of liberty remained: "It was permissible to live and die, to work and to obey, and to go to Church." Indeed, all those who neglected to attend the services were subjected to severe penalties.

A Spaniard scientifically inclined, Servetus became a Monotheist, and his denial of the Trinity enraged Papist and Protestant alike. His life was henceforth in danger, and driven from pillar to post he lived under assumed names in Lyons and other cities. Escaping from Paris, where he had worked under Vesalius, he was lost sight of until he appeared in Vienne, whose Archbishop made Servetus his physician. No one in Vienne seems to have suspected that Dr. Michel de Villeneuve, the Prelate's physician, was the arch-heretic Miguel Servetus. Enforced silence soon proved too galling to his spirit, so

he committed to writing his most daring speculations. His manuscript he sent to Calvin, of all men in the world, seeking his conversion. Calvin was infuriated not only by its didactic tone, but by the opinions expressed. Moreover, Servetus actually intimated his desire to visit Geneva, so Calvin smiled grimly, and in a letter to his subordinate Farel wrote: "Servetus sent to me lately, and besides his letter sent me a great volume full of his ravings. . . . He declares himself ready to come hither if I wish him to; but I shall not pledge my faith to him; for if he did come here, I would see to it, so far as I have authority in this city, that he should not leave it alive."

By some means Servetus at last realized the danger of correspondence with a foe so deadly as Calvin. So he requested the return of his manuscript, but this appeal was ignored, and Calvin carefully preserved the incriminating document for future use. Now, Trie, a creature of Calvin's, forwarded a letter to a friend in France, telling him that while heresy was pitilessly suppressed in Protestant Geneva, this pestilent weed was permitted to luxuriate in Catholic France, where a miscreant, "whose real name is Miguel Servetus, but who calls himself Michel de Villeneuve, and practices as a physician," had written a damnable work. This letter led to the denunciation of Servetus, but when the Inquisitor reached Vienne, both the printing press and its product had vanished, while the suspected physician stoutly denied his identity with Servetus. The Inquisitor proved complacent and Servetus remained at Liberty. Calvin's animosity was not lessened by this rebuff and a bigoted Catholic, named Arneys, to whom Trie had addressed his letter now wrote to Geneva asking his correspondent "to supply additional and more damning material concerning the aforesaid heretic." So after affecting surprise that his letter had been shown to the Inquisition, Trie forwarded letters in Servetus' handwriting, as well as portions of the manuscript in Calvin's possession. Trie's epistle to Arneys concludes as follows: "I think I am sending you some irrefutable proofs, so that you will have no further difficulty in getting Servetus arrested and brought to trial."

The French are not devoid of a sense of humour, and the Gallic Inquisitors seem to have been highly entertained when they learnt of the arch-heretic Calvin's solicitude that Servetus should be incinerated by themselves. As Zweig justly remarks: "Such courtesies were not usually exchanged between the notables of the respective faiths who were accustomed to use fire and sword, the gallows and the wheel, in the attempt to destroy one another." Still, the Inquisitors now set to work and Servetus was constrained to admit that he and Dr. Villeneuve were one and the same. So the good physician was arrested and sent to prison where, however, he enjoyed exceptional freedom from restraint. In these favourable circumstances he effected his escape and the authorities mildly contented themselves by burning Servetus in effigy in company with five bundles of his *Restitutio* in Vienne's market-place.

The sufferings of the fugitive during the ensuing months must have been terrible. But of his movements at this time nothing is known until he ventured to Geneva, where his implacable enemy reigned supreme. What extremity induced the wanderer to seek shelter there can only be conjectured, for he must have known that the splenetic Calvin would show no mercy. Yet he almost immediately attended the Cathedral service where Calvin was to preach. "Calvin," states Zweig "recognized the ravaging wolf among his pious flock, and inconspicuously gave orders to his minions. Servetus was arrested as he left the cathedral. Within an hour the fugitive was in chains. The arrest was a breach of international law,

and also the laws of hospitality generally accepted throughout the world. Servetus was not subject to Genevese jurisdiction unless for an offence committed in that city. He was a foreigner, a Spaniard, who had committed no crime that would have justified his seizure. His books had been written and printed across the frontier, so that his heretical views could not have harmed any of the pious Genevese."

Accused of no crime, Servetus was incontinently cast into prison at Calvin's order. This itself was an outrage on the laws of Geneva as an accuser was required to place himself at the Court's mercy and to remain in custody until his charge was justified. So Calvin cunningly deputed one of his servants, Fontaine, to act as accuser, and he apparently drew up the indictment which his accomplice urged against Servetus.

At first the Council inclined towards leniency, and the heretic might have been permitted to depart had not Calvin determined to encompass his enemy. The dictator intervened between Servetus and his secular judges, and the former's fate was from that moment sealed. The accused defended himself with spirit, and in his zeal for his religious opinions played into his adversary's hands. The pious judges were painfully shocked by what were to them blasphemous utterances. Calvin was elated and wrote to a friend: "I hope he will be condemned to death."

Servetus endured a long incarceration, manacled in chains in a clammy and unspeakably loathsome cell. He petitioned the authorities for better accommodation, but when it was suggested that more humane treatment might be accorded a hidden hand intervened. "The upshot was," writes Zweig, "that this bold thinker and independent scholar was left to languish in his cell as a mangy dog might have been left to die upon a dunghill." So revolting were his surroundings that the wretched prisoner was swarming with vermin and literally befouled with his own excrement.

After this horrible experience, Servetus again appeared before his ruthless enemy. "This man in irons," writes Zweig, "clad in stinking rags, was confronted by his arch adversary on the judge's seat; by Calvin . . . with whom the prisoner now wished to discuss matters, mind against mind, scholar against scholar; by Calvin who reviled Servetus as a criminal and assassin." Servetus infuriated beyond measure by the indignities heaped upon him denounced his pious accuser in unmeasured terms, but although sentence was postponed, it was now certain that the heretic was doomed to perish in the flames.

All devices to induce Servetus to recant having failed his death by roasting alive over a slow fire was duly carried out. When the unfortunate physician was led out to execution he was a sorry sight. Dirty and in chains he tottered as he walked.

The wood was arranged around the stake, and the attached chains were wound round the martyr's wasted form. The book and manuscript sent to Calvin years before were incinerated with their author. "Finally, in scorn," declares Zweig, "there was pressed upon the martyr's brow a crown of leaves impregnated with sulphur. The preliminaries over, the executioner kindled the faggots and the murder began."

Even in the Dark Ages heretics were sometimes strangled or reduced to insensibility before the flames were lit, but this Protestant crime was committed with the most devilish cruelty and vindictiveness. In his agony, Servetus uttered a cry so heartrending that the very spectators were moved to pity. This pious murder took place in Champel near Geneva, on October 27, 1553, less than four centuries ago.

T. F. PALMER.

## H heads I Win, Tails You Lose

THE recent victory of M. Van Zeeland, Prime Minister of Belgium, over M. Degrelle, leader of the Rexist Party, in the bye-election in Brussels, caused the British Left Press, led by the *Daily Herald*, to emit whoops of victory. Fascism in Belgium had been checked, if not overthrown. Let us see what an acute observer in another country makes of the "famous victory."

At the time of the election there was in Brussels M. André Lorulot, leader of the French Freethinkers, who was attending a meeting of the International Council of Freethought. This is how he viewed the contest in his journal, *L'Idée Libre*.

I am, he writes, strolling in the streets of Brussels while waiting for the meeting of the International Council of Freethought, which is gathering to-night. And I amuse myself, an incorrigible Parisian, by reading the posters. An implacable duel is being fought. On the one hand, Degrelle, chief of the *Rex* (the Belgian Fascist movement, semi-Hitlerian, anti-French). On the other hand, Van Zeeland, sole candidate of democracy, of the Liberals, the Socialists, Communists, etc.

Other men are in the crowds (for the people of Brussels are, at least, as given to idle lounging as the Parisians). And I hear a voice demanding, *Who will win?*

I had a great desire to reply (but it is impossible for me to conduct propaganda in Belgium; the safe conduct which a very devoted friend had obtained for me only being good for a few days). If I had been able to do this, I should have said: *The one who will win is the Church!*

Indeed, if Degrelle is Catholic, Van Zeeland is not less so.

Degrelle is an agent of the Jesuites. One of the inspirers of the apparitions of Beauraing! *Rex Christus*. . . His programme? It is that of Dollfus, Schuschnigg, Salazar, Casimir [de la Rocque] and their associates.

The bishops, officially, have disavowed him and the "organized" Catholics are campaigning for Van Zeeland. What does this prove? If Degrelle triumphed to-morrow, you would see the same bishops, prostrate at his feet, offering him their warmest blessings.

The Church has been very strong. There are only two candidates standing—and it is not possible to put up a third without playing the game of the Fascist Degrelle. The men of the Left are cornered. Obligated to vote for the "parsonic" Van Zeeland. For he is parsonic one hundred per cent. Who to-day makes democratic grimaces—and who to-morrow will without doubt betray democracy. Van Zeeland is the bishops' man. He has favoured the monastic orders and the clerical schools. Besides which he is an eminent financial shark. See how the Jesuites are strong, since they have had the ability to impose on the Socialists and the Communists the candidature of this man!

Therefore, in all ways, the Church will win. She is ready to carry Degrelle and Fascism to the top; she is equally ready to support the pseudo-democratic régime, allied with Capitalism, docile to the priests, corrupted by the politicians. In any case, the Church gains. . . . What beautiful politics!

And our brawlers of the extreme-left, who don't wish to learn, who refuse to attack religion, who cause their infants to be baptized, and whose social ideas are as superficial as *naïve*, what of them?

Poor Democracy! Your defenders are sincere and self-sacrificing, but, alas, very little dangerous for the privileged.

Thus Lorulot, Mr. Chapman Cohen's opposite number in France. May I add, for my part, that the present state of affairs in Belgium reminds me of the fatuous support given by the Left in Germany to Hindenburg to stave off the advent of Hitler? In the upshot the former prepared the way for the latter.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

## Spiritualism in the Detection of Crime

IN his book, *When Fleet Street Calls*, J. C. Cannell, a London journalist with the widest reporting experience, makes some enlightening references to spiritualists and spiritualism. He says:—

Though Sir Arthur Conan Doyle told me repeatedly that mediums could be, and had been, of assistance in the detection of crime, I am unaware of a single authenticated example of this. I wish it were so, for a great deal of trouble would be saved to the journalist as well as to the police if names and addresses, as well as other facts, could be supplied clairvoyantly. The prospect of carrying off a great scoop through the aid of a medium attracts me mightily; but I am afraid it is an ambition I shall never fulfil.

Sir Arthur even declared, with the emphasis which characterized him, that the day would come when Scotland Yard would have its own seance-room, in which mediums would be regularly employed to assist the police. And, further, he said he knew that the police of this country did use mediums, though they were afraid to say so.

I have yet to learn, as a fact, that one of "The Big Five" attend seances in the course of his duties while investigating big crime cases. Until the rosy days prophesied by Conan Doyle, in which Scotland Yard will have its own seance room, arrive, detectives will have to continue to depend upon the finger-print and photographic departments, and other equally prosaic methods of crime detection.

There are cases in this country in which seances have been held, or some sort of occult practice has been resorted to, in an attempt to obtain information about a crime; but not one of them has produced one helpful fact.

Here we have a very convincing exposure of the claims so loudly advanced with regard to spiritualism.

But the remarks by Mr. Cannell are even more interesting, I consider, because of what they reveal concerning Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Doyle was a doctor by profession. But it was as a man of considerable literary repute—very well-deserved repute, I think—that the world came to know him. For the two reasons—his medical training and his celebrity as an author—the habit of spiritualists is to cite him as a scientist in support of their cult.

Scientists, of course, are entitled to all due respect to the extent that they speak of matters within their own particular sphere of knowledge.

But outside that they emphatically cease to be scientists. They become mere individuals, with not the least justification for presuming—any more than any other human being—to be heard regarding, if I may so put it, affairs beyond this life. Here scientists and non-scientists are on common ground. The one is as prone to error as the other. Could we, indeed, have this more clearly demonstrated than by Mr. Cannell with regard to Sir A. C. Doyle?

Let us away, then, with the chatter that a certain scientist believes this, or another scientist says that. It is not what any scientist believes or says—that is, outside his own special subjects. It is what science itself says. Truly a very different matter. And science has never yet given—nor is it ever likely to give—the slightest endorsement of spiritualism.

FRANK HILL.

Sydney, N.S.W., Australia.

## Acid Drops

There is no question that religion entered largely into the plot that shifted Edward VIII. from the throne. First there was the King's reported dislike to the Coronation ceremony—he had no fancy for front place in that foolish pantomime, and second, there was the objection—the religious objection—to his marrying a divorced woman. Now the Duke has decided to dispense altogether with a religious ceremony, and that is not likely to please the clergy. But even as Duke of Windsor his action may further cast dislike on the religious form of marriage. It may help to place marriage, in even the minds of the vulgar, on its proper basis as a civil contract.

But it would have been very curious if members of the Royal Family had been present at the wedding of the Duke, after he had been driven from the throne because he desired to marry the woman of his choice. That would have injured Mr. Baldwin with his faked "constitutional crisis," and also discredited the Church's objection to the King's choice of marrying the lady instead of his making her his mistress. And the position was apparently met by the Royal Family and the Government officials being forbidden to attend the wedding, an order that was promptly obeyed. And in a family where we were assured domestic affection ran with unusual strength! That also gives food for thought—but only to the minority. Government of both Church and State would be more difficult than it is if the majority reflected on the significance of such matters.

We are glad to see that Mr. Herbert's Bill for the amendment of the marriage laws has passed its third reading. The opposition to it was mainly based on its unchristian character. That is, of course, only another way of saying that it applied commonsense to the marriage contract. But was there any need for Mr. Herbert to plead that his Bill was "in the finest sense of the word, a Christian Bill"? If it was anything at all it certainly was not a Christian measure. Christianity in both theory and practice is opposed to it. We know that Mr. Herbert said it was Christian "in the finest sense," but what the deuce does that mean? We should like to see Mr. Herbert try and explain what he means by it. He probably said it with his tongue in his cheek, and might defend its use on the grounds that it was only intended to please nit-wits and to flatter bigots. But in any case we commend its analysis to Mr. Herbert if he brings out another edition of his *What a Word!*

There is an organization calling itself "The National Constitution Defence Movement," which is making an appeal for signatures to a petition asking for the suppression of a poster which shows the Communist symbol of a hammer and a sickle over-printing a cross. We haven't seen the poster, but if it is as described we cannot see anything wrong about it. It is certainly not an illegal publication. If the printing were the other way round it would be considered quite proper. And why not in place of the much advertised "conquering cross" a conquering something else? What peculiarly stupid things these politico-religious organizations are!

It is a pity that the House of Commons discussions on the salaries of the Royal Family were not published at reasonable length by the press. But those interested can get them in two issues of the Parliamentary Reports, at the total cost of one shilling. Mr. Chamberlain, speaking for the Government, expressed his agreement with the suggestion that the throne should be freed from the garish and snobbish displays that at present surround it. But he suggested that it was a matter for the King himself. We leave readers to imagine what chance there stands of there being less processioning, and advertised public displays if it is left to the members of the Royal Family to initiate it. It is this "aloofness" that gives to the vulgar mind, aristocratic or slum, an impression of "dignity." And one of the faults found with

Edward was that he did not behave in a "dignified" manner towards "common people." Moreover, if the Royal Family did get rid of its aloofness there would not be nearly the same value attaching to a king shaking hands with a dustman—after it has been seen to that the dustman's hands do not bear evidence of his occupation. You cannot have a semi-divine monarch that is on a human level with "commoners." If angels were as common as "coppers" a vision often would lose all value.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, addressing Empire Youth, the other day, "urged dedication to the three great causes of liberty, justice and peace." We would dearly like to know what efforts the Archbishop has made to secure "liberty," that is liberty to criticize, and freedom of speech, which, he declared, "are essential if social rights are to be maintained." The Blasphemy Laws are still on our statute books—a tyrannical anachronism, if ever there was one. Would the Archbishop move a finger to have them removed? Is he prepared to allow full and frank freedom to criticize his own primitive beliefs? The truth is, it is easy to plead for "freedom of speech," so long as one's own precious beliefs and theories are not attacked; and it sounds so well, too.

If the Church of England had any sense of decency it would disown forthwith a well-displayed advertisement sponsored by "Pat McCormack" (thus he signs himself) appealing for *one million shillings* to assist "Unfortunates" who seek shelter and aid at St. Martin-in-the-Fields Church. A mass of people exceeding the density of the coronation crowds is depicted thronging towards and up the Church steps, and if the notorious cleric can visualize such masses—which he labels "The Homeless" why not use the wealth of the Church instead of begging for human purposes. That any branch of an Institution possessed of great wealth should go on begging and begging is in itself colossal impudence. It is, however, worse than that. It is a feature of resignation based upon the words of Jesus, "The poor are always with us." The Church never will get down to *root causes*, for their Kingdom, we are assured, is not of this world.

On filing first citizenship papers in Hollywood recently, German Marlene Dietrich (Maria Magdalene Sieber) remarked for the benefit of the curious: "My eyes, they are blue and my hair, it is blond. I think it is best to become an American citizen."

*Angriff*, Dr. Goebbels' daily paper, has been explaining that failure to have children in Germany nowadays is a sign of distrust in Herr Hitler. As Hitler has no children it would appear that he distrusts himself.

*The Scottish Educational Journal* is anxious that the religious denominations at the General Assembly of the Scottish Churches should not quarrel about their share of the plunder and so "strengthen the hands of those who would secularize our educational system, leaving each Church to make itself wholly responsible for the religious education of its own children. This we are convinced would be a tragedy alike for Church and School." We can see a sense in which that situation can be regarded as a tragedy, but the *ethical* tragedy rests in the fact that the deeply-religious portions of the community are quite willing to dip their hands into the pockets of those whose interests lie with education only, in order to finance their own schemes and interests. The pickpocket who takes the risks of his profession, and never drags in Jesus as an excuse, is an honourable gentleman compared with the religious racketeer. This is tragedy or comedy, according to the angle from which one regards it; tragi-comedy is perhaps the fitting word.

The Bishop of Chelmsford has a genius for the delicate theme, which reminds one of the Bishop of London. In his diocesan chronicle, he writes:—

"People cannot be Christians, I often think, unless their income ranges between 50s. a week to £1,000 a year.

Historically, the Church has thriven when the ill-paid person predominated. The shepherds were, it would appear, looking after, not Christians but just sheep. At the other end of the scale, says the Bishop:—

If a man has more than £1,000 a year he is in danger of becoming the rich man, "who cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven!"

A Bishop cannot be quite candid on such matters. He knows that Jesus consigned Dives to Hell and Lazarus to Heaven, for no other reason than that one was rich and the other poor. Jesus forgot to say, however, when a man becomes *rich*, so one of his Bishops, who has been touched and greased in the correct way by the correct persons, makes good the omission. But if the thousand-a-year man is in danger, it would not appear that the Archbishop of Canterbury has a dog's chance. That much seems clear, and the realization, happily, is causing no one grave concern.

Mr. Baldwin's close association with Archbishop Lang perhaps accounts for increasing unctuousness in the ex-Premier's utterances. A halo would appear to be more suitable adornment for the "honest" gentleman rather than an earl's coronet. He retired full of noble sentiments which he has had ample opportunity of expending for so many years. But how awkward when pious words are taken *seriously*! The thing isn't done. It's not cricket. Dr. Karl Silex, Editor of the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, referring to Mr. Baldwin's speech to the Empire Youth rally, declares:—

Mr. Baldwin affirmed that the Empire could only exist in the "Brotherhood of Man." This brotherhood of man cannot consist of oppressors and oppressed, and from this it follows logically that the British Empire cannot continue to exist if it denies to Germany membership of this brotherhood.

Ah, Doctor; you are trying Harrovian training too far if you think to draw a satisfactory response to logic.

Humour is all too rare in the Press world to allow any discovery of it to pass unheeded. "Laugh, clown, laugh!" Let every "Little Audrey" giggle till she splits her infinitives!—and you who are too serious to join the general cauchinnation—why, "Smile damn you, smile!" For that nursery of romantic journalism; that training stable of Fleet Street colts; that organ immortalized by the Political Parrot, the *Daily Express*, now heads its leader column with the quotation:—

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

"S'trewth!" is all we have breath left to utter.

We shall perhaps come to the paradoxical situation when a pure and unadulterated Secularism will be adopted by the Church as "Religion." On June 6, the Metropole Cinema at Victoria is to hold a "Religious Film Service," exhibiting the film "The Passing of the Third Floor Back." This is adapted from Jerome's play of that name. Religious people have always claimed that the "stranger" in this play is a representation of Jesus himself in spite of Jerome's disclaiming any such intention. It is quite possible the future will witness "religious" adaptations of Albert Hall balls and Covent Garden dances; David, Salome, and other biblical "strip-tease" characters sanctifying the cocktails.

However, America still goes one better. A "Lovers' Church" opened in Oklahoma City with 150 "pretty girls cycling six bashful young men." It was a "psychologist's" experiment for "combining religion with social contact." The small attendance of men prevented the sponsor, Dr. W. A. McKeever, revealing his "little secret" for "getting young people together":—

You get the idea that men haven't got love in their hearts, he told the girls. But that's all wrong. They have got love in their hearts, but they hate to admit it.

Only a religious "psychologist" could explain the "love" and the "hate" being so commingled!

Lord Tweedsmuir, Governor-General of Canada, speaking before the Senate and House of Representatives, on a recent visit to the U.S.A., told of a certain Scotch Divine who, having frequently taught the horrors of Hell, would soften the picture at the end of the sermon by stating:—

Of course, my friends, you understand that the Almighty is compelled to do things in his official capacity that he would scorn to do as a private individual.

Loud laughter, we are told, greeted this remark, and it does not surprise us. At the present time crowded audiences listen to the performance of *Iolanthe* at Sadlers Wells Theatre, and roar with laughter at the inanities of the Noble Lords. It is to be hoped that when they get home after the performance they will find time to reflect that spontaneous laughter is a tribute that a discerning intelligence pays to the occasion.

Sir Prabhaskar Pattani, Prime Minister of Bhavnagar States, led the Assembly of the World Fellowship of Faiths in a Coronation prayer at the City Temple. The first half of the prayer ought to embrace all peoples in worship of a common "God." The second half besought England's God to "Save the King," and crown him "the Defender of the Faith of his Peoples." Here is the first portion:—

May He Who is the Nature Spirit of the Animist, Buddha of the Buddhist, Father in Heaven of the Christian, Brahma of the Hindu, Jehovah of the Jew, Jina of the Jain, Allah of the Moslem, True Name of the Sikhi, Ahura Mazda of the Zoroastrian, and the Good Life Universal of the people of other Faiths, unite all men, women and children of the British Commonwealth of Nations in understanding and in fellowship.

A "God" by any other name would smell as sweet! And to think how many of our "nobility" have taken pride in descent from *the Crusaders*!

## Fifty Years Ago

WALTER WOOD, who was hung at Strangeways Prison last Monday morning at eight o'clock, died a sincere Christian. He went straight to glory, after the hangman stretched his neck, and spent his Bank Holiday in heaven. We suppose he is now hobnobbing with the late Mr. Peace, of Sheffield, and perhaps he has been introduced to Guiteau. For all we know, also, he may have been honoured by a brief interview with David, the man after God's own heart, and other illustrious scoundrels, who have left this earthly scene of their villainies for the blissful regions of kingdom-come. When it is considered that heaven is half full of such two-legged cattle, the prospect of spending eternity there can hardly be attractive to an honest man. On the whole, it would certainly be preferable to go "down below." The climate there is severe, but the company is more select than in "the upper circles"; and when one has got used to the temperature, and found it really salubrious, except now and then when Old Nick banks up the fire, one would congratulate himself on having escaped the tedious *te deums* and the nauseous society in Heaven.

Being vigorously taken in hand by the prison chaplain, Walter Wood had been prepared for glory. Seven days before his state-assisted emigration, he wrote a long letter to his brother, full of gushing piety. After quoting a verse of a hymn from memory, which shows that he had received a religious training, he exclaimed, "I hope when I vanish from this world the Lord Jesus will be waiting to receive me in his arms. Oh, how beautiful this meeting must be!" We scarcely agree with this jubilant murderer. Jesus Christ suffered a sad fate at Jerusalem, but if it is his perpetual duty in heaven to cuddle all the Walter Woods on their arrival, we fancy his heavenly fate is worse than his earthly one.



# THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2412.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. C. JONES.—Thanks for addresses of likely new readers; paper being sent.

W. A. WILLIAMS.—We are obliged for your letter, and much appreciate your effort to increase sale. A supply has been forwarded.

J. WHELESS (New York).—We have handed your note to the writer of the article. We are sorry the assertion that in the Roman Catholic version of the Bible the command concerning graven images is omitted, did not catch our eye on reading the proof, otherwise it would not have appeared.

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

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

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

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.

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## Sugar Plums

We feel disposed to apologize for the space we have taken up in dealing with the Coronation. But it is a vast subject, and one cannot usefully summarize human history in a paragraph. And we have been encouraged to deal with the subject at the length we have because of the large number of letters we have had thanking us for writing as we have done, and next because the *Freethinker* is actually the one paper in this country that would publish such a series. Our friends will be glad to learn that the articles have brought us a number of new readers. We have also had many enquiries for the republication of the series in book form, but that would mean more writing, and we have enough on hand at the moment.

But we do ask our readers to take advantage of the occasion to do what they can to place the *Freethinker* in new hands. A great deal of useful propaganda can be done during the summer months, and in many ways. Our offer to send the paper for six weeks to selected addresses on receipt of six halfpenny stamps is still open. We look for the help of our readers in making this journal better known than it is, and not merely to make it better known, but to break down the pretence that it is not known as widely as it is. In this respect we think we can say that the *Freethinker* is to-day better known than any other Freethought paper in this country has ever been.

We suppose it is just a continuation of Coronation hysteria, or part of a planned campaign of deception. But for sheer humbug we take a passage from a review of a life of Mr. Baldwin, which is given chief place, in the *Observer* for May 30:—

To him (Mr. Baldwin) more than to any—unless, perchance, in equality, to King George V.—we owe the recovery of home.

If ever there was an insult to the English people it is contained in these words. To assume that England was without, or had forgotten what a decent home was like until George V. "recovered" it, not perpetuated it, but recovered it, is as vile an insult as was ever offered to the public. And only readers whose sense of the fitness of things is lost, whose sense of personal dignity is not drowned in a wave of flunkeyism could pass it without feeling disgusted with it. It would have been bad enough had we been told that the two men named had *strengthened* it, but that we have recovered through these two something that had been lost, is the last word in polite vilification. And after we have been told of how Christianity established the home, and Queen Victoria raised it from the depths to which it had sunk under her royal predecessors! There should be some consistency in even lies.

A Sunday journalist affects to be terribly upset by the Mark Twain film: "The Prince and the Pauper." Another writer in a London daily thought it was a pity that such a film should be on view during Coronation week. The readers of this paper need no inducement as such paragraphs offer to see any of the work of such a witty, irreverent and healthy humanist like Mark Twain. It is complained that the Great Seal of England is scoffed at as being "good for cracking nuts." Well if a thing is good it must be good for something, and Mark Twain has made an effort to answer that question. It is much more sensible than saying it is a "symbol," the last resort of the hard-pressed conventionalist.

We are sorry to learn that Mr. R. Ready, who has for many years acted as Secretary of the Liverpool Branch N.S.S. has been compelled to resign office. Mr. Ready has done the Branch good service, and has left his successor, Mr. Shortt, a legacy of work well done. Mr. Ready now stands in the position of President to the Branch, so that Liverpool will still have the benefit of his experience.

Mr. J. V. Shortt, who is at present spending what time he has for the purpose, in open-air Freethought lecturing, will be pleased to hear from friends and Branches of the N.S.S. in Lancashire, who will assist in fixing up meetings. Mr. Shortt's expenses are being defrayed by the Executive. His address is 24 Warmington Road, Knotty Ash, Liverpool.

We are glad to learn from the *Truth Seeker* that Mr. Clarence Darrow's 80th birthday has been celebrated in Chicago by his comrades of the law. Mr. Darrow has not only a reputation as a great lawyer (he admits endeavouring to model himself as a young man upon the great Ingersoll), but he has been an active and outspoken Freethinker, and his legal activities were animated and humanized by sound ideas upon the nature of crime and punishment. His part in the world-famous Dayton "Fundamentalist" trial brought him into deserved prominence.

A brother lawyer at the commemoration luncheon said that Darrow had seen injustice and suffering on every hand and, yet:—

He is singularly kindly, charitable and forgiving. In all the forty-five years of my acquaintance with Mr. Darrow, I have never seen him exhibit anger nor utter a word of malice.

Mr. Darrow would, we know, say he did not make himself. All the same, it is good and helpful to know that some men are made that way. The honourable memories that Mr. Darrow can now enjoy have stretched out in a practical and lasting way into hundreds of American homes.

The *Times* has issued an *M.C.C. Supplement*, and from this we glean an interesting piece of information. In an article by Sir John Squire, it appears that at a dinner of the Hambledon Club, one of the very earliest and most famous of Cricket Clubs, one of the guests was Mr. Tom Paine, the author of the *Rights of Man*. Sir John surmises that some of the Whig members would be respon-

sible for this whimsical putting of the cat amongst the pigeons. It is not recorded whether Paine was asked to say "a few words," as is customary on these occasions—probably great care would be taken to avoid such a catastrophe. We cannot guess ourselves what Paine would have said, but if the occasion had been the present day, we think that this great friend of man would have taken the *Times* to task for their snobbish habit of reporting cricket scores in this way:—

Hammond, b. Mr. Allen ... .. 146  
Mr. Rought-Rought, c. Fagg, b. Mr. Robins ... 2

In sport a man is not a man but an amateur or professional. Mr. Tom Paine would perhaps have clinched his point by a reference to the Great Cricketer, Grace, who fittingly wound up his career as a Great Amateur, by being the recipient of *The Daily Telegraph Shilling Fund*.

In an article on *Cricket* in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, you can read:—

It is an open secret that not a few players who appear before the public as amateurs derive an income in some pretext or other from the game.

No one knows this better than the *Times*, but the *Times* being a distinctive paper read by men of distinction, must continue serving-up humbug to please its clients. So M. A. C. P. Kaye b. Verity, 32, is likely to continue.

Our paragraph, last week, referring to the refusal of a Council to permit a copy of the *Freethinker* in the public library, was incorrectly given as happening at Birkenhead. It was, in fact, at Bebington, a near-by place. The name of the churchman who spoke in favour of fair play was not given.

Edinburgh saints are asked to note that Mr. G. Whitehead will speak at the Mount on Saturday evening, June 5, at 7.30, and on each following evening for a week. The local N.S.S. Branch will co-operate at all the meetings, and as there are some keen workers in its ranks, there are good prospects of excellent meetings, and a large quantity of Pioneer Press literature changing hands.

Audiences at the West Ham Branch N.S.S. open-air meetings at the corner of Deanery Road, Water Lane, Stratford, are not yet up to the usual in numbers. The meetings are held every Sunday at 7 o'clock, and this evening Mr. R. H. Rosetti will be the speaker. Local saints will no doubt take the hint and see that in future there will be good gatherings to meet the respective speakers.

## Sixty Years Ago

SIXTY years ago the conditions in many Cornish villages were of primitive simplicity and one, in which much of my boyhood was passed, may be described as being typical. The cottage in which I resided was very old, the walls were immensely thick and made of closely rammed earth, the floor was of stone slabs, and the roof was thatched with straw.

Candles known as "dips," which constantly required snuffing, and lamps, of which the illuminant was colza oil, made darkness visible in the winter's evenings during the brief interval between supper and bed-time. Our only water supply was from a little stream which flowed by the village street; at one point, where there was a fall, a pipe conducted the water to a granite trough, which was known as the "shoot." There the cattle came to drink, and in the early morning the maids and matrons, clattering in pattens, brought their clomb pitchers for the daily supply, and exchanged the scant gossip of the village.

Such conditions would be considered insanitary now, but no one was ever ill except from the "rhumatiz" and other ailments incidental to old age, and a "wambling of the innerds," which the boys were apt to suffer from during the fruit season.

My holidays were passed in this quiet spot with an uncle, a fine old sailor who had run away from school and entered the merchant service as a cabin-boy, to become both master and owner of his ship. My uncle's cottage was stored with mementoes of his many voyages, spy-glasses, sextants, charts, a compass, which he taught me to "box," and lurid pictures of ships going-down, blowing-up, or grappling a foe to the order, "Boarders away."

In my uncle's armoury was a much-prized pair of pistols which had been given, or bequeathed, to him by the notorious duellist, Captain Macnamara, of whom he had many yarns to tell.

Macnamara was known in his native county Clare as Shawn Bwee (Yellow John), on account of his swarthy complexion, and also as "Fireball." "Fireball" was said to have fought fifty-seven duels during his early years, besides acting as second in many affairs of honour; his last encounter being with Major Montgomery, whom he shot through the heart, the *casus belli* being a fight between their dogs in Hyde Park.

The pistols, they are mine now, are a beautiful pair, sawhanded by Tatham and Egg, which "Fireball" with Saturnine humour, named "Baws gau Sagart" (Death without the priest).

In *Lays and Legends of Thomond*, by M. Hogan, who knew Macnamara well, will be found *Fireball's Address to his Pistols*. The following is the first verse:—

"Come here, Baws gau Saggart, and shew me your mouth,  
You've always told truth when you spoke inside out;  
Now I'll give you your breakfast of powder and lead,  
To blow out the brains of some arrogant head."

Strange to say "Fireball" was never wounded in these encounters, though his adversaries were usually less fortunate, and he died peacefully at Quin, where his tomb is to be seen in the oratory of the old abbey on the left of the high altar.

The only occasion on which he became a "casualty" was when "out" with the rebels in '98, at the battle of Vinegar Hill, where he received a wound in the thigh, from the effects of which he was lame during the remainder of his life.

In his adventurous youth my uncle had also known the "Pirate" Trelawny, whose advent among the coterie in Shelley's villa at Lerici—Mary, Claire, and Captain Ellerker Williams and the charming lady who passed as his wife, was so dramatic. All were charmed with the romantic visitor, of whom Mary wrote: "Trelawny recounts the adventures of his youth eloquently and well. He is six feet high, with raven black hair, which curls thickly and shortly like a Moor's; dark grey expressive eyes upturned lips, and a smile which expresses good-nature and kind-heartedness." No wonder that Shelley delighted in the company of his new friend, who had undertaken a journey from Geneva to greet him; the poet was not accustomed to such homage from his countrymen.

The village folks had been inveterate and determined smugglers in their youth, and many tales were current of how they had circumvented the Preventive Men—there was no coastguard then—and helped in the landing and carrying of the stuff inland, to where confederates were waiting to convoy it to hiding places known only to the free-traders.

Fine cognac was to be found in most of the cottages in those days, and its prime quality was remembered with fond regret, and compared with the "wished old stuff" which the nearest town provided.

Sixty years ago pilchard fishing was a staple industry in the West Country, and when the quiet autumn days came the villagers would watch for the fires which the huers lighted on the cliffs when the schools appeared. The first wreaths of smoke were

the signal for every man and boy to make for the boats; the men went first and the boys on the volliers were not far behind. The huers waved towards the break and glitter on the water which showed the presence of a school. Soon the boats were laden with the shining little pilchards, and we returned, "straming, straming, laking" and redolent of fish.

We used to have fine catches, too, of mackerel, bass, chad, pollock, conger and hake in their season, and it was seldom that we came ashore with what was derisively known as a "Saltash rig," i.e. a wet a . . . and no fish.

The ancient harvest custom known as "crying the neck" was still, though rarely, observed. It had, no doubt, its origin in the worship of, or sacrifice to, some deity associated with fertility.

When the wheat had been gathered into sheaves the oldest reaper, or sometimes the farmer or his hind, plaited and tied with ribbons the last one cut.

The harvest hands, men and maids, then formed a circle while the holder of the neck lowered and raised it three times, crying at each elevation "the neck"; these around followed his motions and joined in the invocation, which was then changed to the words "we yen." As the farmer on these occasions provided an unlimited supply of cider, all made merry, and some young fellow would bear off the neck to the farm-house. There the doors would be guarded by maids with pitchers full of water, and he who bore the neck rarely escaped a sousing, before he could hang it in the kitchen.

Since writing the above, I have found in Sir James Frazer's *Adonis*, the origin of the aspergation which the farm maids inflicted on the bearer of the Neck: "Certainly the custom of drenching with water . . . the person who brings home the last corn cut at harvest (a custom observed in Germany and France, and till quite lately in England and Scotland) is practised with the avowed intent to procure rain for the next year's crops."

Sir James gives a number of instances of the prevalence of this custom, which was part of the widespread worship of Adonis and Aphrodite, in Europe, North America and India.

But our Cornish folk had not the least idea of the significance of the custom which their far-away ancestors practised as a religious rite; with them it was part of a frolic which ended the labour of the harvest, and was terminated by the regale of the farm-house supper.

It was a picturesque scene the groups of men and maids, all as brown as cigars from long days spent in the harvest field, among the yellow sheaves that the setting sun was turning to gold, the ever-changing sea where the far-distant ships were making their way up-Channel—*exeunt omnes*. The actors have all departed and the scene will never be re-set.

The companions of my holidays were the village boys with whom I bathed, fished and roamed on the cliffs where peregrines and ravens nested and wild goats had their home.

The ebb of the spring tides in May month was the time to go prawning and then, too, the holes in which the crabs and lobsters lurked were uncovered, and these we used to draw out with an iron hook. If the hour of low tide was a very early one, my friend Billy, who always rose with the lark, used to awaken me; his signal was silent and effective, for I used to tie one end of a piece of string to my toe and hang the other end out of my bed-room window.

The village of my childhood has long since disappeared, a new generation has arisen, and the old customs are forgotten, but to me all remains unchanged. Memory still records the shouts of the huers from the

cliffs, and the cry of "we yen, we yen," with which we acclaimed the neck. And sometimes I awake at daybreak, thinking that Billy has signalled, and that the tide is near the ebb.

EDGAR SYERS.

## The Effects of Atheism

"Atheism has been an indispensable agency for deepening our knowledge of God."—(*The Meaning of God*; W. Hocking.)

IN one of his *Essays in Freethinking*, Mr. Chapman Cohen has pictured the attitude of the Christian towards the Atheist as evolving through three stages. First, he took the straightforward course of burning him. Then, as Atheists became more numerous, and included many of social eminence, they were merely slandered or, if possible, imprisoned. Latterly it has been the custom simply to snivel contemptuously at the Atheist, or to insult him by calling him an Agnostic, or even to pretend that Atheists do not exist. Now I seem to discern yet another development, in which the Atheist is accepted as a heaven-sent stimulus to theology. And instead of being damned for his opinions, the Atheist is merely God's instrument for correcting and solidifying the doctrines of religion.

Atheists personally are now held to be quite decent citizens, some of them nearly as good as Christians. With regard to "the notion that Atheism is inconsistent with moral rectitude," the Rev. C. Webb has discovered that "in a very large number of cases such a suspicion has been grossly unjust." After which the Atheist may breathe more freely, with the comforting thought that in exercising his knowledge and reason, and in sacrificing his chances of social and economic advancement at the altar of truth, he does not constitute a menace to society. We are left to judge the thoughts of our Communist friends at the remark of the Dean of Canterbury, that in some ways the U.S.S.R. approaches the moral eminence of Christianity.

The remark at the head of this article, made by an American Professor at Harvard, seems to be a peculiar way of saying that the criticism offered by Atheists has forced believers to go about hunting for new conceptions of God to replace the ones outworn. His remark was sincere, but it appeals to me as a caustic comment on the value of God's revelation and on the character and ability of his chosen spokesmen. God revealed himself through his Son, whose teaching has been carried on by countless ministers and divines, many of whom have been permitted personal communion with the Father. In the compass of 39 articles is included what is necessary for belief. After this has gone on for two thousand years God has to send Mr. Chapman Cohen and the *Freethinker* to show what He really meant. As a result of this, and of the spread of Atheistic teaching, Prof. W. Hocking at last knows what God is. He is "person and no person; living and non-living; fighter and no fighter; just and yet alike to all; merciful and yet unbending" (*ibid*). Thus is our knowledge of God "deepened."

Hocking concedes that there are difficulties confronting belief, but finds that "Atheism discards the one hopeful element of the situation, namely, that God may actually furnish the solution to these dilemmas"—a remarkable piece of logic, since, in order to judge as to the claims of Theism and Atheism, he assumes the falsity of one as part of the data.

The actual effect of Atheistic propaganda and scientific advance has been to compel many Theists to

dilute their ideas of the deity. This is shown in a work by one of Hocking's compatriots, Mr. John Brightman (*The Problem of God*). "The advance of knowledge," he writes, "has compelled us to abandon our faith either in God's character or in his omnipotence. We believe it is more reasonable to deny the omnipotence of the power than to deny its goodness." Seeing nature as a mixture of good and evil, he postulates a God restricted in power. With equal logic he could have posited a restricted devil. And if God is, as he implies, not powerful enough to prevent a shipwreck, why should He be powerful enough to produce a good harvest? If nature takes its course in a shipwreck, uncontrolled by God, why cannot it do so in the case of a good harvest?

And so, while there can be no objection in principle to the contention that newer knowledge may throw light on an old conception, the plea that in this case it actually does so, is simply grotesque. It will begin to look plausible when it is shown that Whitehead's *Principle of Concretion* is a clarification of Jehovah, that by continually lopping off the attributes of Deity we render him more acceptable to the religionist or less fantastic to the unbeliever, or that any amount of doctoring of the term God will obviate the findings of anthropology.

G. H. TAYLOR.

## The Knowlton Pamphlet

JUST about sixty years ago one of the most sensational and remarkable trials for opinion which ever shook this country took place. It was in everybody's mouth; it became, indeed, a *cause célèbre*; and its reverberations are felt to this day.

The cause of all the trouble was a slim pamphlet on birth-control, written by a more or less obscure Massachusetts physician; and it is safe to say that he never foresaw the extraordinary effect it would have on subsequent generations—and morals—all over the world.

Not that he was the first writer on such a subject. The question of population had been authoritatively dealt with by Malthus in a world-famous work. But his *remedy* for over-population was hotly contested. Malthus advocated late marriage; but some of those who agreed with his views on the population question, disagreed with his remedy; rather they preferred the use of artificial contraceptives and early marriage. Francis Place, with his passionate reforming zeal, and Richard Carlile—both great fighting Freethinkers—produced between them *Every Woman's Book* (1825 or 1826), one of the earliest practical pamphlets on contraception; and, in its original form, now exceedingly rare. An edition was printed, by the way, in 1892, by Robert Forder, but, according to Professor Norman Himes, it is "quite different in phraseology from the earlier authorized editions." An exact reprint of the fourth edition of 1826 was published about 1880; but this, like all the genuine editions, is very difficult to obtain. Robert Dale Owen's *Moral Physiology* (1831) (also the object of a prosecution in England), was next in time to *Every Woman's Book*. Many editions of this work were published both in England and America; here the one most easily accessible is that produced by Truelove, who later was most unjustly sentenced to four months' imprisonment for publishing it. Pioneers of opinions differing from those held by "authority" seem almost always to have had a hard time. Yet it is due to their courage and devotion that we owe so much liberty and reform. To old Edward Truelove, the publisher, and more than the publisher—for he was a genuine lover of his books—Freethought owes a very great deal.

It was in January, 1832, that the first edition of *Fruits of Philosophy* by a Physician, was first published in New York. No copy of it survives as far as known. A second edition came out in 1833, of which Harvard University has the unique copy. In 1839 appeared the fourth edition, of which survive only two copies; and finally in 1877 came a tenth edition, a facsimile of the ninth, which is now once again reprinted by the indefatigable Professor Himes, the historian of the Birth-Control Movement in England, as representing the final edition of Knowlton's famous pamphlet, as revised and corrected by him before his death in 1850.

Knowlton (born in 1800) was in many ways an unique character—witness, for example, the title he gave his little work. He had no one to help him, and had to pay by extra work for his tuition at the hands of two Massachusetts doctors, and one in New Hampshire. He was married before he entered a medical school (in 1821), and it is good to learn that he was a Freethinker, a utilitarian, a psychological materialist, and "in medicine, original and daring." These qualities stamped him as different from his fellows; in fact, "his awful religious views," says Prof. Himes, "were the subject of sermons which divided Ashfield [where he had settled], and caused a local furore." He used to play his violin on Sunday mornings, scandalizing the people who went to Church. "But whenever a baby was to be born," we are told, "he was preferred by the residents for miles around." He was a frequent and valued contributor to medical journals, and had "an excellent standing and reputation."

Prof. Himes notes that Knowlton was the first man in birth-control history "to go to jail for his opinions"—and this was in that land of the "free"—America. The English advocates, Bentham, the two Mills, Place, Carlile, George Drysdale, and even Bradlaugh, never went to prison for their birth-control propaganda. But the *Fruits of Philosophy* caused too much of a noise; in 1832 the author was fined and sentenced to three months imprisonment. All the same, there were several trials, the juries failing to agree among themselves. Knowlton, in these trials, argued his own case; when he was sentenced, he had a lawyer who was both incompetent and indifferent.

After all this trouble, the work seems to have fallen into an almost complete oblivion until 1877, when opinion in England was shaken to an enormous extent by the famous—or infamous—prosecution of Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant. Knowlton had continued to revise his work, adding this, and supplementing that, till he produced the ninth edition. He died of angina pectoris, a comparatively young man in 1850.

We must turn to England for its subsequent history—for it certainly made history.

Many English editions were almost immediately published after its appearance in America. This must be due partially to the birth-control activity of Place and Carlile. James Watson, who shares with Hetherington the honour of fighting for a free press, brought out a copy in 1833; and from that date there seems to have been a continuous demand, and various editions were published by different people, all more or less basing their text on Knowlton's second edition—that is, as far as I am able to judge.

Among the later publishers was Charles Watts, whose edition was—so it is alleged—interleaved with a few "obscene" diagrams, and sold by one Henry Cooke of Bristol. This was seized by the authorities,

\* *Fruits of Philosophy, or the Private Companion of Adult People*, by Charles Knowlton, M.D. Edited with Introductory Notice by Norman E. Himes, with Medical Emendations by R. L. Dickenson, M.D. Peter Pauper Press, Mount Vernon, U.S.A., 1937.

and Cooke sentenced to two years' hard labour. As a consequence Charles Watts was in turn prosecuted but, on pleading guilty, was let off. It was at this stage that Charles Bradlaugh, who had always been a staunch neo-Malthusian, and who was made of that stern stuff without which many reformers might never have succeeded, stepped into the breach. It was not a question as to whether the *Fruits of Philosophy* was right or wrong; it was a question of the right of free speech—or the free publication of a work on a subject which had hitherto been unmolested in England. Bradlaugh determined to test his right of publishing the Knowlton pamphlet, and after a case which almost turned England into a turmoil, he and Mrs. Besant were sentenced to six months' imprisonment, a sentence quashed later on technical grounds.

But as far as Knowlton was concerned, the immediate result of this action was the sale of over a million copies of his work. It is doubtful whether any pamphlet ever published attained such a prodigious circulation. And the extraordinary fact remains that comparatively few copies have survived and exist at this day.

A comparison of Bradlaugh's edition with that published by Prof. Himes makes one wonder whether they ever could have been written by the same man. Certainly Knowlton must have revised his last edition out of recognition, if Prof. Himes has presented us with the best available text. Space forbids my retailing the great differences between the two; but readers who are able to procure this magnificently printed edition of 1937, of a rare and unique work can congratulate themselves. It is a beautiful book alike in typography and in the meticulous care of its editing.

Knowlton was, of course, a little ahead of his time in ideas; his physiology is, as can be expected, nearly out of date. But the *Fruits of Philosophy* stands as an unique landmark in one of the greatest movements of our time—that of birth-control. For its republication in such a fine form, our thanks are due to its enthusiastic editor. And we shall look forward with the greatest interest to his forthcoming history of the way in which it became internationally famous as well as to his detailed biography of Charles Knowlton.

H. CUTNER.

### What of the Child?

APROPOS of the article in the issue of May 2: "Give me the Child," a reader has suggested a question of considerable interest.

"Certainly," says he, "the outraged father deserves every sympathy that his son is condemned to illegitimacy and disinheritance, and his own life darkened, by the enslavement of the child's mother to a church, which compels her to sacrifice their happiness and welfare; but the mother's rights are equal if not superior, and she cannot be compelled to become mentally emancipated."

There is force in the argument, yet there remains more to be said.

The converse of this thesis would seem to be that the mother can compel the child to be mentally enslaved, as well as suffer socially and economically in defiance of the father's eagerness to rescue him, and, one might add, in defiance of her own responsibility in begetting him in contravention of her religion.

There is no doubt that the existing law supports her. In fact that has recently been put to legal test, for only last month the father in desperation counter-kidnapped his own child to save it from the moral kidnapping. The mother secured a writ of habeas corpus, and the father had to return the child, narrowly escaping imprisonment for contempt because he appeared himself in court without "the body." But surely there is some discrepancy here not only between the technical law and the moral

law, but between the technical law and the obvious intention of recent acts to safeguard by retrospective legitimation the children of such unions.

If a Roman Catholic mother may endanger the social and economic prospects of a child to make the scapegoat her own breach of the law of her church, and the father has no rights or redress, it would appear that Roman Catholic conceptions still dominate the letter of the law in complete defiance of the spirit of recent legislation. If Mr. Herbert's "Marriage Bill" is ultimately defeated by the dark forces of obscurantist obstruction, we suggest that his next effort might include some provision for the rescue of the children victimized by superstition, as well as the unfortunate conjugal partners. After all, the child's position is the most helpless, and a future citizen doped to approve of his own bastardy, and the exclusion on "religious" grounds of his father's influence, might well cause anyone but a priest to shudder.

A.N.P.

## Correspondence

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

FREE SPEECH

SIR,—Close on my article appealing for more vigilance in the Freethinking camp against attempts to attack civil liberties, there has occurred a flagrant instance of the Fascist forms that the administration of the law in England is taking.

George Miles, an engineer and member of the Communist Party, has been sentenced to a month's hard labour for comment on the royal family. The following is the report from the *Daily Worker* :—

He held up two pamphlets, which he described as "The Happy Family." Holding up the first pamphlet, he referred to the King and Queen. He then held up the other pamphlet and said, "Here you have Baldwin the Good and Chamberlain and the Happy Family making armaments." Prosecuting solicitor then said that Miles afterwards referred again to "the beautiful Queen Elizabeth" and her daughter, saying, "They are what you pay for. . . ."

The defendant gave evidence, denying that he used any of the expressions alleged. The meeting, he said, was the usual weekly one, which had been held at that spot for the past ten years. The subjects of discussion were the forthcoming bus strike and the Coronation.

All the evidence was given by policemen, though the remarks were supposed to be such as would "cause disorder at any meeting of citizens in this country." If the remarks were causing disorder, nothing would have been easier, obviously, than for the police to have indignant citizens as witnesses.

But the important point is that this savage sentence was imposed under the Public Order Act, which was supposed to be introduced to put down Fascism. Mr. Thurtle welcomed it. Only Mr. Pritt, in the House of Parliament, explained what a deadly force for suppression was being handed over to reaction. So far the Act has been used in the defence of company—unionism to defeat the overwhelming majority—will of the Harworth miners to have their own union; and now it is being used to attack the mildest of comment on any institution that reaction considers its own.

Clearly what Miles said was milder than many of the comments made by Mr. Cohen in the *Freethinker* on Royalty and Coronation. It appears then that if Mr. Cohen repeats such statements at a public meeting, he is liable to a month's hard labour in jail.

I appeal to the N.S.S. to realize how serious is becoming the threat to freedom of speech. The amount of potentially Fascist legislation that Baldwin had accumulated must not be underestimated. While paying "democracy," the loudest lip-service of any public man, he had brought on the statute-books laws that make it possible for reaction at a moment's notice to overthrow the gains of the whole last century. He can indeed now retire with an appeal for "industrial peace." We know the Fascist boast that there is industrial peace in Ger-

many and Italy—a peace obtained by crushing every organized form of resistance among the workers.

Mr. Barker's excellent essay on Hetherington is appearing in the *Freethinker* at an opportune moment. More than ever now is it necessary to re-learn the lessons of the early Freethinking fighters. JACK LINDSAY.

[We are not quite clear what course Mr. Lindsay would wish us to adopt with regard to the threat to freedom of thought. Warnings are constantly given in these columns concerning it, and some have pointed out the danger of much frequent legislation. We even expressed a fear that the recent legislation with regard to the wearing of uniforms, aimed mainly at Fascists, might very easily become an instrument of oppression. And long before Fascism came upon the scene we protested against the habit that was growing up of showing one's objection to opposing political opinions by disturbing public meetings. That fashion has grown of recent years, until it has become common with all parties.

If Mr. Lindsay means that the N.S.S. ought to adopt some specific economic or political theory, then, I am afraid he is wasting time. Members of the N.S.S. may work in and for whatever movement they feel inclined, but the Society has its own plan of propaganda and is not likely to depart from it.—EDITOR.]

### THIS FREEDOM

SIR,—*The Plebs*, for June contains, in its correspondence columns, more evidence concerning the difficulties in obtaining Free Speech and Free Expression of Opinion.

Messrs. Martin Secker and Warburg, Publishers, inform us that, in December last, the *Observer* refused an ad. for the book *Behind the Spanish Barricades*.

Now the *Daily Worker*—according to the letter—has refused an ad. for *World Revolution*, by C. L. R. James, on the ground that it is "Trotskyist."

"Left" and "Right"—politically—appear to keep in step in their antipathy against Free Publication. What Freethinkers desire is that the tyranny of Left and Right be left, right behind! ATHOS ZENOO.

### UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AND FREEDOM

SIR,—Your contributor, Mr. J. Reeves, is most unfair to University College, London, in his article on "Religious Recrudescence in Education." After stating, probably correctly, that London University had been the pioneer in granting diplomas in Biblical studies, he calls it a "fall," in that the original college, University College, was expressly founded as a non-theological institution. It still is. The diploma in question is not granted by this college, but only by such as Kings, which has always been an avowedly theological body, as Mr. Reeves points out himself.

Students and ex-students of University College London, are proud of their association with religious freedom of thought. What other colleges of the university do, we cannot help: Kings is Anglican; Hackney and New, Non-conformist; Jews, Jewish: but University stands for Freedom.

With best wishes to the *Freethinker*.

EWEN MCFEWN.

### THE SWINBURNE CENTENARY

SIR,—I have read the valuable article of your gifted contributor "Mimnermus" on Swinburne, in your issue of May 23, with the greatest pleasure and interest.

In addition to the lines he has quoted from the great Freethinking poet, Swinburne's lines (in *Poems and Ballads*, Series II.), on "The Feast of Giordano Bruno" should be of particular interest and inspiration to Freethinkers.

These begin:—

"Son of the lightning and the light that glows  
Beyond the lightning or the morning's light,  
Soul splendid with all-righteous love if right . . ."

and conclude:—

"From bonds and torments and the ravening flame  
Surely thy spirit of sense rose up to greet  
Lucretius, where such only spirits meet,

And walk with him apart till Shelley came

To make the heaven of heavens more heavenly sweet  
And mix with yours a third incorporate name."

BASIL M. HARVEY-JAMES.

### Obituary

JOHN HERZOG

At Golders Green Crematorium, on Friday, May 28, the remains of John Herzog were cremated. Seventy years of age at the time of death, he was keenly interested in the Freethought, Socialist, and Trade Union Movements, and never lost an opportunity of serving the respective causes as occasion presented. His expressed wish for cremation and a Secular Service was duly carried out before an assembly of relatives and friends, the service being conducted by Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

### SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

#### LONDON

##### INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, Horace J. Bridges, D.Litt. (Chicago Ethical Society)—"Erasmus the Laughing Reformer."

##### OUTDOOR

BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 6.30, Mr. L. Ebury.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES BRANCH N.S.S. (Kingston Market): 7.0, Mr. H. S. Wishart—"God Must Go."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Highbury Corner): 8.0, Saturday, Mr. L. Ebury. White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11.30, Sunday, Mr. L. Ebury. Parliament Hill Fields, 6.30, Sunday, Mr. L. Ebury. South Hill Park, Hampstead, 8.0, Monday, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 6.30, Sunday, Mr. A. Leacy. Rushcroft Road, near Brixton Town Hall, 8.0, Tuesday, Mrs. E. Grout. Cock Pond, Clapham Old Town, 8.0, Friday, Mr. F. P. Corrigan.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Corner of Deanery Road, Water Lane, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. R. H. Rosetti—A Lecture.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.30, Sunday, Messrs. Bryant, Barnes and Evans. 6.30, Messrs. Bryant, Barnes, Leacy, Connell, Carlton and Tuson. Thursday, 7.30, Messrs. Saphin, Bryant, Carlton and Tuson. Friday, 7.30, Messrs. Barnes, Perry and others. The *Freethinker*, *Age of Reason* and Mr. Chapman Cohen's latest pamphlets on sale outside Marble Arch Tube Station every evening.

#### COUNTRY

##### OUTDOOR

ACCRINGTON MARKET: 7.0, Sunday, Mr. J. Clayton.

BEDLINGTON (The Station): 7.0, Wednesday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

BLACKBURN BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Place): 7.30 (if wet in Cobden Hall, Cort Street, Blackburn), Thursday, June 3, Mr. J. Clayton—"Russia." Literature for sale.

BLACKBURN BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Place): 8.0 (if wet in Cobden Hall, Cort Street, Blackburn), Monday, June 7, Mr. J. V. Shortt (Liverpool)—"Does Man Survive Death?" Literature for sale.

ECCLES (Eccles Cross): 8.0, Friday, Mr. J. V. Shortt—A Lecture.

HAPTON: 7.30, Monday, Mr. J. Clayton.

HILL LANE (Haygate): 7.30, Friday, Mr. J. Clayton.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Alexandra Park Gates): 8.15, Saturday, Mr. W. A. Atkinson—"Religion and the Modern World." Platt Fields, 30, Sunday, A Lecture. Stevenson Square, 7.30, Sunday, A Lecture.

NORTH SHIELDS (Harbour View): 7.0, Tuesday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

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

SUNDERLAND BRANCH N.S.S. (Gill Bridge Avenue): 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

TEES-SIDE BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Cross, Stockton): 7.0, Monday, Mr. J. T. Brighton. Davidson Street, Middlesbrough, 7.0, Tuesday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

WIALLEY: 7.30, Tuesday, Mr. J. Clayton.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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