

# THE FREETHINKER

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## Views and Opinions

**The Home Secretary and the Godless Conference**  
THERE are at least 70 Members of Parliament who, if those who elected them had a proper conception of intellectual freedom, would say a final goodbye to Westminster on the dissolution of the present Parliament. I say, if their constituents had a proper conception of freedom, because the dismissal of the 70 assumes that these constituencies are interested in the freedom we have, and desire, not merely its preservation, but even its enlargement. And unless "freedom grows from more to more," it must, relatively, at least, shrink from less to less. An illustration of the truth of what has been said is given by a meeting of seventy Members of the House of Commons, enforced by members of an organization called the Christian Defence Union, and whose mouthpiece appears to be a fussily ridiculous, or a ridiculously fussy person, Captain A. H. M. Ramsay, M.P. Captain Ramsay forwarded to Sir Samuel Hoare, Home Secretary, a resolution from the gathering referred to, pointing out that the forthcoming Congress of the World Union of Freethinkers is likely to cause a breach of the peace, and imploring Sir Samuel Hoare to prevent the holding of the Congress. To this communication the Home Secretary replied, to "My dear Ramsay," that he had given the matter "careful consideration," and explained his attitude as follows:—

I should strongly deplore the holding here of a Congress of this character, and I am in fullest sympathy with the feelings which have prompted the protest against the holding of this Congress, the organizers of which hold and propagate beliefs repugnant to the sentiments of the great mass of Christian people in this country. But . . . with its free institutions, it is not within the power of the Home Secretary to grant or withhold permission for the holding of a meeting, and no ban on this Congress purporting to be imposed by me would have any legal validity. . . . There is nothing contrary to law in the assembly in conference of a body of Atheists and Freethinkers. The Congress, I understand, is to be held in private,

admission being by ticket, and while I appreciate that the holding of such a Congress in a Christian country arouses resentment it must be remembered that *this country has a long and cherished tradition of liberty and toleration which in these times it is more than ever important to maintain.* . . . There is also apprehension that the Congress, while purporting to be a Congress of Freethinkers, may be, in fact intended to further Communist aims. My information is that a joint committee of four English Rationalist Societies invited the World Union of Freethinkers to hold its quinquennial Congress in London in September next. The World Union of Freethinkers includes in its membership, members of a disbanded organization, formerly known as the International Union of Proletarian Freethinkers, but I have no evidence that the proposed Congress is being organized as a means of Communist propaganda.

I have italicized certain sentences in this letter, because they imply several points worth noting. Generally, however, it is worth noting that no less than seventy Members of Parliament—I daresay there are more—are so ignorant of the laws of this country as not to be aware that neither the Home Secretary nor any other official has the power to prevent a meeting, as such, of Atheists, Freethinkers, Communists, or any other body of people which is not clearly inciting to a breach of the peace, or in some other way offending certain well-defined principles. It is, at present, lawful to advocate the peaceful change of any of our institutions, from the crown downward. It is the right of every British citizen to be permitted to advocate the abolition of royalty, the disestablishment of the Church, the alteration of the character and functions of the Houses of Parliament, or even the abolition of Parliament altogether. That seventy Members of Parliament are, apparently, not aware of this is a sad reflection on the education, the intelligence, and the knowledge of "my dear Ramsay" and his 69 supporters. Evidently there should be a kindergarten school for some Members of Parliament. And when Sir Samuel Hoare says that he has no evidence that the Congress is to be used for the furtherance of Communism, as though he could forbid the Conference if it were to be used for that purpose, he is simply pandering to the ignorance of his petitioners, when he might have utilized the occasion to give them a much-needed lesson in some elementary features of English law.

\* \* \*

### Playing Double

But I am not concerned with Sir Samuel Hoare, and his own private feelings. They are his own concern, and of small importance. But the particularly foolish and lying communication sent him by the "Seventy," and the Union for defending God Almighty from the Congress in September, was addressed to the *Home Secretary*, and that is my concern, and is the concern of every citizen of this

country, for we have to put up with his administration of the law, and it is evident from the tone of his letter that the defending administration of the law in his hands is not quite so certain as it might be. As Home Secretary his reply might have been, and I think should have been, short and precise. He should have informed these ignorant and bigoted members of the "seventy" that English citizens have the right to meet and discuss any subject they chose; that it was not even his business, as Home Secretary, to express an opinion as to the value of these discussions, and that any attempt to interfere with the right of public meeting would be sharply dealt with. If Sir Samuel Hoare was not saying with his tongue in his cheek, that this right of meeting is today "more than ever important to maintain," he should have utilized the opportunity to emphasize this admittedly important point.

Instead of this the Home Secretary says that he "strongly deplores" the holding of the Congress of the World Union of Freethinkers, that he is "in the fullest sympathy with the feelings" that have prompted the petition, and really regrets that he can do nothing. If that is not an encouragement to religious intolerance what is it? In any instance where the right of any Freethought gathering was in question, can anyone doubt on which side the weight of the Home Secretary's judgment would fall? He must inform his supporters that he cannot grant this request to prohibit the Congress, otherwise he would lose their support, but he quite clearly shows that he regrets the power to prohibit is not his. "We have in this country a long and cherished tradition of liberty and toleration," but Sir Samuel Hoare is in "fullest sympathy" with the feelings of those who would suppress by force those who exercise this freedom and intolerance by attacking the belief in God! Let us also remember that the Home Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, might, at any moment, be called upon to make a decision that involves freedom of publication or of speech, or action. Quite clearly the Home Secretary is one who should try and hold an even balance in many matters. Quite clearly, one would not care much to trust Sir Samuel where his prejudices are concerned.

Sir Samuel Hoare says that the organizers of the Congress wish to propagate beliefs that are "repugnant to the sentiment of the great mass of Christian people in this country." This is little short of an impertinence. As a law officer of the Crown Sir Samuel Hoare is not concerned at all with the religious beliefs of a section of the people, but with dealing justly with all. Roman Catholic beliefs are repugnant to Protestants; Protestant beliefs are repugnant to Roman Catholics. Will he, therefore, express regret that either of these forms of opinion exist, or that he is in fullest sympathy with one against the other? I think not. These and other forms of religious opinion are fairly well organized, and bigotry may express itself solidly at the poll. It is because Freethinkers are, because they are Freethinkers, more tolerant, that Sir Samuel feels that he may safely flout the one and pander to the other.

The tone of Sir Samuel Hoare's letter is thoroughly offensive. The air of doubt that pervades his letter is unnecessary. He says he has no evidence for believing the Congress is to be used as a disguise for unavowed Communistic propaganda, when he has been authoritatively told the purposes of the Congress. He keeps alive suspicion, when he knows quite well there is nothing to conceal. And he knows that the fullest information is to be had by anyone who cares to ask for it. His assumption that there is a vast body of even religious opinion against this Congress is a mere cheap political dodge. Apart

from the machine-made opinion of the Roman Catholic Church, and a number of minor organizations of the Church of England, there is no great body of even religious opinion against the Congress. Many leading Churchmen, Nonconformists, and intelligent members of Parliament have refused to be bullied and cajoled into taking part in an agitation that is a sad reflection on English liberty. Sir Samuel is wrong also in saying that the Congress is to be held in *private*, as though it had something to conceal. The business meetings will be so held, because that is customary. But there will be a *public* meeting to which the general public will be invited, and so far as the limits of the building admit, the general public will be welcomed. Freethinkers have paid too dearly for their liberties to decline to exercise them because of a little noisy opposition. The pity is that one of the principle officials of the State should go out of the way to express his sympathy with a narrow intolerance he is unable to satisfy.

Considered merely as the expression of the prejudice of Sir Samuel Hoare, his expressed sympathy with those who would wish to see the Congress forcibly suppressed, and his own inferred regret that he is not able to forbid the Congress, are of no greater importance than the mutterings of the greenest of country curates. But Sir Samuel Hoare elevated, to a high position through the tricks and chances of political expediency, and using his position to flatter a religious bigotry of the narrowest kind, is a very different person. Since his famous betrayal of the League of Nations, Sir Samuel Hoare has done nothing more shameful than to express full sympathy to rob British citizens of their rights in a matter of intellectual liberty, and to express regret that they are permitted to exercise a form of hospitality that Christians are permitted to exercise without complaint or hindrance.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## Gleanings from Scottish History

THE Saxon royal family, after the Battle of Hastings, came under the protection of Malcolm Canmore. Particularly the Princess Margaret, who became his wife.

Roman Catholicism may be said to have entered Scotland with Margaret, in 1068. And it was her great aim when she became Queen, to make the Scottish Church as like as possible to the church of her native country—the Church of Rome. For spiritual adviser she had Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury. And one historian tells us that for her great service to Rome she was rewarded by being made a Saint 600 years after her death (1093). Whilst another tells us that she was canonised, in 1250, by Pope Innocent IV.

David I. (1084-1153) her son—"the sore saint," a failure as a warrior—turned to abbey building. His reign was for Poper, the grand period of the mortar-tub in Scotland. He endowed Bishoprics and Abbeys at the expense of the crown. The British Solomon (King James I.) said that "He was a sore saint to the crown." Many of the most magnificent abbeys in Scotland were erected by him—Melrose, Dryburgh, Jedburgh, Kelso, Holyrood, etc. It was he who introduced into Scotland the order of the fighting monks—the Knights Templars.

But Malcolm of the Great Head, the saintly Margaret, his wife, and their son David—the builder of kirk—were all melted into air, into thin air, when a man appeared. Under what strange circumstances genius often manifests itself!

Michael Scott was one of the greatest men Scotland

has ever given birth to. His thirst for knowledge took him to the universities of Oxford, Paris, Padua, and Toledo, in turn. He studied medicine; got the degree of Doctor of Divinity, was a great Mathematician; the first to give Europe a complete translation of Aristotle's works; wrote a large volume on Astronomy, and books on several other subjects. He was a man of European reputation, despite Papal curses. Dante honoured him with a place in his "Hell," see Canto xx., lines 113-115:—

"That other round the loins  
So slender of his shape was Michael Scot  
Practis'd in every slight of magic wile."

That Michael should have been considered so worthy of Dante's hate is something every Scot should be very proud of.

Doughty in his *Arabia Deserta*, frequently tells us of the significance of breaking bread in Arabian homes. There was an ancient custom in Scotland which bound the guest to take part with his host in all dangers which might occur, so long as the food eaten under his roof remained in his stomach. This ancient custom, an improvement on the Arabian one, may throw some light on some otherwise unexplainable events.

A parcel of land called "Gudeman's Croft" might be seen in every town and parish in Scotland. This piece of land was set aside for the Evil One. In token of his dominion, it was given up to the unchecked operation of the curse wherewith the ground was cursed when man fell.

The year began in Scotland on the 25th day of March, the imagined day of the Annunciation. An Act, altering the date to January 1, passed by the Privy Council in December, 1590, informs us that "In all well-governed commonwealths and countries, the year begins yearly upon the first day of January, commonly called New Year's Day, and this realm only is differing from all the others in the count and reckoning of the years."

The corruptions of Popery gained, it is said, a greater height in Scotland in the reigns of James IV. and V. than perhaps in any other country in Europe. The wealth and power of the clergy was enormous. More than half the property of the nation belonged to them. Free, as churchmen, from the civil law, and corrupted by luxury and idleness, the lives of most of them were abominably profligate. The ambition, pride, and splendour of the higher orders of the clergy, the greed and insolence of the lower, passed all bounds. Every few miles, all over the country, there stood in some fair and fertile spot a great establishment of some of the orders of the monks living in idleness and on the fat of the land. There were 240 such places, and the population was under a million.

But these monks were said to be very hospitable. And judging from the annual consumption of food at their establishments it seems to savour of truth. For one example, take the abbey kitchen of Arbroath: Its twenty-five monks used annually "nine-hundred and sixty withers; one hundred and eighty bullocks; twenty-four swine and boars; twenty pounds worth of lamb, veal, and chicken; fifteen hundred salted cod-fish; eleven barrels of salmon; twelve thousand dry haddocks and speldings, besides fresh fish bought daily; four pounds weight of saffron, sixteen pounds of pepper; two pounds of ginger, and six gallons of honey; eighty-two chalders of malt, thirty chalders wheat, and forty chalders of meal."

Once or twice every year priests seemed to encourage the people to ridicule their sacred calling. Strange elections took place, at which freedom to hold high carnival was given. To briefly notice a few of these: take the election of "The Pope of Fools." This mock pope was attended by a set of mock bishops in

ludicrous dresses. His train were disguised, some in masks of monstrous feature, some in the dress of women, some with painted faces. They performed a mock worship, and ate and drank, and played at dice and cards on the altar. They perfumed their pope with burnt leather instead of incense. They ran about the church, leaping, dancing, laughing, singing and breaking vile jests. When they had sported to their hearts content inside the church the Pope of Fools gave them his blessing, and they set out through the town in a procession followed by a crowd, and performing all sorts of mad antics.

At another time a "Boy Bishop" would be elected with interesting results. Or at the "Feast of Topsy Priests," when an "Abbot of Unreason" was elected. At this feast men were dressed to represent dragons, lions, bears, wolves, asses, and swine. The asses stood on their hind legs and played the harp, nodding their long ears to the music. The swine played the bagpipes and the fiddle, while the other animals roared in character. And all went merry as a marriage bell.

And now we come to an actual Pope. A few years before the Battle of Flodden (1513) Pope Leo X. had seized the territories of Parma and Piacenza, in upper Italy, and added them to his dominions.

Afraid of losing these territories, because Louis XII., of France, who was carrying on war with Italy, had a claim to them, he made a treaty with young Henry VIII., of England, who was then flush of money, and athirst for military glory, to invade France with a large army by way of drawing Louis XII. out of Italy.

Louis XII., of France, on the other hand, played the same game as the Pope. He persuaded James IV., of Scotland, to invade England while Henry VIII. (against whom James had many grievances) was engaged with his French invasion, with the view of getting Henry VIII. out of France. But the scheming of the Pope and Louis XII. did not mature.

So the French, the Italians, and the Pope's Swiss butchered each other in Italy; the English and the French killed each other in Normandy; and the English and the Scots murdered each other at Flodden, that Pope Leo X. might retain his ill-gotten territories—*Ad majorem dei gloriam*.

The next event in which the tragic influence of the Church of Rome may be traced is that of the "Broken Treaty." Prince Edward, son of Henry VIII., was a child of six when Mary was born heir to the Scottish throne. It was proposed that a marriage be arranged between Edward and Mary and thus settle all disputes. Henry VIII. set his heart on this marriage. The treaty of peace and marriage was signed, and sealed with the Great Seal of Scotland. "Christ's body" was broken before the Regent and the English Ambassador as a pledge of inviolable fidelity to the contract. But very soon that treaty was torn in shreds by priestly intrigues.

To compel Scotland by force of arms to keep this treaty became the aim of Henry VIII., and the havoc did not cease with the early death of Prince Edward.

Henry sacked Leith, and Edinburgh (1543). But had a reverse at Ancrum (1544). The Earl of Hereford, in September, 1545, again invaded Scotland, this time so successfully that in fifteen days the English burned seven monasteries; sixteen castles, five market towns, two hundred and forty-three villages, thirteen mills, and three hospitals. The abbeys of Holyrood, Melrose, Dryburgh, Kelso, Jedburgh, Haddington, and Newbattle, ruined by this English invasion took place, be it noted, sixteen years before the reformation.

And now to conclude with "The most pitiful of all the Stuarts"—James VI. of Scotland and I. of England.

Before James VI., the boy King, made his first visit to Edinburgh, in October, 1579, the magistrates called upon "all persons having pigsties under their outside stairs to remove the same. All who had dung-hills or any sort of rubbish in the High Street or any of the common thoroughfares, were commanded to make a clearance."

"The Character of James, as he grew up showed an extraordinary meanness and baseness. There are persons who have no sense of smell, so that to their nose a bed of roses, or a dung-hill, is all one. Morally speaking James wanted the sense of smell. His moral sense was so utterly blunt that he seemed incapable of discerning between an honourable action and a base and shameful one. He was inveterately given to shuffling and lying, and gloried in dissimulation as an accomplishment. He was afraid at the sight of drawn steel. But though he could not look upon cold iron, he dabbled in assassination, and rewarded cut-throats for bargains of murder. His mother trusted him with copies of her secret correspondence relating to the conspiracies against Elizabeth in which she was engaged. James turned informer on his mother and sent the correspondence to Elizabeth! When the news of his mother's execution arrived he could not conceal his joy." (Mackenzie's *History of Scotland*, pp. 464-5).

Now, who having a very intimate knowledge of the Bible can raise any objection to its dedication to James?—that "most dread sovereign, which Almighty God, the father of all mercies, bestowed upon us the people of England."

The history of Scotland teems with creatures more or less like James. That Scotland stands where it did is still disgracefully true. It still bows to its gods as heretofore.

That it will ever stand where it *should* can only become possible when the efforts of its great men, from Michael Scott to John M. Robertson, meet with proper recognition.

GEORGE WALLACE.

## Another Bad Name for the Dog

"I believe that religion, generally speaking, has been a curse to mankind—that its modest and generally over-estimated services on the ethical side have been more than overborne by the damage it has done to clear and honest thinking."—H. L. Mencken.

CLEAR and honest thinking, as understood by the Churches, has led to the policy of blackguarding their opponents. Prejudice-provoking epithets are coined so as to keep alive feelings which assist the existence of the Churches, even if at the expense of social life and well-being. Be it noted that the prejudice-provoking epithet was only evoked when the method of the stake and the bonfire became impossible. It was a very poor and comparatively ineffective second-string. So when people who objected to being murdered became too numerous, any epithet that sounded offensive which would hinder and harass the person who failed to patronize the Church's wares was brought into service. This led to their being treated as Pariah Dogs and, so, in this roundabout way, tended to their discouragement and (for practical purposes) non-existence.

The word *Infidel* had a good run for its money and did splendid service. The term was thrown at all those who spurned the Means of Grace. A celebrated ecclesiastic in my boyhood wrote in one of the leading Reviews that it was *and should be* an unpleasant thing for a man to call himself an *infidel*. Not that any man did deliberately choose such a term as explaining

his intellectual attitude towards the Churches. The word could only rightly apply to those who were unfaithful in their every-day life to the teachings which they *professed to believe*. In this way it was always obvious that the Christians were the chief infidels in the community and, for that matter, still are. To them the term can still be applied with some justification. But Christians did not mind what Freethinkers chose to call themselves; what they wanted was to fix a word of their own, a word with a relish of impropriety about it, and which suggested nameless unpleasantness, and to apply it as long as its object of creating prejudice and hatred was successful.

The word *infidel* did die at last because of its inherent absurdity. The odium attached to it was then applied to another word, *Atheist*. So successful was this transference that even men who lived and died without the remotest belief in any kind of God (with an understandable connotation) shuddered at the word *Atheist*, and exercised considerable ingenuity in inventing words of much the same significance, but with the advantage of avoiding the disagreeable penalties Christians attached to the *Atheist*. But *Atheist* is now, alas, becoming too commonly used, with the result that it is ceasing to rouse the hoped-for reactions. What is the good of trying to excite bitterness, malice, and a persecuting spirit amongst those who take the sacraments when a respected and generally admired man like the late A. E. Housman, when asked by his brother, Laurence Housman, what he called himself, replied decisively, "I am an Atheist."? When this avowal is printed in a popular paper, *John O'London's Weekly*, and the man who makes the avowal is the subject of a eulogy by a living Prime Minister, Mr. Stanley Baldwin, it is evident that the word *Atheist* is ceasing to carry out the rôle laid down for it. Another word has, therefore, to be coined.

This word, we are now realizing, is Anti-God. It is this word which the noble and ethical Christian gentlemen, ladies, and children, are now engaged in throwing about generously and hoping for the best. Apply the word Anti-God in the directions where *Atheist* and *infidel* once served, and the same inhuman socially-disintegrating primitive intolerance will raise its head again. Good sacrament partakers, good psalm-singers, good pietists, will feel within them once again the sentiment that raised the *auto-de-fé*, and consider themselves justified in assisting at "breaches of the peace," and spitting upon those who spurn the means of Grace. Round about the honourable figures of men like (the late) A. E. Housman, H. L. Mencken, Somerset Maugham and H. G. Wells will cluster masses of ethically undistinguished people who have automatically lisped the responses, purchased candles, and thereby purchased comfortable seats in the New Jerusalem—the site of which is certainly not to be found in this green and pleasant isle. On the side of God this nondescript lot will be found drawn up in array against those whose spirits are not craven. GOD will have on his side, for instance, the pious Catholic journal that brings out a contents bill running

### THE DEATH AGONY OF THE BEAST IN SPAIN

They will have on their side, also, those who attend magnificent Papistical functions—circuses—which roused the biting comments of a man like the great T. H. Huxley: "I am unable to understand how grown men can lend themselves to such tom-fooleries—nothing but mere fetish worship—in forms of execrably bad taste, devised, one would think by a college of ecclesiastical man-milliners for the delectation of school-girls. It is curious to notice that intellectual and æsthetic degradation go hand in hand."

"ANTI-GOD!" howl the enlightened religionists

(making friends, they hope, in influential quarters). Away with such men to the Pyre! We stand for God, the God of our Fathers, the God of whom Shelley wrote:—

"A vengeful, pitiless and almighty fiend,  
Whose mercy is a nickname for the rage  
Of tameless tigers hungering for blood."

What matter to the Godite that the careful and scrupulous John Stuart Mill (Gladstone called him "The Saint of Rationalism") wrote:—

It can do truth no service to blink the fact, known to all who have the most ordinary acquaintance with literary history that a large portion of the noblest and most valuable moral teaching has been the work, not only of men who did not know, but of men who knew and rejected, the Christian faith.

What care those who have just sent up half-a-crown to the *Little Flower* or the *Bleeding Heart* in gratitude for having drawn a horse in the Sweep? What care such unmistakably pious souls about moral teaching? Have they not used ugly words about the irreligious, and so made more sure of spending eternity in proximity to God's Footstool? Have they not proved their loyalty to the God of our Fathers and staked a claim in Paradise by joining the kindly religious chorus in yelling unlovely terms of opprobrium? Have they not registered their objection to Freethinkers being sarcastic at the Godites' expense by hurling epithets at them quite stupid and innocent of subtlety? Have they not tried to belittle the reputation of men like Lytton Strachey for writing in such manner of Philip of Spain? :—

When he awoke it was night, and there was singing at the altar below him; a sacred candle was lighted and put into his hand, the flame as he clutched it closer and closer casting lurid shadows upon his face; and so, in ecstasy and in torment, in absurdity and in greatness, happy, miserable, horrible and holy, King Philip went off to meet the Trinity.

"ANTI-GOD? ANTI-GOD!" say our Christian Lambs! Away with Strachey to the Pyre! This is the language which is apt to create, and *will* create, if we can help it, a Breach of the Peace. What, no pyre! Well, then, blackguard him! He mocks, he mocks!

But the partisans of the Creed in whose name more human blood has been violently shed than in any other cause whatever, these, I say, can hardly find much ground of serious reproach in a few score epigrams.

The Anti-God reprobate who wrote that was the English statesman, John Morley. Yes, John Morley was another who was fair game for the candle-pur-chasers!

Mind you it is not only necessary for you to be a believer in God to escape the holy chorus, you must kneel at the right shrine. Kneel at the wrong shrine and you will not escape calumny. Voltaire was a deist, but he had the temerity to say that the odour of a monk was objectionable to him. There you have *The Mark of the Beast*, my friends! Paine not only founded, but put fervour into, a Society of Theophilanthropists. And so he became Anti-God. They are in fact all ANTI-GOD who accept not the name of the Ancient of Days, Jehovah, the Name of Names, the friend of the Pope of Rome and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and, incidentally, the Infamy of Infamies.

T. H. ELSTOB.

## National Secular Society and the Corporation of Glasgow

THE CIVIC RECEPTION accorded by the Corporation of Glasgow to the N.S.S. Conference will be a notable landmark in the history of Freethought in the second City of the Empire. There was a very large attendance, the hospitality was genuine and thorough, and one of the most enjoyable social functions in the history of N.S.S. Conference went through without a single untoward event. Pressing duties elsewhere prevented the Lord Provost being present, but a very able and charming substitute was provided by the Senior Magistrate, Bailie Mrs. Jean Mann, who was accompanied by Bailies Crone and McGregor.

After a formal reception in the handsome Satinwood Salon, the company adjourned to the Banqueting Hall to listen to speeches that were commendably brief.

BAILIE MRS. JEAN MANN said: Ladies and Gentlemen, the first thing I have to do is to make an apology for the absence of our Lord Provost. It is, perhaps, an unfortunate coincidence that the visit of the Lord Mayor of London Town happens to take place at the same time as your Conference, and we, the Lord Provost and myself, were both invited to dine at the Exhibition to-night. I have come here to deputise for him. I want to give you all a very hearty welcome to the City of Glasgow.

To-night you are on the pleasant side of the buildings. These buildings witness very many different scenes. There is a concert going on in the Council Chamber. It is not often that the Council Chambers witness harmonious sounds like those that will be heard to-night, and in the other side of the building there is a place called Misery Hall, where we meet with people from all over the city who are in distress, and who come to their councillors when they are in need. Now, when they come to us we do not ask: "What are your religious beliefs, if any?" (Hear, hear.) We do not say: "Are you a member of my church, or Bailie Crone's church, or Bailie McGregor's church?" We do not ask any questions like these regarding their private beliefs, and when we send out our rate papers we send them to everybody, not just to the Presbyterians or the Baptists. (Hear, hear.) We regard all men, when they come to Misery Hall, as brothers, and all women as sisters. Like you, we believe in the great brotherhood of man. (Hear, hear.)

Now, this is not the time for making speeches. You are here to-night to enjoy yourselves, not to listen to a speech from the Senior Magistrate, but, just in closing, I would very briefly quote from one whom many of you know, and whose works many of you have studied, and he has said that the place to be happy is here; the time to be happy is now, and the way to be happy is in making other people happy.

Now, see to it that to-night you all go and enjoy yourselves thoroughly.

On behalf of the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Councillors, we bid you a very hearty welcome to our City Chambers. We want you to feel at home here to-night and to be as happy as you possibly can. (Applause.)

I will now call on Mr. Chapman Cohen, the President of your Society.

MR. CHAPMAN COHEN: Madam Bailie, and Members of the Corporation, Ladies and Gentlemen, I think it was a timely warning, that you are all here to enjoy yourselves, and I take that to be a very gracious hint that the speeches must not be long. (Hear, hear, and laughter.)

A man possessed of God cannot be in possession of himself.

I assure you I have no desire to stand in the way of your enjoyment. My first duty, however, is to thank the Corporation of Glasgow, on behalf of the Society of which I have the honour to be President, for the welcome we have received, for the hospitality that we are offered, and for something more.

I have been coming to Glasgow twice a year, at least, for about 46 years, and in that time I have made a great many friends here, I have learned—and I say it without any attempt at flattery—to appreciate the Scottish people as a whole, and the people of Glasgow in particular, and I can only say that to-night's ceremony will form a new bond of friendship, in spirit, at least, between myself and the Glasgow people.

I hope, therefore, it will not be taken in the wrong sense when I say that the welcome offered to the National Secular Society, while in this form, not usual, is not undeserved (Hear, hear), and also—and again, I hope I shall not be misunderstood, if I say that, while the Corporation of Glasgow honours the National Secular Society by its welcome, the Corporation of Glasgow is also honouring itself in honouring the National Secular Society (Hear, hear), because when a Corporation or a Magistracy deals out justice with an even hand, irrespective of opinions, religious, political or other—when it acts in that way, it is giving the world an indication of its own sense of fairness and justice, of its fitness to be where it is, and, therefore, I say it is inviting the world to honour it for an impartial discharge of its duties. (Hear, hear.)

Now, I suppose there are some here who are not aware of the fact that for well over 100 years there has been a Freethought movement, an organized Freethought movement, in this city. Men and women have banded together without any hope of material advantage, without any hope of social gain, banded together with the sole desire of putting forward a view of life which they might have lived in their own way, selfishly keeping it to themselves, but which they believed it to be their duty as citizens to put before others. They had no material end in view; they could not gratify social ambition, there was no hope of personal gain, and they received the usual abuse, misunderstanding, ill-treatment, sometimes imprisonment, that heretics have always received whether the heresy was religious or political or social or ethical. The heretic, in the fact of being a heretic, may be wrong, may be altogether mistaken in his views, but, at least, because he is a heretic, he is giving to the world an earnest of his sincerity. You can preach a lie, a popular lie, in the hope of making profit, but you cannot preach against established belief and the majority of the people, without showing your sincerity, and I think when you look back, if you consider that for over a century there has been this body of men and women in this city saying that they will, at all costs, say what they believe to be true, facing all kinds of danger and disparagement, facing that force under which most men bend and dissimulate, the force of public opinion; I say a body of men and women, generation after generation, living in the centre of a city doing what they can to hold up to others what they believe to be right, represent a power for righteousness, a power for right dealing, a guarantee of sincerity and intellectual straightforwardness, that no community can afford to despise without paying a terrible price for it. The price we pay for doing so is hypocrisy, lying, and insincerity. And because this is so, I welcome to-night's ceremony as an indication that in one city in this country alone—I really don't know of another, that has ever approached it—in one city in this country there is a Corporation which says, as Madam Bailie has said, "We

are not concerned with your religious opinions or your irreligious opinions, you are, to us, fellow-members of the same community. (Hear, hear.) You have a right to the same amenities that every other member of the community has; we give you the same recognition that we give to other sects and parties. "I say that is a duty which every corporate body owes to the people. Unfortunately, it is a duty which very few corporate bodies feel called upon to carry out. I welcome it, then, as an indication of a better spirit. Whether other people adopt it or not, is their lookout; it is not ours.

For in the last resort every man makes himself; the only man who can make or unmake himself, and when a man reckons up with himself he finds he has ultimately to reckon with his own sincerity, his own truthfulness, his own mental and moral courage.

Madam Bailie Mann and Members of the Corporation, I thank you heartily for the honour you have done this Society. I thank you for myself, because I feel that the work the Society has done is getting, at least, the recognition of its being an honest endeavour for general improvement. I thank you also because it is an earnest of a fair treatment between citizens, that we will say to each other: "It is not merely your right to express an opinion that differs from those of others when you believe you have hold of a truth, it is your duty to do so. (Hear, hear.) It is your duty to find out what you believe to be true, and, when you have found it out, to shout it from the housetops." I hope that every Corporation will say, "We are concerned with you only as citizens, and, as citizens, we are determined to give you the same justice, the same even treatment that we measure out to others." (Applause.)

BAILIE MRS. JEAN MANN: I call upon Mr. R. M. Hamilton, the President of your Glasgow Society, to speak.

MR. R. M. HAMILTON: Ladies and Gentlemen, what I have to say shall be brief, fortunately.

I wish, on your behalf, to move a very hearty vote of thanks to the Lord Provost, the Magistrates, the Corporation of Glasgow, for their courtesy, their courage, their sense of justice and fairness in according us this hospitality to-night.

The company vigorously responded to the motion.

BAILIE MRS. JEAN MANN: On behalf of the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Corporation of Glasgow, I want to thank you for that appreciative vote of thanks.

Now, you will notice that we are only supposed to speak a few minutes, and, just before you go, I want to point out that there will be dancing here until 11 p.m., and if you are awfully anxious to have one or two extras, such as the Lambeth Walk, it might be extended to a little after eleven, and for those who are not sensible enough to dance (Hear, hear and laughter), there is a concert room, and there is some very fine vocal music for the whole evening in that room, and whether you dance or whether you are just fond of vocal music, all of you, I am sure, will be delighted to have something to do, so you are just to be at home for the evening. It is not very often that the Glasgow people get a chance of getting something from the Corporation (Laughter), and the Committee Rooms this time instead of being full of controversial matter will be full of sandwiches and tea, and soft drinks, with emphasis on the adjective "soft," and you will just get there and make yourselves at home and enjoy yourselves for the rest of the evening. (Applause.)

I differ with Moore in thinking Christianity useful to the world; no man of sense can think it true.—Shelley.

## What is Christianity?

COMMENT me to the Bishop of Chelmsford for straightforward language. This is what I read from his Pastoral Letter: "A civilization which can give birth to the shameful persecution of the Jews, the spraying of mustard gas upon Abyssinian villages, the lying and dishonesty which make a mock of treaties and agreements is not worth preserving." Then the Bishop goes on to say: "This evil spirit of hatred and distrust can only be exorcised by the application of Christian principles." Quite right from first to last! But what one wants to know is what are Christian principles? Christendom under that name has now been before the world for just upon 2,000 years. For at least 1,200 to 1,500 of those years it has dominated the Western world and has also made many missionary efforts everywhere.

Now if one of the Bishops of Christendom declares that civilization as we have it to-day is not worth preserving, the outside looker-on may well suggest that there must have been something wrong hitherto in the teaching of the Cult. Still the Bishop proclaims it is the only chance we have of getting the human race into that decent state of life known by the name of civilization. If even after all the years, Popes, Cardinals, Luthers, and Protestants in general have not succeeded, what becomes of the idea that Christianity is the way out?

Two thousand years is a fairly long time to give anything a trial. If in spite of the fact that a certain system has been the dominant power through all that long period with the object of making mankind into a happy family and the end of it all is what is described by the Bishop, then, after granting all credit to good intentions, clearly the resultant activities do look like failure. Let us, however, be merciful in our criticisms and say that it is the unmitigated wickedness of humanity that has prevented Christianity achieving its object. But then there still remains the fact that as practised it has not been strong enough to attain the object of making a human world as pleasant to live in as heaven itself is fabled to be although undoubtedly that is what it set out to do.

So we come back to the Bishop's final appeal that the application of Christian principles will alone succeed in getting us out of our present unbrotherly mess. And once more then one is driven to ask what are Christian principles, when those hitherto exercised seem to be a clear failure or we would not have this honest Bishop's outburst. So if we are still to rely on Christianity to remedy matters, its principles must somehow of necessity be amended.

Far be it from this humble writer to suggest fully effective world-saving efforts, but one thing does seem clear. That is that more and more all depends on man himself to make his life worth living on earth. To do this with any hope of universal peace and happiness we must adopt in every aspect of Society the Christian call of the Sermon on the Mount, the same call, by the way, is included in almost all religions, to "do to others as we would be done by." That is the axiom going by the name of the Golden Rule.

If humanity would only ask itself the plain question of what would be left of our perpetual talk of "sins against God," especially persistent in some pulpits, were the Golden Rule kept unbroken between man and man, then progress to perfection would surely be more rapid, seeing it would turn all religions straight from talk to action in a way the simplest could follow.

Since writing the above I notice that two of our leading million-circulation papers have been down on the Bishop for his daring to think this is not the best of all possible worlds. Well, there is no doubt those papers and their proprietors find it is so. Where would their circulations be without fodder for their daily reports of human crimes and human miseries?

HENRY WRIGHT.

As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect. Emerson.

## Acid Drops

There really must be some sort of a revival of genuine religion going on, and we hope the Archbishop of Canterbury is pleased. For example, the Bishop of Ely, speaking at a Diocesan Conference on June 13, suggested as a cause of the damage recently done to crops that this may have been due to "rebellious spirits." The Bishop thinks that:—

Discarnate and rebellious spirits may have some limited and temporary power to exercise in the realm of nature as they apparently have in the realm of human nature.

This really is a return to genuine and "true Christianity," and there are still multitudes of Christians in this country who will heartily agree with the Bishop. The New Testament characters, beginning with Jesus Christ, would have smiled approval on the Bishop of Ely. All the great leaders of the Christian Church for very many centuries would have done likewise. We must admit that there does seem to be some revival of religion afoot. The Bishop of Ely is an evidence of it.

Hitler and Co., are, apparently, experiencing the truth of Shakespeare's opinion that ingratitude is sharper than a serpent's tooth. Herr Globocnik, leader of the Nazis in Vienna, protests against the majority of Viennese who are not showing themselves properly appreciative of the new rubber truncheon, the nice strong concentration camps, etc., that Goering, Hitler, and Goebels provide for their benefit, and the unselfish manner in which the invading Germans shoulder the burden of Austrian cash and valuables. Herr Globocnik says there is in Austria at present much more criticism than is "necessary or justified." And we all know how the German leaders, so much admired by our English Fascists, deal with unnecessary criticism.

Our congratulations to Lord Londonderry. When he reflects on the manner in which thousands of non-combatants, including a large number of children, have been bombed in Spain and China, he must feel proud that it was largely owing to his efforts that the proposal, brought forward at a League of Nations Session, to ban the use of bombing-planes in "civilized" warfare was not carried. Without them that "gallant Christian gentleman Franco" would have been kicked out of Spain long since, and would have been compelled to find his spiritual home in either Rome or Berlin.

An advertisement in the *Glasgow Observer* reads:—

Furnished Apartments to Let, with or without attendance; close to Racecourse; few minutes from Church.

How convenient! when one has backed a winner one can, without undue effort, just pop into Church and return thanks to the Lord.

Catholics are very angry that their wonderful Eucharistic Congress at Budapest received so little notice in the popular press. The *Times*, it is true, devoted half a column to the Danube procession of the "blessed Sacrament"; but most of the other papers were sure that the majority of its readers preferred whole columns given to the Derby or to the Test Selections. In this we are for once in agreement with them, for we can fancy few things more boring or futile than Eucharistic Conferences with its mass of pious people grovelling at the feet of some impossible bishop or cardinal and its ridiculous processions of bones and relics.

This particular one ended in a cloudburst which prevented the Legate's speech from being given. The *Universe* points out the "extraordinary coincidence" that the Chicago Eucharistic Congress in 1926 ended in the same way. A possible inference from this coincidence is that it was a hint that even God Almighty had had enough of this religious mummery, and had not quite forgotten how he had dealt with people in the times of Noah. The Eucharistic Congress should take the hint.

The Kendal Town Council has listened to a deputation of the Churches of Kendal against Sunday Games, and in spite of their protestations has decided by a majority of 6 (14 votes to 8) to allow tennis, bowling and putting in the pleasure grounds under the control of the Corporation on Sundays from 1 p.m. to sunset. The Rev. J. Williams, Methodist minister, explained to the Council that:—

The English people have a position of greatness among the nations of the world. To weaken the forces which are striving to maintain this ideal of life, as Sunday games are likely to do, threatens the foundation of this greatness.

The Council, strange to say, were not sufficiently impressed by Mr. Williams's eloquence, and Sunday cricket and bowls will now be allowed the chance of corrupting and demoralizing dear old England.

In *Me*, Again Naomi Jacob tells the following story. She

learned to play golf in pre-War days. The old Scottish professional to whom she went for lessons disapproved of her clothes. "You'll never play wi' a stiff collar like you round your neck," he said, and added, "Ah doot ye're like the rest on 'em, wi' stays that's far and away too tight." Miss Jacob remedied these defects, only to be told, "Yon skirt's ower lang!"

I said: Do you—I mean—shall I—? That is—would it be better—?"

"Nay, nay," he said, "leave it wheer it is. We mun just mak' the best o' a bad job."

I said: "I'm relieved. I wondered if this was a golf course or the Garden of Eden."

He looked at me coldly. "It's no a place fur cracking irreligious jokes o' that nature!"

In *John O'London's Weekly*, the editor takes Mr. H. G. Wells to task for his disparagement of Palestine as one of the mighty focal points of world history. Says Mr. Wells:—

Nothing began there, nothing was worked out there. All the historical part of the Bible abounds in wild exaggeration of the importance of this little strip of land. We were all brought up to believe in the magnificence of Solomon's temple, and it is a startling thing for most of us to read the account of its decorations over again and turn its cubits into feet. It was smaller than most barns.

Mr. Wells is rebuked for applying a tape-measure to ideas of this sort. But, curiously running away from his own standpoint, *John O'London* continues:—

. . . As for the Temple of Solomon, it rises like a sunlit hill in history. In design it was a replica (but twice the size) of the Tabernacle which Moses set up, after he had promulgated the Law in the Sinai desert. There is good reason to believe that the porch of the Temple and its upper chambers rose to a height of 120 cubits (180 feet), so that its height was about that of the steeple of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, in Trafalgar Square. "And the porch that was in front of the house . . . the height was an hundred and twenty and he overlaid it within with pure gold."

So there is good reason to believe that (although mere bigness is to be discounted), the Temple was an enormous building indeed. The "good reason to believe" is apparently the quotation from 2 Chron. iii. 4, which refers to the porch. There is equally good reason to believe (1 Kings vi. 2-10), that the dimensions of the Temple itself, were 90 feet long, 30 feet wide and 45 feet high. St. Martin's-in-the-Fields could contain this building three times over. We will admit that, according to the Divine Historian, the Temple had a deuce of a porch, but that was the way with Divine Historians; when they once drew the Long Bow they drew it well and truly. In short, they exaggerated.

The Mayor of Wandsworth deplores the "passing of the old English Sabbath." The opinions of the Mayor or all the individual members of all the Boroughs of every City are their own. They have no right to inflict imper-

tinuous judgments of this kind on serious citizens meeting to protest against cruelty to children. This dictum of the mayor's silly bigotry on a totally different topic was delivered solemnly at a meeting of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Apart from its utter irrelevance, the Mayor's religion is one with a Holy Book containing stories of believers in the Mayor's creed, whose obedience to the commands of the God the Mayor worships would have sent them to the gallows or the jail—not to say the lunatic asylum—had there been a R.S.P.C.C. in the days of Abram and Elisha and of other Bible worthies.

The Rev. Lawrence Larrowe, Minister of the First Methodist Church, Springfield, U.S.A., instead of turning up at his Church in his guise of a Fisher of Men, went off to Amsden Brook and caught eight trout. Struck by this plain and unmistakable return from their pastor's activities, his board have approved of his action. Henceforward a Sunday Service is to be held from 9 to 10 a.m., after which time the congregation "can do as they wish for the rest of the day." Between 9 and 10, however, the worshippers are to discipline themselves to doing as they do not like and must not let the possibility of acquiring eight trout between these hours to influence them.

Dr. J. W. Fifield, Jr., of the First Congregational Church, Los Angeles, goes one better. He announces Sunday services for golfers, picnickers, horseback riders and other out-door enthusiasts. He invites them to come dressed for sport. The service will be over by 8.30 a.m., and then "Yoicks, Tally Ho!" They will then be free to enjoy themselves.

The General Assembly of the Scottish Presbyterian Kirk has been in solemn conclave on the tremendous question of modern divorce. Not looking upon marriage as a Sacrament—this was, of course, the position of Calvin—the Elders are ready to sanction divorce for adultery and desertion; but they draw the line at insanity, or habitual drunkenness, or other forms of illness. Matrimony exacts an oath of "life-long fidelity," and the Scottish ministers are not going to tolerate the law which allows a man or a woman a divorce from some incurable lunatic or dipsomaniac. Fortunately, these religious fanatics will eventually have to toe the line whether they like it or not; and it is a pity that some one in authority does not tell them that they and their views are an insult to modern thought. The old days of the *Scarlet Letter*, of witchcraft, of Puritanism in general, are gone for ever, no matter what Jesus or Calvin said. And with them go the authority of Scottish Kirks and similar out-of-date religious bodies. The world has moved into a better and a healthier atmosphere.

### Fifty Years Ago

THE Salvation Army boasts of its missionary work. General Booth has been holding a big demonstration at the City Temple. The platform was filled with a motley crowd, wearing the costumes of half the world. Ching-wing sang a Chinese song, and gave his testimony—for what it was worth. An aboriginal Australian followed in suit. Then came a Hindoo female and a Hindoostance song. It was like another feast of Pentecost. General Booth "explained" the success of his Army. The first cause was "the possession of a real enjoyable salvation"; in other words, tambourines, music-hall tunes, unlimited slang, bastard uniforms, and general high jinks. There have been many religions in the world before—some mad, some monstrous, some infamous, and some silly; but never was there a religion that came within a mile of Salvationism for downright vulgarity and deliberate trading on human atavism. Booth's last cause was "willingness to pay the price." But the last shall be first, or rather it is the first. Booth is a fine old showman. His speciality is raising the wind. He has exhausted every device for extracting cash from Christian pockets. He has even married his daughters in public and taken gate money.

*The Freethinker*, June 17, 1888.



# THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2412.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MR. COHEN must again ask the indulgence of his correspondents. He did not return from Glasgow until the Thursday after the Conference, very tired after an unusually hard spell of work, and when he got back, the pile of letters waiting to be dealt with, at both the *Freethinker* Office and at his private address, was mountainous. He hopes to clear up everything within a few days. Meanwhile—Patience.

To Advertising and Distributing the *Freethinker*.—A.W., £1; D. Fisher, 4s.

W. MCINTOSH.—Many thanks, but regret we are unable to use.

J. J. FAIRCLOUGH AND H. WRIGLEY.—Thanks for cutting, but we have at present neither space nor time to deal with the matter at length. Have filed it for later use. It is the usual Spiritualist yarn, and as convincing as have been the others.

L. WEISBARD.—Thanks for address of a likely new reader; paper being sent for four weeks.

R. A. McDONALD.—Thanks for cutting. We are very full up at present, but it is good to be kept informed as to what is taking place in different parts of the world.

H. P. MASON.—We have heard of several suggestions of the kind you name. They have all been set afloat without Mr. Cohen's consent, and while fully appreciating the feeling of which they are the expression, he would much rather not—at least, for the present.

J. TAIT.—Obliged for cutting. Intolerance is the largest inheritance the world has received from the Christian Church. It is one of the many vile things to which Christianity has given a moral covering.

R. THOMPSON.—The best way of protesting against the lying and bigotry displayed in connexion with the International Congress is to join the Freethought movement and do something. A large part of the strength of Christianity to-day is derived from the indifference of those who do not believe in it.

P. NORTHCOTE AND R. BOULTING.—Next week. Crowded out of present issue.

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

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

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

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

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 "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.

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.

## Sugar Plums

We print elsewhere in this issue a report of the speeches at the Civic Reception of the N.S.S. Annual Conference by the Corporation of Glasgow. The Conference is similar to that which will be carried out in September in London by the World Union of Freethinkers, and which Sir Samuel Hoare regrets he is not able to prevent. All that need be added to the report of the speeches is that the generosity of the Corporation was unstinted. The

concert provided was first class, the dancers had provided for them one of the best dance bands in Glasgow, and the dancing was prolonged from 11 o'clock to 11.30. Everyone enjoyed himself or herself thoroughly. If the function marked an epoch in the history of Freethought in the British Isles, that carried with it an impeachment of the rest of Britain which penalises one form of opinion and glorifies another.

We do not imagine that other Corporations will follow the example set by Glasgow. Religious bigotry is still too strong for that, and many of those in power, even when they are inclined to deal out civic justice to Freethinkers, are afraid to do so. And if we may say so, without appearing to be inappreciative of the action of the Glasgow Corporation, we may add that we do not care a brass button whether other Corporations follow the example of Glasgow. Freethought has made its way hitherto in virtue of two qualities, courage and independence. It has pandered neither to position nor power; and so far as we can decide the issue it will continue to follow this policy. When a judge acts justly, even to compliment him on his conduct is to cast a reflection upon others. Freethought asks nothing for itself it does not ask for others, and takes nothing for itself it is not ready to demand for others.

We have received cuttings from a number of Scottish newspapers, which printed a notice of the Civic Reception in Glasgow. None of these had any adverse comment to make concerning the reception, but behaved as newspapers should, that is, published an item of news. Those who objected to this publicity being given to Freethought will thankfully recognize that they will have the full sympathy of Sir Samuel Hoare with them.

We think the following is worth printing. It comes from a Newcastle-on-Tyne reader:—

I am a reader of your publications, and have long meditated about sending you entrance fee and subscription—through indolence merely. But this past week's publication of Sir Samuel Hoare's reply to the attempt to suppress the Freethinker's Congress has roused me, and I wish I could persuade others to join. I enclose P.O. for 15s., with best wishes for your publicity efforts.

We hope that this letter will have the desired effect. If every Freethinker, or even the majority of Freethinkers would pull their weight, our work would indeed be light. We deal with Sir Samuel Hoare in "Views and Opinions." We hope our readers will help in the circulation of our reply.

From the *Observer* of June 12:—

Dr. Freud, who has had to leave Austria, as an unacceptable Semitic element in a totalitarian State, may have read with a smile the announcement of a Northern paper that "the original Manchester headquarters of the British Union of Fascists has been converted into a synagogue."

There would not be, as in the case of the creation of a Christian Church, a "purification" ceremony. The Jewish synagogue is not a "sacred" place, but merely a place in which religious ceremonies are carried out. Apart from this we are pleased to see that for once a newspaper has got the description right. There is no such thing as a Jewish "race" or a Jewish nation. There is a branch of the Semites that had a particular religion known as Judaism. In this they are on all fours with, say, Roman Catholics. There are Germans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, etc., who are Roman Catholics. There are equally men of many nations who are Jews. But when a man ceases to believe in Judaism, he ceases to be a Jew. He is then a citizen of whatever country he belongs, with all the general characteristics of that country, plus the influence of whatever remains of his religious prejudices and associations.

We referred some time ago to the impertinence of Roman Catholic priests in Liverpool in forcing a religious service upon the inhabitants of some Corporation flats in

Liverpool. We are glad to see that the City Council has informed the priests in question that no such service may be held in Corporation flats without the permission of the Housing Committee. This is good so far as it goes. But we do not see what the Housing Committee has to do with granting a permission for Roman Catholics, or others holding such services. The resolution should have read "without the permission of all dwelling in the flats." In such circumstances a single person has all the rights that a number has. We suggest that if any such service is contemplated in the future that everybody belonging to any sect, and those not belonging to any sect, hold a service or a meeting. And we see no reason why in such circumstances any meetings could not be legally prevented. It strikes us that the Housing Committee is not the supreme authority in such matters. The statutory rights of an individual cannot be abrogated by a vote of a Town Council.

Mr. G. Whitehead, working with the local N.S.S. Branch, will hold meetings during the week commencing to-day (June 19) each evening in Bradford. Attention is drawn to the literature available at all the meetings, and the *Pamphlets for the People* are very useful for handing to orthodox friends; local saints should acquire a few copies for that purpose.

A great many people assume that Aldous Huxley has become less antagonistic to religion than his earlier books appeared to indicate. It may be so. His latest work: *Ends and Means*, looks like an attempt to unite and even confuse superstitionists with "rationalists." His *Brave New World* poked fun at some real or imagined idiocies of "advanced" thinkers. In his present work (p. 225, *Ends and Means*) Huxley at least admits that "A great deal of what is taught and done in the name of even the most highly evolved religion is definitely pernicious."

## National Secular Society

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE

THE Annual Conference of the National Secular Society was held in the Grand Hotel, Charing Cross, Glasgow, on Whit-Sunday, June 5. The Morning Session commenced at 10.30 a.m. There was a large attendance of members and delegates. The following Branches were represented:—

Birmingham, Mrs. Grant; Bradford, H. J. Rogers, H. Bamforth, Mrs. M. Bulmer; Bolton, P. Foster, W. T. Paine; Blackburn, J. Sharples, Mrs. S. Sharples; Birkenhead, R. H. S. Standfast, T. B. Jones, W. J. Matthews; Burnley, J. Clayton, D. Mapp; Chester-le-Street, J. Elliott; Chester, W. S. McNeil; Edinburgh, F. Smithies, W. Cronan, H. Topp; Glasgow, R. H. Hamilton, Mrs. Whitefield, A. Copland; Greenock, J. McCann, C. H. Mair; Kingston-on-Thames, B. Robshaw; Chorley, T. Bayard Simmons; Liverpool, Mr. G. Thompson, Mrs. E. Thompson, E. Henderson, Miss A. M. Parry, J. V. Shortt, Mrs. A. Shortt; Leeds, D. Fisher; Manchester, W. A. Atkinson, W. Blaney, C. McCall, Mrs. McCall, Mrs. Blaney, W. Collins, H. Webb; Newcastle, J. T. Brighton; Nelson, R. Hartley; North London, L. Ebury, Mrs. S. J. Ebury; North Shields, W. Parry; Plymouth, T. Finley; Preston, J. McClellan; Swansea, R. E. Rossler; South London, L. Anderton, Mrs. C. M. Anderton; Sunderland, J. Walton; Seaham Harbour, T. Ewing; Tees-Side, W. Griffiths; West London, G. Bedborough, Miss Woolstone, J. Horowitz; West Ham, Mrs. M. Quinton.

It was moved, seconded and carried that the report of the last Conference as printed in the *Freethinker* should be taken as the minutes of the Conference and accepted as read.

The President then read the Executive's Annual Report. Mr. Jones, Birkenhead, moved and Mr. McClellan seconded its adoption. Mr. Smithies suggested a slight rewording of the clause respecting street meetings, which was agreed to; the Report was then put to the meeting and unanimously adopted.

Mr. McCall, Manchester, moved, and Mr. Collins, Manchester, seconded, the adoption of the Financial Report. A number of questions were asked concerning items in the Report which were satisfactorily answered.

Mrs. Whitefield called attention to the duty of every Branch to make an annual contribution to the Benevolent Fund as set forth in the Society's rules. The Report was then unanimously adopted.

On the Resolution for the election of the President, Mr. Cohen asked Mr. Hamilton, President of the Glasgow Branch to take the chair during the discussion of this motion. Mr. G. Bedborough then moved that Mr. Chapman Cohen be re-elected President, and paid a very high tribute to his work. Mr. Rossler seconded it, and after speeches from several members the resolution was adopted with acclamation.

On resuming the chair Mr. Cohen thanked the members for their renewed confidence in him. He said this was the twenty-third time the Conference had elected him its President, and he valued this honour very much, not merely as an expression of the confidence the members of the N.S.S. had in him, but because he had good reason for knowing that it reflected the confidence that the overwhelming majority of Freethinkers in this country had in his leadership of the Freethought movement in this country. When he was first elected President he made but one promise, that he would do his best. He was the best one, because the only one, who could say that that promise had been carried out to the utmost of his ability. He felt satisfied that at the present moment the N.S.S. was stronger financially, was as successful in its work, and stood higher in the public estimation than it had done at any time in its history. He thanked the Conference for the tribute it had paid him by the vote that had just been given. In the nature of the situation he could not hope for many more years of service—August, 1939 would mark the conclusion of fifty years service in the Freethought Cause, but when he finally gave up the post of President of the National Secular Society he hoped to pass it on to his successor with its power undiminished and its dignity unstained.

Mr. Bayard Simmons asked permission to read a letter from the World Union of Freethinkers, which properly should have been directed to the Secretary, expressing its admiration for the work done in this country by the N.S.S., and in particular the efforts being made by the Society to make the forthcoming International Congress a complete success. The President then moved on behalf of the Executive the re-election of Mr. R. H. Rosetti as General Secretary. In doing so he said he had better opportunities than others for estimating the value of Mr. Rosetti's work and his loyalty to the Society. The existence of a Secretary of Mr. Rosetti's trustworthiness obviated a great deal of anxiety that might otherwise exist for the President. Mr. Rosetti had been a life-long worker in the Freethought Cause, and he had the greatest pleasure in proposing him for re-election to the post of General Secretary. Mrs. Whitefield seconded the resolution, which was carried.

Motion 6 and 7, the election of Treasurer and Auditor, were carried without discussion, as also was the election of the Executive.

At this point Mr. Standfast asked permission to enquire why no press representative had been appointed, as provided in the rules. The President explained that the provision was made in the rules so that such

a post might be filled should the situation at any time warrant this being done. But the position of a person who could proclaim himself to the world as the representative of the National Secular Society was a very responsible one, and up to the present the occasion for such an appointment had not eventuated. But a great deal of press correspondence was carried on all over the country, mainly in the provincial press—the London press, with the exception of local papers was, in giving fair-play to unorthodox opinions, pretty hopeless. The General Secretary and others did their best to keep our views before the public. It had been urged on more than one Conference that members should do what they could to make make use of the press.

The President in moving on behalf of the Executive motion number 9, said that he would do so without spending much time in doing it. Everyone was aware of the calumnies that had been circulated by the Catholic Church, and certain branches of the English Church regarding the International Congress. English Freethinkers he was certain would give the best reply to these slanders by making the Congress a notable success.

In moving No. 10, the motion dealing with the operation of the Education Act of 1936, Mr. G. Bedborough pointed out that the Act not only made provisions for using public funds in what they considered an unjustifiable way, it actually gave to the managers of sectarian schools the power to dismiss teachers who in their judgment were considered unfit to give religious instruction. Mr. Walton, Sunderland, supported the resolution. Mr. Shortt of Liverpool moved, Mr. Ebury seconded, that the word "Allows" be substituted for "Provides" in line 2 Motion 10. The amendment was accepted and the motion was then carried.

The Conference then adjourned for lunch.

#### AFTERNOON SESSION

Concerning motion No. 11, Mr. Thompson, Liverpool said that the motion

"That this Conference, recognizing the tradition and practice of the N.S.S. with regard to the equality of the sexes, impresses upon Branches the desirability of developing and utilizing the services of women upon N.S.S. platforms."

did not represent the Motion sent in by the Liverpool Branch. It contained the wording that a suitable woman speaker be included at all Conference Demonstrations wherever a suitable person was available. On behalf of the Agenda Committee, the President explained that it was the duty of the Executive so to frame a Resolution, that while keeping to the spirit of the Resolution, it must be expressed so that no misunderstanding of the Society's policy should be set forth, and in the opinion of the Executive the original Resolution carried with it the implication that the legitimate claims of women speakers had been ignored. This, of course, was not correct; women speakers appeared upon our platforms wherever their services were available, and in such circumstances women had spoken at Conference meetings, and still speak at Branch meetings. As a matter of fact a woman had been invited to speak at this Conference Demonstration before the Liverpool Resolution came to hand. Mr. Thompson appeared to accept the explanation, but was of opinion that whenever a Resolution was altered the Branch or Member sending it should be acquainted with the alteration, and in accordance with Branch instructions he declined to move the resolution as printed.

The President said that it was the rule of practice

that whenever time permitted in the case of alterations of importance, those who had sent in the Resolution were acquainted with the alteration. Mr. Shortt, Liverpool, then moved "Next business," which was carried.

On Resolution No. 12 Mr. Standfast, Birkenhead, said he had a complaint similar to that raised by Mr. Thompson, and asked to move the suspension of the standing orders to do so.

On this being put to the meeting the voting was equal, the President said that as it was clear that the action of the Executive was in question, he declined to give a casting vote, but in the circumstances he thought no objection would be taken to Mr. Standfast being permitted to make a statement on the matter he had in mind.

Mr. Standfast said that the Resolution originally sent condemned organized interference with Fascist meetings, the Motion as printed substituted "Public" meetings for "Fascist" meetings, which, in his judgment frustrated the purpose the Branch had in view, which was to call attention to organized interference at Fascist meetings. The alteration ignored the reason for framing the resolution, and he protested against this interference with Resolutions from Branches.

Mr. Shortt, Liverpool, said that in Birkenhead and Liverpool they had to deal with special and organized attacks on Fascist meetings, and the resolution was intended specially to discountenance these. Mr. Brighton said that if Fascism was subject to special attacks in Liverpool, in other districts other forms of propaganda were made the subject of distinct attacks, and therefore, if we were to follow the line of argument adopted, we ought to read "we claim free speech in Liverpool for Fascists, for Roman Catholics in Durham," and so on throughout the country. The resolution as printed seemed to meet the situation, that of protesting against interruptions at all meetings without any discrimination.

The President said the explanation that had been given with regard to the Liverpool resolution stood for the one before the meeting. We were not called upon to pay greater attention to disturbances at Fascist meetings than at any other meetings. It never dawned upon the Agenda Committee that any objection could or would be raised to framing the resolution as on the Agenda. We are opposed to organized interference with all meetings, whether Fascist or Communist, Religious or non-religious. The resolution stated the attitude of the Society and was in line with the whole policy of our movement.

An amendment was proposed to insert the words, "condemns all organized interference with Fascist and other public meetings," but was lost. The resolution, as printed, was then put to the vote and carried.

In the absence of Mr. T. H. Elstob Motion No. 13:—

"That this Conference protests against the abuse of their positions by coroners and magistrates, which in some instances goes to the length of denying witnesses their legal rights, with regard to the administration of the Oaths Amendment Act of 1888. It urges upon Freethinkers the duty of insisting on their right to affirm in all circumstances where an oath is usually required, and to refuse to answer irrelevant questions, and to agitate for an amending of the Act that will abolish all questioning of witnesses who desire to affirm."

was moved by Mr. Clayton and seconded by Mr. Bedborough, and after a brief discussion carried.

Motion No. 14, by the Executive: "That this Conference reaffirms the non-political character of the National Secular Society" was met with an amendment by Mr. Walton (Sunderland), who sug-

gested the words "non-party political" be substituted for "non-political." This was seconded by Mr. Ebury. After some discussion the amendment was carried, and then passed as a substantive motion.

Motion 15 was carried without discussion.

Motion 16: "That the Executive should be instructed to consider the possibility of establishing a central headquarters in London," was moved by Mr. Horowitz and seconded by Miss Woolstone. The President said that in the near future circumstances might arise that would give the creating of a suitable headquarters a better opportunity than existed at the present moment and, after other speeches, the suggestion was remitted to the Executive for consideration.

Motion 17: "That each Conference should decide the venue of the next Conference," was rejected on the ground of practical difficulties.

Time was too short for a lengthy discussion of Motion 18, moved by Mr. J. Walton:—

"That this Conference protests against the legal remission of rates and taxes to religious places of worship; it also protests against the practice of Local governing bodies enlarging this disguised endowment of religion by its extension to Institutes and other places used for secular purposes, and against the practice of fixing a low assessment to halls owned by religious bodies, and which are let for secular or business purposes; this Conference urges Freethinkers to rouse local opinion on this matter, and suggests that the Society collect and publishes information on the subject."

but it was agreed that the resolution was of considerable importance, and the President urged Freethinkers all over the country to do what they could to collect information on the subject. Mr. Walton had already collected evidence of the gross dishonesty of religious bodies in his own area, and as President he wished to thank him for the trouble he had taken, and if the evidence from all parts was collected and summarized, a pamphlet on the subject might be issued. The resolution was carried unanimously.

There being little time available, Motions 19, 20, 21, and 22, being of a non-controversial character, were carried without discussion.

On Motion 23, dealing with disarmament, the deletion of the words, "which, if persisted in, can end only in a world-war," moved by Mr. Bayard Simmons and seconded by Mr. Collins. This was agreed to, and the motion, as amended, carried. Motion 24: "That all Branches shall submit an Annual Balance Sheet to the Executive," was also carried as was also Motion 26: "That a copy of the Rules be sent annually to each Branch."

On Motion 25: "That Rule 5, sub-section 2, be amended to include the office of Vice-President, in order to alleviate the arduous duties which are carried on by the President," moved by Mr. Robshaw, Kingston Branch, and after some discussion, the President said he fully recognized the good feeling that prompted the resolution, but he was unable to see how it could be carried into effect. He would welcome gladly any help that could give him more time for various other things, and if he were wealthy enough to employ a private secretary, this would give him some relief. The task of carrying on a weekly paper was enough for most men, and when one added the other hundred and one odds and ends that required attention, and considering the fact that on September first next he would have reached the age of seventy, a slacking of work looked desirable. But so far as he could see, the only way in which anyone could be trained to carry on was by being in close contact with the President. So far as this could be done it was being done. There was the Executive, and there was the General Secretary, and if the Presi-

dent's work was worth anything they were all in line to carry on in his absence, whether that absence were temporary or permanent. Usually the occasion found the man, and he had strong hopes that whenever he was compelled to step aside, other not less worthy of leading would be found.

The resolution was not pressed to a vote.

In bringing the Conference to a close, the President said it was his pleasing duty to express the thanks of all those present to the Glasgow Branch for the way it had worked to make this Conference successful. Knowing personally so many of the members of the Branch, he could say with confidence that their repayment was in the success that had been achieved. No labour had been spared, and while he was not surprised at the way in which the members of the N.S.S. had been received, many of them who were paying their first visit to Glasgow, would, he felt sure, admit that his accounts to them of Scottish thoroughness and hospitality had not been in the least degree exaggerated.

The feeling of the Conference was expressed in the loud applause that followed. Mrs Whitefield responded for the Glasgow Branch, and the Conference was then closed.

## A Legacy in which All may Share

In the pocket of an old ragged coat belonging to one of the insane patients of the Chicago poorhouse, there was found, after his death, a will. The man had been a lawyer, and the will was written in a firm clear hand on a few scraps of paper. So unusual was it that it was sent to a lawyer; and so impressed was he with its contents that he read it before the Chicago Bar Association, and a resolution was passed ordering it to be probated. And it is now in the records of Cook County, Illinois. And this is the will of the old insane patient of the Chicago poorhouse:—

I, Charles Lounsberry, being of sound and disposing mind and memory, do hereby make and publish this my last will and testament, in order, as justly as may be, to distribute my interest in the world among succeeding men.

That part of my interests which is known in law and recognized in the sheepbound volumes as my property, being inconsiderable and of none account, I make no disposition of in this my will. My right to live, being but a life estate, is not at my disposal, but these things excepted, all else in the world I now propose to devise and bequeath.

Item: I give to good fathers and mothers in trust for their children, all good little words of praise and encouragement and all quaint pet names and endearments; and I charge said parents to use them justly, but generously, as the needs of their children shall require.

Item: I leave to children inclusively, but only for the term of their childhood, all and every the flowers of the fields and the blossoms of the woods, with the right to play among them freely according to the customs of children, warning them at the same time against thistles and thorns. And I devise to children the banks of the brooks and the golden sands beneath the waters thereof, and the odours of the willows that dip therein, and the white clouds that float high over the giant trees. And I leave the children the long, long days to be merry in, in a thousand ways, and the night and the train of the Milky Way to wonder at, but subject, nevertheless, to the rights hereinafter given to lovers.

Item: I devise to boys, jointly, all the useful idle fields and commons where ball may be played, all

pleasant waters where one may swim, all snow-clad hills where one may coast, and all streams and ponds where one may fish, or where, when grim winter comes, one may skate, to hold the same for the period of their boyhood. And all meadows, with the clover blossoms and butterflies thereof; the woods with their appurtenances; the squirrels and the birds and echoes and strange noises, and all distant places, which may be visited, together with the adventures there found. And I give to said boys each his own place at the fireside at night, with all pictures that may be seen in the burning wood, to enjoy without let or hindrance or without any incumbrance or care.

*Item:* To lovers I devise their imaginary world, with whatever they may need, as the stars of the sky, the red roses by the wall, the bloom of the hawthorn, the sweet strains of music, and aught else they may desire to figure to each other the lastingness and beauty of their love.

*Item:* To young men jointly, I devise and bequeath all the boisterous inspiring sports of rivalry, and I give to them the disdain of weakness, and undaunted confidence in their own strength. Though they are rude, I leave them the power to make lasting friendships and of possessing companions, and to them exclusively, I give merry songs and grave choruses to sing with lusty voices.

*Item:* And to those who are no longer children or lovers, I leave memory; and bequeath to them the volumes of the poems of Burns and Shakespeare and of other poets, if there be others, to the end that they may live the old days over again, freely and fully without title or diminution.

*Item:* To our loved ones with snowy crowns, I bequeath the happiness of old age, the love and gratitude of their children until they fall asleep.

After all, was he so poor and insane? If that was the world in which he lived, was he not richer, and his mind less disturbed than are some who go about freely and who have money in bank? At any rate to each of us he bequeathed something. Let us not fail to get our legacy.

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### Christian Truth

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If any reasonable person desired a demonstration of the incompatibility of Christian Priesthood and Truth, the shameless attacks on the Coming Freethought Congress should be completely satisfying. From a wealth of material, two minor items of evidence from the last week in May teach a lesson.

At the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, the Rev. Duncan MacDonald of Glasgow, the Conventer, having expressed an objection to the nickname of "Wee Frees" given to his Church, then declared that he thought it ghoulish for people to charge the Covenanters with things they never did. He then went on to speak of the feelings of horror with which his committee had learned of the proposal to hold in London, "what the promoters had announced as an anti-God Congress." The promoters, like the Covenanters, have been charged with a thing they never did; the Organizing Committee of the Congress are so accustomed to meeting with lies of this sort out of the mouths of the priests of Christ Jesus that they learn of them not with horror, but with disgust. Freethinkers may be either Deists or Atheists or Secularists. If they believe in some sort of Deity, they are not likely to be opposed to it. If they do not believe in the existence of a Deity (or of a deity) they cannot oppose something which does not exist. If they are indifferent, having come to the conclusion that it cuts no ice either way whether a god exists or no, they can never be anti-God. The term anti-God supposes the existence of an active and oppressive God. Not only the promoters of the International Congress have never publicly announced their Congress as "anti-God," but they are not likely to do so.

The next false witness borne by the Rev. Duncan was

in saying "the proposal is not indigenous to Britain." In showing thus his readiness to break one commandment, the Reverend McDonald gives proof, if proof were required, of the small hold that the Jewish Commandments have on Christians, whether "Wee Frees" or any other sort. As has been repeated again and again in these columns, this proposal emanated, in the first and last place, from this country. At the Annual Conference, Whitsuntide, 1937, of the N.S.S. it was agreed to invite an International Congress to be held in London in September, 1938.

Of course, it may be the case that the Rev. Duncan was misled. Who could have led astray a leader of the Free Church of Scotland? There can be little doubt that the Rev. Duncan has been, willing enough no doubt, imbibing the heady and demoralizing wine of Roman propaganda. The Cardinal Archbishop must smile to mark how readily the Free churchmen are to do his behests! The Free Church is become the tool of the ancient enemy, Roman Papacy. Is this "Scoto-Catholicism"?

This is itself an answer to the question asked by a writer in the Italian *Avvenire*, quoted by the *Tablet*, "Freethinkers are afraid of the Vatican, but what threat can there be from a wholly bankrupt institution?" This is a reference to what purports to be the "preamble of the Congress." We, as organizers and promoters of the Congress, might be expected to have some acquaintance with "the preamble of the Congress." Yet we have none. However, this document declares that religious systems are morally bankrupt, and that this moral bankruptcy of the religious is corroborated by the laments of the Pope. Yet the writer in the *Avvenire* cannot perceive what Freethinkers have to fear from the Vatican, if it is a bankrupt institution. If there is anything a man may fear, it is the morally bankrupt. That the Roman Church is utterly unscrupulous as regards truth, we have had this year the most convincing proof. The astuteness of its coarsely machiavellian tactics is shown by the ease Free Churchmen are caught in its toils.

C. BRADLAUGH BONNER.

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### Freethought and Psycho-Analysis

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THROUGHOUT the whole of the recent essay by Dr. Jones, what particularly impressed me was the singular inappropriateness of his criticisms. The article is, to me, peculiarly reminiscent of Dr. Johnson's kicking of the tree to disprove Berkeley's Idealism. For except in his mention of the history of the conflict between science and religion, there seems to be very little connexion between the "Rationalists" of Dr. Jones' essay and the Freethinkers who actually read the *Freethinker*.

That some Freethinkers are not in agreement with the conclusions of Psycho-Analysis is of no more consequence than that others cannot accept the conclusions to which the theory of Relativity leads many mathematicians and physicists. The right of a man to form his own opinions by weighing the evidence as it appears to him is fundamental to Freethought; and logically the psycho-analyst is in a position to chide Freethinkers, only if they were to take the unlikely action of attempting to suppress the utterances of psycho-analysts, when, in fact, they would cease to be Freethinkers.

It is doubtless true that some of the findings of psycho-analysis would prove useful illustrative material in the discussion of the question of Free Will, provided, of course (and this is a fact which I believe Dr. Jones has overlooked), that both parties were prepared to accept the conclusions which the psycho-analysts have drawn from their experiences. A speaker's choice of illustrative material must depend largely on his estimation of the mentality of his audience; and in the great majority of cases I would be much more confident of success in convincing an opponent of the truth of determinism by giving him Chapman Cohen's *Determinism or Free Will?* than by submitting the chapter on this subject in Freud's *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*.

Most of us have been accustomed to the profitable habit of most religious bodies, which leads them to discover some startling new "truth," which Freethinkers may

have been preaching for about a century (and for which many times they had been threatened with present and future punishments), but it was indeed surprising to find Dr. Jones stating the following "tremendous" conclusion of the psycho-analysts:—

Even if there were no Divine Being in reality, the human mind is so constituted that it would inevitably build such a conception together with the characteristic attitudes accompanying it.

That Freethinkers have been saying this since long before Psycho-Analysis was invented, and that their conclusions have been confirmed by the anthropologists seems entirely to have escaped the notice of Dr. Jones.

From the point of view of convincing religious people of the error of the god idea, I fail to see any value in the fact that the conception of the deity may be shown to be a "projection" of the early conceptions of the parents. This psychological attitude can also be seen in the mental relation to Kings, Prime Ministers, Dictators and others who definitely do exist. The conclusion is easily drawn that an object (imaginary or otherwise) *already conceived* is used for the purposes of this "projection." So that we find the chief reason for the continuance of religious beliefs, the fact that false ideas are taught by parents and teachers; and the cure would seem to be secular education, not psycho-analysis.

Not all psycho-analysts, it would appear, are concerned to rid the world of religion, Paul Bousfield (*Elements of Practical Psycho-Analysis*), for example, assures his readers that the analysts would not try to take away a patient's belief in religion. And Dr. Jones himself appears not to give the subject its deserved prominence, when, in the face of the outstanding example of the actions of the Pope in regard to Spain, and of his acceptance of the suppression in Rome, Dr. Jones states that "no one could maintain that organized religion has played any serious part in this (the present day) restriction."

That Dr. Jones is not very well acquainted with the Freethought movement in this country is evidenced by his confusion of Freethinkers with all who call themselves Rationalists, a fact which assists to the conclusion that the psycho-analysts who are interested should come to the Freethought organizations, and not the Freethinkers to the psycho-analysts.

Freethinkers always have fought and always will fight for the right of scientists to express their opinions, and it would appear to me to be the duty of those scientists who are aware of this fact to assist the Freethinkers in their magnificent task.

PAUL GOLDMAN.

## Correspondence

### VERIFY YOUR REFERENCES

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—Someone has very kindly sent me a copy of the *Freethinker* containing a criticism of my book *Verify Your References*, by Mr. Cutner.

The quotations from Mr. J. M. Robertson's *Christianity and Mythology* were from the first edition. He will find the words, with merely verbal alterations, on pp. 368 and 412 of the Second Edition, revised and expanded, published in 1910.

For his other criticisms I must leave your readers to form their own judgment when they have read what I have written.

CLEMENT ROGERS.

## Obituary

MR. SID BARRALET

The Freethought movement has lost a valuable servant by the death of Mr. Sid Barralet, whose remains were cremated at Woking on Tuesday, June 7. A Freethinker practically the whole of his life, he was interested in all

manner of progressive movements. One of his pet ambitions was to see a Branch of the N.S.S. operating in his own town, and he played a leading part in the formation and maintenance of the Kingston-on-Thames Branch N.S.S. Before a gathering of relatives and friends a Secular Service was read by Mr. B. Snelling.—R.H.R.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

### LONDON

#### INDOOR

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1) : 11.0, Professor G. W. Keeton, M.A., D.Litt. — "International Law and International Morality."

#### OUTDOOR

BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand) : 6.30, Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Place) : 7.30, Mr. Evans—A Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Highbury Corner) 8.0, Friday, Mr. L. Ebury. White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11.30, Sunday, Mr. L. Ebury. Parliament Hill Fields, 3.30, 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, A Lecture. Rushcroft Road, opposite Brixton Town Hall, 8.0, Tuesday, A Lecture. Cock Pond, Clapham Old Town, 8.0, Friday, A Lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH (Corner of Deanery Road, Water Lane, Stratford, E.) : 7.0, Mr. Ivor Greenhouse.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park) : 3.30, Sunday, Miss E. Millard, M.A., Messrs. E. Bryant and G. Barnes. 6.30, Messrs. Bryant, Barnes and Tuson. Wednesday, 7.30, Mr. W. B. Collins. Thursday, 7.30, Mr. E. C. Saphin and Mrs. N. Buxton. Friday, 7.30, Mr. G. Barnes.

### COUNTRY

#### OUTDOOR

IRKINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (The Haymarket) : 8.0, Saturday, Mr. J. V. Shortt—"Evolution."

BLACKBURN (Market) : 8.0, Monday, Mr. J. V. Shortt—"Secular Education."

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S. (Car Park) : 6.30, Sunday. Rest of week near Exchange Steps, 7.30, Mr. G. Whitehead will speak.

EDINBURGH BRANCH N.S.S. (Mound) : 7.0, Mr. F. Smithies—"Peripatetic Presbyterianism."

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY (Albion Road) : 8.0, M. Whitefield and A. Copland. Peel Street, Partick, 8.0, Wednesday. A. Copland. Albion Street, 8.0, Friday, A Lecture. Albert Road, 8.0, Tuesday, June 21, M. Whitefield.

GREENOCK BRANCH N.S.S. (Grey Place) : 8.0, Every Wednesday, Muriel Whitefield. Questions and discussion at each meeting.

HIGHAM : 7.0, Monday, Mr. J. Clayton.

HUNCOAT : 7.30, Thursday, Mr. J. Clayton.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (Corner of High Park Street and Park Road) : 8.0, Thursday, Miss Parry and Mr. Thompson, A Lecture. Corner of High Park Street and Park Road, 8.0, Sunday, Mr. Thompson and Mr. Norris, A Lecture.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Beccles Market) : 7.30, Friday, W. A. Atkinson. Alexander Park Gates, 8.0, Saturday, W. A. Atkinson. Platt Fields, 3.30, Sunday, W. A. Atkinson. Stevenson Square, 7.30, Sunday, W. A. Atkinson.

OSWALDTWISTLE : 7.30, Wednesday, Mr. J. Clayton.

ROCHDALE (Cattle Market) : 7.0, Sunday, Mr. J. Clayton.

SUNDERLAND BRANCH N.S.S. (Gill Bridge Avenue) : 7.0, Mr. Norman Charlton.

TEES SIDE BRANCH N.S.S. (Jubilee Hall, Leeds Street, Stockton) : 7.15, Debate—"Secularism or Socialism—Which?" For the N.S.S., Mr. H. Dalkin. For Socialism, Mr. G. H. Williamson.

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## HENRY HETHERINGTON

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