

# THE FREETHINKER

Founded 1881

Editor : CHAPMAN COHEN

Vol. LXIX.—No. 19

[REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL  
POST OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER]

Price Threepence

## VIEWES AND OPINIONS

### Persecution

I HAVE neither time nor space to describe the number of "heretics" executed, nor the brutal nature of the persecutions waged by the Christian Church, yet how much of modern cruelty, even when not exercised in the name of Christianity, nevertheless owes its prominence and extreme cruelty to Christian influences. I want to direct attention to other and more important aspects, more important because they involve not merely cruelty to the living, but evil to those unborn. I have often quoted from H. C. Lea, whose exhaustive volumes dealing with the persecutions of the Church are still unchallenged. I venture on another lengthy quotation from the same writer. Summing up the general influence of the persecutions of the Church, and particularly that Christian-invented machine, the Inquisition, he says:—

It introduced a system of jurisprudence which infected the criminal law of all the lands subjected to its influence, and rendered the administration of penal justice a cruel mockery for centuries. It furnished the Holy See with a powerful weapon in aid of political aggrandisement, it tempted secular sovereigns to imitate the example, and it prostituted the name of religion to the vilest temporal ends. It stimulated the morbid sensitiveness to doctrinal aberrations until the most trifling dissidence was capable of arousing insane fury and of convulsing Europe from end to end. . . . Energetic only in evil, when its powers might have been used on the side of virtue, it had its hand and gave the people to understand that the only sins demanding repression were doubt as to the accuracy of the Church's knowledge of the unknown, and attendance on the Sabbath. In its long career of blood and fire, the only credit which it can claim is the suppression of the Cathari,\* and in this its agency was superfluous. For those dogmas carried in themselves the seed of self-destruction and more wisely might have been left to extinction. Thus the judgment of impartial history must be that the Inquisition was the monstrous offspring of mistaken zeal, utilised by selfish greed and lust of power to smother the higher aspirations of humanity and stimulate its baser appetites.

It is this brutalisation of the human character, this cultivation of narrow-mindedness, this glorification of brutality, and its consequences in contemporary life that I wish to stress. For until we do recognise its influence, we shall be in no situation to pass judgment on the social reactions of Christianity on common life.

It is a fact recognised by competent psychologists to-day, although the influence of the Churches for evil is still too strong for them to stress it, that the doctrine

\* It must not be overlooked that this sect was of Christian origin, and if it deserved suppression, one might point out that it would never have existed but for the Christian-soaked atmosphere in which it breathed.

of eternal damnation, the stress laid upon it by all the pulpits until yesterday, the gloating of preachers over the torments of the damned, and the satisfaction with which it was heard by the congregations, all this was an exhibition of sadism that only recently has been properly understood.

Consider this as something not dug from medieval or old documents, but from a little pamphlet written for the use of children, printed in Dublin, by permission of Roman Catholic authority, and sold at one penny. It is a picture of what may happen to a child who is not a good Catholic:—

What a dreadful place it is. The roof is red hot; the walls are red hot, the floor is like a thick sheet of red-hot iron. On the middle of that red-hot floor stands a girl. Her feet are bare . . . her bare feet stand on the red-hot burning floor. . . . She says, I have been standing on this red-hot floor for years . . . sleep never comes to me for a moment . . . at least let someone go to my little brothers and sisters and tell them not to do the bad things which I did, so they will never have to come and stand on the red-hot floor. The Devil answers, Your little brothers and sisters have the priest to tell them these things. If they will not listen to the priest, neither will they listen even if somebody should go to them from hell.

Imagine the unadulterated brutality of teaching of that kind on a number of young children! And yet we have a Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children which has never made a single protest against the unspeakable horror of such a booklet being placed in the hands of a child.

One other example. This is taken from one of the many forms of excommunicating obstinate heretics. It is given by H. C. Lea in his "Studies in Church History." I will abridge a little, but even then it will be lengthy.

"By the authority of God, the omnipotent Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and the holy and unsullied Mary, the Mother of God, we excommunicate and anathematise . . . That he may be delivered over to eternal torment . . . And as fire is quenched in water so may his light be quenched for ever and ever . . . Be he accursed of God the Father, accursed of God the Son, accursed of the Holy Ghost, which cometh at baptism, accursed of the Holy Cross . . . Let him be accursed wherever he may be, whether at home or abroad, in the road, or in the path, or in the wood, or in the water, or in the Church. Let him be accursed, living and dying, eating, drinking, fasting or athirst, slumbering, waking, walking, standing, sitting, lying. Let him be accursed in all the forces of his body. Let him be accursed outside and inside; accursed in his hair and accursed in his brain, accursed in the crown of his head, to his temples, to his forehead, in his brows, in his eyes, in his cheeks, in his jaws, in his nostrils, in his front teeth, in his back teeth, in his lips, in his throat,

in his shoulders, in his upper arms, in his lower arms, in his hands, in his fingers, in his breast, in his heart, in his stomach and liver, in his kidneys, in his loins, in his thighs, in his knees, in his shins, in his feet, in his toes, and in his nails. Let him be accursed in every joint in his body. . . . May Christ, the Son of the living God, curse him throughout his kingdom, and may Heaven with all the virtues rise up against him to his damnation, unless he repents and renders due satisfaction. Amen."

It will be noted that the only safe places are up in an aeroplane, or down in a submarine.

These are enough specimens to enable anyone to appreciate the brutalising consequences of religious teachings of this kind, and with the exception of the full-blooded curse of the Mother Church, this brutalising of human nature through the medium of Christian teaching went on generation after generation. The marvel is that sanity and humanity remained active.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

(To be concluded)

### OUR LADY OF NEW YORK

ALL Freethinkers and nearly all Catholics know what, in reality, are the most important events in modern history. Of far greater importance than such trifles as wars and revolutions were the descents of Our Lady, the Virgin Immaculate and Queen of Angels to this terrestrial world of sin and sorrow. This is all the more so, as the Holy Mother of God, in order to visit her earthly children here below has nowadays to travel considerably further from Heaven to Earth than she did in the Ages of Faith. A fact which was demonstrated some centuries back by that faithful priest of our Lord and servant of His Blessed Mother, the Reverend Canon Copernicus.

In recent ages Our Lady has descended to Earth three times: at Lourdes in France, at Fatima in Portugal, and at Guadaloupe in Mexico. And we can be quite certain that the Queen of Heaven, with so much angelic business on Her hands, would not have descended right across the Milky Way had not Her journey been really necessary. And it was undoubtedly so. For upon all three occasions she warned mankind of impending calamities of sinister shape and of portentous dimensions.

At Lourdes, She warned Bernadette of the terrible tribulations that were coming to France, and warned in particular that "the Eldest Son of the Church" (i.e., France) was about to apostatise like Judas, that unworthy instrument of our Salvation. At Fatima, She warned Portugal, Her "Most Faithful\* Daughter," of the coming Anti-Christ, Lenin, and of the hideous darkness from the East about to be established by the Satanic Bolsheyiks. Whilst at Guadaloupe, She warned the New World, which Her faithful servant, Columbus, had discovered only because She, the bright "Star of the Sea," had shone before him across the ocean, against the coming apostasy of the Republic of Mexico and its fiendish persecution of Her Faithful Children.

We wish to inform the readers of "The Freethinker" that we have diligently consulted the writings of that greatest of all scientists, Nostradamus, and have arrived at the certain conclusion that Our Lady is due to come again shortly, and to a place clearly indicated in that work of impenetrable wisdom. For again She has much to tell us before the biggest and best of all wars begins

to make the Earth Christian and empty. For the "Church Militant" on Earth is shortly due to be "translated" into the "Church Triumphant" in Heaven by means of the Atomic Bomb.

Our Lady, the Virgin Queen of Heaven, will undoubtedly bless the Crusaders, who will kill more heretics and infidels in a day than their medieval predecessors could kill in a century. And if, indeed, he is not already there. She will probably express Her August Desire that Her gallant knight, General Franco, shall be admitted into UNO. And seeing that it is in America that Her next appearance is due, She, in Her infinite mercy, will no doubt add a prayer to Her Son, who can refuse Her nothing, for the speedy conversion of Atheistic Mexico, not to mention such heretics as the Mormons and those benighted Protestants of the Middle West.

It is, we repeat, "theologically certain" that it is the American Continent, and more exactly in the U.S.A., that the Blessed Mother of God is next due to appear. Not a novice in the divine Science of Theology but could see the force and the flawless logic of our reasoning. America (that is, the U.S.A., not the "lesser breeds outside" the Declaration of Independence) is the one Christian nation in the world capable of stemming by force of arms the present hideous and ever-mounting tide of Atheism and Communism, and thus of saving the very name of the Queen of Heaven and of her Divine Son from an otherwise certain oblivion. America, with its Air Force is, to-day, the last hope of Christianity.

A weighty reason. And there still remains one of a theologically irresistible character. For Holy Church, and our Holy Father at Rome receive 80 per cent. of their temporal income—that is exactly 80 cents in every dollar, from the U.S.A. And he who feeds the sheep is fed by the shepherd. This argument is so strong as to be virtually conclusive.

We can be more precise still. The Virgin will appear at New York, She will become, by virtue of her appearance, "Our Lady of New York."

The theological arguments that demonstrate this conclusion are also very convincing in character. For the arguments that Our Lady, Queen of Angels, understands English are too feeble to lead any self-respecting theologian astray. In any case, only "Anglo-Israelites" maintain that she does, and they are heretics beyond the pale of Holy Church, and as such, due undoubtedly to be damned ultimately.

Whereas there is aural testimony of the most irrefutable character in Her previous appearances at Lourdes, Fatima and Guadaloupe, that She speaks the Latin language and its modern derivatives fluently.

Ergo, She will appear in that place which has the largest Latin population and everyone knows that this is New York, which has even been termed the "New Rome" on account of its vast Italian population, not to mention its numerous Jews (for New York is "New Jerusalem" also) to whom Her Divine Son appeared last time He was upon Earth, and to whom Our Lady, as a Jewess Herself in Her Earthly Life, probably still has a natural inclination, particularly since "blood is thicker than water."

Our theology is, we believe, unimpeachable, our logic irresistible as our piety is profound; soon Holy Church will venerate "Our Lady of New York" along with the Virgins of Lourdes, Fatima and Guadaloupe, etc.

\* The official title of the former kings of Portugal was "Most Faithful."

What a blessed Day it will be, and what a stupendous miracle. The miracle of "Our Lady of New York" will, in fact, be as much bigger and better than all previous miracles, as New York itself is bigger and better than all other cities, or as the American nation itself is bigger and better than all other nations. Judging from present rearmament programmes, the Appearance of the Queen of Heaven in New York will have to come quickly and will be an outsize in miracles; the miracle, in fact, of all times.

And how the pious Democrats of the U.S.A. will honour the unique appearance in their midst of the unique Mother of God. The already existing shrines of Our Lady in honour of Her Apparitions at Lourdes and Fatima will fade into insignificance by comparison with the Shrine that the world's greatest and most democratic City will build in honour of the first visit of the Queen of Heaven to the greatest Republic on Earth.

The President, who in any case is almost certain to be a member of the One True Faith, will open it in person, and the Pope himself, also by then, no doubt an American, will come over from Rome for the ceremony of consecration.

Whilst as for the pilgrims, they will come from all nations, languages and currencies. They will be more numerous than the stars in the sky, than the waves in the ocean, than the sands on the seashore. Lourdes, Fatima and Guadalupe will be forgotten, all eyes will be turned to New York. "Hail Mary, Star of the Sea." "Star of the North Atlantic (Pact)."

The Yankees will know how to organise their miracle as miracles ought to be organised in this age of Big Business. Was it not a German Field-Marshal who declared that apart from his own army there were only two perfectly organised bodies on earth: the Roman Catholic Church and the Standard Oil Company? And both will unite to make a success of the American "Lourdes," in a way that no degenerate Latin has ever done.

It will be, we repeat, the miracle of all time, and will far surpass not only the previous recorded miracles of the Blessed Virgin, but even the earlier and more modest miracles of Her Divine Son and of His Apostles.

For we live in the "American Century," the Marshall Plan indicates it, the size of the American Air Force confirms it, and the coming of Our Lady to New York will set the seal of Heaven unmistakably upon it.

F. A. RIDLEY.

#### OUR HEAVENLY INQUISITION

The *Universe* film critic, reviewing "Captain from Castile," does not like the "assumption" that the Inquisition "was wholly evil," and that its methods were not "peculiar to Church trials." In fact, we are confidently told, as if there was not the slightest doubt about it, that it worked "justly and with moderation" when the trials were held by the clergy! The "later abuses" were largely practised by "lay assistants." One wonders sometimes which to admire most, the cool assumption that the Inquisition was quite all right when it was in the hands of the clergy, or that it was "abused" by a gang of laymen when it wasn't—as if the laymen were not as thorough Catholics as the clergy. What a devastating *Provincial Letter* this would have made for Pascal if he were alive this day!

#### OUR GRANDFATHERS

THERE is a curious tendency, among reader of fiction, to look down on the age which has immediately preceded their own. Nowadays it is the age of H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and John Galsworthy which is looked upon with a kind of friendly contempt by those who regard Graham Greene, George Orwell, Evelyn Waugh, and Aldous Huxley as the greatest masters of English fiction. But not so long ago it was the Victorians who were so condemned.

The revival in the interest of the general reader in Victorian fiction may account in some degree for Lord David Cecil's "Early Victorian Novelists" (Penguin Books; 1s. 6d.)—a book which is of fascinating interest for all who studied the development of English fiction through the ages.

Lord David makes many telling points—not the least being his explanation of the reason why Dickens, Emily Bronte, Anthony Trollope, in spite of their manifest faults, remain so magnificently readable to-day. The Victorian novelist, he says, has to do everything. He cannot write just philosophy in the disguise of novels, like Mr. Aldous Huxley; he cannot just amuse, like Mr. P. G. Wodehouse; he cannot just thrill, like Mrs. Agatha Christie. He has to do all these things at the same time, or by turns. In other words, the Victorian novelist had to be more versatile than any writer of the age in which we live. "A book like 'David Copperfield,'" says Lord David Cecil, "is a sort of vast schoolboy hamper of fiction, with sweets and sandwiches, pots of jam with their greased paper caps, cream and nuts and glossy apples, all packed together in a heterogenous deliciousness."

That is one point. Writers of to-day tend to become more and more of specialists. There are few who can pack every kind of attraction into their books so that every type of reader can find something to enjoy. And even though, for the most part, their philosophical outlook was naive and limited, not, for instance, ever doubting that the hail-fellow-well-met Victorian religious optimism could be exploded; even those who do not share their ideas can enjoy the work of these writers.

And certainly Lord David Cecil shows himself brilliantly aware of the value of the Victorian novelists. As I have already said, he is well aware of their faults, but he does not allow this to obscure their very distinct virtues or the talents which many of them possessed to a remarkable degree. And a writer such as Emily Bronte he paints in vivid colours, showing that, while she was almost disregarded in her own day, she was one of the most remarkable minds that ever worked in the field of fiction. Her plot (in "Wuthering Heights") is pure melodrama in its externals; yet there are suggestions of depths of character underneath the surface which only Thomas Hardy has equalled in later generations.

Our grandfathers, therefore, though they may not always have been aware of it, had some remarkable reading in their libraries—reading that often had explosive value, when considered in connection with the religious and philosophical views that were generally held. To Lord David Cecil our thanks are due for making this so clear.

JOHN ROWLAND.

#### VATICAN POLICY IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

By L. H. Lehmann. 50 pages of documented facts regarding Catholicism and Fascism. Price 1s. 4d., post free.

## ACID DROPS

Like the Pharisees, the Clergy are not as other folk, their work is not a "job," it is a "calling." They are not paid a salary or wages, it is a "stipend." But one thing they have in common with ordinary people, they must have money to live, and they do not underrate its importance; judging by the many attempts made to get their share of the "spoils." The latest attempt to be made will endeavour to level out clerical stipends, in effect, "robbing the rich parson to pay the poor one." It appears that the rich ones have been resisting this move for many years, and the latest move is going to cause some little trouble. Despite the parson's peculiar garb, at bottom they are not so different after all.

Mr. Attlee may be Prime Minister, but to the dour Scots Presbyterians of Paguter Isles, he is only a Jonah (Jonah and his fish are still very real to millions of people). If Mr. Attlee persists in attending Lunches and speaking at Political Meetings on a Sunday, not only will he "draw the wrath of God upon himself, but the whole nation will suffer." We can only sigh and console ourselves with the thought that Scotland also produced a J. M. Robertson, a David Hume and a Burns.

Whoever arranged the ceremony of the signing of the North Atlantic Alliance, blundered in not having the name of God invoked at the ceremony, said Representative Dwight Rogers. Whatever Mr. Rogers had in mind we can only guess, but his speech no doubt went down very well. Like all good politicians he will do his best to offend nobody and please as many as he can, and his assertion was obviously meant to cover all eventualities; for if the Alliance led to war, then Jehovah the God of Hosts could be invoked; if the Alliance led to peace, then Gentle Jesus takes the stand. In racing parlance, this is called hedging a bet.

Often God is not denied or cursed, it is as though He were absent, said the Pope recently. Well, isn't He?

Our congratulations to Major A. Morris, of the Kilburn Rent Tribunal, who, during a case in which a landlady objected to a tenant's washing on the line on Sunday, said, "Personally, I find my shirts dry just as well on Sunday as on any other day." Which very sane statement brought forth the pathetic observation from a Women's Institute official that, "Surely, there is still something different about a Sunday." We agree, it is still a day when a fanatic minority do what they can to make it as difficult and as miserable as possible for the majority, and all because some time ago, somewhere, someone said to someone else, "Six days shalt thou labour . . ."

Bishop Cavero of Coria, Spain, collapsed and died during the Palm Sunday procession to his cathedral. The death of a Freethinker in a Freethought procession to an Infidel hall would be understood by every Christian—but how can they explain the passing so suddenly to glory in this way of a fully believing Bishop? Truly are the ways of the Lord inscrutable.

Some people are never satisfied. Here we have Pasquin of the *Universe*, quite angry that the B.B.C. Light Programme on Good Friday last followed Stainer's oratorio and a Methodist service with "red-nosed comies, cycle races and football." Why not? Our own

grumble is that we get too much of this "reverent" music and primitive religious services anyway, and it certainly is a relief to hear a red-nosed comic or even a football commentary; anything, in fact, which gets away from such boring "plays" as "The Man Born to be King." Freethought has still a long way to travel.

Altar Wines, to be supplied to Clergy and Convents and Religious institutions only. Per bott. 12s. 6d. Ecclesiastically approved by the Hierarchy. (Advt.) "Enthusiastically" approved also, we think.

April 23 always brings the Society for boosting St. George out in full-battle array—though it is a fact that not only do we know nothing whatever about the saint, but if anybody called George really lived about that time, it was a rascally war contractor who was lynched for his misdeeds. Of course, the boosters of St. George refuse this identification, but they produce no more evidence for the hero than they do for his dragon. Still, it is only fair to point out that this lack of evidence accompanies many of the other saints in the Christian calendar—and they are still adored.

A writer in the *British Weekly*, "Ilico," dealt in a recent number with death and the unbeliever. He is frank enough to admit that "death is certain and oblivion certain, too." And he is obliged to admit, too, that the "unbeliever" can produce "many facts to prove the kingdom of Death, and we find it difficult to produce facts on the other side." So far, believers can produce only one argument—that Christ really rose on "Easter morning," though Ilico has frankly to add that "there is very much we do not know about it." It is not so long ago that Christians would never have made such a shocking admission in a Christian paper.

Yet Ilico is obliged even here to point out that unbelievers are "not much impressed by the rather confused stories they may casually read in Scriptures." That is how the glorious "historical fact" (as he calls it) of the Resurrection is described by a fully believing Christian! The heaven of Freethought does sometimes penetrate into the most unexpected places.

Mr. Boxall's proudest record . . . for 24 years he has served daily mass without a break. He bids fair to be able to claim that he is an enthusiast.

We are certainly in favour of making our register office weddings brighter and more cheerful; the civil ceremony has been for too long performed in a perfunctory manner and usually in depressing and dingy offices, in many cases adjacent to the "workhouse" or in an office tucked away around the corner of the municipal building. We hope, however, that any attempt to introduce religious rites into what is purely a secular affair will be quashed immediately, for the Burnley Registrar is reported to have "sadly shaken his head" when asked to say a prayer at a recent wedding and said it is time that certain reforms were introduced. Fortunately the Marriage Act of 1856 specifically states that no religious ceremony shall be conducted in a general register office. It is as well, however, that Freethinkers watch any attempt to get around this.

# "THE FREETHINKER"

Telephone No.: Holborn 2601.

41, Gray's Inn Road,  
London, W.C.1.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS

For "The Freethinker."—A. Vallance, £1 13s.  
Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 41, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1, and not to the Editor.

THE FREETHINKER will be forwarded direct from the Publishing Office at the following rates (Home and Abroad): One year, 17s.; half-year, 8s. 6d.; three-months, 4s. 4d.

Lecture Notices should reach the Office by Friday morning.

The following periodicals are being received regularly, and can be consulted at "The Freethinker" office: THE TRUTH SEEKER (U.S.A.), THE FREETHINKER (U.S.A.), THE LIBERAL (U.S.A.), THE VOICE OF FREEDOM (U.S.A., German and English), PROGRESSIVE WORLD (U.S.A.), THE NEW ZEALAND RATIONALIST, THE RATIONALIST (Australia), DER FREIDENKER (Switzerland), LA RAISON (France), DON BASILIO (Italy).

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

## SUGAR PLUMS

The N.S.S. Annual Conference at Nottingham during the Whitsun week-end is open to all members of the Society. Admission is gained by showing the current card of membership, and all present are entitled to speak and vote on the agenda resolutions. It may be possible to arrange a coach outing on Whit-Monday, but at the moment it is not easy. It would be helpful if those who would stay for such an outing would notify the General Secretary at 41, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

A decision in the House of Lords regarding a bequest of £500 left to the Carmelite Priory for "charity" purposes is of considerable interest to Freethinkers. In the first place, the findings of the noble judges show how carefully the matter was considered, and how little they were influenced by the "religious" side even in this country. The Prioress contended that if the nuns under her charge prayed for the good of the community or constantly "contemplated divine things" in the solitude of their cells that was "charity" in the highest sense—a contention Lord Simonds made mincemeat of. "With regard to the alleged elements of public benefit," he declared, "edification by example, that was something too vague and intangible to satisfy the prescribed test." So the appellant lost her case.

Needless to add, shocked Christians hurriedly wrote to *The Times* expressing their disgust at such a decision in a Christian country. One of them contended that even the "great case" of *Bowman v. Secular Society, Ltd.*, in which the belief that Christianity was part of the law of England was exploded ought not to mean that "Christian doctrine" should be discounted altogether. These religious bigots used to move heaven and earth to prevent Freethought getting bequests—and now they do not like it when the tables are turned—by both law and justice.

A memorial exhibition, devoted to the work of Francis Bruguiere, will be opened by Cecil Beaton on May 5 at The Focal Press Gallery (31, Fitzroy Square, London, W.1). The exhibition will remain on display for the rest of the month, Saturdays and Sundays excepted.

Bruguiere, who in private life had a stimulatingly "freethinking" approach to all problems of philosophy and ethics, consistently broke every shibboleth in his work; and in this way he actually succeeded in turning such a limited medium as photography into an art. He illustrated many books including *Oswell Blakeston's Few Are Chosen*; and he had an immense influence on the advanced theatre and film avant-garde. The sensational impact of his work comes from a mind which dared to think freely; and the Focal Press exhibition will offer a fine representative selection of his achievements.

Readers who are visiting the Royal Academy this summer may be interested to see the portrait of our contributor, Mr. H. Cutner, painted by Effie Spring-Smith. It is "On the Line"—a compliment to the artist.

Mr. L. Ebury can be heard next Sunday evening at Highbury Corner, Islington, London, N. Mr. Ebury has many friends in that area and new ones will be welcomed. He always has something to say worth listening to and gives of his best to the Freethought Movement. He will begin at 7 p.m., and he will be there each Sunday evening during the summer.

## THE PROBLEM OF PERSONALITY

### II

THE terms "self" and "personality" indicate different culture stages. "Soul" is a general concept with no particular associations; even stones had souls. It may be associated with a pantheistic naturalism, we read of a world soul; but personality is associated with the supernatural; God is personal. Whereas the soul has been identified with objects of sense, the shadow or the blood, personality is transcendental, associated with feelings. We get a line on personality in its etymology from the latin *persona*, a mask.

The ceremonial wearing of masks, connects with the hideous masks of the Tibetan devil dancers, the wearing of skulls and skins, the "ballet" of the Shaman, with what has been called "ritual drama." The pantomimic mummery of the drama goes back to ritual. The masquerade and carnival also connects directly with dancing and music; the mystical war dance, the mimic hunt, the Australian corroboree; tracing back to what has been called primitive gesture language. This is an extension of play in animals, and there is much of the childish "let's pretend" in these mimic performances. In our games, and in the Playhouse, we learn to play the game of life.

The joyous celebration of the death of King Carnival has a strange resemblance to the mystical scoffing, taunting, mockery, of the Mock King. The curious medley of personal feeling seen in the Saturnalia, in which master and slave, male and female, change places, has come down to us in the burlesque of the pantomime, where the principal boy is a girl and the old dame a man, authority is ridiculed, and folly is the order of the day. The sideshows of the carnival or country fair, with fortune tellers and quacks, pickpockets and confidence tricksters, show a quaint mixture of superstition and hilarity. At one time witch-baiting and Jew-baiting added to the festivity.

So here again, there is no separate identity in our feelings. We often weep tears of joy, and grief may be shown in hysterical laughter. Laughter is both an emotional outlet and a social discipline. Ridicule gives both a feeling of shame and of superiority. Laughter may be ironic, sarcastic, cynical, sardonic, or sinister and sadistic. We are here concerned, not with like and unlike, but with likes and dislikes; with personal feelings. Certitude, expressed as personal conviction, may be vindictive. But happiness and sorrow have no meaning apart from social relations. We are not concerned with separate identities but with personal identification in the association of social life.

Consideration of the *personae* of ritual drama, and of the mystery, shows a clear distinction between self and personality. The high priest is a personification of the god, he is "not himself." Further, the other participants also, are not "themselves." They are behaving in an abnormal manner. As with the mystic in contemplation, they are in communion with the "not self." So also with the *dramatis personae* of the play; the actor must "live" the part; he is "not himself." And the audience go because it takes them "out of themselves." In all this we see the characteristic of personal feeling.

We can now see the difference between, and the connection between, the self and personality. The animistic soul is the motive in external objects; the animating principle of objective movement. With the soul, there is projection of feeling into the objective world; with personality, this is reflected back in personal identification. When, for instance, we say a certain individual has a strong, or a repulsive personality, we describe him in terms of our own feelings towards him. So, we might say, the soul concerns motive in action; personality, motive in feeling. Personality, as a communion with the "no self" is, if it might be so expressed, a mystical motive of the self, itself.

This is seen in the mystical inversion, characteristic of the masquerade. The *persona*, the mask, is not the "thing in itself," but a symbol of an unseen "power" that works through the performer. The ecstasy expresses the feelings identified with this unseen power. But whether we observe a primitive mystery where the performers work themselves up into a frenzy; or in an opera or symphony; we see the development of a motif, commencing with a slow movement, increasing in tempo, up to a climax; so that the ecstasy is in fact, cultivated feeling.

A further comparison shows a difference. In a primitive mystery all participants take active part, dancing, chanting. In a modern theatre or opera, it is bad form for the audience to express its feelings, except in the applause. But everyone looking from the stage would see the facial expression, involuntary movements, and often hear involuntary cries. They "live" the play as much as the actors, but psychologically, not in action. There has been psychological, as well as cultural development.

This suppression or repression conditions the individual. As Chapman Cohen said, we see the baby discovering itself, we also see the development of personality in training and discipline; an audience of children at a cinema or show, is a rowdy affair, with the children shouting and jumping in their excitement. But their behaviour becomes conditioned by restraint. The influence of home life and the school, develop the habits of the child, and he learns the psychological habits of personification and personal identification in ceremonial and custom.

The influence of the group upon the individual is similar, even apart from mob-psychology, in religious and political restraint. As the word "parson" has the same derivation as "person," so also is "ministry" derived from the same root as "mystery." A minister of religion is "not himself," he speaks for God. A political leader or Minister of State, speaks, not for himself, but for his followers or representatives. The King is a lineal descendant of the Hero God, a symbol. Personal identification, as part of our cultural heritage, is also part of our psychological make-up, with the confusion and complexity of social life.

Fetishes and totems, gods and idols, took human form in the *personae* of the mystery. Angels and devils in the *dramatis personae* of the miracle plays became heroes and villains in melodrama. Public figures in pageantry and political ceremonial are living symbols, personifications reflecting our own feelings. To the question, by what criteria are our mental characteristics judged, we now see the answer. The mentality of ritual, of drama, of pageantry, becomes common currency in the psychology of our daily life.

H. H. PREECE.

### THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN

IN view of the revolution which has taken place in our ideas of Hebrew literature, it is curious to find individuals still adhering to the theory that there must be some kernel of truth in the story of the Egyptian Bondage and the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites. It is to be borne firmly in mind that these two events are narrated in the Pentateuch and Book of Joshua; and it is precisely those compositions which modern research has demonstrated to be imaginative and unhistorical. Bishop Colenso, following the lead of the Deists of the last century, definitely proved that the events detailed in these books were not only incredible, but impossible; whilst later criticism has endeavoured, with considerable success, to follow out the process of the compilation of this literature, with the result of showing that it has been fabricated for the express purpose of supporting certain priestly interests and assumptions. Consequently, it is exceedingly surprising that anyone should attach the slightest historical value to these books.

But it is argued that the story of the Egyptian bondage and the conquest of Canaan was already familiar to the oldest Hebrew writers, whose compositions have come down to us, being alluded to by the eighth-century prophets, Hosea, Amos, and Micah. That, however, does not help us very much, seeing that these prophets lived seven hundred years after the alleged Canaanitish conquest. They may be witnesses for the beliefs of their own time, but we have no means of judging their competence to speak of events which happened centuries before they were born.

Finally, it is urged that these traditions are so positive and so persistent that there must be necessarily some truth at the bottom of them. But we fail entirely to see the necessity. A tradition, in the nature of things, must be a falsehood. Traditions are merely theories framed to account for matters the origin of which is unknown. If we go into the country, and see a huge stone lying about a hundred yards from a church and five miles from any other rock at all resembling it, we may consult the local tradition as to how it got there, and we shall probably be told that once upon a time the devil picked up the stone from off that hill five miles away, and flung it at the church in order to destroy it. But, his aim being bad, he missed it, and ran away, leaving

the stone where we now see it. No educated person would argue that there was any kernel of truth in that tradition. It would only prove to us that the legend was invented at a period after the church was built, and at a time when people seriously believed in the personal existence of the devil. In our days the stone would be considered as an erratic block, conveyed from its original position by glacial agency; and the fact of the church being in its neighbourhood would be purely accidental. In like manner, we can only be called upon to accept the Jewish legends of the conquest of Canaan when these legends can be shown to accord with the circumstances of their settlement. Otherwise, we must assume that the Hebrew tradition has been framed in support of some theory which is most probably wrong.

The story of the Egyptian Bondage may be summarily dismissed. For a hundred years the monuments of Egypt have been searched, and no trace of any Israelitish sojourn has been found upon them. Scholars have entirely failed to trace any connection between Egyptian and Hebrew religion or culture. The Israelitish tradition does not even tell us the name of any known Egyptian monarch; for King Pharaoh is an utter stranger to the Egyptian annals; and apologists have been driven to the strangest shifts in order to justify him. The Hebrew language shows no signs of Egyptian influence, though the people who spoke it were such close neighbours of the Egyptians, and were so often drawn into the sphere of Egyptian politics. Consequently, there is absolutely nothing to support the idea that the Israelites were ever in Egypt.

On the other hand, it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate the Jews from their immediate neighbours in Palestine. First of all, they spoke the Hebrew language; and we cannot suppose that the Hebrew language originated anywhere else than in Palestine. It is true that in historical times it was spoken in Cyprus and Carthage; but the Cypriotes and Carthaginians were admittedly in close social, religious, and dynastic relations with Phœnicia. Hebrew was spoken to the east of the Israelites, as we have the Moabite Stone to witness. Hebrew was spoken to the west of the Israelites, as we have the evidence of a large number of coins and inscriptions. Therefore, we can only conclude that the Israelites were of the same origin as the Moabites and the Phœnicians. If any such body as the children of Israel ever invaded Canaan, they must have been so completely absorbed by the Hebrew-speaking inhabitants as to leave no trace of a separate existence.

(The late) CHILPERIC.

(To be concluded)

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**RE "POLITICAL MURDERS?"**

Sir,—My first intervention was called for when a contributor to "The Freethinker" calmly proclaimed these various traitors as having been murdered (no matter the means), without submitting a tittle of evidence.

In the recent case, Mindszenty was accused of treason, conspiracy to overthrow the Republic and infringing the currency laws—not for holding an opinion.

He did not deny the truth of any charge on the basis of the evidence in Court. The penalty was death—he got a "lifer," probably meaning 15 years.

Press correspondents from world press agencies were at the trial, and the "Times" said, re journalists reporting from Hungary: "The translation is exact and there is no censorship of messages." The "Daily Express" quoted the Osservatore Romano as fully approving the Cardinal's attitude during the trial, including the confession, and commented that the Vatican organ broadly accepted the Cardinal's statement.

Mindszenty's conduct coinciding with what he predicted was far from remarkable. It naturally coincided when he knew he had been well and truly found out.

I still say, had he been "framed," one utterance in court suggesting it would have been joyously seized on by newspapers everywhere.

Communists don't practise fascism, and Mr. Gould wouldn't pose such a question if he understood anything of two completely opposite ideas. But I'm afraid he doesn't want to understand when his sympathies so obviously lie with a Cardinal who tried to use his religion to cover treasonable activities.—Yours, etc.,

AUSTIN FORBES.

**LIFE AFTER DEATH?**

Sir,—May I, as briefly as possible, reply to Mr. R. F. Turney's questions on the above subject? He curiously refers to my "confession of faith," although I have made no such confession. I merely stated that I was in favour of scientific investigation of psychic phenomena and that in the absence of proof I preserve an open mind on the matter.

Mr. Turney alludes to my planes of existence and my vibrations, etc., but if he had read my article correctly he would have understood that I was describing a theory held by Spiritualists—and nowhere have I described myself as a spiritualist. I abhor the term.

It would seem that my critics, in their convulsions, are splashing about rather carelessly and yet I am accused of being intolerant because I used the word "scuffers" when referring to those who indulge in ridicule and cheap gibes, such as "bottled spirits," etc. Can Mr. Turney oblige with a more appropriate term?

Concerning the Irwin messages, I have been in communication with the late Mr. Harry Price, who had no explanation to offer; and as a scientific investigator Mr. Price has probably tested more mediums than any other man in the world. Perhaps Mr. Turney can offer an explanation where Mr. Price could not.

Regarding the last paragraph, I explained in my article how it would be possible to believe in an "after life" without believing in ghosts, so I see no point in repeating the explanation here for the benefit of those who seem unable to read.—Yours, etc.,

W. H. WOOD.

**LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.**

**LONDON—OUTDOOR**

North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead Heath).—Sunday, 12 noon, Mr. L. Ebury (Highbury Corner, Islington): 7 p.m., Mr. L. Ebury.

West London Branch N.S.S. (Marble Arch, Hyde Park).—Sunday, 6 p.m. Messrs. E. BRYANT, F. WOOD and E. PAGE.

**LONDON—INDOOR**

South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1).—Sunday, 11 a.m.: "Population and Food—A World Problem," Prof. G. W. KEETON, M.A., LL.D.

**COUNTRY—OUTDOOR**

Blackburn Branch N.S.S. (Market Place).—Sunday, 7 p.m., Mr. J. CLAYTON.

Bradford Branch N.S.S. (Car Park, Broadway).—Sunday, 6-30 p.m. Mr. H. DAY.

Kingston Branch N.S.S. (Castle Street).—Sunday, 7-30 p.m.: Messrs. WINTER, WHITAKER and BARKER.

Nottingham Branch N.S.S. (Old Market Square).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. T. M. MOSLEY.

Sheffield Branch N.S.S. (Barkers Pool).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. A. SAMMS and others.

**ASK YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY  
TO SHOW  
THE FREETHINKER  
Special rates on application**

## AN ACT OF FAITH

(Extract from "History of Portugal" by Oliveira Martins, translated from the Portuguese by N.F.)

THE first of these burlesque funeral dramas took place in Lisbon on 20th day of September, 1540. On the morning of that day, a procession issued from the Bishop's Palace at the Rossio and marched towards the Praça de Ribeiro, where the ceremony was to take place.

In front came the charcoal burners armed with pikes and muskets, to tend the fire, after, a large crucifix hoisted on a pole, then the Dominican friars in their brown habits and white bands, carrying a banner on which was visible St. Michael, holding in one hand the Sword of Vengeance and in the other the Olive Branch, with the words "Justitia et Misericordia" written with gold lettering. Behind the friars, followed the nobles and men of rank, on foot; familiars of the Inquisition garbed in black and white, with their crosses of the two colours embroidered in threads of gold. Then came the prisoners, one by one, in line, all in the order of the category of their delictions, beginning with statues of the dead.

On beams of wood hoisted in the air, and supported by men in long white tunics with wide flowing sleeves called "samaras," and hoods of black waxed Holland linen, were life-sized images of the condemned who were absent. The images were dressed in yellow linen garments with a red cross sewn on to the front and back, and painted with devils and tongues of fire. These garments were known as "sambenitas." On the heads were pasteboard mitres called "carochos" three feet high, also painted with extravagant figures. If the statue represented a person already dead, a special executioner walked behind it with a black coffin decorated with devils and instruments of torture. The coffin contained the bones of the defunct, to be thrown at the feet of the statue when in the burning wood pile.

Straight behind were the living prisoners, without distinction of sex. By the side of each was his godfather, his confessor and a Dominican friar. The men were dressed in long striped black and white garments, with hands, feet and head bare; the women in still longer garments of the same kind. All carried long tapers of yellow wax in their hands, and a rope hung from the neck of each.

Different insignias distinguished those who went to the stake repentant, having recanted; they wore the "samarra." Those who at their trial had obtained pardon, and so were saved from being burnt, wore the "samarra" and the "carocho," on which were painted inverted tongues of fire to show the fate they had escaped.

After this elongated procession came the halberd bearers of the Inquisition, and following on horseback, the Officers of the Supreme Council, Inquisitors, Qualifiers (officials of the Ecclesiastical Court who prepared and examined cases for trial), reporters, informers and other followers of the Court.

The death knell slowly tolled from the church towers. The mob pressed and jostled in the streets, insulting the victims with abusive language, and pelting them with stones and filth. When the procession reached the "Praça de Ribeiro" cordons of troops were lined up to impede the people from entering the enclosure reserved for the Auto de Fe.

There on the platform were present King Dom John III, piously satisfied in his faith, the Queen with the various members of the Court, and at the side of the Monarchy with his rapier unsheathed stood the Lord High Constable. On a higher platform was raised the throne and canopy

of Cardinal Dom Henrique, afterwards king, and now Chief Inquisitor. He was accompanied by the members of the Sacred Tribunal, sitting round him on benches. The delinquents remained standing in line.

Having finished the reading of the sentences, and absolved some of those who had recanted, the New Christians (forcibly converted Jews) and the witches were handed over to the secular authorities to be burned alive. The King and Queen, the Court and the Chief Inquisitor then retired; and the bells continued their mournful dirge.

The charcoal burners with halberds, the executioners in their hoods, the friars holding up their crucifixes remained near the condemned in order to burn them. The crowd in mass surrounded the spot where the wood was piled in quadrangles, with eyes avid, and minds filled with a holy anger against their brethren who had betrayed their faith. All died piously garrotted and afterwards burnt. The doctor of Cipriano, however, being the most culpable, was ordered to be burnt alive.

Near the pile, a friar, with his hands crossed on his breast, begged of him to repent for the love of God, but the poor fellow turned on him the bulging eyes and jeering face of a madman. Suddenly breaking loose, he mounted the ladder and ran to the top of the pile, where he sat, making irreverent grimaces. The friar beat his breast, the crowd roared with fury. The executioner then grabbed him and tied him to the post and the charcoal burners lighted the fire, which immediately began to crackle. The boys and women of Ribeiro, jumping at him with pieces of wood and knotted ropes, knocked out one of his eyes. They pelted him with stones, with nails, with any object on which they could lay their hands; they made gashes from which the blood spouted: his head was cracked, his lip all torn. Meanwhile, as the flames began to break out amongst the logs of wood, he twisted and turned, now to one side, now to the other, in his endeavour to beat them back with his hands; and when with his one remaining eye he saw a stone whizzing towards him, he twisted his long garment round his arm, and putting it up to his face tried to shield himself: In vain: soon a long stream of blood trickled down his face—they had put out his remaining eye.

This lasted for more than an hour, and very much diverted the crowd, now sure of the death of the enemy of their faith.

But the strong wind that got up at sunset from the direction of the river dragged with it the flames, and, as a consequence, there was not enough smoke to suffocate him; so the unhappy victim lived for three hours, roasting in a terrible agony, contorting his body, making horrible grimaces, screaming, and crying: "Oh! Oh!"

## I, EVERYMAN

What does the world know, really know of me?  
 What of my life is known to those who care?  
 For them I play one part consistently  
 Upon a stage they recognise and share.  
 They see at most a fragment of the whole,  
 And vaguely glimpse complexity behind,  
 But have no notion of my vital role  
 Upon the secret stages of the mind.  
 Yet there my finest, richest moments are,  
 In dramas which the daily round inspires,  
 And there I reach and touch my highest star,  
 And give reality to all desires. . . .  
 Beyond the grey routine, the thoughtful frown,  
 The armchair dozing, and the lying down.

F. L. MAYELL.