

THE FREETHINKER

Founded 1881

Editor: CHAPMAN COHEN

Vol. LXIX.—No. 30

[REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL
POST OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER]

Price Threepence

VIEWS AND OPINIONS

On Thinking

MY present purpose is to attempt the untangling of a knot. I shall not follow a strictly chronological order, since that would require a volume, nor shall I concern myself very much with names. I want to tell a story in logical sequence, trusting that by this plan the reader will be able the easier to follow it to a happy ending. If people had only cultivated this habit of splitting hairs, a great many split heads would have been saved, and a great many of our troubles would have been avoided. Nothing in this world can be had without payment, and stupidity is the most costly, and the most extravagant form of dissipation of which I am acquainted.

We begin then with the fact that the distinction between the "spiritual" and the "material" commonly made to-day, is not primitive to human thought. Neither is it that of the distinction between the natural and the supernatural. Such distinction belongs to a later phase of life when positive knowledge began to separate itself from the somewhat amorphous output of primitive intelligence. One may safely assume that primitive distinctions extend little farther than that between the usual and the unusual, the ordinary and the extraordinary, the painful and the pleasant. One may take a further step and conclude that it is the unusual and the painful that mostly attracts attention.

So long as things run smoothly, the primitive intelligence seldom inquires into causes. It is when disaster or trouble occurs that man meets them with an interrogation. From this point of view, a strictly scientific one may be regarded as a kind of "defence mechanism" which the human mind creates to protect itself against adverse natural forces.

Religion, then, is born in an atmosphere of fear and ignorance, and one of its earliest, its most powerful manifestations, is that of "taboo." A taboo simply stands for something that is forbidden. It has no moral significance. Early religion had nothing to do with morals, although as in primitive life religion covers everything, it is necessarily associated with the good as well as with the bad, the useful as well as the harmful. The action of "taboo" may be negative or positive. It may order that certain things may be done or that they may not be done, but in either case it is determined by the fear of "supernatural" agencies. As a consequence of this belief we have sacred places, sacred books, sacred buildings and sacred persons. The special dress of the priest in his present day make-up gives the modern equivalent of the primitive paint and feathers.

It is no great wonder that one may so successfully evoke the activity of primitive forms of thinking when we have so many offices, customs, and ceremonies that are intended to keep them alive. It also explains why it is so difficult to get these modern taboos set on one side; and also why many apologies for maintaining these primitive mental products are offered by those who, while

quite conscious of their absurdity and even of their danger, yet lack the courage openly to reject them. Physical courage has always been cheap and plentiful.

Much of this fear of the taboo is disguised by the pretext of respect for the ideas of other people. But it may be noted that if a new idea is propounded men may laugh at it to their heart's content.

It is quite probable that many readers will think that I am a long time getting to the point, but those who are patient will, I think, realise that the old adage, "The longest way round is often the shortest way home" will in this case justify itself. Take as an illustration the common saying that art and morality began in religion. It might as reasonably be maintained that cleanliness began in dirt or health in disease. Of course, art and morality must be formulated in whatever terms of expression exist, and the fact that art-forms have so often in earlier times a religious implication, is not more significant than is the fact that the children of English parents, living in an English society, do not grow up speaking Choctaw or Chinese. It is as impossible to coin a completely new vocabulary, or even to think absolutely new ideas, as it is for a child to speak an absolutely new language.

What we have to bear in mind is the difference in origin of science and religion. The latter born of fear and ignorance, there is no greater doubt of this to-day than there is of the origin of the markings on water-laid geologic deposits. It is in this general atmosphere created by religion that science is born. But when I speak of science I do not mean mere knowledge. A knowledge of things sufficient to enable him to live man must always have. That kind of knowledge exists in the animal world, it merely assumes a more orderly and a more knowledgeable form in human society. But because of his religious environment man first expresses his knowledge in a religious form. The food grows, but it is due to the spirit of the corn, the boat flows down the stream, but this is because of the mysterious "Mama" that is resident in the boat. So with everything. Man knows that to get anything he must work, and that he must work in a particular way, but while man sows it is the gods that give the harvest. And that message is still declared in every fetish-worshipping place in the civilised world.

But part of the work of science consists in separating the casual from the causal, the essential from the non-essential, and its development depends upon tracing events—not to the agency of the gods, but to the operation of knowable and controllable forces, and the statement of their actions and reactions in terms of general law. But the statement depends upon language, and in the use of language there is only at hand a vocabulary impregnated with religious ideas and implications. The scientist, therefore, when he is not himself under the influence of the words he is compelled to use, cannot help suggesting these religious ideas to those he is addressing. One may take just one example of this.

The Greek philosopher, Heraclites, speaks of the "One and the Many." It is highly probable that all he meant to convey was the persistence of some primitive substance in the midst of continuous change. But the "one" gets marked with a capital letter, and presently is found doing duty for a god who underlies and sustains phenomena, and we are soon witnessing the birth of that philosophic nightmare, the "thing-in-itself." The situation is inevitable. To be understood by his fellows, the advanced thinker is bound to use existing terms. But these terms were coined to express meanings different from his own. He thus finds himself suggesting one thing and intending another. And of this situation, inevitable in all ages, the timid philosopher and the crafty theologian take the fullest advantage.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

THE ORIGINS OF MORMONISM

II.

A CRITICAL historian of the origins of Mormonism has commented upon the Divine Revelation to the American Prophet: "The Book of Mormon is a product of an adolescent mind. The Mormon Faith is the reaction of an adolescent civilisation to this work. In the adolescence of Joseph Smith, and the adolescence of the America of his time, lies the explanation of the Mormon phenomenon, the crudities, the incongruities, the jumbled theology of the book, and the religious faith it produced."

What was the actual nature of the strange phenomena witnessed in the America of 1823-7 around the Hill of Cumorah in the State of New York? Most of the contemporary critics of Mormonism resorted to the simplest, most obvious, but also, least probable of explanations, fraud, pure and simple. But in the case of the American, as previously, of the Arab prophet, this facile explanation raises serious difficulties, perhaps more than it solves; it is not, after all, an easy matter to "live a lie," and withal, to be convincing. We, to-day, know a good deal more about the phenomena of abnormal psychology than did the contemporaries of Joseph Smith, similarly for those of epilepsy as well. In any case, "fraud" itself represents a somewhat ambiguous term. It seems more likely that what Joseph Smith actually saw was real—to Joseph Smith. That he actually "saw" "God the Father, God the Son and the exalted Angel Moroni," that is he saw them in the same sense, and with the same degree of reality as, in analogous visions, the dipsomaniac actually sees, or so it is said, blue elephants, running up and down his bedroom walls; or in which the lunatic in the padded cell believes himself to be Napoleon or Lord Nelson. For it is with the dipsomaniac that abnormal psychology now tends to bracket, the religious visionary rather than with the self-conscious impostor.

In the case of Joseph Smith, we may add that the God who appeared to him was a typically crude anthropomorphic creation of the immature civilisation of the American Frontier as indeed, was the visionary no less than the vision.

As for the famous Book of Mormon: it is practically the unanimous conclusion of all critical historians that it is an imitation of the Old Testament, and an extremely clumsy one, entirely without the flashes of genius and eloquence which periodically punctuate the uneven contents of the original Jewish volume. Nearly all the critics agree that the American "Bible" is a dull book; Mark Twain once described it as "chloroform in print." Its content, the "history" of Ancient Israel in America

down to the sad fate of the last of God's prophets, Mormon (after whom the book is named), and Moroni (who buried it where he posthumously revealed it to Joseph Smith on Cumorah Hill), is a tissue of absurdities. A conscious plagiarism on the part of Joseph Smith and his entourage from some rather similar earlier MSS, or unconscious recollection by the Prophet himself of folklore imbibed in youth? The whole question of the literary origins of the Mormon Bible has been hotly debated, and must still be regarded as amongst the unsolved curiosities of religious literature. A peculiarity which it has the honour to share with the Koran and the New Testament.

Whilst clumsy in style and doubtful in authorship, the Book of Mormon was a psychological master-stroke. The only book the average American Frontiersman was familiar with was the Bible, and he was "tickled to death" to learn that America, no less than Palestine, was, indeed, "God's own country," the scene of a special revelation of God to His Chosen Race, His American Chosen Race. A further recommendation of the new dispensation was that it equated the Red Indians, the then enemies of the frontiersman, with the enemies of God—for in Mormon Theology, the American Indians are apostate Jews.

With this initial recommendation Mormonism got quickly off the mark; soon it had not only a prophet and a Bible, but also a church. For, on April 6, 1830, the year which witnessed the publication of the "Book of Mormon," Joseph Smith officially organised the "Church of the Latter Day Saints" at Fayette, Seneca County, New York. The Mormon organisation assumed the form of a theocracy from the start. The ecclesiastical Hierarchy was effectively ruled by a "First Presidency." Joseph Smith was "a Seer, a Prophet, an Apostle and an Elder in the Church." The First President had two "Counsellors," his brother Hyrum, and Sidney Rigdon, the later of whom has been held by some critics to have been the real genius of early Mormonism and the inspiration, if not the actual author of the "Book of Mormon."

To assist the First Presidency was the Apostolic College, "the quorum of the Twelve Apostles," similar in number to those of Jesus. Amongst whom was Brigham Young, later to be world famous as the Founder of Salt Lake City and as the Mormon "St. Paul," but apparently a figure of secondary importance during the Founder's own lifetime.

The theology of the new church is thus summarised by one of its historians:—

"The Mormons recognised as sources of doctrine the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and divine revelations through appointed prophets such as Joseph Smith and his 'Apostolic Succession' of Church Presidents. They accept the Trinity and believe that all Three Persons of the Christian Trinity are immortalised, glorified, resurrected Beings, with bodies, parts and passions. They believe that God's declared purpose as revealed in the Old and New Testaments and in the Book of Mormon, which together make up the Mormon Bible, is to bring to pass man's immortality which is assured by the death and resurrection of Jesus. They hold the doctrine of eternal progression, which proclaims the power of man to continue to grow in wisdom and learning throughout eternity, the initiatory rite of baptism may be performed by proxy for the dead. Marriage with the ecclesiastical ceremony by sealing and performed only in a Mormon Temple by ordained officials, is for eternity."*

A feature of the first period of Mormonism, that period associated with the name and leadership of Joseph

* It will be observed that this statement of Mormon Doctrine contains no mention of that *enfant terrible* of Mormon theology: Polygamy.

Smith, rather than with his now better-known successor Brigham Young, was its communistic organisation. This seems to have been due to the enigmatic Sydney Rigdon, the Prophet's Chief of Staff, and it seems, destined successor. At Kirtland, Ohio, where the first Mormon Headquarters was established, the type of social organisation closely resembled that of the communistic colonies recently founded in America by the famous English Socialist, Robert Owen. Rigdon had become interested in the teachings of Owen, many features of which he incorporated into the organisation set up by the Mormon theocracy.

A remarkable man was Robert Owen, and how versatile! Among his spiritual offspring were the Mormon Church and, in an entirely different connection, the National Secular Society, for as a Socialist, Owen, as we have just seen, influenced the former, and as a Secularist, the latter, for the N.S.S. numbered many "Owenites" amongst its original members.

However, communism, novel and extremely unorthodox tenets, and a dictatorial theocracy alien to the rough democracy of the Frontier, combined to arouse hostility to the "Latter Day Saints." And to crown all this, came the early economic slump of 1837, "which caught the Ohio Saints on the crest of wild speculation, and they lost heavily. To escape rising prejudices and to enable the disaffected to retrieve their fortunes in undeveloped country which offered new opportunities, the Prophet led the Saints to the promised 'Land of Zion' in Jackson County, Missouri, in what was then the Far West.

Their Odyssey proved a stormy one, the Missourians were slave-owners, and Mormon communism and anti-slavery doctrine threatened to disrupt their economic system. The Saints were tarred and feathered, maltreated and sometimes killed. They moved on to virgin soil in Illinois where they built a city, "Nauvoo" ("the City Beautiful"), which soon became the largest settlement in Illinois. Here Joseph Smith enjoyed a kind of Indian Summer. He became Mayor of Nauvoo and a virtual dictator. He assumed the rank of Lieutenant-General, raised a Mormon "legion" for self-defence and banned a hostile Press. In 1840, the Mormons acquired a virtually independent status as a result of their support for the successful Whig Presidential candidate.

However, a state of endemic civil war soon broke out between "Saints" and "Gentile" immigrants, acts of violence were committed on both sides. Joseph Smith and his brother were finally arrested for unconstitutional banning the Press. Whilst in prison awaiting trial, both were lynched and murdered, with, as the Mormons charged, the connivance of the authorities. At any rate, the alleged assassins were acquitted.

A local rising followed, and after fierce fighting the Mormons bowed to superior force and agreed to evacuate Nauvoo in order to avoid a general massacre. With the death of the Prophet and their resulting trek to the Far West, the era of Joseph Smith, the first creative epoch of Mormonism may be said to have ended in 1844. The era of Brigham Young and his Mormon empire will be reviewed in a concluding article.

F. A. RIDLEY.

A TRACT FOR THE TIMES

IT is not very often—at most, I suppose, once in a decade—that the critic has the surprising pleasure of reading a book which makes him sit up in surprise, thinking: "This is first-rate!" On the rare occasions when it happens, this critic, at any rate, cannot resist the impulse to rush off to his typewriter and get down his impressions of the book while it is still fresh in his mind. And if you say that quick writing may be bad criticism, I do not care; I shall retort that George Orwell's "Nineteen Eighty-Four" (Seeker and Warburg, 10s.) has such an urgent message for our day that any conscientious critic who has a feeling for the mental climate in which he lives is compelled to recommend the volume with the least possible delay.

Now, probably most people who read these pages will be acquainted with at any rate some of the works of George Orwell. Since the publication of "Burmese Days" some fifteen years ago, he has become known to all who value an independent attitude to the difficult problems of the time. It was with "Animal Farm," a biting satire of the dictatorial aspects of Russian Communism, that he first achieved something like a mass circulation for his work. That was a great little book; "Nineteen Eighty-Four" (I say this without hesitation) is a great long book.

It is, as its title will suggest, a picture of the future, and the none too distant future at that. But it is uncomfortable in that it presents a frightening picture that has at any rate germs of possibility. Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World" is a fantastic fairy story by comparison.

In Orwell's world, three great powers—Oceania (roughly, the U.S.A.), Eastasia (China and Japan), and Eurasia (the U.S.S.R. and most of Europe) have divided the territory and population of the earth between them. They are perpetually at war, though not war in our sense of the term. Fighting goes on at remote spots, rockets drop occasionally on London, though few people know who has fired them, but the ordinary people (the "proles") do not bother much about the war. They are more concerned with the difficulties of getting food, the pinkish stew and ersatz coffee which they have to live on, while the members of the Party (Ingsoe, or English Socialism) which controls the country are able to get a little synthetic gin which must be a horrible drink, since a glass of it affects the drinker like a blow in the head. Wine, tobacco, good food—all the things which nowadays are regarded as symbols of civilisation—have become so scarce as to be almost forgotten.

And Britain (which is known as "Airstrip No. 1" of Oceania) is so badly battered by the slow and relentless bombardment of the years, so inextricably entangled in the red-tape of controls, that the shabbiness of London in, say, 1942, is far excelled. Piles of rubble litter the streets, windows are missing in half the houses. The people of intelligence are dispirited. Only in the hearts of the "proles" is there any trace of happiness.

This may seem a depressing picture, which it is. But what makes it so terrifying is the fact that Orwell has depicted the way in which the totalitarian techniques of falsifying history and faking facts has made it impossible for anyone even to remember what the old world was like. Even the language is being altered, so that abstract words like "freedom" or "justice" have become meaningless. That, as I see it, is why the book is important. In some ways it is a savage satire on some of the tendencies of our day; in other ways it is a lesson for the future which we should do well to observe. But it is so brilliantly written that the admirer of good clear English for its own sake can read it with pleasure.

ROME OR REASON? A Question for Today. By Colonel R. G. Ingersoll. Price 4d; postage 1d.

THE MOTHER OF GOD. By G. W. Foote. Price 3d; postage 1d.

Orwell is one of the great writers of our time. There can be no doubt about that. He has already been compared with Swift, and the comparison is not so fantastically exaggerated as at first sight it might seem. But he is important, not so much because of the sheer brilliance of his writing, as because he has seen through many of the fallacies of contemporary thought. Aldous Huxley is the nearest to him in power; but Huxley's pathological obsession with sex (seen especially in his recent "Ape and Essence," about which I wrote here not long ago) does much to destroy the value of his political message. Orwell looks at the world through healthier eyes; but he sees that there are tendencies in our time which may, if not fought, kill everything that we hold dear.

I feel that he has made only one mistake; it does not seem likely that the changes he suggests could happen by 1984; but even there one never knows. Things move swiftly in our day, and, given a short period of atomic warfare and the civil war that would inevitably follow—given, even, a period of repressive Tory government—a sudden revolutionary upsurge might give power into the hands of a group of people greedy for control of their fellows—a party such as those whom he portrays.

Bertrand Russell has praised the book highly. I am sure that other critics will praise it also. But I think that it should be read as an indication of the way in which revolt against some of the trends of the time should start. Here, in other words, is the way we are going, if the authoritarian aspects of Socialism get control, as opposed to the freer, more democratic aspects. This is not to say that we should pander to the advocates of fear of Russia; it is not even to say, as Lord Beaverbrook's "Evening Standard" said, that the book should be required reading for every Labour candidate (suggesting by implication that it is an anti-Socialist tract). It is to say that this is a book with a message, and probably the most important novel of the last ten years.

JOHN ROWLAND.

AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM

THE time being early in the sixteenth century the adventurers of His Most Catholic Majesty of Spain had not yet completely conquered Jamaica, still waiting to penetrate inland. Beside the main body smaller outposts established themselves at favourable points along the coast.

One of these was at the head of a bay where a stream of pure water from the hills discharged into the sea, while a shelving sandy beach enabled boats to be grounded and drawn up with ease and in perfect safety. Higher stood tents, huts, and already a few houses built substantially of stone, for the Spaniards in the New World established themselves as if for eternity.

From a tall flagpole in the middle of this little settlement floated the yellow standard of Spain with its globe and its haughty motto: "Non Sufficit Orbis." Nailed to the gable of the largest hut was a big wooden cross with a bell hung below it. Nearest to the woodland which began scatteredly not far back and rapidly thickened inland was a low shed with a high surrounding fence. In this enclosure several bloodhounds having points akin to mastiffs lay dozing in the sunshine.

About this pioneer camp a few soldiers moved lazily on duties not appearing to be urgent, or merely lounged. Till near midday the bloodhounds stirred into expectant activity, prowling along the fence facing the forest, raising their heads and sniffing the air, meanwhile uttering growls and low-throated whines.

Soon these burst into loud barks of increasing ferocity as they jumped up with forepaws against the fence, better to see and smell.

From among the trees emerged a little group of soldiers and Indians. Ahead strode a captain swaggering in the pride of accomplished duty. The Arawaks were in file, tied together by native plaited ropes from neck to neck. Men and women there were, with children running by them, and some mothers carrying babies. The Spanish soldiers marching alongside and behind urged on their captives by pries with sword or pike point, while there was laughter among them at some joke kept up in shouts and culls and reiteration.

The procession halted in the shadow of the cross. A priest came out of the building, raising two fingers in benediction as the soldiers genuflected, then he stood in conversation with the captain, looking meanwhile at the miserable or apprehensive captives.

Taking hold of the bellrope the priest rang a number of strokes, at which other Spaniards came forth from the various buildings. All this while the bloodhounds clamoured a continuous uproar, getting increasingly restless.

The whole party of Spaniards gathered in a ring round the Arawaks, while the priest went into the large hut and returned carrying a basin of water. Stepping forward a young soldier fell on his knees and held the full vessel up while the priest raised his hands and blessed it.

Other soldiers cut the Indians' neckropes. Each native was in turn hustled forward, pushed on to his knees, and the priest sprinkled him with holy water and made the sign of the cross over him, bestowing upon him a Christian name taken from the calendar of saints. The men finished, the women were similarly forcibly baptised, and finally the children, in each case the handling being rough and violent to the degree of brutality.

When all had thus been made Catholic Christians the priest briefly told them so, whether they understood it or not. Also he praised their captors for their zeal in performing this holy service, so making the sacramental ceremony possible, blessing them for it as good servants of the Church. That completed, he retired into the cross-crowned large hut.

The Arawaks stood dumb, round-eyed and frightened, not comprehending what it all meant, but fearing the worst. Next movement was that with kicks and blows and pries of weapons they were driven up the slope toward the woodland. When they saw this open to them, they ran as fast as they could for cover and shelter of trees and bushes. The Spaniards stood watching and laughing, while the bloodhounds bayed hoarsely and hideously. To these the Spanish soldiers went after waiting for a few minutes till the fugitive Indians were out of sight and hearing.

The half-dozen bloodhounds crowded together by the gateway at the approach of the men. Two of the latter unfastened the gate, jumping aside as the ferocious creatures surged out, jaws open and eyes aflame, but now silent, too intent on prey to make any noise. With noses down they loped along the trail of the vanished Arawaks.

Having watched them out of sight, laughing and uttering cruel jests, the Spaniards slowly dispersed to whatever duties awaited them. The rushing through undergrowth died away, as did a burst of baying from the bloodhounds. Cries and screams came faintly from the forest, then no sounds at all.

Some time later the bloodhounds returned, padding slowly and individually out of the forest, tongues lolling and satisfied looks in their heavy eyes. On their jaws and chests and forelegs were spots and splashes of blood. Last to come dragged along by one leg a small child. As he dropped it and stood over it sniffing, the victim moved convulsively and uttered a low wailing moan of extreme pain. Growling, the hound snapped at the child's throat and tore it out with one powerful bite and jerk.

A. R. WILLIAMS.

BRIGHTER SUNDAYS?

HATS off to the Lord's Day Observance Society! Their constant agitation, aided by snoopers, paid and unpaid, has resulted at last in what the B.B.C. might call "Focus on the Sabbath Day," and people are now beginning to wake up.

So far the Sabbatarians, the bigots, and the misery-mongers, have almost had it their own way. The small but determined voice of the N.S.S. was never silenced. It is true, and gradually Sunday was becoming the recognised day in summer for outings of all kinds—and in winter for visits to art galleries, museums and the cinema. Attendances at churches slowly dwindled and the clergy woke up to find Sunday was no longer considered a day of worship and long faces, but the day on which the majority of our people decided to have a good time.

Hence the formation of the Lord's Day Observance Society, supported so well by our misery-mongers that they are now housed in expensive offices in Fleet Street. They are out to crush everything on Sunday which makes for the happiness of the masses. Sunday is the day set aside for worship, for grovelling to God Almighty, and with the support of the clergy, they are going to make everybody, if possible, know it.

So long as they managed to curtail the activities of a few Freethinkers—who cared? But now the L.D.O.S. is attacking everything within its scope, aided by two Acts of Parliament which are a disgrace to democracy. And at last the people are being roused. Indignant protests are being sent to our newspapers, and if a rigorous stand could be made now by all who want a "Brighter Sunday," the L.D.O.S. will disappear in a whirlwind of disgust.

Here is a specimen letter which appeared in *Cycling* for July 6:—

"I cannot refrain from protesting in the most vigorous terms at the decision reached by the N.C.U. to ban massed-start racing on disused aerodromes on Sundays, following protests by the Lord's Day Observance Society. I feel that the cycling Press should support the rank and file of organised racing men before early morning time-trialing also comes under the ban. Let us never for one moment forget the influence that racing has had on the light-weight trade, and visualise the inevitable falling-off in the trade in general should the ban continue.

In conclusion, I would say to the N.C.U. that I consider they have done no good to themselves by their action in this matter and that if it is their view that the cycling fraternity is prepared to stand idly by and submit to this imposition, for it is nothing less, then a change of administration is overdue."

J. A. THOMAS.

Hford. In sending us this, our contributor, Mr. T. D. Smith,

adds:— "It has evidently come somewhat as a shock to our young sportsmen that such a Society exists with such power and it is to be hoped that the lesson will be taken to heart.

What I wish to call attention to, however, is that during the last few months Sunday has been the day set aside for military manoeuvres and from early morning we

have processions of the Boy Scouts and Church Brigade (complete with bands), massing of the Territorials at the different Drill Halls, complete with despatch riders on their motor cycles, whilst military aeroplanes fly from the aerodromes in use, and a fortnight ago, at Lichfield, a real mass parade of the different arms of the Services before Lord Montgomery.

I have yet to learn that the L.D.O.S. has raised any protest against these activities and particularly so as they are a Christian body who profess to follow the Lowly Nazarene and the 'Prince of Peace.' This is just another proof that religion, despite all that is said to the contrary, is pro-Militarist." T. D. SMITH.

In the meantime, Mr. John Parker, M.P., has been taking an active part in the formation of a society called the "Brighter Sunday Association" to "Free the People's Sundays," and needless to say, the N.S.S. will do its utmost to help. Here is an extract by Arnold Russell from *Reynolds News*:—

"What sort of Sunday do you want? Do you want the present God-fearing day in which you can do little but fear God, or the wicked 'Continental Sunday' where, if you get the urge, as most foreigners do, you can go to church in the morning, and watch cricket, football or racing in the afternoon? And maybe a theatre at night instead of the pictures?"

To-day, the battle for your soul is joined and it promises to be a better scrap than any staged by Solomons the King of Sock.

Indeed, I think Jack missed the opportunity of putting into the ring Mr. John Parker, M.P., forthright Labour member for Dagenham, and ebullient "Praise the Lord" Henry Martin, Secretary of the Lord's Day Observance Society. I give promoters the tip; they are anxious to meet, but knowing both, I am carefully backing out of the promotion business.

Having heard them talk, I have decided that the pen is mightier than the word.

Says John Parker, leader of the 'Brighter Sunday Association' (Free the People's Sunday): "We are getting terrific and very widespread support. People all over the country want to end these absurd laws whereby one can play darts or dominoes but not billiards, or where an actor can appear in a concert but not wear the make-up or costume which is part of his act. A great number of organisations are backing us. We shall approach M.P.s generally and then hope for the luck of the ballot so that we can bring in a Bill to offset the activities of the Lord's Day Observance Society—common informers and other pests—and bring Sunday into line with modern thought."

From all this, it will be seen that things are moving and that at long last, Mr. Misery Martin has stirred up something he never bargained for.

Too often in the past we have succumbed to the impudence of religious bigotry—either through sheer apathy or, perhaps more often, because lack of funds prevented us from active opposition. Let us now, therefore, support Mr. Parker, and all who are making a stand on this question, to the utmost. H. C.

ATOMIC CHALLENGE

The world is swiftly spinning,
And its lodgers come and go;
No prize looks worth the winning;
Now, if ever, that is so!
As well suppose eternal
Words inscribed on faithless smoke,
As trust to things diurnal,
When one quick, atomic stroke
May scatter lore of ages,
And all treasured, enshrin'd arts;
All fair poetic pages—
True outpourings of true hearts!
Foredoom'd be nations' ending,
Or co-operate they must!
Victor and vanquished blending—
Their denominator, dust!

A. SLATER.

ACID DROPS

A Mr. Hardyman wrote recently to the *Sunday Dispatch*, pointing out that if the Sabbath Day is Saturday, the seventh day, then Sunday, the first day of the week, can't be the Sabbath Day. And he adds, "There is no statement in the Bible which alters it." Well, we have been pointing this out for years in these columns—but it should not be forgotten that Mr. Misery Martin has an easy way to get out of this difficulty. All he has to say is that he wants the "Lord's Day" observed, and the Lord's Day is Sunday. Of course, when it suits him, he also calls it the Sabbath, so that he can catch religious boobs both ways.

But Mr. Misery Martin, and his 22-year-old official, Miss Wardle, whose heart is in her job (she tells us) are no respecters of persons. They gleefully managed to get a Roman Catholic priest fined a pound the other day because he held a Sunday evening dance. Two plain clothes detectives caught out the heinous crime, and the Rev. A. G. Billington, the "Northern Divisional Organiser of the Lord's Day Observance Society" said it was he who sent Miss Wardle. How these Christians love one another!

Two swallows may not make a summer, nor, perhaps do a few masses in honour of Mussolini make all Catholics Fascists, but consider the following two items from the *Chicago Daily Tribune*: "On the anniversary of Mussolini's death Masses were said in various Italian churches, and a Press photographer had his camera smashed as he took pictures of the congregation. At the end of the service all the congregation gave the Fascist salute."

"In Lisbon Mass was celebrated and the officiating priest, Father Crespo, said: 'This Mass is for the soul of Benito Mussolini. Let us pray to God forgive him his sins for the benefits he brought to the Church.'"

We frequently pass an Italian Catholic church which has in its forecourt a war memorial to the Italian dead of the First World War, with an inscription "to the glorious dead" dedicated "Anno VI" (viz., sixth year of the Fascist era). Of course the holy fathers may not have noticed it.

Water is cut off from midnight to 6 a.m. in Lisbon because of the drought in Portugal, and our Portuguese correspondent informs us that cattle are dying of thirst in the Fatima (Leira) region. We understand, however, that the Holy Water export business is still flourishing, and even if the Holy well should dry up fresh water can always be pumped into it. After all, what does it matter if a few cattle die in horrible circumstances so long as the "great lying Church" lives?

With Fatima hotly engaged in producing many miraculous cures, it was necessary for Lourdes to do something outstanding. So disdaining the cure of cardinals or bishops, Lourdes has at last produced an authentic miraculous cure; a boy suffering from total blindness and meningitis, with paralysis of his legs and arms. One visit to the baths was of no avail, but after the second he was completely cured. The Archbishop of Aix immediately declared it to be "a miraculous cure in the strictest theological sense of the word—a cure due to God through the intercession of Mary Immaculate." This now should put Fatima on her mettle and no doubt she will be able to trump the Lourdes ace with ease. We expect many full blooded miracles from both shrines with such competition.

Jesus (mythical or historical) and Christianity present no difficulty for the Rev. Mr. Osabutey, M.A., D.D., who preached at Accra (West Africa). The *Ashanti Pioneer* reports him as saying "The Christian religion is a translation of an African idea and Jesus was ordained in Africa, not Europe or England (*sic*). The first Pope was an African and even the Caesarian Calendar was prepared by an African." This African "Goebbels" is likely to cause as much trouble in his quarter as does Dr. Barnes over here, for there must be many negroes who will object to being saddled with such antecedents.

Archbishop Downey recently inspected the equipment of a Catholic school for the blind and referred to the work being done to end blindness "by legislation" or to improve the condition of the blind. These people never, if they can help it, point out how Jesus Christ cured the blind with a little dust and spittle and why they, the representatives of God Almighty on earth, have to depend on purely secular methods when dealing with blindness. Indeed, just like mere unbelievers.

As was to be expected another difficulty has arisen in Palestine—what is to be done with the "Jewish Christians" and the "Arab Christians"? We doubt whether their new religion prevents them from despising each other, and the Jews loathe the converts as much as the Arabs. What with this problem and that of unlimited immigration of Oriental Jews into Palestine, and the tremendous difficulty of balancing imports with exports, to say nothing of God Almighty not lifting a finger to help the new State, Israeli looks like shipping a lot of trouble. And to cap all, Church missionaries are appealing for more money to convert both the Jews and the Arabs. Lunacy can hardly go further than that!

The Primate of All Ireland—we like the "All"—is urging Catholic parents "to combat the further spread of secularism which has de-Christianised society," as if his puny voice could arrest a world-wide movement. If the Primate wants to gauge the strength of the Secularist movement, he ought to come out and meet a representative Freethinker in debate. He would then see why "Catholic parents" have as much chance of stopping us as of stopping the Niagara Falls.

The need for maintaining churches as a social service was urged by Sir G. Eddy, and he also thinks that the upkeep should be borne by the general taxpayer; rather impudent, to say the least. For apart from the difficulty of assessing the social services of the Church, it means that Freethinkers and all non-religious people are expected to finance and support a creed that runs counter to all Freethought stands for. As if we do not already unwillingly support them by having to pay their rates and taxes.

The Pope has been vaccinated as a precaution against a minor epidemic in Rome, reports the *Western Gazette*. What an example to his flock. How now can the English Cardinal who turned back from a Lourdes pilgrimage to consult his own doctor, be "ticked off"? We have heard of the chef of a well-known hotel who went to another restaurant for his lunch, and he had our sympathy, but for the great "I am" who has the ear of God to show such little faith is the limit. We can only hope that the diseased animal lymph was duly blessed before being injected into the holy arm.

"THE FREETHINKER"

Telephone No.: Holborn 2801.

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

TO CORRESPONDENTS

A. HEWITT.—For "The Freethinker" Fund, 10s.

E. SNEDELEY.—Pleased to hear once again from you—one of our oldest readers.

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. Roseth, giving as long notice as possible.

SUGAR PLUMS

Intending visitors to the International Freethought Congress in Rome should have their arrangements well in hand by now. The Congress will open with a reception on Friday evening, September 9, and close on Monday evening, September 12. The Congress will celebrate the 100th Centenary of the birth of Giordano Bruno and a special stamp has been printed. The stamps can be obtained at the offices of the N.S.S., 41, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1, at 1s. 6d. for 25, postage 2½d. extra. Also fuller details of the Congress if required.

At Platt Fields, Manchester, to-day at 3 p.m., Mr. J. Clayton will meet Mr. E. Corcoran, a Roman-Catholic opponent and debate the question, "Is the Design Argument Sound." The arrangements are in the hands of the Manchester Branch, N.S.S., and in striking contrast to the policy of the local Catholic Evidence Guild which bans N.S.S. opponents from its platform.

Mr. J. T. Brighton is now including Sunderland in his lecture circuit and is arranging lecture visits there. Local saints willing to lend a hand should watch the lecture notices column of *The Freethinker* and contact Mr. Brighton on his next visit. The N.S.S. Executive will help in any way possible.

God must be yielding to the pressure of Modernism: He is getting impartial, for not only did He open the flood-gates and wash out the meeting of the South London Branch at which Mr. L. Ebury was to have spoken, He also drenched a Roman Catholic procession in honour of the Virgin Mary in Holborn, so that the procession had to scatter for cover. We hope the delayed start of the South London Branch will have a better chance on Sunday (to-day) when Mr. P. A. Ridley will speak. See Lecture notice for details.

MORE TRIBUTES

A further selection of the many tributes to the work and personality of Mr. Chapman Cohen, received by "The Freethinker":—

CHAPMAN COHEN

CHAMPION OF FREETHOUGHT

IT requires a great deal of moral courage to fight for unpopular causes for over 60 years, and that is the record of Chapman Cohen, who has this year, resigned the office of President of The National Secular Society, a position he held with distinction for over 30 years.

In the early days of Mr. Cohen's work for Freethought, Christian intolerance was much greater and more aggressive than it is to-day. One does not attribute the present attitude to any change of heart on the part of the clericals but solely to change of tactics. In those early days many people regarded the term Secularist or Atheist with horror. To-day the clergy express opinions which would have caused consternation amongst their followers 30 or 40 years ago. Educated churchmen such as Dean Inge and Bishop Barnes are saying to-day what the despised Atheists said 50 years ago. The Bradlaughs, Footes and Cohens of the world have fought for the right to think freely and talk freely, to investigate all things thoroughly and never to accept so-called "facts" because they were supported by tradition and vested interests. It is very difficult for the younger generation to-day to realise the soul-crushing effects of a religion where Hell was a real place of brimstone and torture, and it was this gospel of fear and savagery that Chapman Cohen attacked year in and year out. If fierce in his attacks upon humbug and cruelty, in his private life he was gentleness itself. Like Bradlaugh and Foote he has been attacked by men with little petty minds but these people are forgotten to-day—these human mosquitoes have been swatted by the weapons of science.

As a writer, lecturer and debater, Chapman Cohen's work has been of incalculable value to the Freethought cause in Britain.

We have seen men with big newspaper reputations who were boosted as philosophers and thinkers by the popular Press, bowled over in debate in a way that must have made them regret having accepted the challenge of a man whose knowledge and range of reading were so stupendous.

In Mr. Cohen's enormous library of many thousands of books, I have never come across one with uncut pages, nor have I ever failed to get a clear convincing account of any writer or book I asked him about.

Had Chapman Cohen turned his undoubted ability in other directions, he would probably have been a great financial success, but he would have missed the affection and admiration of thousands of people of all classes. He would also have foregone the happiness which must come to any man who has seen the cause for which he has fought throughout the years, if not accepted, at least tolerated by those who have opposed any new ideas or scientific advancement.

The Freethought cause was fortunate in having such a standard-bearer as a champion for so many years.

F. A. HORNIBROOK.

INTELLECTUAL courage and unswerving loyalty to truth were the supreme virtues of past protagonists of militant Freethought. Carlyle, Bradlaugh, Holyoake, Foote and, in her palmy days, Annie Besant, were among the bravest of the brave. This splendid tradition has been consistently continued by their successor, Chapman Cohen, who, as a veteran of eighty, has been constrained by age and its almost invariable accompaniment, the decline of enthusiasm and energy, of one's younger days. If certain Rationalists have vacillated, compromised, and even recanted—and even H. G. Wells once postulated a divinity he subsequently discarded—Chapman Cohen in his long career as Freethought penman, lecturer and debater, never surrendered any of the guiding principles of philosophical and scientific realism.

The present writer has known Chapman Cohen as a publicist for more than half a century, and recalls Bradlaugh's, Mrs. Besant's, and Foote's lectures at the Old Hall of Science in London and elsewhere. Foote's marked ability as lecturer and journalist were highly

appreciated, and when he died in 1915 there were those who feared and, doubtless many who hoped, that the militant Freethought movement, with its organisation, the National Secular Society, and, above all, *The Freethinker*, would expire. Hopes and fears alike proved groundless, for all Foote's contributors to his journal rallied round the new editor, C.C., and it survives to this hour, and it is understood that provision has been made for its future publication.

Still, it was no small task to keep an aggressive Freethought journal alive through two world wars when so many long-established organs disappeared. *The Era*, *The Morning Post*, *The Morning Leader*, and all the London evening papers, save three, have vanished. *The Academy* is dead and the *Edinburgh* and *Westminster Reviews* likewise. *The Athenaeum* and *Nation* are incorporated in the *New Statesman*. But *The Freethinker* still survives and circulates throughout the civilised world. Long may it continue to do so. But its persistence since Foote's illness and death is a greater tribute to the ability and resourcefulness of its editor than most of the customary forms of praise.

T. F. PALMER.

I HAVE had many conversations with Mr. Chapman Cohen, and many years ago I spent a very pleasant evening with him and his family. Several of his books I have read, not to speak of a great many of his articles in *The Freethinker*. Mr. Cohen has loyally served the cause of Freethought for many years, and wields an incisive pen. His books and articles betray very wide reading.

May I draw attention to one book of his, which I most appreciate of all his works—*The Other Side of Death?* Here he marshals with irresistible cogency the arguments against the idea of an immortal soul, at any rate as Christianity and its kindred religions understand it. But Mr. Cohen shows himself not only an acute logician, but a man of deep and strong feelings, confronting sincerely the significance of death, with whose stern reality the whole beauty and pathos of our human life is indissolubly bound.

May Mr. Chapman Cohen, who has now reached the evening of his days, enjoy a happy retirement in the society of his good wife and his friends!

A. D. HOWELL SMITH.

SIR.—May I as one of the younger members of the N.S.S., be permitted the honour of paying my personal tribute to Mr. Chapman Cohen for his brilliant record of magnificent service to the Freethought Movement in this country and abroad, and in particular, to those who, like myself, have derived inestimable benefit through having studied under his leadership.

It was ten years ago, when I was but 17 years old, that I first met Chapman Cohen through the medium of *The Freethinker*, and although I had the privilege to meet Chapman Cohen on but three occasions, it was mainly through his writing that I came to know him. The crystal clarity of his ideas, and the refreshing difference of approach, made me feel that I had found a true friend.

Let me therefore join with others my own heartiest wishes for a long and happy retirement to both Chapman Cohen and Mrs. Cohen.—Yours, etc.,

JACK GORDON.

SIR.—Your presidency of the N.S.S. is one of my treasured thoughts.

But how easy it is to say that, when I realise that you have enabled me to learn more useful knowledge and more far-reaching knowledge than from any other single source!

May your retirement be a joy to you and to Mrs. Cohen.—Yours, etc.,

J. G. BURDON.

THE HORNET STINGS BACK

ALTHOUGH Mr. Wood so strongly deprecates our "jeering and scoffing" against some of the claims of Spiritualists, his article in reply to mine was a particularly fine example of "jeering and scoffing," though I was only doing what he asked us to do. I was "investigating." However, let us see where we have got to.

Mr. Wood claimed, in his original article, that the dead commander, Flight Lieutenant Irwin, through Mrs. Roberts the medium, "gave a detailed account of the disaster [in which he was killed] and its cause in highly technical terms . . . At the time of the seance, the official inquiry had not been held and there had been no published report of the accident . . . The details given by Mrs. Roberts were found to be absolutely correct after investigation . . . If Mrs. Roberts did not obtain her information from Flight Lieutenant Irwin after his death, then from whom did she obtain it and how?"

In his second article, Mr. Wood says that as he knew Irwin personally, he was "well acquainted with his distinctive manner of speech"—"which was the way his voice came through, according to Harry Price." And Mr. Wood adds, "I am quite convinced—and so was the R.A.F. officer who examined the Report, that no one could possibly use or understand the highly technical terms used by the medium unless he was an expert in airship construction or a pilot."

When I read his first article, I came to the conclusion that Mr. Wood either had all the relevant accounts of the seance—it was with Mrs. Garrett and not Mrs. Roberts, a mistake anyone may make, trusting only to memory—or that he was bluffing or supremely credulous. I am sorry to say that, in a sense, he was bluffing, and he certainly showed childish credulity.

He was good enough to send me a cutting from the *Sunday Dispatch* dated March 19, 1933—nearly three years after the disaster. Anything can be written in three years. Now what I wanted was something printed before the official inquiry—for how could I possibly compare the two records to see if, as Mr. Wood insists, they were "absolutely" the same? Not only does he not do this, but he says that it is my job to get hold of the Air Ministry's Report. So that, at the outset of my "investigation," I find him making certain statements, and when I ask him for proof, he says in effect, "go and find out yourself, I am not going to help you." I am not in the least surprised, and I am extremely doubtful if Mr. Wood ever saw the official Report or heard of the seance until three years after the accident when he read about it in the *Sunday Dispatch*. When he claims, then, that the seance was "absolutely" the same as the official Report, he is "bluffing."

Let us have a look at Mr. Price's account of the seance. He says that "conditions of space" allow him only to present the facts, but it appears that he was having "a routine seance," with Mrs. Garrett in full daylight two days after the crash, and her "alleged" control (Price's description) "Uvant" introduced "IRVING" or "IRWIN." Now, in almost all the accounts that I have read of seances, and in those that I have attended, the control or the spirit uses only the Christian names, George or Sally, for example, and never, or very rarely indeed—I have never myself come across an instance—a surname. George or Sally is standing close by, but never Mainwaring or Cholmondy or Rashkavar-tini. That seemed to me rather suspicious in the article, and when I came to "investigate" the two books in which Harry Price gives accounts of this seance, neither does it say that the control said "Irving or

Irwin"—it was "Irwin" right away. It is only fair to point out that the first account of the seance was sent to the *American S.P.R. Journal*, and it appeared in July, 1931, nine months after it took place, and Price used this for his articles and books.

As far as I read, there were present at the seance the medium, Price, and his secretary, Miss Beenham. What took place, therefore, depends on the veracity of the two latter, and exactly how much can we depend on them? I simply do not know. The spirit spoke so rapidly, says Price, that "Miss Beenham had a little difficulty in taking down what she said," but, adds Price, "it is thought very little was lost." I like the "it is thought" for it can mean anything. It has made Mr. Wood know for certain that it was the spirit of Irwin which came through, and it has made me extremely sceptical of the whole affair.

Why should the spirit speak so rapidly in highly technical terms? Was that all he was thinking about? Did he never give a thought to his own violent death and the deaths of his crew? Would Mr. Wood claim that if he unluckily was killed, and he came through to a medium he would immediately engage in a highly technical discussion on spiritualism utterly disregarding the tragic fate into which he was so unceremoniously jerked?

Then, is it not highly suspicious that Irwin's spirit should be haunting the precincts of Price's Psychical Laboratory anxiously waiting for one of the "routine" sittings? Did Irwin know where the Laboratory was, or are spirits or controls exempt from considerations of time and place? Has Irwin, now relieved from his highly technical description of the disaster, disappeared for ever into one of the "higher" planes outside this world of ours specially reserved for good people and heroes? He appears never to have come through again—a fact which seems to me to be very significant. Surely the spirit could have honoured some other medium with his earthly friend, Mr. Wood, as the sorrowful sitter?

Mr. Price does not seem to be in any way surprised that Irwin came through to him. He just takes it for granted. He was England's famous investigator, and Irwin's spirit naturally chose him to prove to the world that people survive after death. At least, that is the impression I got reading the *Sunday Dispatch* article. It is all just matter of fact.

Mr. Price showed his report to an "officer" called Mr. X who, according to Mr. Wood, "came from Cardington, where the airship was built," but who, according to Mr. Price, "came from Bedford, where the airship was built." You can take your choice. In any case, Price says he does not know whether the Air Ministry made any use of his verbatim report—before the official inquiry? There is nothing in the *Sunday Dispatch* article which shows that Price compared the "verbatim report" with the official Report of the accident. And therefore nothing which justifies Mr. Wood's contention that the two—the seance and the official Report—were found to be "absolutely" identical.

A valued contributor to this journal, Mr. Sturge Whiting, who wrote such a scathing reply in his

"Mystery of Versailles" to a book written by two women who claimed that, at the beginning of this century, they saw enacted a whole scene with Marie Antoinette and her court at Versailles, and who knew Harry Price, tells me that the famous investigator claimed the public always preferred *bunk* to *debunk*. That was what he gave them. This is why in the *Sunday Dispatch* article he did not answer the obvious question, "Do you, Price, really believe that it was the

spirit of the dead Irwin that came through at your seance?" But he *did* answer the question in his book *In Search for Truth* (1942)—which was not written for just newspaper readers. On page 158, Price distinctly declares that, "There is no evidence that it was the *discarnate Irwin speaking*."

There is, therefore, no need for me, as Mr. Wood "jeeringly" asks me to do, to tear Mr. Price's report to shreds; Harry Price himself has done it for me.

Mr. Wood almost hysterically declares over and over again that he is not a spiritualist. A man who believes that a spirit can talk in highly technical terms through a medium and a "control" may declare that he is not a spiritualist, of course, but the readers of this journal know as well as he does that a rose is a rose no matter what we call it. Any man who believes what Mr. Wood believes must be a spiritualist; and the fact that the *Psychic News* has taken him to heart and given him editorials and whole pages shows that, for once, they are right.

H. CUTNER.

UP A GUM TREE

JOSH BILLINGS once said—"The trouble with most folks is not so much their ignorance, as their 'knowing' so many things which ain't so." Whilst a great many people here in Scotland have been wondering when they were to be supplied with Australian eucalyptus honey, the London Federation of Master Bakers have been complaining to the Food Ministry that the honey is unsuitable and *unfit for human consumption* (italics mine). A Food Ministry spokesman said: "The eucalyptus-tasting honey is believed to be due to a good proportion of the flora in Australia consisting of eucalyptus" (marvellous deduction) and that, "the taste has sometimes been detected in the honey." Then to crown it all, an *official* at Australia House is reported to have said that very little of the honey sent to Britain tasted of eucalyptus. It would be safe to bet that this apologising official is not an "Aussie," or he would have told these "Pommies" where to get off.

It was towards the end of last century, when a distinguished French naturalist was travelling in Australia, that the honey was discovered. He observed near the top of one of the eucalyptus trees, a strange excrescence. On examining this with his field-glasses, he noticed a vast army of small insects flying about, entering and leaving an opening in the tree. Struck with the unusual appearance, he got his men to cut down the tree. During this operation the insects came in deputations to see what the strange workmen were doing. Convinced that the insects were small black bees of a peculiar kind then unknown to entomologists, he got the workmen to protect their faces from the attacks of the bees, which are very sting-ey, and the tree fell. The shock made the queen leave the hive inside the tree, accompanied by her faithful followers. The hive was examined and the honey—in considerable quantity—was found to be of such peculiar flavour and remarkable sweetness that he sent home specimens of both honey and bees to his doctor friend for analysis and examination.

To find out the properties of the honey, it was first given in warm milk to dogs. It produced a slowing of the heart's action; in a small dog, from 174 to 70 beats a minute. The effects lasted 24 hours. The temperature was also reduced one degree for the time being. Operating upon himself, the doctor found the honey and milk to yield a most pleasant beverage and to produce, after a few minutes, an agreeable sensation of warmth

throughout the body. The bronchial tubes were cleared and the voice became clearer and more resonant. The lungs acted more freely. After using the honey for a week, he could take violent exercise without feeling the strains.

The doctor submitted a report on the eucalyptus honey to the Academy of Medicine, Paris. The honey was found to contain 62 per cent. of sugar, the active principles (i.e., eucalyptol, eucalyptene, terpene, cymol, colouring, resinous and aromatic principles), 18 per cent. The large proportion of sugar and medicinal elements drew the attention of the medical savants to the importance of the honey in therapeutics. On account of its sweetness and nutritional qualities it has been recommended as an excellent substitute for cod-liver oil in wasting diseases. In cases of bronchitis, phthisis, and scrofula, as a sedative to the heart, as a reducer of fever, as an antiseptic, it is second to no product. The *Progrès Medical*, of Paris, contained a number of authentic cases of remarkable cures by the continued use of eucalyptus honey. Three teaspoonsful of the honey in warm milk are taken thrice a day in wasting diseases with great success.

It combines active principles which have been long recognised for medicinal purposes. Eucalyptol has been used in intermittent fevers, post-scarlatinal nephritis, and albuminaria. Eucalyptene has been employed in malarial fevers. Terpene is a powerful antiseptic and disinfectant. Cymol is a good stomachic. Combined, then, in the honey by the bees, these various ingredients are found to be of considerable importance in the treatment of throat, bronchial, lung, and heart affections, in various fevers, in whooping-cough and influenza, and in catarrh. In short, it is a boon to suffering humanity.

According to recent Press reports, Samuel Taylor, of Twickenham Road, Isleworth, Middlesex, was a white-haired, sick old man, hardly able to hobble from one room to another. Sam is 80 years old. The family doctor gave him a few months to live. In searching through some old papers, he found a few of his grandmother's recipes. He decided to try them, with the following result: His hair is returning to the brown colour it was when he was a young man. His back, once bent and stiff, is now straight and supple. He takes a five-mile walk every day before breakfast, and three times a week he walks the fifteen miles from his home up to the centre of London, and then walks back again in time for supper. He lost all his teeth years ago. *Now he is beginning to cut new teeth.* And you'll never guess the chief "ingredient" of his "miracle brew." Yes, that's right, Australian honey! It is later reported that theatrical agents have offered to put him on the stage and an Australian honey manufacturing firm has invited him to Australia to advertise their goods. But Sam has turned these offers down; he says he is quite happy and contented on 26s. a week. The one thing that worries him is that, as he is a religious man, he is wondering if it is right and natural for a person to grow younger, and that's where Sam gets stuck; or, in the language of the classics, he is virtually, like the other three "authorities" aforementioned, UP A GUM TREE.

J. HUMPHREY.

At the recent Methodist Conference, Mr. Stead complained that "most of the people living in the east end of our big manufacturing cities have gone pagan." So what? What is wrong in going "pagan"? If going pagan means giving up the stupidities of Christianity, its ridiculous miracles and devils, it surely is a good thing to go pagan. And there is no answer to that.

REPORT TO HIS EXCELLENCY SEQUEL TO DICKBARTON HOAX

(Your Excellency will please excuse my spelling; for secretarial reasons I am obliged to write this report in English.)

YOU will recall that the Charter of the United Nations, as drafted at Dunbarton Oaks, was given final form at the subsequent San Francisco Conference. The Charter is a Treaty or Pact between or among the High Contracting Parties, and is intended to ensure the peace of the world.

Assuming that the peace of the world will consist of the separate peaces of the separate pieces, however, provision was made in the Charter for Regional Pacts, to protect the various regions from wars which U.N.O. was intended to prevent.

I can report progress in this direction. By means of the Atlantic Pact it is hoped to create a pacific Atlantic; by means of a Council of Europe it is hoped eventually to unite sixteen or more members of the "United Nations in a unity that will be rather less of a plurality than U.N.O. has turned out to be.

This development, too, follows the line that the peace of the world will be made less insecure if we create one or more little talking-shops inside the big talking-shop. (I should add that the British Government have taken the precaution of depriving the Council of Europe of the power which U.N.O. itself so obviously lacks—the power to act upon decisions. It must be admitted, however, that they are right in maintaining that a debating society cannot be converted into a government merely by conferring paper powers upon it. As Your Excellency has so often impressed upon me, a Peace-Keeping Agency cannot perform its duties unless it can enforce its decisions without waging war, and it cannot do this unless and until it is enabled to enforce its decisions upon individual citizens).

Behind the scenes of U.N.O. itself, this trend towards little wheels within the big wheel found expression in the creation of the "Interim Committee of the General Assembly" (popularly referred to as the "Little Assembly"). The Little Assembly appointed a Sub-Committee. "A comprehensive account of the approach and conclusions of the Sub-Committee and the Interim Committee will be found in the Preliminary Report (Implementation of Paragraph 2 (c) of the General Assembly Resolution of November 13, 1947) of the Sub-Committee, which the Interim Committee adopted; the final report of the Sub-Committee and the report of the Interim Committee to the General Assembly which is substantially the same as the Sub-Committee's final report. Some members have seen in the beginning of this work a continuation of the Geneva tradition of organised measures for collective security." (I quote from James Nevins Hyde's report published in "International Conciliation No. 44").

Your Excellency will no doubt wonder what effort, if any, was made to ascertain whether the Geneva tradition of attempted "government of governments, by governments, and for governments" made any contribution to security or, indeed, whether so-called collective security is an adequate substitute for international government. The position is obscure, but the foregoing facts regarding the deliberations of the Little Assembly, gleaned from J. N. Hyde's report, may throw light upon this question:—

"In some of the discussions a distinction between mediation and conciliation was brought out. The Sub-Committee felt that . . . it would be useful to consider what distinction, if any, exists between mediation and

good offices. . . . It was suggested that in the future the scope and practice of arbitration might be considered. . . .

While the Little Assembly is debating the difference between mediation, conciliation, arbitration and good offices, and ignoring the difference between a debating society and a government, Your Excellency would be well advised to buy armament shares.

Discussing the proposed duties of "a qualified conciliator" (whatever that may mean) the Little Assembly heard an objection to a resolution which stipulated that the parties to a dispute "shall meet." This was amended to read that they "shall be invited to meet." As Your Excellency may appreciate, the risk of war vanishes to nil when a Power realises that she will not be instructed to meet her enemy across the table, but merely invited. I must confess I had some difficulty at first in seeing how this made a tittle of difference, but I bow to the superior wisdom of statesmen. Still, considering the great difficulties in which they always land themselves when trying to juggle with international "law" it is surprising they do not try to devise a system in which it operates directly upon individual human beings, instead of on governments as such.

China and the U.S.A. submitted a proposal suggesting *inter alia* that "the Interim Committee might also usefully examine the General Convention to improve the means for preventing war concluded at Geneva in 1931." Unfortunately, however, there was no reference to the rather more modern suggestions for abolishing war by means of international federal government. The Lebanon energetically sponsored a plan for setting up a permanent Committee of Conciliation, "capable of inspiring confidence and inducing by its sheer prestige and high moral purpose the requisite spirit of conciliation between the nations."

In Your Excellency's next despatch, will you kindly inform me whether your sheer prestige and high moral purpose have been sufficiently sheer and sufficiently high to raise enough taxes from our people to pay my salary for the past quarter? Or did you use some other power by which to finance the welfare of our State?

HAROLD S. BIDMEAD.

CITIZENESS OF THE WORLD No. 1?

VIRGINIA DAVIS TO SING FOR EUROPE

VIRGINIA DAVIS, sister of Garry ("World Citizen No. 1"), arrived in Zurich this week from America, via Shannon, on a concert tour of Europe. She is well known in America as a soprano singer of the songs of six countries, and has been described by the Press as "the Ruth Draper of the folk song." Last year she gave a nation-wide series of 40 concerts in U.S.A. and has now come to Europe to give benefits in aid of her brother's World Citizens' Movement and local federalists. She plans to visit Stockholm, Brussels, Paris, Berlin, London and possibly Capri.

This is by no means her first visit to Europe; she has travelled up and down the European countryside studying native characteristics and the local songs.

Virginia inherits her talent from both parents. Her mother is a gifted pianist-composer, and her father, Meyer Davis, has played for every President since Wilson.

Miss Davis's tour in this country is being sponsored by the Crusade for World Government, 54, Baker Street, W. 1 (WEL 5483), to whom volunteer helpers should apply.

"DEAD SOULS"

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith (R.C.) has a beautiful new scheme for raking in the shekels. In their appeal for new members, which costs one dollar per annum, living and *deceased* persons may be enrolled. "N.F." who sends us details of the racket has suggested that we ask all readers to take out subscriptions for their dead relatives. The only difficulty would be to get a supply of asbestos on which to print. However, if any subscriber would like us to send four consecutive issues of *The Freethinker* to any address, please send four penny stamps to this office.

OBITUARY

ALFRED LONGHURST

At the Putney Vale Crematorium, London, S.W., on Tuesday, July 12, the remains of Alfred Longhurst were cremated. Death followed a very painful illness which he faced with courage and patience. He was in his 69th year and held strong Freethought views to the end. To his widow and other members of the family, we express our sympathy with them in their loss. There was a good muster of relatives and friends at the Crematorium, where a Secular Service was read by the General Secretary of the N.S.S.

R. H. R.

LECTURE NOTICES, ETC.

OUTDOOR

- Bradford Branch N.S.S. (Car Park, Broadway).—Sunday, 6-30 p.m.: Mr. H. DAY.
- Burnley (Market).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. J. CLAYTON.
- Crawshawbooth.—Friday, July 22, 7-30 p.m.: Mr. J. CLAYTON.
- Kingston Branch N.S.S. (Castle Street).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: MESSRS. WINTER, WHITAKER and BARKER.
- Manchester Branch N.S.S. (Platt Fields).—Sunday, 3 p.m.: Debate, "Is the Design Argument Sound?" Pro, Mr. E. CORCORAN, R.C. Contra, Mr. J. CLAYTON, N.S.S.
- Manchester Branch N.S.S. (Alexandra Park Gates).—Wednesday, July 27, 8 p.m.: Mr. C. T. SMITH.
- Merseyside Branch N.S.S. (Ranelagh Street (bombed site), Liverpool).—Sunday, 7-30 p.m.: Mr. W. PARRY.
- Nelson (Chapel Street).—Wednesday, July 27, 7-45 p.m.: Mr. J. CLAYTON.
- North London Branch N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead Heath).—Sunday, 12 noon: Mr. L. EBURY. (Highbury Corner).—7 p.m.: Mr. L. EBURY.
- Nottingham Branch N.S.S. (Market Square).—Sunday, 7-30 p.m.: Mr. T. M. MOSLEY.
- Sheffield Branch N.S.S. (Barkers Pool).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. A. SAMMS.
- South London Branch N.S.S. (Brockwell Park, Herne Hill).—Sunday, 7 p.m.: Mr. F. A. RIDLEY.
- West London Branch N.S.S. (Marble Arch, Hyde Park).—Sunday, 6 p.m.: MESSRS. E. BRYANT, C. E. WOOD and E. PAGE.

INDOOR

- West Ham Branch N.S.S. (Loco. Men's Institute, 62, Forest Lane, Stratford, E.18.).—Tuesday, 8 p.m.: Branch Meeting, all welcome.

INDOOR

- South Place Ethical Society (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.).—Sunday, 11 a.m.: "A Psychologist Looks at Culture," Professor T. H. PEAR, M.A.

OUTDOOR

- Glasgow (Brunswick Street).—Sunday, 3 p.m.: Messrs. S. BRYDEN, E. LAWAST and J. HUMPHREY.

LONELY?—Join Victory Friendship Circle, 34, Honeywell Road, London, S.W.11. Details 1s.

★ FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF ★

BOOKS BY CHAPMAN COHEN

MATERIALISM RESTATED. 4s. 6d. Five editions of this important work have been printed and the value of the book on this important subject is enhanced by its simplicity of style.

GRAMMAR OF FREETHOUGHT. 3s. 6d. The author introduces what he considers to be the right mental approach to such fundamental Freethought subjects as: Morality, Life, Mind, Evolution, and the "Next World."

ESSAYS IN FREETHINKING. Vols. 1, 2, 3, 4. 2s. 6d. Light in form but serious in purpose. These essays are suggestive, provocative, and will start you thinking.

DETERMINISM OR FREEWILL. 2s. 6d. Fourth Edition. A short concise exposition of the philosophy of Determinism shorn of all irrelevances and confined to essentials.

GOD AND THE UNIVERSE. 3s. 6d. Third Edition. An exposition of the incompatibility of Science and Religion. Replies to Professors Eddington, Jeans, Huxley and Einstein.

BRADLAUGH AND INGERSOLL. 3s. This is a Centenary appreciation of the two great contemporaries to whose great work in the cause of Freedom of Thought the world owes a great debt.

AN ATHEIST'S APPROACH TO CHRISTIANITY. 1s. 3d. A study of Christianity from an unusual angle.

CHALLENGE TO RELIGION. 1s. 3d. Four Lectures deliberately designed to deal with the most relevant aspects of Religion.

THE OTHER SIDE OF DEATH. 2s. 6d. A keen analysis of the belief in survival from a militant Freethought point of view, with particular reference to those religious aspects that theology leaves out of account.

GOD AND EVOLUTION. 6d. Can Evolution be squared with Christianity? A scathing answer to Modernists.

THEISM OR ATHEISM. 3s. 6d. The author's classic and philosophical exposition of Atheism with an exhaustive lucid reply to the Design argument.

PRIMITIVE SURVIVALS IN MODERN THOUGHT. 3s. Here is a thorough examination of many terms used in science and philosophy which still retain the "Ghost of a God." Should be studied by every Freethinker.

CHRISTIANITY, WHAT IS IT? 2s. The Freethought answer to a plain question put to Chapman Cohen by Freethinkers and Christians alike.

GOD AND ME. 2s. 6d. Second Edition. These "letters to God" show the author as a satirist as well as a Freethought critic.

THOMAS PAINE (A PIONEER OF TWO WORLDS). 1s. 4d. A finely written appreciation of one of the greatest Englishmen of all time—as well as a citizen of the world.

PAMPHLETS FOR THE PEOPLE, Nos. 1 to 18. 2d. each. 16pp. Cloth bound in one volume 5s. In simple language these pamphlets contain the quintessence of the author's long experience of Freethought problems. No Freethinker's library should be without the complete volume.

The above works represent not merely a complete Freethought library, but the work of a lifetime of Freethought activity.

THE COMPLETE SET PRICE £2 9s. POST FREE

Add 3d. postage for single volumes.

3,000 COPIES ALREADY SOLD

THE EVOLUTION OF THE PAPACY

by *F. A. RIDLEY*

Author of *Julian the Apostate, The Jesuits, etc.*

A clear exposition of the origins of Roman Catholicism as a world power and the part it has played in world history

Price 1/-

Stiff Cover
80 pages

Postage 1½d.

The Freethought Case simply and concisely put

Propaganda Leaflets

Ideal for distribution at meetings

Christian Ethics. Does Man Desire God? Are Christians Inferior to Freethinkers? The Beliefs of Unbelievers. What is Secularism? Do you want the Truth? Sunday Cinemas.

4-page folders 1/- per 100 from the
Gen. Sec. N.S.S. 41, Gray's Inn Road.

Back numbers of the FREETHINKER can also be had for distribution

Have You Got Your

NSS HANDBOOK

Yet?

No Freethinker should be without it
Packed with useful and vital information

Tithes, Secular Funerals, Withdrawal of Children from Religious Instruction in Schools, Constitution of the NSS, etc.

32 pages

Post Free 7d.

From all Booksellers or direct from the

PIONEER PRESS