

**THE FREETHINKER**  
**16 February 1908**

**Correspondence.**

**VERTEBRATES AND INVERTEBRATES.**

**TO THE EDITOR OF "THE FREETHINKER."**

Sir,—At the very outset of the Boulter case I wrote to the leading Rationalist paper, urging them to identify themselves with the latest victim of "gentle Jesus, meek and mild." Needless to say, they "respected my point of view"—but refused to publish the letter. It will only serve them right if they are prosecuted themselves in a year or two—for cowardice in face of the enemy. The truth is that as soon as people of any shade of opinion become sleek and well-fed and respectable and secure, the manly virtues leave them. I welcome the Boulter prosecution for many reasons; not least for this, that I like to be on the side of the vertebrates. I would rather gnaw the bone of Atheism than stodge myself with the mashed potatoes of polite Rationalism.

I am glad to see that you and the N. S. S. are as ready as ever to die in the last ditch. Like R. L. Stephenson's Berserk, "I am off to die with Odin." Hitherto I have fought shy of a label, for I am at least as much a mystic as a sceptic; but for the purposes of this argument I pray you to honor me with the title of Atheist. If we should ever quarrel on the point, it will at least be not until the mangy lion of Ecclesiasticism and the jackals of Nonconformity have finally ceased to show their fangs, crimsoned with the blood of a great company of Atheist heroes and martyrs, physically overcome, spiritually invulnerable.

ALEISTER CROWLEY.