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Views and Opinions.

Atheism and Natural Order.

A correspondent asks us in what way can Atheism account for "natural order"? The question is asked in other directions with sufficient frequency to justify our attempting to answer it here, and we are quite ready to do so, with one qualification. And that is to repudiate the assumption—on which the question is based—that the Atheist is bound to have an explanation of natural order before he is justified in rejecting Theism. And that is decidedly not the case. We may, for example, be quite unable to explain the motion of a glacier; but we should be a fool, if for no other reason than that we accepted the theory that it was caused by the wriggings of an imprisoned giant. And whether the Atheist can or cannot explain natural order in no way affects the validity of his position. The explanation of Nature is part of the function of science; and where that is compelled to proclaim ignorance, the rest of the world must follow suit. It is enough for the Atheist to show that no evidence exists to justify the Theistic hypothesis. That the Atheist cannot explain does not prove that the Theist can. You do not prove the possession of knowledge by demonstrating the ignorance of your opponent; nor are you justified in building an affirmation on what is no more than a negation. After all, it is the Theist who claims to explain; it is the Atheist who rejects the explanation; and all that he is called upon to do is to show that the explanation offered neither fits nor explains the facts.

* * *

What is Natural Order?

What is it that is meant, or what ought we to mean, by such an expression as "Natural Order"? In this connection Natural Law and Natural Order are fundamentally identical—the only difference being between a fact and a description of it. But as it happens that most of our words are, as Wendell Holmes said, polarized, it follows that these words are confused in their use by their application to another and a different sphere. We speak of natural law and social law, of natural order and of social order; and a similarity of sound is taken as an equivalent of meaning. This is certainly not so in this instance. Social order is not something that is discovered; it is something that is established. Social law is not something observed,

but something decreed. In Nature we know nothing of anything that is ordered, or of any pre-determined plan. What we have is the fact of existence. All else is inference or assumption. The first solid and indisputable fact here is that what we call the order of Nature is no more than the observed succession of events and the relations we note as existing between them. To say that it is part of the order of Nature that iron should sink in water, and wood should float, is saying no more than that this is what we see occur. But if exactly the reverse happened, and had always happened, it would not in the least interfere with our speaking of natural order. The mere fact of there being an order is of no particular argumentative value to anyone. It is certainly of no value to the Theist. So long as things exist, order there is bound to be; and in saying what the order is, we are only saying that things occur. And how they could be and not occur is a question that no one has succeeded in answering in an intelligible manner.

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The Fact of Regularity.

But it may be said that this will not account for the regularity we observe in Nature. Things, it is said, not only exist; they exist in an orderly manner. The same causes always produce the same effect, and this regularity calls for some explanation. The need is more apparent than real. But we do not wish to evade the point, although we must beg our readers' patience in replying. Let us start afresh. The existence of something is admitted. Atheist and Theist are at one here. The sole question is one of disposition. And there are at least two ways in which one might account for the regularity of Nature. It might be a purely mental product. There is no doubt whatever that to some extent the human brain is a selective instrument; that is, what it knows is determined by its capacity for knowing—a truism, and yet one that contains much. We know that the fact of the colour of the world being to us what it is, is due to our perception of colour being what it is. If that were different, our colour world would be different; and in the case of colour-blindness it is different. And the same is true of our other senses. Now, assuming that the universe as it exists apart from our consciousness of it be really chaotic, that all sorts of things happen in all sorts of ways, and that the happenings of to-day bear no resemblance to the happenings of to-morrow, the fact remains that we should never know it. For the condition of human consciousness is the perception of likeness and difference. We know things as they are because we recognize them as being like things that we have before recognized and separated from the mass on account of their unlikeness to other things. And, therefore, it follows that if human consciousness is to exist, regularity must exist as an extra human fact, or the human brain must create it as the condition of its own existence. And it is at least conceivable that the human and animal brain may have evolved the capacity for perceiving things in a certain order only and of ignoring anything that occurs in

between. On this theory the brain would be like a sieve which caught within its meshes events of a certain kind or quality and allowed all others to fall through unobserved. Also on this theory the universe might be in itself completely chaotic. But, so far as we are aware of the existence of a universe, it must be "orderly." A universe that was not orderly would be to us a universe that was non-existent. * * *

What Might Prove God.

The second theory proceeds from a different point of view. Existence, as we have said, is common ground for all. We assume it in all our reasoning. But if we must take existence for granted, regularity or order follows as a prime condition of thinking about the universe at all. Indeed, so far as the Theist is concerned, it is not regularity, but irregularity that would establish a presumption in favour of deity. Suppose that we take existence for granted, and symbolize it by A B C D and its manifestations in consciousness as E F G H. In that case all phenomena will present themselves as varying combinations of these latter factors. And so long as we are thinking of these factors we cannot think of any alteration of E F G H unless we think of a corresponding alteration of A B C D, just as we cannot think of H₂O producing water unless we think of some alteration in the nature of the factors. From this point of view regularity is a basic condition of human thought. But suppose that within such limits as did not destroy the possibility of recognition there were to occur certain irregularities; for example, that two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen did not produce water. The immediate inference would be, not that the quality of the elements had undergone an alteration, but that some disturbing force had intervened and had thus prevented the usual phenomenon appearing. Thus, not alone does regularity in nature follow from the very nature of human thought, but an irregularity at once suggests the probability of external interference. So far as any legitimate inference can be drawn from the regularity of nature, it thus establishes a presumption in favour of Atheism rather in favour of Theism. Just as the existence of Neptune was inferred from the perturbations of other planets, so the absence of identical effects from identical causes might lead us to infer the existence of some external coercive agency.

God and Science.

* * *

Finally, it may be pointed out that a genuine science is only possible on the constant assumption that all we have to deal with in the world is constant and determinate forces. If there is a God he must not interfere. Like a constitutional monarch, he may be ornamental, but under penalty of extinction he must not be useful. God may exist but he may not work. Prevision is of the very nature of science, and that would be impossible if at every stage of our calculations we had to reckon on the possibility of interference from some almighty intelligence. Every scientific formula would have to be accompanied with the D.V. of a prayer-meeting. Whatever scientific men may profess, science itself is impossible save by a setting on one side of the Theistic idea. Moreover, if our only ground, assuming the existence of deity, is the difficulty of conceiving how natural forces can, unaided, produce all we see, we are taking up a suicidal position. For unless natural forces themselves possessed the capacity for producing the results we see around us, no amount of "Divine guidance" will secure them. "God" does not, therefore, explain natural order. Its function is not explanatory, but narcotic. It explains nothing; and does but add a wholly gratuitous difficulty to those with which we are already faced.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

New Light on an Old Problem.

Determinism or Free-Will? By Chapman Cohen. New Edition, Revised and Enlarged. The Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

It is gratifying to learn that there was a demand for a new edition of this philosophic masterpiece which was so favourably reviewed when it first appeared. The *Morning Leader* welcomed it as "a very able and clear discussion of a problem which calls for, but seldom gets, the most severely lucid handling." The Rev. Frank Ballard, D.D., M.A., B.Sc.(Lond.), pronounced it "decidedly the ablest brief statement in print of the Determinist theory" (*Christian Reality in Modern Light*, p. 210). The *Times* characterized it as "a defence of Determinism written with ability." It is not in the least surprising, therefore, that a work so enthusiastically received should be re-issued in a revised and enlarged form. Dr. Ballard's estimate of it as "the fairest and clearest philosophical statement of the Determinist position" is fully justified. The problem discussed is one of the oldest in philosophy, and admittedly one of the most difficult. The Socratic identification of virtue with knowledge, and of evil with ignorance involved of necessity the doctrine of Determinism. Aristotle's attempt to refute the argument advanced by Plato was a complete failure, with the result that the overwhelming majority of the Stoic philosophers were firm Determinists. But what is Determinism as opposed to Free-Will? In Mr. Cohen's book the answer is as follows:—

One may put the Deterministic position in a few words. Essentially it is a thoroughgoing application of the principle of causation to human nature. What Copernicus and Kepler did for the world of astronomy Determinism aims at doing for the world of psychological phenomena. Human nature, it asserts, is part and parcel of Nature as a whole, and bears to it the same relation that a part does to the whole. When the Determinist refers to the "Order of Nature" he includes all, and asserts that an accurate analysis of human nature will be found to exemplify the same principle of causation that is seen to obtain elsewhere (p. 11).

Free-will means the denial of causation in its application to man, man being, according to theology, constitutionally different from all other living beings, not merely because he occupies a higher rung in the ladder of existence, but because he possesses elements or qualities peculiar to himself, in the exercise of which he enters into personal relations with the Supreme Being, which no animal below him can do. Man, thus, stands absolutely alone in the world, and, curiously enough, there would be no virtue in his use of his peculiar faculties were he not free to neglect them, or put them to a wrong use. He is the only moral agent in the kingdom of life, but he could not be a moral agent if all his thoughts and actions were determined. Free-will is, therefore, essentially a product of theology. As our author well says:—

Whenever the discussion of the subject has assumed an acute form, it has been due to theological requirements rather than to ethical or psychological considerations. True, many other reasons have been advanced, but these have been little more than cloaks for the theological interest. Apart from theology, there does not seem any valid reason why the principle of determinism should rouse more opposition in connection with human character than it does in connection with the course of physical nature (p. 19).

Free-will was invented by theology in order to shift all responsibility for the existence of evil from the Creator to the creature. A moral agent, the divines tell us, is a being who has the privilege of choosing between good

and evil. According to this teaching, neither God nor Christ can legitimately be regarded as a moral agent simply because both are incapable of evil; but man received from his Maker a constitution that enabled him to make a deliberate choice between virtue and vice—between heaven and hell. Adam made a bad choice, with the result that his descendants lack the power to make a good one. Dr. Ballard, who has delivered innumerable lectures and published several books against Determinism, offers the following definition of Free-will, which he considers the best ever framed:—

What is meant by Free-Will is that, in all cases of voluntary action, the determination is by some kind of influence which is external to and does not form a part of the processes of empirical law; and that this influence operates not directly on our actions, but on our decision between conflicting motives, in such a manner that our actions, though the motives may be the proximate empirical causes, are ultimately determined by a form of causation which is not empirical. Finally, it is believed that this influence which is external to the universe of phenomena is individual and personal, and we identify it with ourselves, regarding it, indeed, as our only real and personal self (*Christian Reality*, p. 204).

After all, even this notorious opponent of Determinism admits that our actions "are ultimately determined by a form of causation which is not empirical," or that there *are* determining conditions, though they are not empirical. Could any statement be more absurd and fallacious? Our author aptly says:—

The whole of the argument for Free-will makes the word "free" or "freedom" the equivalent to an *absence of determining conditions*; either this, or the case for Free-will is surrendered. For if a man's decisions are in any way influenced—"influence" is here only another word for "determined"—Determinism is admitted. I need not argue whether decisions are wholly or partly determined, the real and only question being whether they are determined at all. What is called by some a limited Free-will is really only another name for unlimited nonsense (p. 25).

Mr. Cohen is at his best when dealing with objections to Determinism. The exceedingly clever and interesting writer, Mr. F. C. S. Schiller, asserts that the charge against Determinism "is not merely that it fails to do full justice to the ethical fact of responsibility, but that it utterly annihilates the moral agent." Our author replies in the following trenchant manner:—

Observe, it is part of Mr. Schiller's case against Determinism that on determinist lines everything, down to the minutest happenings, is the necessary result of all antecedent and co-operating conditions. But this being the case, if Determinism leaves no room for chance or absolute origination, how comes it that an acceptance of Determinism initiates an absolutely new thing—the destruction of morality? Surely it is coming very near the absurd to charge Determinism with breaking an unbreakable sequence. It is surely idle to credit Determinism with doing what it is impossible for it to accomplish. So far as morality is a real thing, so far as the facts of the moral life are real things, Determinism must leave them substantially unaltered (p. 51).

The volitionists fail to realize that right and wrong, good and evil, are purely relative terms. That is to say, nothing is in itself either good or bad, but only in its relations. The character of our actions is determined alone by their consequences. Mr. Cohen puts the case thus:—

Whether one is of the Utilitarian or other school of morals does not substantially affect the truth on this point. Action without consequences—assuming its possibility—would have no moral significance whatever. And consequences remain whether we accept or reject Determinism. Determinism cannot alter or regulate the

consequences of actions, it can only indicate their causes and their results (p. 53).

Equally effective is the treatment of the late William James's amusing insistence on "a moral postulate" in the form of Free-will in conjunction with Determinism as a scientific postulate. James says: "What ought to be can be, and bad acts cannot be fated, and good ones must be possible in their place." As Mr. Cohen observes, it is difficult to see what such an ambiguous statement means. This is the answer to it:—

To say that certain things "ought" to be, or that one "ought" to act in this or that particular manner, is to employ common expressions, and, within limits, relevant and intelligible expressions. But "ought" here clearly stands for no more than ideal conception. Its reference is to the future, not to the past. It does not imply a belief that things could have resulted other than those which actually did result, but a belief that, given a suitable alteration in the conditions, different results might ensue in the future. When, for example, I say that men ought to think wisely, I do not affirm either that all men do think wisely, or that foolish men can do so without some change in their mental make up. I merely eliminate all those conditions that make for unwise thinking, leaving wise thinking as the only possible result. That is, recognizing that from different conditions different consequences will follow, in imagination, all forces that are inimical to the ideal end are eliminated. We say that no man ought to commit murder, and yet if we take as an illustration the congenital homicide, no one can assert that in his case, at least, anything but murder is possible, given favourable conditions for its perpetration. Or if it is said that congenital homicide is a purely pathological case, it may surely be asserted that the same general considerations apply to cases that are not classified as pathological. The more we know of the criminal's heredity, environment, and education, the more clearly it is seen that his deeds result from the interaction of these factors, and that these must be modified if we are reasonably to expect any alteration in his conduct (pp. 55-6).

(To be concluded.) J. T. LLOYD.

The Bounties of Booth.

The Salvation Army beats the big drum till it sounds like a German invasion. But it turns out to be only the awkward squad on a beanfeast.—G. W. Footc.

THAT Mr. William Booth, the tradesman, cuts a much braver figure in the imagination of the educated public than "General" Booth, the apostle of "Blood and Fire," is unfortunate enough. Yet none is to blame for it but the founder of the Salvation Army himself. Most men recoil from the notoriety which is thrust upon them, but William Booth complacently invited publicity, and no hurt that others did him can compare to the injury that he did himself wilfully.

This is shown in the pages of Mr. Harold Begbie's *William Booth, Founder of the Salvation Army* (Macmillan), which throws a fierce searchlight upon a queer personality that repels rather than fascinates. Like Spurgeon, he was only partly educated, and was earning his living at an age when other boys were at school. At thirteen, William Booth was an assistant in a pawnbroker's shop in Nottingham. At the age of twenty, he was combining preaching with pawnbroking, and soon after he devoted himself entirely to the religious work of popularizing lost ideas. With the instincts of a born tradesman, throughout his career he never lost sight of the three brass balls. From the beginning he deemed it wise to run his own show. The necessity of advertisement was always apparent to him, but in rivalry with Barnum he preferred to bill his hoardings for himself.

Mr. Begbie writes enthusiastically enough of his hero, but he cannot help showing the clay feet of the god.

Booth's love-letters to Catherine Mumford are among the most extraordinary ever written. The abject want of humour and the colossal vanity combine to make him incapable of understanding how poor a figure he makes. It is the style which is the man, that style which is not to be paralleled out of the choicest specimens of Baboo or the immortal Portuguese conversation book. To place these wooden love-letters is not easy. The references to linseed-tea, shirts, bathing, medicine, sermons, globules, and other wearisome things, read almost like Mr. Samuel Pickwick's letters to his landlady, quoted with so much unctiousness in court by Sergeant Buzfuz. Booth's love-letters are not the utterance of a man who could not love, but of a man who could not write. Poor Catherine Mumford! In reading these auctioneer's catalogues, she was never in danger of blushing all over, like the young lady in Miss Yonge's novel when she reflected that her sweetheart wanted to marry her.

William Booth even got his ideas for his sermons from his sweetheart. In one of his queer "love-letters" he writes: "I want a sermon on the Flood, one on Jonah, and one on the Judgment. Send me some bare thoughts; some clear, startling outlines. Nothing moves the people like the terrific. They must have hell-fire flashed before their faces, or they will not move." Indeed, Booth's letters must be read to be believed. Mark you, this wooden-headed shopman is held up to the admiration of the public as one of the most "spiritually minded" men of his generation. Such are the delusions of Orthodoxy, fostered by the sycophantic press of England, which is the meanest and most contemptible in the world.

Booth's life-work is embodied in the Salvation Army, which is the most reactionary religious body in England, save the Roman Catholic Church. Booth's trade-mark, "Blood and Fire," proves it beyond all dispute. It is "gross as a mountain, open, palpable." In a country pretending to civilization, the motto should be abhorrent. It means that all must plunge into the blood of Christ, or fall into the fire of Hell. It may be orthodox teaching; it may even be Christ's teaching, but most certainly it is not great and beneficent work for mankind, as Booth's biographer would have us think.

As for the social work of the Salvation Army, it is exaggerated out of all proportion. Salvationists are teetotalers. What effect has this had on the country's drink bill? Salvationists are non-smokers. The sale of tobacco was never so great as during the past few years. As for the alleged restoration of thousands of wantons, it has not affected the condition of our towns, or the statistics of prostitution. Members of the Royal Family may bless the Salvation Army "shelters" and the "beneficent work" of the Hadleigh Farm Colony, but what have Trade Unionists to say on these matters? There is no "charity," Christian or otherwise, in the Emigration Department of the Salvation Army. The emigrants pay their fares, and the army officials take an emigration agency's usual commission from the railway and shipping companies.

Flamboyant Christians assert that the Salvation Army took religion into the slums. And the slums are no better for it. Indeed, the whole country is seething with industrial unrest. Working men and women are no longer to be cajoled into giving other folk money to fight an imaginary Devil. They are going to fight the greedy, Christian landlords and slum-owners. Endless repetitions of the "old, old story of Jesus" will not help men in these matters. There is something pettifogging and ridiculous about this sort of thing. And there is something of the same about General Booth the First. He was the Barnum of the Religious Circus, and he was just as much and just as little a philanthropist as his showman rival in the United States. MIMNERMUS.

Spiritualism.

V.

THE MEDIUMSHIP OF EVA C., STANISLAWA P., AND
LINDA GAZERRA.

THE phase of mediumship centring round the figures of Eva C., Stanislaw P., and Linda Gazerra is comparatively new. In the first two cases especially the phenomena are such that it is difficult to compare them with any similar occurrences recorded in the past. Eva C. is a young Polish woman who was formerly known as Marthe Beraud, and whose mediumship dates from about 1903. In 1905 she was giving materialization *seances* in Algiers, at which Professor Richet was present, who appeared quite satisfied as to the genuine character of the manifestations. These consisted in the usual spirit lights, table movements, etc., but later developed into materializations of entire human forms, chief among them being the spirit of a supposed Arab chieftain, by name Bien-Boa, who seemed to possess most of the attributes of a living person. But in 1906 and 1907 some friends of Marthe Beraud's patrons, whose suspicions had been aroused, claimed to expose the whole affair, and stated that the medium herself had confessed the fraud which she had practised. In the heated polemics which followed, the main points of the accusers were never answered, and the incident remains to this day one of a highly suspicious character.

In 1908 Marthe Beraud came to Paris, and, being now known as Eva C., began to give private sittings under the patronage of M. and Mme. Alexandre Bisson, well known in Parisian literary and artistic circles. In 1909 Dr. Schrenck Notzing, a prominent psychiatrist, joined the circle, and his account of the sittings have been published in a bulky volume, entitled *Materialisations-Phaenomene* (Munich, 1914). The manifestations now associated with this celebrated medium consist solely of materializations, and those of a very peculiar kind. The conditions are mostly of the same character as those usually observable at spiritualistic *seances*. The medium seats herself in a three-cornered cabinet of black cloth, placed in the corner of the room, the front being closed by a couple of black curtains, which are usually under the control of the medium, who opens and closes them at will. The lighting of the room is red, but in certain cases a white electric bulb has been used, over which a semi-opaque veil is hung. Several cameras have been employed in order to photograph the phenomena, and the results can be seen in Dr. Schrenck Notzing's book, and also in the rich collection published by Mme. Bisson in her own account of the sittings (*Phenomenes dits de materialisations*; Paris, 1914). After the medium has been put into a hypnotic trance by Mme. Bisson (with whom she resides), an interval usually elapses before the manifestations begin. These are almost always ushered in by groans and writhings on the part of the medium, which have been likened to those of a woman in travail, and which are invariably the prelude to the commencement of the most startling materializations. These take many different forms, and are of various consistencies. There are, for instance, vague filmy masses of white substance, which sometimes exude from the medium's mouth, and sometimes appear to come from other parts of her body. In many cases they are long and ribbon-like, seeming to have a mobility of their own, and are slimy, viscous, and damp to the touch. Very often the masses take a definite shape, and flat hands and heads appear, which look as if they had been cut out of some substance like white muslin or paper, but occasionally they are modelled, and now and then lifelike, and, according to Dr. Geley, "biologically

living" (*La Physiologie dite supranormal*; Paris, 1918; p. 13). Similar flat white hands were observed during the Carancini *seances*, but I do not remember an example hitherto recorded of the gradual development of lifelike members from a materialized substance. This is so curious that I will quote the way in which Dr. Geley actually describes it. "Suddenly," he writes,

a head appears, about 75 cms. above and to the right of Eva's head. It is a man's head, of normal size, well formed, and with the features in their usual relief. The top of the skull and the temples are perfectly materialized. The forehead is broad and high, the hair thick, short, and bristly, and of a chestnut or black colour. Below the arched eyebrows the contours shade off, and only the forehead and top of the skull can be seen clearly. The head is withdrawn for a moment behind the curtain, then it reappears as before, but the face, not completely materialized, is masked by a veil of white substance. I advance my hand; I pass my fingers through the tufted hair, and feel the bones of the skull.An instant after and everything has vanished.

Occasionally complete forms have materialized, but they have usually appeared when Mme. Bisson has been alone with the medium, and the evidence is not full enough for us to come to any satisfactory conclusion as to what actually occurred. It is, unfortunately, during these private sittings that some of the most startling manifestations are said to have taken place. For example, on January 19, 1913, Mme. Bisson avers that she saw the thumb and index finger of a hand emerge from Eva's neck, and also a heap of whitish matter exude itself from the navel.

The case of Stanislaw P. is very similar. This medium is also a Pole, of a good family, who lost her parents at an early age. The investigation of her mediumistic faculty is more difficult than in the case of Eva C., in so much that she strongly objects to any bodily examination, a fact which must seriously detract from the otherwise remarkable character of her phenomena. She wears a similar costume to Eva's during the *seance*, namely, a tight-fitting garment in one piece, fastening behind, and occasionally a veil of close net was placed over her head and hands, and securely fastened to her single garment. Nevertheless, under these conditions, a white substance like filmy lace exuded from her mouth, an excellent set of photographs being obtained, one actually showing the substance both outside and inside the veil. After the sitting the veil was examined, and its condition was seemingly as perfect as it was before the *seance* began.

The phenomena of Linda Gazerra are of a slightly different order. She is a young Italian woman, who formed the centre of a circle conducted in Turin by Dr. Enrico Imoda, who published his results, with a collection of photographs, in 1912. The principal manifestations at these *seances* were heads and busts, which have the appearance of being photographic or artistic productions, not possessing any of the lifelike qualities attributed to the materializations of Eva C. The sittings took place mostly in absolute darkness, the photos being obtained by a magnesium flash, a circumstance which, coupled with a distaste for any physical examination, especially of her abundant hair, makes the phenomena of this medium open to certain suspicion (Schrenck-Notzing, *Die Phanomene des Mediums Linda Gazerra*; Leipzig, 1912; pp. 5, 29). In some sittings, hands grasping the edge of the cabinet have appeared, and in these cases the hands of the medium are seen in the photographs to be firmly controlled by the members forming the circle. Although the phenomena of Linda Gazerra are not so remarkable as those in the presence of Eva C. and Stanislaw P., nevertheless they have certain peculiarities which we shall notice later, merely

remarking here that, in the case of the Italian medium, the Turin *seances* were conducted on the principle of as few stringent conditions as possible, Dr. Imoda wishing to do nothing which might interfere with the production of the manifestations.

I have now given a very brief account of the sort of phenomena occurring during the *seances* of these famous mediums. And let me say at once that the hypothesis that the whole thing is fraudulent is out of the question *if the phenomena took place as described*. The question we have to ask ourselves is, how far are the investigators of Eva C., Stanislaw P., and Linda Gazerra, competent to describe accurately and exactly what they see? Certainly, if we accept as true some of Mme. Bisson's extraordinary accounts of what happened when she was alone with the medium, then nothing further need be said. No fraud can make fingers come out of one neck, nor white substance spring from one's navel like vaseline coming out of a tube, and then crawl about the body as if alive, rising up and finally disappearing into one's mouth, whilst it sometimes apparently wriggles about on the carpet like a serpent. In a few instances Mme. Bisson has taken photographs of these curious manifestations. Thus, on January 19, 1913, she says that "she sees a face adorned with thick moustache and brilliant eyes which, seemingly alive, gazed at me." A photograph is taken, and the result is interesting. The picture shows the head and bust of a man nearly as far as the bottom of his tie. He wears glasses and a fashionably-cut collar, and it looks as if it had been cut out of some material such as muslin or paper. As a matter of fact, the origin of the picture has been traced, and few have attempted to deny a similarity. On the title-page of *Le Miroir*, a French illustrated paper, appeared in 1912 a portrait of President Wilson, which is the undoubted original of the materialization. The chief difference is the black moustache, which, of course, is not seen in the *Miroir* portrait, for, as everyone knows, President Wilson is clean-shaven. Nor is that all. The same similarities have been traced in other cases, and during one sitting on November 27, 1912, a photograph was taken inside the cabinet, and on the back of the materialization are seen the letters M I R O! The explanations of the medium for this extraordinary occurrence are not worthy of serious consideration, and, to many people, fraud seems the only solution. How far Mme. Bisson is a competent observer it is hard to say, and serious doubts have been cast upon Dr. Schrenck-Notzing's powers of accurate observation (see M. von Kemnitz, *Moderne Mediumforschung*, Munchen, 1914). Pieces of paper and pins have been discovered inside the cabinet and, so far as I am aware, no explanations of how they got there have ever been put forward. There can be little doubt that some of the materialized heads are in some way derived from the *Miroir* portraits, yet, in some cases, the appearance of the features seems to change during the sitting in such a way as to preclude any suggestion that they are permanent sketches or illustrations cut out of paper or thin muslin (see Schrenck-Notzing, *Der Kampf um die Materialisations Phanomene*, Munchen, 1914, tafs ii. and iii.).

In the case of Linda Gazerra, some of the faces have been similarly traced to photographs and works of art, one head especially being almost identical with one of Rubens' productions in the Louvre. This is in accordance with Linda Gazerra's own "control," Vincenzo, who says that the materializations are drawn occasionally from photographs, and they are clearer if the medium herself has seen the pictures in question. To account for these appearances the theory of "ideoplasma" has been advanced. The mediums are able

through some strange creative faculty, to give material expression to their thoughts, and having seen, say, some portraits, they reproduce them in the psychic substance. Other persons wholly reject this hypothesis, believing, like Gulat-Wellenburg, that the mediums possess the power of regurgitation, or, in other words, that the heads and hands duly prepared are swallowed and brought up again as required. Whatever theory is adopted there is no evidence, as far as I can see, that Spiritualism has anything whatever to do with the phenomena. To bring up Drs. Schrenck-Notzing and Geley, as Sir A. C. Doyle, does, as if their investigations were necessarily of a spiritualistic nature, is simply to mislead the public. We know very little about these phenomena, even assuming that they take place as described, and to repeat the parrot cry of "spirits" is like the savage, who, on seeing an automobile for the first time, immediately jumps to the conclusion that a spirit is hiding under the bonnet. For those who cry "spirits" at anything they cannot understand let me remind them of what Richet thought when he said: "It is a great pity for scientific progress that the Spiritualists, Theosophists, magnetizers and mystics, have erected so much foolish stuff upon so insecure a basis."

What is most striking in all the accounts of these manifestations is the laboured attempts of the investigators to prevent fraud, and the amusing records of the "conditions" they impose. Mme. Bisson is, I understand, averse to the presence of experts in trickery at the *seances*, and the situation is likely to remain uncertain so long as they are excluded. Why "scientific" investigators refuse to permit experts in fraud to see phenomena in which they admit its possibility I am at a loss to conceive, as once the ever-present fear of being deceived was removed they could pursue their investigations untrammelled by the constant supervision of the most petty details.

E. J. D.

Pages from Voltaire.

PLATO'S DREAM. (1756).

PLATO was a great dreamer, as many others have been since his time. He dreamt that mankind were at one time double, and that, as a punishment for their sins, they were separated into male and female.

He proved that there could be not more than five perfect worlds, because in mathematics there were only five regular bodies. His republic was one of his magnificent dreams. He dreamt, moreover, that wakefulness arises from sleep, and sleep from wakefulness, and that if you should try to look at a solar eclipse otherwise than in a bowl of water, you will certainly lose the use of your eyes. Dreams, in his time, were held in great respect.

Here is one of his dreams, which is not one of the least interesting. He imagined that the old Demiurgos, the eternal geometer, having peopled infinite space with numberless globes, wished to test the science of the genii who had witnessed his works. He gave to each of them a small portion of matter to arrange, something in the same way as Phidias and Zeuxis had given their pupils statues to chisel and pictures to paint, if I may be allowed to compare small things with great.

To Demogorgon was given for his share the lump of mould which we call the *earth*; and having shaped it, such as it appears to-day, he imagined he had produced a masterpiece. He thought he had silenced Envy herself, and expected the highest praise even from his co-workers; he was much surprised to find from his reception by them that they had a very poor opinion of his artistic skill.

One of them, more maliciously satirical than the rest, addressed him thus: "In truth, you have done wonders; you have divided your world into two parts, and so that the one should not have any communication with the other, you have placed a vast expanse of waters between the two hemispheres. The inhabitants must freeze with cold under both your poles, or be scorched to death under your equinoctial line. You have, in your wisdom, formed immense deserts of sand, for all who travel through them to die of hunger and thirst. I have no objection to your sheep, your cows, your cocks and hens; but, frankly, I have the strongest objection to your serpents and scorpions. Your onions and your artichokes are excellent things, but I cannot see what sense there was in scattering poisonous plants all over the earth; except, of course, that you wanted to poison all its inhabitants. Besides, I see that you have created something like thirty different kinds of monkeys, a still greater number of dogs, and only four or five species of human beings. It is true, indeed, that you have given to the latter of these animals a something which you call Reason; but, really, this reason is a very ridiculous quality; and, indeed, is not far removed from madness. What is more, you seem not to have had much regard for your human animal, or you would not have provided him with so many enemies and so poor a defence against them, so many disorders and so few remedies, so many passions and so small a store of wisdom. Apparently, you do not wish that there should remain any great number of these animals on the earth at one time; for, without counting the dangers to which you expose them, you have so arranged matters that one day the smallpox will take for its annual toll a tenth part of the species, and the sister of this scourge will poison the very source of life in the remaining nine-tenths. And then, as if this were not enough, you have so disposed things that one half of those that survive will be occupied in going to law, and the other in cutting one another's throats. These creatures are no doubt under a great obligation to you, and it must be admitted that you have turned out a masterpiece."

Demogorgon blushed; he felt that there was not a little of moral and physical evil in his handiwork; but he maintained that there was more good than evil. "It is easy to find fault," said he; "but do you think it so easy to form an animal which should be rational, should have a free will, and yet never abuse his liberty? Do you imagine that when you have nine or ten thousand plants to cultivate, you can so easily prevent these plants from having hurtful properties? Do you imagine that with a certain quantity of water, sand, mud, and peat, you can have neither sea nor desert? Just you try to arrange the planet of Mars, my derisive friends, and you will soon see how you will get on with your two immense belts, and what a fine effect you will get at night without a moon. We should then see if your human creatures were without disorders and madness."

Presently the genii proceeded to examine the constitution of Mars, and thereupon fell foul of their sarcastic friend. The solemn genii who had moulded Saturn was not spared; his brethren, the makers of Jupiter, Mercury, and Venus, had all something to say against him.

Bulky volumes and pamphlets were written, wits exercised their ingenuity, ballads and satires were circulated, and when things began to take a bitter and ill-tempered turn the eternal Demiurgos imposed silence on all. "Your work," he said to them, "is both good and bad, because you are in yourselves both intelligent and imperfect; it will last only some hundred millions of years and then, with more experience and added wisdom, you will do better; it is my privilege, and mine alone, to create what is perfect and immortal."

This is what Plato taught his disciples. When he had ceased speaking, one of them said to him: "*And then you woke up.*"

Englished by GEO. UNDERWOOD.

Acid Drops.

There are three columns of very effective notes in *Town Topics* on the L.C.C. decision not to permit Sunday games in the parks. We don't know how long the L.C.C. and other local bodies will resist the popular demand for *moralizing* the Sunday, and we are quite sure that this official Sabbatarianism represents little more than inherited humbug so far as the mass of the people are concerned. Wherever opportunities for rational Sunday entertainments exist, they are exploited to the full. But the Churches are well organized, and thousands of people who have no belief in their teachings seem to be in deadly fear of giving them offence. And all it wants to break this influence is common sense and moral courage—two qualities that are, unfortunately, very rare.

The sheep in the Lord's pastures are not so tame as they used to be. The village priest of Aix, Aveyron, having delivered a tirade against the morals of his parishioners, a number smashed the windows of his church.

An Anglican Church committee, presided over by the Bishop of London, has reported to the House of Convocation on the subject of Crown Nominations. In this precious document fears are expressed that Crown ministers may in the future be less qualified for Church affairs than their predecessors. There is one consolation. There will never be a stronger Christian Prime Minister than Lord Beaconsfield.

For fourteen years the Anglican Church has been engaged in revising the anachronisms of the Prayer Books. They have pruned some of the savagery from the Psalter, and cut out some of the grossness in other parts of the volume, but all to little avail. The trouble of the Prayer Book is the trouble of the Christian religion. It is hopelessly out of date. The ignorance of the sixth century is altogether unacceptable in the twentieth century.

Miss E. Draper, of Worthing, has just died aged 104. At that tender age Methuselah, of Bible fame, was trundling a hoop.

The Bishop of Winchester, who is seventy-six years old, attributes his vigour to being able to sleep at any moment. Curiously, the Church, of which the Bishop is so distinguished an ornament, has also been asleep for centuries.

The Right Hon. J. R. Clynes, M.P., and Mr. Jack Edwards, M.P., were the speakers at a Brotherhood Church demonstration at Southend-on-Sea. The chairman was a Conservative magistrate and a Deputy Mayor, and the singing was led by the Salvation Army Band. In the evening meeting the Rev. H. F. Stead was the speaker, and the music was supplied by the Presbyterian Church band. No one can complain of the "Brotherhood" of such a delightful mixture, but the fraternity is very unlikely to stand a severe strain. "General" Booth's bandsmen playing the "Marseillaise" does not herald the millennium.

The Dean of Durham seems to have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, for which there is no forgiveness, in getting Dr. Jowett, a Nonconformist minister, to preach in his cathedral. For months the columns of the *Church Times* have been full of bitter denunciation of his action. One elegant writer says that "if justice is to prevail, he should be deprived of the deanery and its emoluments." Surely the cathedral ought to have been fumigated after such a disgraceful desecration!

An Edinburgh friend informs us that a new Robert Louis Stevenson Club has just been formed in that city, and many parsons are busy with it. He wonders whether they will give prominence to the following from "A Valentine's Song":—

Priest, I am none of thine, and see
In the perspective of still hopeful youth,
That Truth shall triumph over thee—
Truth to one's self—I know no other truth.
I see strange days for thee and thine, O Priest,
And how your doctrines, fallen one by one,
Shall furnish at the annual feast
The puppet-booth of fun.
Stand on your putrid ruins—stand,
White neck-cloth bigot, fixedly the same,
Cruel with all things but the hand,
Inquisitor in all things but the name.
Back, minister of Christ and source of fear—
We cherish freedom—back with thee and thine,
From this unruly time of year,
The Feast of Valentine.
Blood thou mayest spare; but what of tears?
But what of riven households, broken faith—
Bywords that cling through all men's years
And drag them surely down to shame and death?
Stand back, O cruel man, O foe of youth,
And let such men as harken not thy voice
Pass freely up the road to truth,
The King's Highway of Choice.

The Labour Mayor of Hackney, has the ambition to draw together labour and religion. At a meeting in the Town Hall he said that when on earth "Christ taught the right to a living wage." The Mayor may be a deeply pious man, but his knowledge of the Four Gospels is neither deep nor accurate. Jesus never alluded to "a living wage."

A preacher the other day exclaimed: "The only hope of the world is God," forgetting that God is not a twentieth century discovery. God is the Ancient of Days, and as revealed in Christ he has had nineteen centuries in which to redeem the world, and, so far, he has done absolutely nothing. And yet the parsons keep on predicting that in the near future he will set all things right. It is on this courage of despair that they live.

Dr. David Smith assures "G.E.B.," in his Correspondence column in the *British Weekly* for February 26, that "the Church is a perpetuation of the Incarnation," which really means that the Church is as unreal as the Virgin Birth; and it is their unreality that accounts for the utter moral impotence of both. "The Church," the Professor adds, "is the visible representative of the risen Lord"; and as the risen Lord has never given the least evidence of his existence, one does not wonder at the total failure of the Church.

The Archbishop of York (salary £10,000) declares that if it were not for the fact that he had no family responsibilities it would be impossible to maintain the venerable home that had been the residence of the archbishops for seven hundred years. The Bishop of Chester (salary £4,200) says that it is impossible to keep up his palace, and he is forced to live in a smaller residence. But why these tears in public? Have these distinguished ecclesiastics forgotten that there are mansions in heaven?

The Rev. T. L. Mackesy, preaching at Bexhill, asked what modern novelists, such as Stevenson or Weyman, would not give to know the facts which lay behind some Bible stories? Facts, forsooth! There is more fiction in the story of Eden, the yarn of Noah's Ark, and other Biblical stories, than in all the combined novels of Stevenson and Weyman.

The Rev. H. T. Chilvers has been presented with £211 and a valuable desk on leaving Ipswich for another pastorate. This brother-in-the-Lord is evidently above starvation mark.

Rev. Lewis Blood, of St. Stephens, Birmingham, is appealing for £800 or more. He complains that he is vicar of a

church with a seating capacity of 600, but the congregation numbers only twenty or thirty. So Mr. Blood is astir, and demands "dances, entertainments, etc.," in order to increase the number of attendants. One would have thought that a church of this kind might as well close its doors and have done with it. Of course, if people are generous enough to subscribe for dances, etc., the congregation may be enlarged, but one usually calls those who attend entertainments "the audience." And if Mr. Blood sets up seriously in the entertainment business there should be no need for donations. If the proper kind of performers are engaged there will be no doubt of an audience, and the people will pay for their seats. But Mr. Blood should make it clear whether he intends to run a music-hall or rebuild a church.

Scotland is going ahead. From the *Herald* we see that a discussion has just been held at Milngavie, near Glasgow, on the question of "Is Christianity True?" The debate was opened by the Rev. D. H. Hislop, who was replied to by Mr. McLeod. The *Herald* gives what appears to be a full report of the discussion, and, apparently, does full justice to Mr. McLeod's attack. That is a matter worth noting. One of these days we shall expect to see the press throwing off its mask of solemn pretence, and reporting Freethought meetings as others are reported. We congratulate Mr. McLeod on his very clear and forceful presentation of the case against Christianity.

At Ardrossan, a debate on Christianity was also held recently, in which our friend and contributor, Mr. A. Millar, was the attacker. The *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald* does not do the Freethinker the same justice as does the *Herald*, but the outline given shows that he made out a strong case against the prevailing superstition. But how Scotland is moving! And when it moves, there is little fear of its receding. The Scot doesn't hurry in his movements, but they are sure, and, so far as Christianity is concerned, they will be deadly.

"Lenin or the Lord?" was the title of a series of sermons at a Kingsway Church, London. As Artemus Ward would say, the speaker's imagination was untrammelled by any acquaintance with his subject.

Providence has no special care for churches nor parsons. Thieves broke into St. George's Cathedral, Southwark, and stole the contents of the collection-boxes and several church ornaments. At Bedford Park the house of a Baptist minister was broken into. So far, the marauders have not been struck by lightning.

In an article on "Change and the Churches," the *Evening News* (London) says: "The new age is upon us. One of the most popular and successful of the Church of England's Army Chaplain's calls himself 'Woodbine Willie.'" It sounds as if the Christian religion was ending in smoke.

Under the sign of the red triangle, the Christian religion is almost indistinguishable from a world's fair. In the Rhine Army area the Y. M. C. A. branches promote billiard and football competitions, present cinema shows, gives lectures, and pass the hat round for the glory of God.

Readers of Mr. Cohen's *Christianity and Slavery* will remember the account of the slave-ship *Brookes*, with plates illustrating the manner in which the negroes were stowed in the ship. A recent issue of the *Chief Steward and Ship Stores Gazette* contains a similar account of the *Daniell and Henery*, and its dealings in "Black Ivory." The conditions under which the slaves were carried are indicated by the note that out of 452 slaves, 173 died and were thrown overboard. In some cases, however, the mortality was much larger.

The piety of the *Daniell and Henery* was, as usual, pronounced. The 452 slaves were shipped "by God's permission, Jamaica, whom God preserve." God was beseeched to preserve and send them on a prosperous voyage, and

"to be merciful unto us and bless us and show us the light of his countenance, and be merciful unto us." But, as all who are acquainted with the history of the slave trade know, the traffic was saturated in piety from the beginning to the end. Indeed, we have yet to hear of a form of rascality that hasn't been.

The *North China Daily News* for January 1 reports that there is a growing movement in Japan against Christianity. The Buddhist Students' Association appears to be the moving spirit in this, but we imagine that Christianity can make little appeal to the people of either China or Japan. And it is quite certain that its hold on the educated classes of either country is practically nil. As a philosophic system, Buddhism is immeasurably superior to anything that Christianity has to offer, and, on the other hand, Buddhism has proved itself very attractive to many educational people who have been brought up in a thoroughly Christian environment. And the Japanese, while showing themselves ready enough to take anything in the shape of scientific knowledge that the West has had to offer, has always readily dispensed with its religion.

The truth is that whatever hold Christianity obtains over a strange people is usually due to extraneous agencies such as identification with a governing and an official class, the possession of medical knowledge—against which Christianity fought so strenuously—and the dispensation of charity among the very poor. Left to itself, Christianity could not hold its own in any country in the world. The progress of civilization is everywhere fatal to the claims of religion. That is so general that it may be taken as a law of social and intellectual development.

A tribute to a great Freethinker is paid in a new book on France, entitled *My Second Country*, written by Mr. R. Dell, a journalist who has lived there many years. He says that "the typical quality" of the French people is the "sound good sense" which characterized Voltaire.

A year's offertories at a West Ealing chapel totalled £1,400. There are thousands of churches, chapels, and tin tabernacles in this country.

The latest news of the "starving clergy." The Rev. R. J. Campbell is wintering in Jamaica. The Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs. Davidson dined with the King.

Dr. Parkes Cadman wants "a Church which is a great, living, visible, august combination, spiritualized from pole to pole, worthy of our victorious Lord." Such a Church has never existed, and the reverend gentleman knows it, just as well as he knows that his Lord is the very opposite of victorious. Parsons are adepts in the art of lying to the glory of God.

The Rev. C. L. Drawbridge, of the Christian Evidence Society, admits that the masses are not only indifferent, but many of them positively hostile, to religion. He is quite right, and the clergymen and Army chaplains who disagree with him are clearly mistaken. There is everywhere a strong feeling of opposition to supernaturalism in all its forms.

A friend sends us a "Lines of Communication Order" from our Army in the East, from which we see that there has recently been a Military Court of Inquiry concerning the destruction of "the tree of knowledge," at Kurnah. This is really too bad, considering that this was the only surviving remnant of the Garden of Eden. The authorities should have been more careful. We are surprised that the Churches have not organized the business of selling bits of the branches—but perhaps they thought the less their congregations had of the tree of knowledge the better.

Men quarrel most fiercely about what they least understand.—*Walter Savage Landor.*

O. Cohen's Lecture Engagements.

March 7, Leicester; March 14, Birmingham; March 21, Manchester; March 22 and 23, Leeds; March 28, Maccsteg; April 11, Stratford Town Hall; April 18, Swansea.

To Correspondents.

J. T. LLOYD'S LECTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—March 7, Birmingham; March 21, Abertillery; March 28, Stratford Town Hall.

F. SHEARING.—Pleased to hear from you, and also of your army experience. Your analysis of the psychology of the average soldier strikes us as being fairly accurate. Glad to have your promise of help for the cause.

A. B. MOSS.—Sorry we did not get your note until it was too late to be of use. It followed us to Scotland. Glad to have so cheering an account of your visit to Birmingham. Everywhere our movement is going ahead where it is properly looked after.

A. ALDWINKLE.—(1) Doane's *Bible Myths* (Truthseeker Co., New York) would contain most of the information you require. It is published at 12s. or 16s.; (2) a non-Christian Theism seems to us the most correct answer to your second question.

H. BLACK.—Your letter was sent on to us in Glasgow, so reached us too late for use last week.

P. WEINER.—We cannot adequately reply to your query in a paragraph. In society the action and reaction of ideas and environment are constant. Indeed, ideas are a part of the environment. Human institutions are themselves largely an embodiment of ideas, and any effective modification of the former must be achieved by an alteration in the latter.

L. S. LOVE.—We should not care to say there are no limits to the stupidities of piety, but they are certainly very elastic.

J. CRAUSHAW.—We cannot say about the printing yet. A good public library ought to give you what you require. We fancy that the publishers of the review are either Williams & Norgate, or Murray, but we are writing away from home, and cannot be sure. Book is being sent.

C. LEWIS.—Portraits of Mr. Cohen are at the moment out of print, but we are having more copies done. Mr. Cohen insists upon the one he debates with being a representative, so that he is a responsible person. Other things equal, a clergyman would be taken as a representative.

E. PARKER.—Apply to the R.P.A., 17 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, E.C.

D. STICKELLS.—(1) We do not know the story of Edison going round with a tambourine to make a collection at a Salvation Army meeting, and we should certainly require a better and more reliable authority than the *Children's Newspaper* to accept it as true. We fancy that an intelligent child might well "jibb" at such a yarn; (2) consult some of the writings of W. L. Courthorpe.

J. G. FINLAY.—One can't expect much from the press. But a very good summary of over two columns appeared in the *Sunday Mail*. We had hoped to be in Edinburgh again this winter, but other engagements prevent.

J. BREESE.—We cannot say yet if the discussion will be published. We are not the only party concerned.

T. ELMES.—Mr. Cohen did not reach London until Tuesday morning—after travelling all night from Scotland, and so was unable to attend to the matter in time.

J. J. WALKER.—Much amused and interested in your sketch, but you will appreciate our reasons for keeping it for our private enjoyment.

The Secular Society, Limited, office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

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

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

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The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office to any part of the world, post free, at the following rates, prepaid:—One year, 15s.; half year, 7s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 9d.

Sugar Plums.

There was a huge audience at the St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, to listen to the discussion on "Does Man Survive Death?" between Mr. Cohen and Mr. Horace Leaf. The discussion was followed with the closest attention, and it was pretty evident that Mr. Cohen carried the bulk of the audience with him. The sustained and hearty applause that followed the conclusion of his last speech was a revelation even to Freethinkers of the strength of our movement in Glasgow. And, from a propagandist point of view, the success of the meeting amply repaid all the work spent on its organization. In that respect the joint committee deserves every congratulation. It took a staff of about sixty stewards to manage so large a gathering, but all arrangements passed off without the slightest hitch.

There was not quite so much said about Spiritualism proper as many would have liked. But as Mr. Leaf, being on the affirmative side, opened, the course of the discussion was largely in his hands, and Mr. Cohen was compelled to follow the lines laid down. The result was that the development of the scientific attack on Spiritualism could not be fully shown, and Mr. Cohen was compelled to content himself with indications of possibilities in that direction. And we fancy enough was said to show how deadly such a criticism would prove itself. But there was no mistaking the interest, appreciation, and delight of the audience in what was said; and if another, and similar, occasion presented itself, a different course would probably be followed. Fraud and trickery no more covers all that is grouped under Spiritualism than it covers all that is grouped under the name of religion. We have to do for the residuum of genuine phenomena that have misled so many, precisely what science has already done for so many things that once received a supernaturalistic interpretation.

Reports and notices of the discussions appeared in the local papers, the fullest and fairest appearing in the *Glasgow Sunday Mail*. The question of printing the discussion is under consideration.

Mr. Lloyd had two very large and extremely enthusiastic meetings at Tonyrefail and Porth on Sunday last. On each occasion the hall was crowded to the doors, and the enjoyment of the lectures by those present was very evident. The success of the meetings was the more remarkable as they were arranged at rather short notice.

To-day (March 7) Mr. Lloyd lectures in the Repertory Theatre, Birmingham, at 7 o'clock. His subject is "Christianity in the Melting Pot," and we hope to hear that the theatre was full to overflowing. It ought to be.

We regret that we were in error in referring to Mr. W. G. Godfrey's *Burial Service* as being published at 1s. The price is 2s. 6d. Mr. Godfrey writes us that he is prepared to send copies, free, to all Secular Societies, and to readers of the *Freethinker* who are interested in the matter. Mr. Godfrey's address is 4 Talbot Place, Blackheath, S.E. We dealt with Mr. Godfrey's compilation in our views of February 22. As we were criticizing the stupid comments of the *Westminster Gazette* writer on Secular Burials, we perhaps did the little work scant justice. And even now we have space only to say that the selections are well chosen, catholic in taste, and admirably printed as a booklet.

To-day (March 7) Mr. Cohen pays Leicester a visit. On Sunday next (March 14) he lectures in Birmingham.

There is a steady and growing demand for Mr. Cohen's *Religion and Sex*, and we hear from the publisher, Mr. T. N. Foulis, that the export orders, wholesale and retail, are large. That is very gratifying to all concerned. And in spite of the announcement on the wrapper that the writer is

the Editor of the *Freethinker*, the reviews of the work have been numerous. We have already printed some of these, and from another batch to hand we select the following:—The *Westminster Review*: "It is only to be expected that a work by the editor of the *Freethinker* will provoke controversy, but Mr. Chapman Cohen has evidently devoted careful research to its preparation, and that he has made it interesting is undeniable." The *Aberdeen Journal*, in a lengthy review of the work, which it calls "a scholarly and uncommon study," says: "This is a profoundly thoughtful, scholarly book, thoroughly scientific in tone and remarkably definite in its conclusions. The student of the ultimate genesis in religion will find it worthy of careful perusal as an effort to explain—indeed, to explain away altogether—the religious idea by means of pathology." We must add that the journal does not agree with the book, but it adds that it is "able and interesting throughout." And in face of the boycott that usually obtains, so much is interesting. The *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* is to have a lengthy review of the book in its next issue.

We have no space for other comments at the moment, but we should not like to miss the *New Witness*, which, for a sample of shrieking ignorance and infuriated bigotry, is the most amusing thing we have seen for a long time. The *New Witness* is notorious for its anti-Semitism and piety, and at the end of about a column and a half the writer—a Mr. Maynard, whose stupid fury prevents his understanding what the book is about—concludes with "he that is pathological will remain pathological still—though certainly not more pathological than the dirty little Jew who has written *Sex and Religion*," his fury preventing his even getting the title right. But as the sapient Maynard—we would advise him to stick to the *N. W.*, for we should hardly think there is another journal in Britain that would open its pages to such writing—thinks nothing of Tylor or Galton, and calls Sir James Frazer "the egregious Frazer," there is perhaps little more to say, except to thank him for having given us material for a good laugh. For the world is a queer world, and is not always so full of humour as one would wish. And when we find a Christian foaming at the mouth and blackguarding a living Jew because he is interrupted in his worship of a dead one, there is a pleasant rift in the clouds that envelop a drab world.

Owing to the continued rise in the cost of paper, which is now about 400 per cent. above pre-War level, and still rising, we are again threatened with another increase in the cost of paper and books. The *Spectator* is, in future, to be 9d. instead of 6d., and it is on the carpet that newspapers generally will soon be increased in price. It looks as though to own a book will soon be an indication of affluence, and we shall have people clubbing together to take in a daily paper.

Early Christian Frauds.

VI.

(Concluded from p. 140.)

THE most important matter, from the modern point of view, with regard to the fraudulent and forged writings of the early Christians is the light which these documents shed on the intellectual and moral character of the people among whom the Gospels and other New Testament books originated. It goes almost without saying that fabulous histories, full of lying wonders, would never have been written had not the Christians of the age in which they first appeared been so deeply steeped in superstition, and of so simple and credulous a nature, as to give ready credence to such forgeries. The truth of this becomes evident when it is borne in mind that such fables would find no acceptance in Protestant countries, even among the most ignorant, at the present day.

Speaking of the fabrication of these fictitious histories, the author of *Supernatural Religion* says:—

No fable could be too gross, no invention too transparent, for their unsuspecting acceptance, if it assumed a pious form or tended to edification. No period in the history of the world ever produced so many spurious works.....False Gospels, Epistles, Acts, Martyrologies, were unscrupulously circulated, and such pious falsification was not even intended or regarded as a crime, but perpetrated for the sake of edification. It was only slowly, and after some centuries, that many of these works, once regarded with pious veneration, were excluded from the canon.

These statements can be fully proved.

That "no fable could be too gross, no invention too transparent," is in no wise an exaggeration, as will be perceived by the story fabricated of the martyrdom of the Apostle John—a story which is gravely referred to by Tertullian and Jerome as an undoubted historical event.

This apostle, it is said, when over ninety years of age, was arrested and sent to Rome, where he was sentenced to be burnt (or boiled) in a huge cauldron filled with oil, resin, and pitch. Having been stripped and assisted into the cauldron, the holy man lifted his hands to heaven and prayed, after which the executioners set fire to the piles of wood placed around. The narrative then proceeds:—

The saint felt no more pain than if he had been in a warm bath; indeed, he felt quite refreshed and strengthened. Ere long the flames set fire to the oil, and the burning mass rose high in the air, forming a transparent case of fire around the apostle. A shriek ran through the crowd. All thought he was burnt to death; but presently he stood up in the cauldron, amidst the blaze, and began to sing so sweetly, it was like the voice of an angel in glory. Everyone was astonished; but the executioners only continued to heap more wood upon the fire; and, as they did so, *the flames turned upon them and burnt them to cinders*. In due time the fire, little by little, began to sink, till it was wholly extinguished. As the crowd rushed forward they perceived that all the liquid mass had burnt or boiled away, leaving the cauldron dry. John was then helped out. He had received no harm; *not a hair was singed, nor had the smell of boiling oil or of fire come upon him*. He shone with a brightness dazzling to look upon; and this angel of light was conducted back to his prison.

The concoctor of this veracious narrative, it will be noticed, drew some of his inspiration from the story of the three men cast into the "fiery furnace" in the book of Daniel—the flames, in that story, consuming the men who threw them in, and the incombustible three coming out unharmed, without having even "the hair of their head singed" or "the smell of fire" upon them.

A similar Christian forgery, though not nearly such a vast appeal to faith, is that of the martyrdom of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. The account is given in an encyclical letter purporting to have been written by the elders of the Church of Smyrna to the other Christian Churches. The document which has come down to us contains, at the end, two notes in proof of the historicity and credibility of the narrative. These read as follows:—

Note 1.—"These things Caius transcribed from the copy of Irenæus (who was a disciple of Polycarp), having himself been intimate with Irenæus. And I, Socrates, transcribed them at Corinth from the copy of Caius. Grace be with you all."

Note 2.—"And I, again, Pionius, wrote them from the previously written copy," etc.

The Letter narrating the martyrdom is instructive as illustrating how miracles are manufactured. It contains

twenty-two paragraphs, from which I make the following extracts:—

When Polycarp had pronounced the "Amen," and so finished his prayer, those who were appointed for the purpose kindled the fire. And as the flame blazed forth in great fury, *we to whom it was given to witness it beheld a great miracle, and have been preserved that we might report to others what then took place.* For the fire, shaping itself into the form of an arch, like the sail of a ship when filled with the wind, encompassed as by a circle the body of the martyr. And he appeared within not like flesh which is burnt, but as bread that is baked, or as gold and silver glowing in a furnace.....At length, when those wicked men perceived that his body could not be consumed by the fire, they commanded an executioner to go near, and pierce him through with a dagger. And on doing this, *there came forth a dove and a great quantity of blood, so that the fire was extinguished;* and all the people wondered that there should be such a difference between the unbelievers and the elect.

A long extract from this letter is given by Eusebius in his *History* (iv. 15). Now, the miracle here narrated is far better attested than any of those recorded in the canonical Gospels; for the martyrdom is said to have taken place in the early days of Irenæus, and Caius the presbyter was one of his disciples. Irenæus also himself speaks of the martyrdom.

As we have seen, "no fable could be too gross, no invention too transparent," for acceptance by the great body of Christians, who were dependent on the few scholars among them for a narration of the "facts" which they might unhesitatingly believe.

According to Gibbon, the Christian community, before the time of Constantine, was composed, with few exceptions, of the poorest and most ignorant of the populace, and consisted chiefly of peasants, mechanics, boys, women, beggars, and slaves. This is, in some measure, corroborated by Paul, who says that in his days "not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble," were amongst the ranks of the Christians, because God had chosen "the foolish things of the world," and "the weak things of the world," and "the base things of the world and the things that are despised" to be the firmest believers in Christ (1 Cor. i. 26-28).

Irenæus, speaking of the Christians of his time who followed oral teaching only, says (Her. iii. iv. 2):—

Those who in the absence of written documents have believed this faith are barbarians, as far as our language is concerned; but as regards doctrine, manner, and tenor of life, they are, *because of faith*, very wise indeed.

This implicit belief in all the stories told by Christian propagandists is commendable, no doubt; but there are people who are so constituted that they cannot believe alleged miraculous events without something in the nature of evidence. The myths and absurdities of the Christian religion found credence only amongst the illiterate and credulous—whom Jesus not inappropriately calls "babes" (Matt. xi. 25).

ABRACADABRA.

Puritanism: A Study in Morals.

WITH the rise of petty industry and commercialism, which necessitated a breaking away from Feudalism, there appeared on the religious, the moral, and the intellectual side of life the Reformation, which was to some extent a breaking away from the great bulwark of Feudalism—the Roman Catholic Church.

Catholicism had for centuries dominated in intellectualism, in morals, and in religion. The power of the Church was—except inasmuch as her interests forced

her to adjust herself to the new economic conditions—a check upon the activities of the growing industrial class, the more wealthy of which were ultimately to obtain social, political, and economic power as the modern capitalists.

As a new intellectualism, and a particular emphasis on certain moral duties became necessary to the success of the new economic life, a more and more complete break with the Mediæval Church, on the grounds of religion, was forced upon the Reformers. This seems to have been accomplished in England, more than by any other religionists, by the Puritans.

Not that Puritanism meant entire freedom from the yoke of external authority in religion, morals, and intellectualism to all who came under its sway. In all three spheres of activity it meant the substitution of the authority of the Bible for that of the Church. An authority which was manipulated in the interests of the new aspirants to power and wealth.

The sanction of the Bible was sought for such religious doctrines as tended to weaken the power of the Church, and the same authority was appealed to for the enforcement of such moral teachings as were most suited to the requirements of the growing capitalism. Whatever moral teaching was found to be necessary in order to make the worker more easy of exploitation, a sanction for it could be discovered in the Bible.

On the economic plane, Puritanism no more improved the lot of the working class than did any other religious "ism." In many respects it made life less attractive. As J. M. Robertson says: "Puritanism worsened the life of the working classes, first by taking away their ecclesiastical holidays and guild festivals, and finally by taking all recreation out of their Sunday" (*Evolution of States*, p. 434). Doubtless the restrictions on Sunday were as much as anything in the economic interests of the Puritanical clergy.

It must not, however, be imagined that the birth of the new industrialism and commercialism took place under Puritan Reformationism alone. To again quote J. M. Robertson:—

The commercial and industrial drift of England, the resort to the mineral wealth that was to be the economic basis of later commerce and empire, the pursuit of capitalistic manufacture, the building up of a class living on interest as the privileged class of the past had lived on land monopoly—all went on under Puritanism as under Catholicism, Anglicanism, Calvinism, Lutherism (*Evolution of States*, pp. 434-435).

I have selected Puritanism as being, in English history, a good illustration of the influence of economic development upon morals as against the power of religion which is so often represented as exercising a purifying influence in moral living and as making life beautiful.

Puritanism was enshrouded in religion, and cast a dark shadow over English life for many a year.

In Puritanism we see morals handled, under stress of economic pressure, in the interests of a class with the due sanction of religious authority.

After speaking of the "profound change in the social structure from a military to an industrial basis" (*Puritanism*, p. 49), Clarence Meily says:—

A long series of purely economic virtues, each and all wholly calculated to further the general class business of accumulation, sprang into being. Such were industry, prudence, thrift, frugality, temperance, simplicity, early rising and the like (*Puritanism*, p. 50).

It must not, however, be supposed that the new economic influences working in and through Puritanism created any of these moral duties, or introduced them

into society as entirely new ideas. Economic conditions do not always create new fundamental moral habits or new basic ideas. They serve rather to emphasize, and bring into relief, moral habits which have to some extent persisted under various social conditions in the past, but under the new conditions are seen to be of greater service to the new economic development; they serve also to evoke from old basic ideas new conceptions in relation to changed conditions.

So, also, new economic conditions suppress or eliminate moral habits and ideas which have become of little use in the newly-developed form of society.

The economic factors of any form of society play a part in determining the survival or destruction of habits and ideas—moral, social, intellectual, or religious, etc.—just as the economic factors themselves are influenced for survival or destruction in the total struggle of social evolution by physical, geographical, and biological conditions.

Habits and ideas which can be adapted to new economic conditions survive, while those which cannot be so adapted perish.

The truth of the matter is that the new economic conditions did not create a new complete series of moral ideas and habits under the guise of Puritanism, but gave a new significance to old ones. Thus obedience had been given to both the Church and the Feudal lord under Feudalism, but under the growing industrialism it became more and more necessary to direct the tendency to obedience into other channels. Hence obedience to the Bible, specially interpreted, took the place of obedience to the Church; and obedience to employer or capitalist supplanted obedience to the Feudal lord.

In Puritanism we see Capitalist morals; that is, the old morals, rearranged and redirected, in their most brazen aspect and with the sanction of religion.

The series of virtues above quoted, such as industry, temperance, early rising, etc., was admirably adapted to the requirements of the early capitalists, who saw to it that all the necessary virtues were taught in Puritanical meetings with an undoubted religious ardour; the freedom to search the Scriptures being interpreted to mean, search them in the interest of capitalism.

It was much easier to exploit an industrious and temperate man than one who was the opposite, and, provided Biblical sanction could be found for these virtues, the exploitation of religious men could be carried on under the sanction of godliness. Especially so when the worker could be induced to believe that he, too, might some day, by the exercise of such virtues, be enabled to rise to the position of capitalist, or expert in exploitation. That is, if he were not in the meantime crushed to death by the rigour of the industrial system.

In this way did the religion of Puritanism work hand-in-hand with industrialism to subject the worker to exploitation by the new aspirants to wealth and social power.

The check on this is, of course, not to be found in the abolition of the virtues, but in the necessary enlightenment of the masses to enable them to see through the maze of religious mystification, so that they can work out their own social salvation by refusing to be exploited.

In spite of the disappearance of the Puritans as a distinct sect, Puritan morals spread throughout Capitalist society as being a most satisfactory aid to the exploitation of the worker.

Even to-day the more rigid aspects of Puritanical morals would be prevalent in society were it not that the wage-slave form of exploitation has become so firmly established as not to require to the same extent as in former days a special emphasis on a form of ethic most helpful to industrial and commercial wealth-seekers.

Fundamentally, the moral ideas of society are still Puritanical, as one may frequently discover by suggesting, in certain circles, a freer ethic; but considerable variation in moral habits can be allowed owing to the grip which Capitalism has obtained on our social life. In fact, many of the variations from Puritanism, in their worst forms of moral and religious hypocrisy, are the outcome of Puritanism itself, with its godliness turned in the direction of profit-making.

Still, there are yet to be seen types of the old Puritanical capitalists who, doubtless, would gladly restore the old gloomy days, if they could.

Fortunately, other forces are too strong for them; but, on the other hand, perhaps it is safe to say that, unless we begin to take our pleasures more sensibly, the reaction which is almost certain to follow the present madcap indulgence in excitement will give the Puritanically minded an opportunity to visit us with the power of their sullen habits.

That the total moral tone of society was not greatly improved by the Puritans may easily be realized by the unbiased student.

With their austerity in morals, their special dress, their dislike of art and literature of the lighter and freer kinds, their revulsion to the drama, their abolition of dancing and games, their suppression of the holiday festivals, and with their frigid Sunday, they succeeded in making life dull for the many, and in sanctifying hypocrisy.

Eaten up, as it were, by the desire for wealth, the average successful Puritan could scarce do otherwise than make a profession of religious sanctity of character while indulging in all the business subterfuges that have been transmitted to a later generation.

In a body of men who sought to curtail vice mainly in the interests of industrialism and commercialism, and under the guise of religious fanaticism, by the suppression of enlightenment and enjoyment, there could be no great improvement in morals. Hypocrisy must sooner or later reveal itself.

It is by the expansion of life in the direction of all-round enlightenment and rational enjoyment, made possible by the direction of industry and commerce in the interests of all, instead of the interests of a class, and by the abolition of religious dominance, that a true adjustment of moral ideas and ideals with moral living is to be made possible.

E. EGERTON STAFFORD.

The Calculus of Causality.

Causes are the logarithms of effects.—*Gustave le Bon.*

ANALOGY often furnishes a useful guide in scientific and philosophical inquiry, for though it proves nothing it may indicate the direction in which proof may be found, and it may render more clear and definite conceptions which before were vague and uncertain.

There have been many instances of the profitable use of analogy in the history of science. The views of Malthus regarding the pressure of population on subsistence helped to lead Darwin by a process of analogy to the theory of Natural Selection. The well-known analogy drawn by Herbert Spencer between societies and organisms afforded him a useful guide in developing his sociological theories, and tracing the evolution of the various structures and functions of communities as they advance from a simple to a complex type. The analogies drawn from the study of wave-motion in ponderable fluids led

to the theory of light as a wave-motion in an imponderable fluid. And, as a quite recent case, the comparison of the intra-atomic energies of matter with the movements of orbital revolution in planetary systems may possibly lead to fruitful results.

The conception of causation as the primordial function of substance—the energy function inherent in that ultimate existence—suggests an analogy between such a conception and the mathematical conception of function as a relationship between two series of changes, one of which is dependent on the other under an invariable law. In following up this analogy we come upon some very striking and interesting parallelisms between the notion of a function as operating between a cause and its effect, and the mathematical notion of a function as a law governing the changes in one varying quantity in correspondence with the changes in some other varying quantity. This notion is in its essence extremely simple, and may be briefly stated as follows.

If there be two variable quantities so related that throughout their variations the value of one is dependent on the value of the other in accordance with some constant and definite law, then the first quantity—the dependent variable—is said to be a function of the second—the independent variable—and the law connecting them is expressed in the form of an equation. In simple cases relating to functions of only one independent variable, this variable can be graphically represented by distances along a horizontal straight line; distances to the right of a certain fixed point being regarded as positive quantities, and those to the left of it as negative quantities. The dependent variable is then represented by vertical lines drawn from the several points representing the variations of the independent variable, positive values being given by distances above the horizontal line and negative values by distances below it. As the values of the independent variable change continuously, so also do those of the dependent variable or function, and the curve drawn through the extremities of the lines representing the function is called the “graph” of the function, while the equation which expresses the function is called the “equation of the curve.” In this equation the independent variable is usually represented by the letter x and the dependent variable by the letter y .

The gradient or slope of the curve at various points is also a definite function of the independent variable, and can be expressed by an equation in terms of that variable. Graphically it is represented by the slope of the tangent to the curve at different points. This second function is called the “derivative” of the original function, and the process of finding such derivatives is called “differentiation,” while the converse process of finding the original function when the derivative only is known is called “integration.”

In drawing our proposed analogy between the mathematical and the physical meanings of the term “function” we shall regard the independent variable as analogous to a “cause,” and the dependent variable as analogous to an “effect.” The particular causal law connecting the cause and the effect would then be analogous to the equation between the two variables, expressing the function, and the physical “phenomenon” under investigation would correspond to the mathematical “graph” or curve of the function. Thus the process of finding the

casual law governing a physical phenomenon would be analogous to the mathematical process of finding the function governing the observed changes in a dependent variable. And the aptness of the analogy becomes the more apparent when we remember that practically the whole task of physical investigation consists in the discovery of causal connections between phenomena, just as practically the whole task of higher mathematical investigation consists in the discovery of the functions which govern certain variable quantities in relation to certain other variable quantities.

Students of Mill’s “Logic” will remember that the two principal methods of scientific induction there laid down are those called by him the “Method of Agreement” and the “Method of Difference,” and he has exhaustively shown that of these two the Method of Difference is the one most confidently to be relied upon for revealing the causal relationships of phenomena. Mill has, moreover, clearly demonstrated the truth that by a rigid process of induction alone can such causal relationships be discovered, and that no mere observation of sequences, however numerous or invariable they may be—what logicians call “*Inductio per enumerationem simplicem*”—can ever prove that such sequences stand to each other as cause and effect. We shall find that our suggested analogy between a physical cause and a mathematical function illustrates this principle in a remarkable manner, and to show this parallelism as clearly as possible we will take a simple mathematical function as exemplifying a causal law.

Let us represent some physical sequence numerically by the relation that whenever the antecedent takes a certain definite value the consequent assumes some other definite value. This would correspond to the mathematical relation or function between an independent variable and its dependent variable. For instance, let us suppose that whenever the antecedent takes the value 3 the consequent takes the value 18, or briefly that when $x=3$, $y=18$.

If we suppose this physical sequence represented by the relation $x=3$, $y=18$ to be observed to hold without exception throughout human experience, it would be natural to assume the existence of some law governing the relation, and if, as is always done in the early stages of human speculation, this law be deduced from the mere frequency and invariability of this particular sequence, the relation might be assumed to be some simple and obvious one, such as that y is always six times x . This would, however, be a purely empirical generalization—an induction by simple enumeration—which would be liable to be falsified at any moment by an extended observation of the phenomenon, such as, for instance, an observation of the value assumed by y when x assumes the value 4. Here it might be discovered that the previous generalization which ascribed to y a value always six times that of x was quite at fault, for it might be found that when $x=4$ $y=48$.

The earlier generalization would accordingly have to be abandoned and some other law, covering the newly observed phenomena as well as the old ones, would have to be sought. Such a new law might suggest itself if it were observed that the new value of y was just double of what it should be under the old generalization, and hence it might be assumed that the multiplier of x was not six in every case, but successive multiples of six, so that while x had

to be multiplied by six when its value was three, it had to be multiplied by twice six when its value became four, thrice six when its value became five, and so on. But this theory might again prove to be as much at fault as the former one when the observation is extended to cases where x takes the value five, for in such cases y might be found to take the value 100 instead of 90 as it should do on the assumed theory. Thus each successive extension of the observations might falsify an earlier theory of the phenomenon and make a new theory more difficult, and hence the process of induction by simple enumeration would appear to be an utterly futile process for the discovery of causal laws—would appear, indeed, scarcely to deserve the name of induction at all.

An illustration may make the analogy clearer. Suppose that, during an early stage of culture, when a sufficiently high degree of intelligence had been developed to prompt men to seek for natural instead of supernatural explanations of physical phenomena, an attempt were made to account for some familiar occurrence such as the formation of dew. The earliest and most constant observation as to the deposition of dew would probably be that in the first place it only occurred at night, and in the second place that it occurred most frequently and most copiously on clear, starry nights, while on cloudy nights, when the stars were hidden from view, there was little or no dew. And the earliest crude conclusion drawn from this observation might easily be that the dew was in some way dependent on the stars—possibly that it fell from the stars as a thin impalpable mist when there were no intervening clouds to intercept it. This conclusion, drawn from the accumulated and unvarying experience of many ages, would be an example of induction by simple enumeration, and would correspond to the first crude conclusion formed in our numerical example given above, that the value of the dependent variable is always six times that of the independent variable, or $y=6x$.

(To be concluded.) A. E. MADDOCK.

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INDOOR.

METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Johnson's Dancing Academy, 241 Marylebone Road, near Edgware Road): 8, Mr. A. D. Howell Smith, B.A., "Christianity in the Light of Physical Science."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N.W., off Kentish Town Road): 7.30, Mr. H. Dawson Large, "The Reward for Work: To-day and To-morrow."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N. S. S. (Trade Union Hall, 30 Brixton Road, S.W., three minutes from Kennington Oval Tube Station and Kennington Gate): 7, Open Debate—"Should we Accept that which is Satisfying or that which is True?" Introduced by Mr. J. R. Duncanson. Music from 6.30.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate Street, E.C. 2): 11. C. Delisle Burns, M.A., "Private Property."

UNION OF ETHICAL SOCIETIES (Caxton Hall, Victoria Street). Wednesday, March 10, at 8, Professor Mackenzie will deliver his Presidential Address on "Ethical Religion."

OUTDOOR.

HYDE PARK: 11.30, Mr. Samuels; 3.15, Messrs. Dales Baker, and Ratcliffe.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N. S. S. (Repertory Theatre, Station Street): 7, Mr. J. T. Lloyd, "Christianity in the Melting-Pot."

GLASGOW BRANCH N. S. S. (Good Templar's Hall, 122 Ingram Street): 12.30, A Meeting of the Branch.

LEEDS SECULAR SOCIETY (Youngman's Rooms, 19 Lowerhead Row, Leeds): Every Sunday at 6.30.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, 39th Anniversary of the Opening of the Secular Hall. A Meeting will also be held at 3, and Tea served at 5. Speakers include Mr. Chapman Cohen and Mr. F. J. Gould.

MANCHESTER BRANCH N. S. S. (Co-operative Hall, Downing Street): Mr. Dan Griffiths, 3, "Education is Everything"; 6.30, "There is no Sin."

PLYMOUTH BRANCH N. S. S. (Plymouth Chambers, Drake Circus): 11, A Meeting of the Branch.

RHONDDA BRANCH N. S. S. (White Palace, Pontypridd): Mr. Ratcliffe, 2.30, "Immortality"; 6, "God and Freewill."

SOUTH SHIELDS BRANCH N. S. S. (6 Wenlock Road, Simonside): 6.30, Mr. R. Chapman, "Secular Propaganda"; Arrangements for future lectures.

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