

The
FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

EDITED BY CHAPMAN · COHEN EDITOR · 1881-1915 · G · W · FOOTE

VOL. L.—No. 17

SUNDAY, APRIL 27, 1930

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>The Magic Lamp.—The Editor</i>	257
<i>Peripatetic Preachers.—Mimnermus</i>	258
<i>Weird and Winsome Woodland Sprites.—T. F. Palmer</i>	259
<i>The Conception of Philosophy.—G. H. Taylor</i>	261
<i>Evolution of a Psychologist of Religion.—Theodore Schroeder</i>	262
<i>The Future of Religion.—W. Mann</i>	266
<i>Old Time Tropical Finance.—J. M. Stuart-Young</i>	267
<i>The Author of "Mother."—(Miss) G. Morris</i>	268
<i>The Call of the Gods.—Charles M. Beadnell</i>	269
<i>Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc.</i>	

Views and Opinions.

The Magic Lamp.

KNOWING the Roman Catholic Church in England is like knowing a tiger that has been subdued to run about one's back garden. To know the animal in its true nature one has to take it as it prowls in its native jungle with all its primitive and ferocious and cowardly instincts in active operation. So with the Roman Church. In England it is working in an environment that is largely foreign to its nature. It must profess respect for principles it detests and feign a friendship for the things it hates and would destroy at once if it could. To see the Church in its real nature one must see it at work in remote parts of Ireland, or in countries where its operations are not limited by an anti-Catholic environment, or at least where it feels itself safe to lay on one side the restraints to which elsewhere it is forced to submit.

I was reminded of this by a publication sent me some time ago by a friend in Brisbane. This is a paper issued monthly, edited by the Rev. Father Walter Cain, and issued under the authority of the Archbishop of Brisbane. The title of the paper is *Phillipinas*, and is specially concerned with the missions in the Phillipine Islands. The business of the journal appears to be the sale of "votive" lamps. These are sold to the faithful, which appears to be another name for those who are unfaithful to any stray gleams of common sense with which nature may have endowed them, and so makes them victims of one of the most ignorant impostures it is possible to conceive. The lamps are not exactly purchased, that is they are not taken away by the purchaser. What the purchaser does is to pay for the burning of one of these lamps in a Roman Catholic Church, in order to get something he desires. For five shillings the lamp will be kept burning for seven days, for 20s. they will be kept burning for a full calendar month, so that the purchaser gets the benefit of the odd day or days. The advertisement of Father Cain and the

Archbishop of Brisbane explains that you may get through the medium of the lamp relief from spiritual temptation, the return of a wayward son or daughter, relief from debt, blessings on crops, recovery from sickness, with numerous other desirable things, all for a five shilling votive lamp, the money to be sent to Father Cain of Brisbane. The votive lamp will cure anything, from corns to consumption, and from a ragged suit of clothes to sea-sickness. It is the most powerful patent medicine ever invented—and it costs the least to prepare. In fact we see no reason to doubt but that if we kept a lamp burning we might for 20s. per month increase substantially the circulation of the *Freethinker*.

* * *

Fools and Their Money . . .

Now the whole purpose of *Phillipinas* appears to be to sell Father Cain's magic lamps, with the approval of the Archbishop of Brisbane, for the paper—it extends to eighteen pages—contains nothing else save advertisements. It has about 200 testimonials to the virtues of the lamp. They range from testimonial No. 2739 to No. 2998, all ticketed and numbered like testimonials to some fake memory system or patent pill. Here are some samples:—

2744.—I know you will be pleased to learn that in less than a week after writing to you my favour was granted . . . I obtained a position, and a splendid one, in an engineer's office . . . I am sure I should not have obtained such a position if it had not been for the lamp.

2746.—In July I had four lamps lit, and all favours have been granted . . . In September I had two lamps lit. One was to get rain as our paddock was nearly all burnt out . . . We have got lovely rain. The other was to get a good buyer for the stock we had to sell, and we got the buyer within a week . . . The Votive Lamps are wonderful.

2775.—The one you lit for my niece brought luck. She got her wish—a position as soon as she left college.

2781.—I am enclosing 5s. as a thanksoffering for a great favour received, namely, a good price for our land.

2787.—Some months ago I had a Votive Lamp burnt for my special intention. I was very much in need for some money to pay debts . . . I received the money quite unexpectedly.

2795.—I am enclosing 5s. for a lamp to be lit next month for my success in my examination.

2857.—I had a bad heart and the doctors told me I would never be able to do any hard work, but since I got a lamp burnt I am completely cured.

2875.—Please find enclosed one pound note, for which kindly light a lamp in honour of St. Jude for favours received within the last few weeks. St. Jude is really wonderful.

The Traffic in Credulity.

There are yards of this kind of thing printed in the most unblushing manner, with the full approval of the Archbishop of Brisbane. The traffic is carried on quite openly, and the Rev. Father Cain and his Archbishop are treated with the greatest respect by the public men and women of Brisbane. If they lived in a back street and sold some magic belt, or mystic charm at 5s., guaranteeing that the buyer would get rain as he wanted it, or secure a good job, or sell his stock at good prices, or pass an examination, the vendors would be called rogues and vagabonds, and their customers ignorant fools. But it is done in the name of religion, for the profit of Holy Church, and that makes a world of difference. I do not wonder that so many fakirs, who recognize the risks they run if they trade as fortune tellers, set up as faith-healers and praying experts. It is an easier way of spoofing the public, and the risks are nil.

I have been dealing with Brisbane, because this shameless publication is issued there. But it should be remembered that this practice exists wherever the Roman Catholic Church is established. In England it is, of course, done in a more decorous manner, and the papers that circulate among the general public keep this aspect of Catholic activity behind the scenes as much as possible. Catholic apologists such as Mr. G. K. Chesterton and Mr. Hillaire Belloc say nothing about it in their apologetic writings, although they know full well the extent of this traffic in credulity. I should, indeed, not be surprised to find that such a good Roman Catholic as Sir James Melville, our Solicitor General, burnt something in the nature of a Votive Lamp in order to get the Blasphemy Bill defeated, and that he takes the result as a proof of the active interference of St. Ananias on behalf of the Christian faith. Masses for the purpose of getting imaginary souls out of a non-existent purgatory, but paid for to Roman Catholic priests in real money, is a very active trade wherever the Roman Church is established. Votive Lamps and consecrated (magic) candles are trades carried on in every Catholic Church as part of its regular commerce, and on the Continent it is common to see a box hanging up inside the Church, into which those in need of anything drop as much money as they feel able or inclined to spend, with a note as to what they want prayers said for. The whole is a trade as extensive as it is infamous, since it is a shameless preying on ignorance and superstition by a wealthy and powerful priesthood.

* * *

Real Religion.

In what respect do these clergy of the Roman Church differ from the hawkers of charms and amulets, who are at any moment liable to be dragged before a Christian magistrate—who may even be a Roman Catholic—and punished as a common rogue and vagabond? So far as I can see, not at all. It is useless saying that these priests believe in the magical efficacy of their candles, and lamps, and relics, and masses. Some may, but certainly some do not. And it is equally certain that some of the vendors in ordinary charms and magical cures also believe in the potency of their own nostrums. The difference does not lie in the testimony of the Roman Catholic believer to the good done by the priestly magic, because there is not a thing sold by the lay operator on behalf of which he is not able to bring scores of testimonies that are equally striking. The credulity that keeps the layman in business is the same credulity that keeps the priest at his altar looking through his list of commission which he is paid to hand on to St. Bunkum or St. Graft. Just as the Colonel's

lady and Mrs. O'Grady are the same under the skin, so the charm seller in the East End back street and the Cardinal operating in Westminster Cathedral are brothers in the same trade, vending the same goods, exploiting the same type of credulity.

But above all things, let us try to be impartial in a world where impartiality is only too rare. The Roman Church is the largest and best established fortune telling, miracle working, fool-exploiting business in the world. But there are others. In every Church, in every Synagogue, in every Mosque in the world there are, more or less, diluted examples of the same kind of thing. What is the difference between believing that St. Jude can, if you ask him, cure disease, or bring good fortune, and believing that Jesus Christ can, if you ask him, do the same things? What is the belief in the efficacy of prayer but another example of magic working, or at least a belief that someone will hear the prayers and change the order of things because he has been asked to do so? After all, the Roman Catholic Church is offering illustrations of religion in its pure state, the Protestant gives you the same religion toned down to suit the more civilized taste. Remove this element of magic-working from the minds of people, let them realize that their prayers will not alter the incidence of natural forces by a single iota, that Jesus does not miraculously "change men's hearts," that at most the belief that things are otherwise is a method of self-deception, and religion would be as dead as the Dodo. There is really only one religion in the world; but it has many forms. And the true scientist makes it his business to penetrate the form to the essential structure beneath.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Peripatetic Preachers.

"The decay of dogmatic religion is, for good or evil, one of the most important facts of the modern world."

Bertrand Russell.

"The things we boast of will one day be quoted to prove our ignorance."—Emerson.

THERE is an old proverb which says that if the mountain will not come to Mohammed he must himself go to the mountain. The old tag comes to mind in reading the Rev. R. Pyke's (of Plymouth) advice to his fellow clergymen to leave their churches and go out into the open air to preach their gospel.

This is, indeed, Spartan advice; but the occasion appears to warrant drastic action. "It can hardly be questioned," says Brother Pyke, "that our churches to-day are only half-filled." The urgency is real, for this candid avowal is made by a Nonconformist minister, and Free Church pastors rely more largely upon the alms of the faithful than the clergy of the State Church who are spoon-fed by an indulgent Legislature.

Brother Pyke is not "cracked," for there is far too much method in his madness. He even suggests that these new recruits to the band of evangelists should operate in seaside resorts, and popular "gathering places" in the country, which ought to add a new terror to existence, especially at the opening of the summer season. For Brother Pyke must be aware that already evangelists are as common at seaside places as fleas in cheap boarding houses. From John-o-Groats to Lands End leather-lunged evangelists usurp space and pollute the atmosphere at holiday resorts. That they are in earnest is plain enough, but, unfortunately, they reflect the beliefs of South Sea Islanders, which are by no means suitable for decent citizens of a civilized country in the twentieth century.

To the present horde of howling Dervishes Brother Pyke proposes to add a large number of disgruntled ministers. For that is what it amounts to, for who would willingly exchange the cheerful precincts of a church for "the key of the street," and the loan of a portable harmonium, and an umbrella in case of emergencies? To gild this most unpleasant pill Brother Pyke suggests that the new recruits should each receive £500 a year, but that is not a high price for being turned loose upon the world, with the added risk of being assassinated by the Dervishes, who have so long been accustomed to tell folks what the wild waves are saying.

It is doubtful if resident ministers, accustomed to speaking in churches, would possess brass throats enabling them to speak quite loudly in the open air. An Oxford accent is quite excellent in its way, as so many music-hall comedians have found; but it is too delicate and diverting for seriously attempting to fill the evangelist's hat with coins of the realm at an out-of-doors meeting. Furthermore, if a speaker "roars like a sucking dove," he will never inspire fear in his audience. And if he fails to do this he might as well take the next train home, for religion is a product of fear of an alleged unseen world.

Organized religion is enormously interested in promoting and augmenting fear. The historian Lecky tells us that in the *Ages of Faith*:—

"Every church was crowded with pictures representing the souls of those who had just died as literal bodies writhing with horrible contortions in a literal fire."

As late as the nineteenth century the most popular evangelist, Charles Spurgeon, preached a hell of literal fire, and flamed his fiery evangel throughout the English-speaking world. Even to-day the very foremost Christian organizations have not abated one spark of this fiery damnation. The two most powerful churches in Christendom, the Greek and also the Roman Catholic, still insist on these barbarous dogmas. The English State Church, which is sixty per cent Anglo-Catholic, plays the sedulous ape to Rome in this matter. The Salvation Army, the most virile of the Nonconformist bodies, actually blazons the words "Blood and Fire" as their "army's trademark." If Brother Pyke's dream comes true, and our seaside and holiday resorts are invaded by a horde of howling Dervishes preaching, for the usual consideration, Polynesian theological ideas, there must be every inducement for people seeking relaxation to travel to the Continent in order to escape the Chadbands and Stigginses of our own country.

This suggested new Crusade raises once more the question not only of the value of the high spiritual and moral tone of the Christian Religion, but also of the conduct of Christians themselves. These itinerant preachers voice loudly very different views to those apologetic and invertebrate statements put forward by artful defenders of their Faith in their contests with Freethinkers. In such controversy it is the fashion for the champions of Orthodoxy to explain, with oleaginous politeness, that, in attacking the barbaric doctrine of hell-fire, the intellectuals are but flogging a dead horse. That gee-gee, however, has a Biblical habit of resurrecting, and that there is plenty of kick left in that ancient animal is demonstrated by the addresses of open-air evangelists, and also by the extensive literature issued by the theological publishers.

Freethinkers who imagine that one of the oldest and most barbarous religious dogmas is losing its hold on the national mind, because the clergy appear to damn the dogma with faint praise will do well to remember that, while the old, objectionable ideas are still taught throughout the Christian World, particu-

larly to the young, the protests of the humanitarians are rigidly boycotted. Wherever the clergy retain their power they still preach a hell of literal fire and damnation. It is worthy of the followers of a creed, who, outraging the spirit of the age, pray for rain and fine weather, and for individual members of a very extensive Royal Family.

The clerical leopard does not readily part with his spots, whether caged in a building or in the open-air. Observation shows that when "at large," these evangelists tell "the old, old story," in the old, bad way, which some of us hoped had been discarded by all decently educated people. After all is said and done this continued subsidy of barbarism must stop. If you are a reading man, you will remember that many years ago it was decided by the Court of Arches that a disbelief in an alleged Devil did not invalidate a man's right to be a member of the English Church. You will also remember that Lord Westbury, in the matter of the heretical *Essays and Reviews*, in addressing the jury uttered the memorable words: "Gentlemen, your verdict kills the Devil and puts out hell-fire." The verdict of culture is now dead against Satan and his flaming abode. This is a verdict that brings relief and delectation to all except that clerical caste which uses the lever of fear to force open the doors that they may exploit their innocent brethren to the extent of hundreds of millions of money.

MIMNERMUS.

Weird and Winsome Woodland Sprites.

WHEN first visiting London our provincial cousins are apt to express astonishment at the wealth of floral life in every suburban area of our mighty metropolis. Untravelled dwellers in our murky manufacturing cities, almost invariably speak of smoky and dirty London, which they mentally picture as a vast wilderness of chimney pots, bricks and mortar. But when they discover the splendid trees, shrubs, and flowers of London's gardens, squares, and parks, and note that in addition to our noble river the capital contains what is practically open country from distant Kensington to St. James' Park at Westminster, they cease to wonder at the fact that of all giant cities of the world the death rate of greater London is the lowest.

The fondness of children for gathering flowers, and the love of plant life everywhere displayed in the adult population of urban areas, survives from a remote rural past. In folk lore and religion alike, the sacred tree is omnipresent. The oak, the elm and the ash were all sacred to the spirits. The holly bough and the mistletoe-berry—the golden bough—with various other forms of vegetation have all played their part in the religion of the race.

The oak was the mother-tree in Greek tradition, for when Zeus had destroyed the giants, an oak tree arose from the corpse of one of his slain antagonists. This first-created tree supplied man with its nutritious acorns. Probably this ancient legend dates back to a time when the cultivation of corn crops was unknown. And if we accept the testimony of Galen, the Arcadians still utilized acorns as food at a period when the more advanced Greeks cultivated cereals.

Thomas Hardy meditated over the mystery of the late autumnal blossoming of the chrysanthemum, and Tennyson pondered over the secrets of Nature locked in the heart of the flower in the crannied wall. On a footpath adjoining a wild shrubbery situated near the banks of a beautiful sheet of water, not very far from the centre of London, the notes of the nightingale

may be heard in the sweet of the year. Amid such sylvan surroundings one may appreciate the ecstasy of Keats, and the emotions which constrained Tennyson to pen his lovely lines on Philomel:—

“Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
Rings Eden thro’ the budded quicks,
O tell me where the senses mix,
O tell me where the passions meet.”

The lark ascending to the blue vault of heaven; the melodious song of the blackbird; the twice repeated notes of the thrush; the cuckoo’s cry; and when, as the evening light fades into starlit night, the music of the nightingale ravishes the senses; the bats flit through the air; and the mournful hooting of the owl combine to restore to the modern mind some dim concept of the hopes and fears that held captive the imagination of primitive man when he beheld the dark and mysterious woodlands wild.

No marvel then, that untutored man peopled the forests with a strange array of eerie existences. In many rural retreats scattered throughout Southern Britain the midsummer fairies linger, while in the more secluded areas of Scotland and Ireland many prehistoric superstitions survive among the peasantry. Even in Devonshire the fairies and their circles retain numerous adherents in bucolic regions.

In the folk lore of the forest, weird and wonderful creatures on all sides abound. Demons of every description; beneficent fairies; elves, both mischievous and amicable; and witches who were better known than trusted, made the mysterious woodlands their home. The Wood Spirits and Trolls of Scandinavia were regarded as the rebellious spirits who fought unsuccessfully against God, and were confined for their sins in the dark recesses of the damp forests.

The sovereign lord of the sylvan realm, great Pan himself reigned over a strange medley of fantastic creatures. The voice of the god of the woods was heard in the swaying of the branches, or the murmuring of the foliage. The heart of Pan, so runs the story, was set on Syrinx the Water Nymph. Pan pursued her through Arcadia to the River Ladon, and there she beseeched her sister Naiads or Nymphs to assist her in crossing the stream. The god clung to his capture, when to his mortification Syrinx became transformed into a bundle of reeds in his embrace. As the wind rustled the reeds they sent forth sweet sounds. The god then selected seven reeds to serve as pipes, and these he called Syrinx, the famous Pipes of Pan. This divinity of pastures, forests, and flocks is depicted with horns, pointed ears, the beard of a goat, a nose as crooked as Quilp’s, goats’ hooves, and a tail. His favourite tree was the fir, and doubtless the Devil of Christian mythology inherited many of his bodily attributes from the Pagan king of the woods.

Some antique tree, sadly battered in its conflict with the elements is commonly the chosen residence of the Geni or Woodland gods. In northern European lands an outstanding pine tree is the deity’s special abode, and innumerable are the stories associated with such trees. The withered tree standing desolate amid its green surroundings appears anomalous. To primitive man the dead or dying denizen of the forest owed its decrepit condition to the malign activities of the woodland sprites. Plant diseases now well known to science were then unsuspected, and any arboreal growth strange in aspect—decaying trees smitten by age or hurricane, or the lightning flash—assumed a supernatural mien. In the grey twilight darkening into night, misshapen vegetation displayed ghastly outlines and the mists that swept over the woodlands were exaggerated by fancy into mysterious ghostly powers. In rural Denmark, the belief survives that a derelict tree is in

reality an elf that wanders through the forest during the hours of darkness.

Those repulsive relics of the past, the witches and wizards, long held sway in the holy groves of early religion. When the weird witches celebrated their wild revels their musical conductor was usually Satan himself perched on a neighbouring tree. And trees that remain stationary in size, and, indeed, appear never to have altered within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, are declared to have been bewitched. This explanation was once given to the writer by a Sussex rustic regarding a dwarf holly-tree many generations old.

An infallible antidote to the baleful powers of witches is the rowan or mountain ash. The branches of this tree possess mystic properties which render impotent the most malignant spells of midnight hags who ride on broomsticks through the moonlit air. When a branch of the rowan is shapen into the sign of the cross and deposited in a churn or cheese vat the butter and cheese are amply safeguarded from the witches’ dark and sinister designs. Porteus, in his *Forest Folk Lore*, states that: “No one could be hag-ridden at night who had a branch of it in bed, and old people used to place it on their pillows to keep evil spirits and witches away, while a small piece of it carried on the person was a protection against enchantment. If a branch was brought into the house on Good Friday no witch could enter.”

Those fascinating, if elusive spirits, the fairies are diminutive creatures who hold their revels by the light of the inconstant moon. They are, as a rule, friendly towards mortals. Woods and forests are their natural abodes, and when the queen of night sits enthroned in glory in the heavens the elves and fairies, linked hand in hand, dance in a ring around the trees, and the delicate herbage, pressed down by their tiny feet, rises rapidly, and forms the emerald circles once universally regarded as fairy rings.

Like the industrious bee, the fairies loved the flowers for their honey, and made them their dwelling place. The frolicsome antics of these delicate creatures have been commemorated by the poets. Milton, Spenser, Ben Jonson, Herrick and Drayton all delighted in fairy lore. Shakespeare succumbed to the charms of these purely imaginary spirits. The affection of fairies for flowers is portrayed with matchless art by the supreme poet in the speech of Oberon, the fairy King, in “A Midsummer Night’s Dream”:—

“I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows;
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine.”

Many are the rural fancies concerning the beautiful May blossoms in relation to the aerial sprites, while the bluebell, the foxglove, and various other floral structures adorn the folk lore of fairy life. In Southern Europe the nymphs and dryads replace the fairy romances so common in the British Isles.

In countries such as England, where the landscape is serene, fairy romance is a thing of beauty. But in the more rugged environment of Scandinavia, and the Highlands, the fairy folk are associated with wild weather and other unwelcome phenomena. There the fairies are malevolent towards mankind, and betray mortals unto death itself. Many fairy folk-lorists have noted that the wood sprites of the old German forests “are more harsh, fierce, uncomely, and deformed than those of the Celtic nations which have a tendency rather towards the aerial and graceful.”

Goblins, demons and other wood and forest spirits are represented in the fairy mythology of Germany, Scandinavia, and other lands. In German forests the Waldgeister was long regarded as a common denizen

of their more mysterious recesses. These sylvan creatures differed in disposition, for some were benevolent, while others were distinctly antagonistic to humanity. Certain arboreal growths were sacred to these woodland sprites, and their permission had to be obtained before the woodman felled a tree, otherwise some serious trouble would overwhelm the evil doer.

The fairy community has been immortalized in imaginative literature, and another memorial of their former glory is contained in the exquisitely fashioned arrow-heads of prehistoric man, so long revered by the peasantry of northern countries as elf-darts and elf-bolts. These were long regarded as the implements with which the more spiteful fairies injured flocks and herds, or even human-kind. In days before science had explained the natural causation of cattle disease, the sudden illness or death of domesticated animals was in popular belief the result of the malevolent activities of the wicked elves.

T. F. PALMER.

The Conception of Philosophy.

BROADLY speaking, there are three questions which man may ask himself about the universe: What? How? and Why? The third is probably illegitimate, coming as a result of ejecting human standards into the non-loving world; but it is asked.

Comte saw the human race as endeavouring to answer such questions in three stages; the religious, the metaphysical, and the scientific. To what place, then, shall we assign philosophy? The conception of philosophy, as is well known, is seldom the same out of two different mouths. Like the term "God," it admits of a multitude of different conceptions. There are probably as many ideas of God as there are people who try to form that idea, and as many definitions of philosophy as there are thinkers who use the word. It will be our aim, in what follows, to consider the various connexions in which philosophy has been, and still is, taken, and finally to bring out, for support or criticism, a useful way in which to conceive philosophy.

With that end in view, we shall follow two main lines of development, viz. :—

A. Philosophy as the handmaid of Theology.

B. Philosophy as the handmaid of Science.

Theology was once thought to answer all three questions, especially Why? Science, as we are constantly being reminded, can only answer the How?—yet it may give an inkling of the What?

However, here goes :

A. PHILOSOPHY AS THE HANDMAID OF THEOLOGY.

The classic instance of this is the period of the Scholastics and their predecessors. There was here a very deliberate attempt to prop up the structures of traditional Christianity by the application of philosophical reasoning. Faith had to be supported by Reason, orthodox theology had to be shown to be compatible with logic. And so the Schoolmen *avowedly* conducted their philosophy for the sake of formulating Christian doctrines.

In the twelfth century there had been an outburst of intellectual activity following on that in Mohammedan Spain. Spanish scholars had introduced Aristotle into an intellectually dead Continent, and the Greek master eventually became the study of St. Thomas and his brethren. This meant that the weapons of Aristotelian logic were now at the command of monks and friars who wished to give substance to the empty Christian dogmas.

The seed fell on poor soil. The attempt to Aristotelize Christianity very often ended by Christianizing Aristotle, and the crowning achievement of the movement was the *Summum Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas, a work full of science and metaphysic now obsolete.

To the question, What is philosophy? these scholars would have given more or less the same answer. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, understood as its object the justification of the dogmas of the Christian Church, and in *Cur Deus Homo*, he endeavoured to formulate a reasonable and philosophical view of the Atonement, after having overthrown the traditional one. Later than he, Abelard endeavoured to construct a rational view of the Holy Trinity.

It was the Christian doctrines that these scholars had in mind when they applied the philosophical method. But a similar misapplication of Aristotelian logic was, of course, quite at the disposal of other creeds, and for that matter might have been used with equal validity on behalf of the survival of the Zulu Unkulunkulu or for any savage cult. As a matter of fact Mohammedan scholars had already made similar efforts. Avicenna (b. 980) had constructed a system of philosophy wherein the universe was considered as a tendency from dead matter to God, from whom all had once radiated. There was also an attempt by Averroes to reconcile Aristotle with the Koran, but this was probably a compromise with the authorities on the part of the famous heretic. Another, the Jew Avicbron (1095) was so indiscreet as to allow his philosophical reasonings to culminate in Pantheism, and was fortunate to escape with the mild punishment of social ostracism and a banned book.

In all these instances men had started with the assumptions of their religion, and had tried to fit them in with reason. Once create a belief in the theory, and the facts will follow, whether the subject be Spiritualism, Russian persecutions, or religious philosophy. It was indeed possible to make Aristotle mean anything and "anything" depended on what the particular dogmas demanded. It is noteworthy, too, that almost contemporaneously Averroes had laid emphasis on those aspects of Aristotelian logic which supported disbelief in immortality, and which questioned the existence of God, thus showing that Aristotle could be used both ways.

After the Cartesian transformation it was no longer considered the object of philosophy to justify religious dogma, but there still remained those who would postulate religious dogma before they started to philosophize. Listen to the renowned Bishop Berkley: "The aim of philosophy is to study Divine Wisdom as revealed in the laws of nature." Even Leibnitz, probably the best informed man of his day, presumed the reconciliation of philosophy and orthodox theology. And later still, in France, Victor Cousin started with the assumption that "all truth is contained in Christianity," and deplored that the Buddhist revolution had detached philosophy from religion. As the chief manager of a French college, Cousin, legislated that all professors should teach Christianity as their central doctrine. (It is such methods as this that have accounted for the scarcity of Atheist professors).

There may be some who at this stage would say "Yes, but all these cases are historical. Nothing of the sort happens to-day."

Were that true, this would not have been written. If the game was over, it could be treated as of merely historical interest. But it is not over, and here we come to the crux of what we have to say concerning Philosophy as the handmaid of Theology. Let us

take half a dozen or so of the more glaring instances of eminent contemporary philosophers (so-called) in Taylor, Webb, Sorley, Seth Pringle-Patterson, the late Jas. Ward, and the Churchmen Temple and Inge.

G. H. TAYLOR.

(To be concluded.)

Evolution of a Psychologist of Religion.

(Continued from page 251.)

ALL the generalized conclusions which had been reached so far, now needed to be further re-checked and corrected by the study of persons who are relatively orthodox, and relatively normal. At its best this involved the study of living orthodox mystics, under psychoanalytic conditions and technique. Up to the present time, no orthodox, clerical mystic has been found who is willing to submit to psychoanalysis for the sake of disproving my theory, or for the sake of testing his own, under critical conditions. The only avenue open for this test, has been the printed record of "orthodox" mystics, as to their religious experiences and the descriptions of their conception of divine love, etc. Several essays exhibit this method and its results. Thus far, all my researches had reinforced the earlier suspicion that, for the purpose of a working hypothesis for all modern religions, my findings as to Mormonism could be safely generalized.

Yet this did not solve the problem of the racial origins of religion. With this question in mind, some books on phallic worship were discovered, and I proceeded to collect about everything to be had on that subject. These books quite convinced me that sex worship is the oldest manifestation of religion, and probably the only religious worship that has left its traces on every continent. A bibliography on Phallicism, and the erotogenic interpretation of religion was published.³ Also it appeared as if phallic worship was the natural product of racial adolescence through the coming to consciousness of sexual functioning, as a mystery that demanded explanation, and received over-valuation. This reading on phallic worship was condensed into an essay suggestive of an evolutionary process, under the title: *From Phallic Worship to Secularized Sex*. The theory that, even psychologically, the individual development is a compressed recapitulation of the racial evolution had already been accepted. If phallic worship began as a manifestation of racial adolescence, then religion must still be a product of pubescence and adolescence. Research into the phenomena of conversion corroborated all this. An essay on the history and influence of adolescence in religion stated a part of the evidence. By using the questionnaire method, Professors Starbuck, Coe and other psychologists have confirmed this conclusion.

Now it also became apparent that one could not well understand religiosity, as expressed in terms of the alleged transcendental experience of the super-human or absolute, without seeing the psychology of many related factors, perhaps as different degrees of preparedness, all arranged as if in a state of becoming. I found later that Roman Catholic mystical theologians divided the process into three, or again sub-

divided it into seven different stages. Here was the picture of an evolutionary process in "spirituality." The Catholic writers expressed it as an evolution in "introversion." With my background of study in abnormal psychology, that title suggested to me a progressing morbidity, in contrast with a wholesome growth in the extroversion of interest, and in the maturing of our intellectual methods. For a psychologist, the evolution of intellectual method will be studied as a process of change in its inner (subjective) aspects. In order to formulate this process, it seemed necessary to make further researches, and on that kind of observation, my work is proceeding.⁴

In one case, this evolutionary approach to the problem led to a published evolutionary appraisal of a mystical experience. There it was found that, because the psychologic process of the introversion of interest had proceeded so far during her mystical experience. This woman was functioning under the same limitations as those which exist by virtue of the physical conditions as those which exist by virtue of the physical conditions of the prenatal state. In other words, in the most thorough mystical experience the psyche is functioning at the prenatal evolutionary level. The need for re-appraising mysticism as a whole now became more apparent. Varying degrees of mystical introversion of interest must be seen in relation to varying degrees of a morbid psychologic flight from our more vital and conscious relations to the immediate objective realities. Likewise, the different ways of explaining or rationalizing any given mystical experience must be related to varying degrees of maturity in the subjective aspect of the intellectual method that was used. So also a study must be made of institutionalized religion in relation to its influence on emotional unbalance—that is, to mental hygiene. It is especially important that we trace the influence of institutionalized religion in relation to its acceleration or retardation of the natural process of maturing our intellectual methods. It is felt that now a well defined, adequately detailed, and well supported working hypothesis has been developed, although there are published so far only a few suggestions.

Perhaps some summary of the implications and present results of this approach to religious psychology should be pointed out, before this essay is closed. During my naive agnosticism, it was believed that any sentimentalism which might be labelled "morals" had some social value. It might have been admitted also that every church had some use as the custodian and teacher of morals. Now all moral *valuations* are regarded as psycho-neurotic symptoms. From this standpoint, institutionalized religion is coming to be viewed as the greatest menace to mental hygiene—the most effective promoter and beneficiary of emotional unbalance. Those who are most afflicted with the religious temperament are always given the co-operation of many who are less afflicted, for imposing psychoneuroses upon each succeeding generation. The psycho-neurotic moralist is only a psycho-neurotic criminal in disguise. These two types of symptoms are but different aspects of a double personality, are easily interchangeable.

Therefore, institutionalized religion is undesignedly the most efficient promoter of so-called "crime" even of those "crimes" that religionists most enthusiastically denounce. Thus it is that religion, instead of presenting an issue of wisdom, or of truth, the re-

³ Bruno's Chap book, Vol. 3 (No. 2); February, 1916. *Erotogenesis of Religion*. A bibliography. Here a part of that material is listed with other matter which somewhat anticipated my own conclusion, and some of the raw material for further research.

⁴ See "Deterministic Presupposition in Psycho-Analysis." *Open Court*, Vol. 41, p. 96, February, 1927. "Psycho-Analytic Approach to Religious Experience," *Psychoanalytic Review* XVI, No. 4, October, 1929, p. 375. These essays contain a brief summary of the factors of psychologic evolution.

religious temperament, experience and profession are now thought of chiefly as problems of mental hygiene.

Obviously, one may use great erudition, as well as great ignorance, in rationalizing and justifying a morbid religious impulse or action, whether "moral" or "criminal." Similarly, ignorance, erudition, healthy-mindedness or mental morbidity may be variously and similarly combined to induce either affirmations of theology, or of agnosticism, and atheism. From the point of view of some modern psychologists, our valuation of humans is no longer controlled by their professions. Religious and anti-religious metaphysics present no issue of truth, but rather an issue of mental or of relative degrees of approach to an unascertainable "absolute truth." This in turn can be thought of as a question of the relative maturity of the underlying intellectual methods.

Both religious and anti-religious symptoms may proceed from a sick conscience. The sick religionist accepts a delusional solace for this feeling of guilt, by seeking a delusional friendship with the fantasmal powers of forgiveness. The sick anti-religionist makes a frantic emotional fight against the other fellow's delusional God, as if trying to reassure himself against a feared fantasmal divine punishment, for his guilt. So the sick religionist propitiates while the sick Atheist fights "God," both acting towards Him as if He were a delusional enemy. Where one seeks to make a friend of the vengeful God, the other would discredit or destroy Him. Both act as if to prove their omnipotence, so as to neutralize their own feeling of inadequacy. Healthy-minded people do not take any of these delusions more seriously than is necessary to evade the wrath of the deluded ones, or to make them a subject for investigation.

It was also found that no hard and fast line of demarkation existed between the religious and the non-religious. The difference is now seen as being only one of degree. At the one extreme is the most intense psychologic need for superhuman affiliation, out of which need the religious experience of "God" is created. Even this experience presents many different degrees of intensity. Aside from this there are many lesser degrees of need for "religious consolation" until we reach the fading out point where there is such a well of unified personality as has no need of religion or anything superhuman.

As seen from the psycho-evolutionary viewpoint, the highest degree of religiosity is the most complete introversion of interest, as that is found in most of the so-called "experiences of God." The actual antecedent inducement to such an introversion of interest is the morbid feeling of guilt, probably evolving unconsciously out of the pre-adolescent and pre-pubescent encounters with the problem of sex. With sexual maturing the further introversion of interest, and an increasingly effective inhibition against normal sex-functioning, may lead to endogenous psycho-sexual ecstasy. With the proper ignorance and pious suggestion this can be easily misinterpreted as being of "transcendental" origin and nature. According to ones previous preparedness, this mystical experience (the psycho-sexual ecstasy) will be interpreted in harmony with this or that orthodoxy. To maintain such ignorance about sex, and promote an extravagant guilty conscience around quite normal sexuality, is the chief function of the church. This is an efficient method for creating the hysterical need for religion and for its delusional satisfaction through religious experience. All of this will be avoided when we become concerned with the better mental hygiene. This then is a very brief outline of the course of my development of the theory that sexual guilt is the need for religion and a sexual ecstasy the answering assurance of the experience of God,

Through this newer psycho-genetic insight and understanding I now feel myself sufficiently prepared to accept the challenges of the more "orthodox" Christian mystics. I am still looking for some orthodox clergyman who has enjoyed the mystical "experience of God," and who has confidence that he can prove that it is not psycho-sexual in origin and nature. He needs only to give me sufficient time and co-operation for psycho-genetic self-revelation. I ask only permission to publish the result with his identity concealed. He likewise is free to publish anything he may please about me or my method, without concealing my identity. Between us we may thus make a valuable contribution, either to science or to religion. What mystical clergyman will take a sporting chance on the result?

THEODORE SCHROEDER.

Acid Drops.

The *Morning Post* is running a series of articles on the "Literary Merits of the Bible," written only by men who have a religious belief in the Bible. No one who reads the Bible will deny its literary merits, in its English dress. But the literary beauty of the Bible is due to its translators, not to the book itself. The Bible is not richer in imagery than other Eastern books that one might name, and if the other "sacred" books of the world had reached us in the same way as the Bible has, they might be as much praised and for identical reasons. The *Freethinker* has no reason to decry the literary beauties of the Bible, the humbug commences when we are asked to assume that the people who want the Bible to retain its position do so because of its alleged literary value, and that the literary beauty is due to the fact of its being a book which stands by itself in the world's literature.

If we mean by the English language, a language that was ever written or spoken by the English people, then we deny that the Bible is an English book at all. For the English of the Bible was never written or spoken by the people of this country—or by any other. This is a proposition that anyone can easily test by taking the language of English writers, from Chaucer onward, and contrasting it with the language of the Bible. At any time they will find they are moving in two worlds, one a world in which Bible English lives, the other a world in which the written and spoken language has its being. Our Authorized Version dates from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Let anyone take the leading writers of that day and see whether their language is that of the Bible. Or one can take the book of Homilies, written for the use of preachers, which might be expected to come nearer Bible language than any other collection. Again there is the same situation before us. More striking evidence is given in the Bible itself. For if one will read the translators' preface to the Bible, they will be reading a distinct tongue. The Bible is not English. It never was English.

The truth of the situation is that from the time that parts of the Bible were translated into English, various translators worked over the translations of their predecessors, with the result that while the language of writers and of the people underwent the development that languages undergo everywhere, Bible English travelled a road of its own, every new change marking a greater divergence from the living language around it. In the case of the Authorized Version, the translators were distinctly ordered to depart as little as possible from the style and language of previous translators. The result is that Bible English is one thing, native English is quite another.

The *Morning Post*, dealing with the series in a leading article, remarks that the Authorized Version "is not, as so many think, the creation of the forty-seven divines

who, at the bidding of James the First, toiled at it for more than seven years" . . . It was "a triumphant result of that never ending collaboration between God and Man." Bravo! What a fine thing it must be for an editor to have such profound trust in the unbreakable stupidity of those for whom he writes! The statement is worthy of the Salvation Army. But why did God take seven years doing it? A fitting way would have been for him to have sent down the complete version as he once gave Moses the law on Sinai. But he may have reflected that his earlier essay in authorship had led to so much trouble, that he would be all the better for having forty-seven parsons to keep a watchful eye on him. Still we wonder the *Morning Post* does not go the whole hog and swear that the translation came direct from God. We are quite sure that the regular supporters of the *Post* would have believed it.

A Dublin correspondent, writing to the *Daily Mail* about the negro play "The Green Pastures," regards it as a proof that God is long-suffering, because the actor taking the deity's part is not struck dead. This may be an Irish joke; if it is not, then it is a sight for the Gods that a negro can write a play, taking religion seriously, and in it, be too far advanced for the intellectual stomach of Dublin.

If there should be any signs about in the world that the Freethinker's work is done, an eye should be turned on Spain. From the *Daily Express*, we take the following as a sample of intellectual activities at the top of society:—

His Catholic Majesty (The King of Spain) will kneel to-day in Madrid before each of the chosen twelve, who will be seated with feet bare. A Court official will hold a golden dish. And the King will sprinkle a few drops of scented water over each man's feet, touching them afterwards with the silk towel that an attendant bishop will hand him.

A similar ceremony is performed in Westminster Cathedral by Cardinal Bourne.

England is put in for make-weight.

The Church of England should be thankful for small mercies, according to a correspondent in the *Daily News*. He writes:—

If the Anglo-Catholic Party were to leave the Church of England the Church would rapidly develop into a Unitarian and Modernistic Sect.

There is enough material about now to make the *Morning Post* bite its nails. Soviet Russia has given England an order for nine motor cars at £3,000 each. According to the Moscow *Izvestya* 400 guides have been trained in expectation of the arrival of 10,000 tourists from England and the United States to Soviet Russia during the summer. As a *quid pro quo*, Russian visitors might be taken round London to see a few churches and chapels converted into warehouses and thus made taxable.

Wesleyan ministers and laymen recently met to discuss the methods of Methodist evangelism. One point touched on was "the best method of approach to the modern mind." We gather that this rather puzzled the delegates. You see, none of them had a modern mind, and therefore could not visualize a method to effectively approach people who have. Apparently the delegates realized that the crude evangelistic stuff that succeeded so well with the ignorant of the past was of no use in this case. We suggest that the Lord should be beseeched to make our moderns ignorant, fearful and credulous. This granted, the way of the evangelist would indeed be smooth.

Sir Aubrey Symonds told a royal commission that: "the attitude against women is a survival of the old theory that the masculine mind is better than the feminine for educational purposes." More truly the attitude might be traced back to the influence of St. Paul. That ungallant old gentleman classified women with household chattels. And Jesus never thought highly enough of women to select any for inclusion among his

Twelve Apostles. As a preacher said the other day, the influence of Christian ideas has been very far-reaching. "'Tis true, pity 'tis . . ."

It is not generally known, says Sir Lawrence Chubb, that a Government grant is available for laying out school playing-fields. It is also not generally realized that if churches and church buildings paid rates and taxes, more State money would be available to public hospitals. Every financial privilege and gain enjoyed by the Churches means a corresponding loss to the citizens of the nation.

On the first Sunday after Easter, Wesleyan preachers have been instructed to speak on the "significance and sanctity of the Lord's Day." We presume every preacher will be too diplomatic to say that the Sabbath was made for the parson, although he may think so. He may, however, stoutly maintain that all the troubles of the present-day world are due to indifference to God's commands regarding the Sabbath—they are sent as a warning or a punishment. This excites moral indignation against the ungodly for causing the righteous to suffer also, and engenders a truly Christ-like itch to interfere with the liberty of other people to choose how Sunday shall be spent.

The following is a portion of a Good Friday sermon in a religious weekly:—

The early Church conquered paganism within three hundred years of the death of Jesus. There has never been such a triumph as the triumph of the early Church in the first three centuries . . . In three hundred years the early Churches had put down the intellect of the pagan.

A glorious victory, indeed! From its evil effects the civilized world, after another sixteen hundred years, has not yet properly recovered.

Mr. Peter Freeman, M.P. for Brecon, writes in the *Sunday Dispatch*, that he will never die. Well, well! All we can say is that the determination never to die is terribly selfish. It pays no regard to the feelings of other people. Seriously, we do not know why Mr. Freeman's desire to live for ever should be of more importance, and more certain of gratification than the desire of someone else that Mr. Freeman ought to go decently out of existence at the end of a definite period. But there it is. Mr. Freeman is certain that the Universe will be incomplete without him. Someone else thinks it will be unsatisfactory with him in it. What is God to do in such circumstances?

The Labour Government has produced its Budget, and there was a deficiency of over forty millions to make up. We have often suggested that there is a huge field for exploitation by any Government that has the courage to act. Millions of pounds of Church and Chapel property are allowed to go year after year free from rates and taxes. If one considers the valuable sites occupied by the Churches and Chapels, they may form some vague idea of the extent to which this either adds to the burdens of tax payers, or deprives the Government of a very large amount of revenue. And where the house of the parson is connected with the Church by a covered way, thus making it part of the Church building, that also is relieved of taxation. When will a Government have the courage to refuse to continue this vast endowment of religion by subjecting religious buildings to the same taxation to which other buildings are exposed?

By a majority of three, the Glasgow and South Western area of the Scotch United Free Church has passed a resolution in favour of women having equal rights with men in the Church. That is a remarkable step in reform! But it has taken the Church nearly 2000 years to achieve it. The optimists of the proposal quoted Paul, with his advice that women should keep silent in the Church? St. Paul is evidently considered out of date. But we doubt very much if this would have been the case, but for Freethinkers who did so much to make Christians ashamed of their theology. But fancy a Scotch Church with a woman in the pulpit!

National Secular Society.

THE FUNDS of the National Secular Society are now legally controlled by Trust Deed, and those who wish to benefit the Society by gift or bequest may do so with complete confidence that any money so received will be properly administered and expended.

The following form of bequest is sufficient for anyone who desires to benefit the Society by will:—

I hereby give and bequeath (*Here insert particulars of legacy*), free of all death duties to the Trustees of the National Secular Society for all or any of the purposes of the Trust Deed of the said Society, and I direct that a receipt signed by two of the trustees of the said Society shall be a good discharge to my executors for the said legacy.

Any information concerning the Trust Deed and its administration may be had on application.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. W. HENDERSON.—All the debates you require are now out of print, and are only to be obtained as second-hand copies. Glad to see that some newspapers are not altogether excluding letters from Freethinking readers. Your letter should do good.

R. A. MACDONALD (Johannesburg).—Very pleased to hear from you again. We shall get a good rest—following the funeral—but it will not be properly appreciated by us. The Pioneer Press would cheerfully give permission for the translation of any of its publications into Afrikaan or other languages.

H. PARR.—We have for long had a desire for a series of short biographies of Freethinkers of the militant type. But we have no time for it, and so must wait for a suitable person to turn up. We are afraid that definite information to some of your questions is impossible.

F. SHALLER.—We agree with you that the sight of so many people who have ceased to believe in religion doing so little towards emancipating others. But that is no new feature in connexion with unpopular movements. It is at present rather dangerous, as the repression going on in Spain, Italy, and elsewhere proves. Thanks for your appreciation of the articles on Russia.

R. NISLEY.—We do not know of any translation of Dr. Pinet Sangle's work *La Folle de Jesus*. It is a most interesting work and a translation should prove very useful.

The "Freethinker" is supplied to the trade on sale or return. Any difficulty in securing copies should be at once reported to this office.

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

The National Secular Society's Office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London E.C.4.

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

Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

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

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

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

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

The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):—
One year, 15/-; half year, 7/6; three months, 3/9.

Sugar Plums.

The meeting of the Fellowship of Youth, at Manchester College, Oxford, turned out to be quite a pleasant affair. The meeting was held in the library of the College, and the sexes were about equally divided in number. Mr. Cohen's address was listened to with the closest attention, his points were evidently appreciated even though they did not always meet with agreement. The latter is, however, a very minor matter. But the atmosphere of youth with its constituent parts taking as quite a matter of course an uncompromising attack on the very fundamentals of all religious belief, was distinctly encouraging for the future. Those timid "respectable" Freethinkers who usually feel impelled to qualify, and discount their own dissent from orthodoxy by adopting some non-committal name, or by the use of such foolish verbiage as the prevalence of a "wistful Agnosticism" would have been benefited by being present. It was an enjoyable visit, and Mr. Cohen did not in the least regret having had to break into a few days holiday in order to be there. The lecture will probably be printed as a pamphlet.

Now that Easter is over we beg to call the attention of the members of the National Secular Society to the fact that the Annual Conference will, this year, take place in London. Resolutions for the Agenda should be sent in without delay. These may be placed on the Agenda paper either by Branches or by individual members, but must be sent at once. We should like to see delegates present from all parts of the country. There will, of course, be a good muster of London members, but the fact of the Conference being in London should attract a great many visitors from the provinces likewise. Arrangements have been made for hotel accommodation at a very moderate rate, and those who wish to avail themselves of this must write to the General Secretary stating their requirements.

Mr. Norman Angel asks:—

Germany gets along without armaments; why, then, this terror of States at small reductions?

The matter may be viewed from another angle. If Germany has to rely on the League of Nations to preserve her from militarist aggression, why cannot other States do likewise?

Mr. B. H. Lyon, captain of Gloucestershire Cricket Team, has publicly suggested that county cricket should be played on Sunday. Failing that, the county grounds might be used on Sunday by local clubs, he suggests. A shocking proposal! Every good man knows that it is better for people to be loafing about bored on Sunday, rather than looking at or taking part in wholesome outdoor games.

Helen Hope gives the Christian readers of the *Daily News* some rather dangerous advice, says she: "It's good to lose yourself now and again! Lose yourself in the world of thought and you may come back with a new idea." We know Christians who have lost themselves in that way, and have come back as regular readers of the *Freethinker*.

If for some inconceivable reason (after the lapse of an eternity which contained no terrestrial creation) the "Creator" took it into his head to produce something "new,"—which is incompatible with his supposedly fixed and immutable nature—why did he not give himself the satisfaction of doing a perfect job at the start, instead of creating man "in his own image"—a creature so imperfect that he was about halfway between the anthropoid and the present-day civilized human being.
Georges Clemenceau.

The Future of Religion.

MR. C. E. M. JOAD—well known to our readers as a stout anti-Materialist—has delivered a lecture (to the Congress of the National Union of Students, at Cambridge, in March) and written a book; both dealing with religion, and they please nobody. Every reviewer is dissatisfied, from the mildly expressed criticism of Mr. Leonard Woolf, who finds the book "rather puzzling," down to the ferocious onslaught of the Editor of the Catholic *The Universe*, who finds that Mr. Joad has, in his lecture, "displayed almost incredible ignorance of the subject on which he had undertaken to speak, as well as a flippant manner and abominable bad taste, which reminded one of the militant Atheist of Hyde Park." Consisted of a "farrago of nonsense," to which, he concludes, "We can, then, leave the Joads to indulge their ignorant and ill-mannered rhetoric."¹

So Mr. Joad can now appreciate the full force of Christian charity, and estimate at its true value the force of that religious emotion, which, in the second part of his book, he wishes to exploit for the good of humanity.

And yet, in spite of the volume of adverse criticism showered on the book, it is a good book. Not that we agree with it, we do not, at least as regards the latter part and the conclusion. By a good book we mean one that is interesting and holds the attention from start to finish, and Mr. Joad, however much we may be opposed to him, certainly has the art, or the gift, of doing that.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Joad has met with the fate in store for all those who attempt to run with the hare and follow with the hounds; they please neither the hare nor the hounds. The critics, on both sides of the question, in such cases, pick out, and concentrate their criticism upon the parts of the work which they object to, and ignore the other parts, and therefore the book receives the slings and arrows from both sides.

Mr. Joad commences his book by showing the startling decline in religious observance that has taken place during recent years. He then goes on to show how the old ideas concerning the Bible and Christianity have crashed under the impact of modern science, and with them have gone the old ideas of a future life. Says Mr. Joad:—

The Christian conception of hell it finds frankly revolting . . . Of recent years it has dropped into the background, but it is still there, a skeleton in the cupboard of the Church's teaching, whose bones can on occasion still be rattled to frighten the wicked. But the world has repudiated it, and in doing so has lost much of its respect for a religion whose appeal was addressed largely to men's fears.

And what of "the bliss unending"? It has fared little better, the modern man finding the Church's picture of an after-life as unreal as it is unattractive. A more boring sort of life for the average Englishman it would be impossible to conceive.²

With nothing to do. No hunting, fishing, shooting, or motoring. With no balls to be kicked, or played, with bats, racquets, mallets, cues, or clubs, the average Englishman would soon be praying for a second death to deliver him from the weariness and ennui of such an existence. "The concepts of heaven and hell have played no little part in discrediting Christianity," says Mr. Joad, "and a re-

ligion that is to survive will have to jettison them as obsolete lumber. Yet the Church, if it does not insist on them, does not explicitly discard them."

In a later chapter Mr. Joad discusses "How Religion Arose." According to modern scientific ideas, the great religions are "witnesses, not to the attributes of God, but to the inventive faculty of man. God is not a real being; He is the image of man, projected, enlarged, upon the empty canvas of the universe." It was out of man's loneliness and insecurity in nature that religion arose:—

Human life is immensely insignificant. It is an accidental development of matter, the chance product of forces, an accident unplanned and unforeseen in the history of the planet. A casual and unwanted passenger, it struggles across a fundamentally alien and hostile environment, in which the material and the brutal on all sides condition and determine the spiritual and the vital. One day it will finish its pointless journey with as little noise and significance as, in the person of the amoeba it began it. Until this consummation occurs, man will fare naked and forlorn through an indifferent universe, a puppet twitched into love and war by an indifferent showman who pulls the strings. His destiny is swayed by an inescapable fate; his fortunes are at the mercy of an irresponsible chance. He is a mere target for the shafts of doom. (p. 109.)

But this sense of impotence and helplessness, in the face of nature, is intolerable to us. We long for a guardian and protector: "We cannot bear to be without significance in the universe; we long to feel that we count, that somehow and to something we matter. And so we invent an immensely powerful and important personage called God, to whom we matter enormously . . . and the more powerful God is conceived to be, the more significant do we, His chief concern become." The essence of religion, according to Freud, is compensation. "It is compensation for man's loneliness in face of the vast indifference of the universe." Later on the rules and laws which govern society are attributed to God, and morality itself is declared to be of divine origin. Nor is Freud's account of the matter singular, says Mr. Joad: "On the contrary, it is one to which, with minor modifications, most psychologists and anthropologists would subscribe."

Again, religion has always been patronized, and supported, by the ruling classes, as a means of governing the labouring poor. As Mr. Joad points out:—

Society, moreover, is based upon force, which its rulers employ to maintain and perpetuate the inequalities on which they thrive. To make their task easier they invoke the assistance of religion. For religion is not only a means of reconciling the individual to society; it is also, and more particularly, a device for inducing the poor and oppressed to tolerate the particular order of society which impoverishes and oppresses them. This religion becomes the instrument of the rich and the bridle of the poor. (p. 117.)

And the poor, on the whole, says Mr. Joad: "have gladly embraced the promise of celestial bliss in the next world as a compensation for the champagne and cigars they were missing in this one. Since the celestial bliss was known to be of indefinite continuance, while the champagne and cigars could not last at the most for more than a beggarly fifty years."

Religion, from this point of view, says Mr. Joad, "is a gigantic social hoax, a hoax which has been, on the whole, remarkably successful." It is, to quote the well known saying "The Opium of the People." And on the top of all this comes the crimes committed and countenanced by the Church. Says Mr. Joad: "I do not want to soil these pages with the horrors of the Church's persecuting past;

¹ *The Universe*, April 11. Leading Article, "Students and Religion."

² C. E. M. Joad, *The Present and Future of Religion*, p. 52.

suffice it to say that cruelty both more in quantity and more fiendish in quality has been inflicted by representatives of the religion of Christ (both the Roman Catholic and Protestant varieties of that religion) upon those who have ventured to disagree with them than by any other class of living creature, whether human or animal." It is a terrible record.

W. MANN.

(To be concluded.)

Old Time Tropical Finance.

In the early days of the Bank of British West Africa, there were branches only in the most important centres. Nor had "agencies" been established in towns, where it was not felt worth while to erect premises that should bear the increasingly popular initials B.B.W.A.

For many years in Onitsha, we struggled along with a little branch known as the Bank of Nigeria. This was in great measure an investment of the Niger Company's; and, in truth, the local Niger Co.'s Station Agent was also amateur Bank Manager.

The amusing feature was; in those distant days when cash was scarce, and when barter ruled the roost, that a client might have a "potential" credit balance of (shall we say?) a hundred pounds, and find the Bank possessed only of ten!

On more than one occasion I have gone round to Trainor, who was then the Manager, and presented a cheque for £50 or £60.

"Must first look in the safe, old bird," he would say.

The swinging open of the little iron door would reveal a solitary bag of a hundred pounds.

"Quite drestfully cut up, sennie," little Trainor would then declare, "but that lonely orphan must be reserved for the Niger Co.'s kernel trade to-morrow. Can't spare a bean!"

And then would begin a plaintive, "I beg you, massa!" which might or might not end in my coming away with twenty pounds out of my credit balance of ten times that sum; and all because there was not enough money to go round the Colony.

I recall one very amusing episode. A pal of mine, who was employed by a timber venture across the river on the Asaba side (and who, alas! a year later ended his life by a self-inflicted bullet wound in the neck) arrived to see me one day with a draft from his principals at Lagos for a hundred pounds. It was made payable at Lokoja—the B.B.W.A.'s nearest branch. But for all practical intents Lokoja remained as far off as the moon.

Lokoja, be it known, is a hundred and forty miles further North; but when steamers were rare visitors to our shores it meant six days' effort by canoe to reach that desired haven.

"Lend me twenty on it, till the next upward boat," Smillie begged.

I explained that Trainor was frightfully short of money; yet I knew that Smillie had fifty or sixty hungry Natives on his Mahogany Concession, waiting for their month's wages.

It was then that Smillie suggested a trip up river. I had need to visit Illah and Idah—half-way stations; so off we set in a big canoe, with a dozen Igara pullers. We went armed with a well-lined chop-box, and a case of Tennent's Beer.

What a trip that was! I had only a few shillings and "tikkies" in my pocket, which generally represent the knock-about wealth of an ordinary Man of the Sand Dunes; and Smillie hadn't a penny piece beyond the draft. Hospitality however was poured upon us at every little trading-beach of our Odessey;

and we reached Lokoja ten whole days and nights after leaving Onitsha.

Then the fun began in real earnest. There were all sorts of people to meet, and all sorts of good fellows to cajole and enliven. Not only did Smillie cash his draft—but he spent it! My half-Scotch, half-Lancashire prudence compelled me one night, when Smillie was more than ordinarily merry and bright, to "borrow" fifty pounds from him. The fate of that fifty pounds Smillie was not to know until the return journey had been nearly accomplished. Perhaps he thought I had lost it at Slippery Sam or Poker. I know that his share had gone that winged way!

All the way down river (what a contrast of mood to the upward journey!) poor Smillie was holding his head, and bemoaning his fate.

"A hundred of the best gone; and those damned labourers unpaid!" he moaned unceasingly.

It was when we were opposite Asaba that I crept to the tail-end of the canoe, revealed a kerosine case which was "supposed" to hold only yams, and lugged out the bag of fifty pounds—one thousand white shilling pieces!

"Now fork out my I.O.U. from your wallet," I demanded sternly.

Dear old Smillie's gratitude was almost farcical. He shed tears of relief; and I went back to my station feeling as happy as any chubby Boy Scout, who has done his daily Good Deed!

I cannot better illustrate the recklessness and acquired town-ignorance of the Man from the Bush than by relating what happened on one of my earliest trips home from the Coast, after a three years' absence in a lonely station. I started off with about twenty pounds; but life on board the *Tarquah* was fairly hectic; and I never like to let down the stewards.

In those iniquitous days Elder Dempsters paid their men rather shabbily; and the stewards looked toward their perquisites and gratitudes for the support of wife and family. To-day—as with all Trade Unions!—they are doubtless more sinning than sinned against!

So, within three days of Liverpool, I began to count my exchequer. Thirty-five shillings! Well, I must give the table steward half a sovereign. The bedroom steward ought to have a like amount. Then there remained the bar-room steward, the bath-room steward, the "boots" and the lanky youth who looked after the deck. Perhaps he deserved most of all; for a cool drink, when lounging back in a deck-chair, and while the moon and stars were shining, was worth all the iced libations of daylight . . .

In any event, thirty-five shillings would have to "go round." But what then about expenses ashore?

Oh, the agonies of mathematical calculation that I endured! I was as utterly oblivious of the fact that I had re-assumed the wearing of a gold watch and chain (which had been hidden at the bottom of one of my trunks during my tropical sojourn) as if they had had no existence.

So, throughout that last day on board, a pale-faced and harassed-browed Coaster "might have been seen" skulking in the rear of more wealthy fellow-passengers, as if with the intention of picking their pockets.

One man aboard, F.R.G.S., F.Z.S., and what-not-else, had been very genial to the shy youngster, who listened so enthralled to his yarns of the natural world. (I might have been twenty-three or twenty-four in those far-off days.) So I decided to tap this gentleman for a loan.

Once the resolution had been formed, I cornered him in the lounge,

"I want to do the right thing to the stewards," I told him confidently; "if you could make me a small advance until I reach Manchester, I'd be very grateful."

He absolutely glared at me, although his voice was honey-sweet when he replied.

"I make it one of the principles of my life neither to lend or to borrow," he said coldly.

Perhaps I flushed. But I was desperate. "It is only a small sum that I need," I muttered weakly. "Will you not break your rule for once?"

"How much do you need?" he asked. Then in a hurried way: "I happen to be very short myself."

"Oh, about five!" I answered with intense relief, and holding out my hand. I meant—need I say it?—five pounds.

Before I knew what was happening, Mr. F.R.G.S. had left the room. He absolutely ran from me. But I consoled myself with the thought that he had virtually promised me the advance; so I divided my thirty-five shillings to the last penny among the stewards, and went ashore.

Then began my Gethsemane. Mr. F.R.G.S. seemed deliberately to be avoiding me; and I had the task of passing my baggage through the Customs with my own hands. I could not pay any porter. The dusk was falling, and the date of our arrival happened to be a Saturday—a most worrying time to land. However, I was now becoming desperate and I soon managed to pull my fellow-passenger aside.

"I hope you haven't forgotten?" I whispered.

"Oh, ah, yes! You said five, didn't you?" he stammered.

Mutely I nodded. Mr. F.R.G.S. dived into his trousers pocket, and counted into my palm . . . five separate *shillings*!

It will be best to draw a veil over subsequent events. This is a book of anecdotes, not a biography. But I reached Manchester on Sunday afternoon, just in time to take my mother into my arms, kneading bowl and all (she was preparing the dough for potato cakes!), and to have one of the happiest evenings of my life.

When I related my troubles over the tea-table, my father's piercing blue eyes dropped to my waistcoat; and when he bellowed, "Are there no *pawnshops* in Liverpool?" I felt as foolish as the boy caught stealing apples from the family orchard!

While on this subject of "loans," I may as well add that I have had more than a bellyful of this aspect of Coast impecuniosity. Mr. Micawber's friendly advice is universally ignored; and most men with an income of twenty pounds spend the disastrous twenty pounds one shilling and one penny three-farthings. To lend to a man whom you *know* is one thing; but if the thoughtless "Coaster" allows himself to be inveigled into any of those numerous "Gin Crawls" and "Rum Saunters" that hide themselves in the purlieus of Liverpool's Water Street, St. James's Street, and near the Landing Stage arches, he is asking for an overdraft at the Bank!

What a medley of derelict humanity is there to be seen!—men who stand almost as justification for Mrs. Simonton's *Hell's Playground*, or Leo Gordon's *White Cargo*.

Poor devils! How they cringe and crawl! Some of them are so "fed-up" with the slush and mire and cold and sleet of Liverpool, and so full of the nostalgia for Africa's solitude, splendour and sunshine, danger, disease and dust (to quote one of my own poems), that they would be willing to become stowaways. But the time of the stowaway is over—especially on Elder Dempster's leviathans!

"Only half-a-crown, dear old chap!"

And while you hand over the coin, with a murmured, "Sorry it isn't *more*!" there flashes forth a glimpse of the dear old devil-may-care spirit in the swift retort:

"You are not half so sorry as I am!"

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

The Author of "Mother."

"As an implacable foe to all that is mean and paltry in the aspirations of humanity, I demand that every individual who bears a human countenance shall really be—a man."

ANYONE who has read the "Childhood" of the courageous and suffering soul who emerged finally triumphant from the darkest abyss of misery and destitution to fling his experiences into the face of a sympathetic society, will realize the impossibility of Gorky's voice being raised except in the cause of the downtrodden and the outcast. The difficulty is to see how this man without education and with so little encouragement came to establish for himself with such rapidity a world-wide reputation as a writer with beauty of form, artistic finish, and boundless strength and courage. Fully to appreciate his work we must go back to the reforms of the fifties and sixties, the abolition of serfdom in Russia, the initiation of local self-government, the breaking up of many class distinctions—all of which were tending to open up new ground and pave the way for the new thought of Russia. A vigorous literature which enlarged and enriched the literature of the world, appeared with Turgenev, Goncharov, Tolstoy and Dostoiévsky. Then followed a period of stagnation, and later further reaction with the desperate struggles of the Nihilists in the seventies and the banishment of thousands of the intellectuals to Siberia. There was, of course, a reflection of this period in the literature of Russia—and suddenly appeared Maxim Gorky standing for the new and virile element for which the earlier reforms had been the preparation. New economic conditions had been created, and a well-to-do class recruited from non-aristocratic strata, sprang up, and in addition, an industrial proletariat. Gorky, with his fervour and his cherished ideals naturally flung himself into the movement with all the force of his nature.

Alexei Maximovitch Pyeshkoff—to give him his full name—was born in 1869 at Nijni Novgorod. He lost both parents in early life, and passed a very miserable childhood. He received only a few months schooling, became apprenticed to a cobbler, and later found his way to one of the Volga steamboats, where he became employed as a scullion. It was here, through the boat's cook, with whom he became friendly, and who introduced him to the beauties of Gogol and others, that he first came to love literature. This love for reading grew, and at the age of fifteen he tried to enter Kazan University, but failed. He then took up work in a biscuit factory; this period of his life is most intimately described in "Twenty-six of us and one other."

He endured much hardship about this time wandering in Ukraine, the Crimea and the Caucasus—and from this period came "Chelkash." A little later a derelict student taught him to read and cypher, and from this time he made a point of entering his observations in a note book. Shakespeare, Goethe and Byron were studied with the utmost love and patience, and in 1893 Gorky definitely commenced to do literary work. Through the good offices of Vladimir Korolenko, a well-known editor and writer, new journals engaged him permanently on their staff, and for the first time in his life, the eking out of a bare subsistence ceased to be his first consideration. The writings of Gorky expound the new Russia, and the young minds of his native country are for ever with him. The influence of his early life and of his revolutionary sympathies is seen in all his works. He realizes that men who emerge from the ranks, and whose influence would have a refreshing and invigorating effect upon life, though gifted with energy and in-

telligence, can neither choose nor be chosen by the higher professions. He realizes to the full the falsity and the selfishness of the times.

"Senseless, pitiful and repulsive is this our existence, in which the immoderate, slavish toil of the one half, incessantly enables the other to satiate itself with bread and with intellectual enjoyments."

(Miss) G. MORRIS.

The Call of the Gods.

GREAT YAHWEH cursed, but Jesus wept.
 'Twas over Eve a blush first crept.
 "Taste just this one," the Serpent spoke,
 "The road is blocked," cried Balaam's moke.
 Old Jonah gaped in Whale's inside.
 Chrysippus¹ laughed so much he died.
 Lone Juno sulked, for fickle Zeus
 With mortal damsels played the deuce.
 Grim Saturn frowned, his brow o'ercast.
 To whirling wheel Ixion's² tied fast.
 When Mars fair Aphrodite met,
 Vulcanus trapped them in his net.³
 Apollo beamed and Pluto scowled
 Three-headed dog of Hades howled.
 Neptunus roared above the wave;
 Proteus answered from his cave.
 Cyclopes⁴ hammered neath the earth,
 Old Momus shook his sides with mirth.
 Janus looking opposite ways,
 Made coincide his "yeas" and "nays."
 From Perseus' shield Medusa⁵ glared.
 The Bull of Minos⁶ stamped and blared.
 Pan danced and piped while Satyrs leered
 The Centaurs pranced and goat-Fauns cheered.
 The Hydra monster squirmed and hissed.
 Narcissus⁷ vain, the mirror kissed.
 The love-sick goddess Echo joined
 'Till nought but voice was left behind.
 Poor eagle-torn Prometheus⁸ moaned
 And world-supporting Atlas groaned.
 The snake-tressed Furies⁹ screamed and gaggled;
 And bald-head Harpies tore and haggled.
 When Zephyr¹⁰ whistles with his breeze,
 The Dryads answer from the trees.
 All gods must bend to Cupid's will.
 He fires their blood to coo and bill.
 Dark Circe¹¹ asked the crew to dine
 Then changed them into grunting swine.
 Midst shady groves the Muses hum.
 Round frenzied Vine-God Bacchants thrum.
 Hope called from out Pandora's¹² box
 "You still can pawn the baby's socks!"
 Mermaidens chant amid the surf;
 And Fairies frolic round the turf.
 Naiads croon beside the rill
 While Oreads¹³ call from hill to hill
 Midst rocks and shoals the Sirens¹⁴ sport
 And lure to death men far from port.
 At midnight hour Banshee¹⁵ and Jinn
 Cacophonate with awful din.
 Pixy and Gnome, Goblin and Sprite
 Chatter and chirp from dusk till light.
 Were all these Gods to call together
 Men would run like hell for leather.
 Did all their voices synchronize,
 From end to end they'd rend the skies.

¹ The Stoic philosopher Chrysippus (b. B.C. 208) saw an ass drinking wine and eating figs, and the sight caused so violent a fit of laughter he died.

² Ixion seduced the goddess Juno, which so infuriated Jupiter that he ordered Mercury to tie him to an eternally revolving wheel in Hell.

³ Vulcan, husband of Venus, threw a net over the bed in which she and her lover, Mars, lay in one another's arms, and thus they were caught and exposed to the ridicule of all the gods.

⁴ Cyclopes; Giant deities, attendants of Vulcan; they forged Jupiter's thunderbolts.

⁵ Medusa, one of the three Gorgons. Her looks turned people to stone. Perseus slew her and placed her head on Minerva's shield, lent him by that goddess.

⁶ The Minotaur, also slain by Perseus.

⁷ Narcissus, a beautiful young god, who fell in love with his own reflection, and spurned the love of the goddess "Echo." He was turned into the flower that bears his name.

⁸ Prometheus, who stole fire from heaven and gave it to mortals. Jupiter ordered him to be bound to a precipice on Mount Caucasus, where an eagle was to feed upon his liver daily, the organ being renewed as fast as devoured.

⁹ The three Furies or Fates, Hell goddesses with brazen wings and snakes in place of hair.

¹⁰ Roman God of the West Wind. Dryades, Roman Tree-gods.

¹¹ The beautiful goddess of the Island of Æaea, off Italy. She entertained Ulysses for a year, but all his ship-mates were changed into swine for their voluptuousness.

¹² Pandora, the first woman made of clay by Vulcan, she had beauty and all the virtues. Forbidden to open a certain box, curiosity overcame her, and she let loose the demons of all the ills and troubles that have ever after afflicted mankind, "hope" alone remained at the bottom of the box.

¹³ Oreads were mountain nymphs.

¹⁴ Sirens, nymphs of the sea, half-woman, half-bird. Their voices were so melodious that men forgot their work and listened in rapture until captured and devoured.

¹⁵ The Banshee; a very ancient Gaelic goddess Bean-sidhe, the Woman of the Hill.

CHARLES M. BEADNELL.

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

RUSSIA AND PERSECUTION.

SIR,—I wonder if I may add a few words to the letter of Mr. A. D. Howell Smith re the religious "persecutions" of Soviet Russia. But let me state beforehand that my opinion is quite a personal one.

I am sure that, when we look into the question with an unbiassed mind, and when we are willing to be quite sincere, we must agree that this so-called persecution is a perfectly natural and logical outcome of human nature. When the religious element of a society has the upper-hand, it seems to me that it is not only duty, but also its instinct of self-preservation which will lead towards an attempt of eliminating Freethought propaganda. If you turn the tables round, and the Freethought element is the mightiest, is it not quite natural to stop all religious propaganda? After all, both sides are convinced that the opposite sides are poisonous. For my part I am convinced that religious teachings are poison for the child's growing brain. As a medical man, I know that prevention is better than cure; and, as humanity is still in that condition which makes it more than valuable to all sorts of mysterious and mad hallucinations, I think that Soviet Russia is absolutely justified in forcing its steps on sane roads. Nobody would let one's child choose freely between two roads, when one knows that one of these roads leads to a precipice! Humanity is a big baby!

W.R.S.J., M.D.

SIR,—Your articles and attitude upon Russia appear to me to be so well timed and expressed that there appears to be very little occasion for further remarks upon the subject.

Mr. Smith, however, thinks it is a splendid opportunity to express, under the guise of Freethought, an attack upon Russia, I have no recollection of similar attacks by him upon Poland, Italy, India, Egypt, etc., but then! that is different?

To adequately reply to Mr. Smith would involve political arguments not admissible in English Freethought.

Mr. Smith's conception of freedom seems to me to be *metaphysical*; while communities are governed by a State, how can there be a perfect freedom? There never

has been a state that did not forcibly suppress opinion.

The only thing for Freethinkers to do is to advocate Freethought in all countries, irrespective of our political prejudices.

Thanking you again for the eminently sane articles that remind me once again of the "Views and Opinions" during "the War to end all War."

R. TURNEY.

Society News.

LIVERPOOL (MERSEYSIDE) BRANCH N.S.S.

The Fifth Annual General Meeting of the above Branch was held on Sunday, April 6, at 18 Colquitt Street, Liverpool.

The Secretary's report indicated that during the past twelve months the Branch had been active over a wide field: over thirty outdoor meetings had been addressed by local speakers, Messrs. J. V. Shortt and P. Sherwin, and Mr. Whitehead had held over twenty meetings. Mr. Jackson had been chairman at most of these meetings. Twenty-four indoor meetings had been held. At all the meetings the sale of literature had been good. Attempts to get Freethought literature in local public libraries had been partly successful. Some good work had been done by getting local speakers invited to address outside organizations on secular topics.

One debate had been organized, Mr. Cohen representing the Branch. The financial report presented to the meeting showed an income and expenditure of about £130, and proved the Branch to have a balance of cash in hand of over £8.

The following were elected to carry on the Branch. work during the forthcoming year: President, Mr. E. Egerton Stafford; Vice-Presidents, Messrs. W. McKelvie, J. V. Shortt, C. J. Harrison and A. Jackson; Committee, Mrs. P. Ready, Mrs. A. Shortt, Mrs. M. Stafford, Miss H. Wilson, Messrs. W. J. Martin, H. Murphy, and W. T. C. Skinner.

Mr. S. R. A. Ready, 29 Sycamore Road, Waterloo, Lancs., was elected Secretary.

Messrs. E. E. Stafford and H. Murphy were elected as Auditors.

Mr. W. J. McKelvie was elected delegate to the Annual Conference.

Other business transacted included revision of Branch rules, the arrangements for 1930 outdoor propaganda, and conference motions.—S.R.A.R.

"A THOUSAND YEARS WITHOUT A BATH."

The Middle Ages was not a period when cleanliness was considered next to godliness. Indeed, many churchmen looked askance at the practice, and held total abstinence from bathing a pious mortification, of the flesh. For this and other reasons, people were probably less cleanly than they had been in heathen times. A certain English abbot thus lays down the rule for his monastic household:—

A bath should by no means be refused to a body when compelled thereto by the needs of ill-health. Let it be taken without grumbling when ordered by a physician; so that, even though a brother be unwilling, that which ought to be done for health may be done at the order of him who is set over you. Should he wish for one, however, when not advantageous, his desire is not to be gratified.

The children of Edward I. were given baths about four times a year—notably on Easter, Whitsun, and Christmas eves. In many noble households baths were even less frequent, while in humble homes they were usually quite unknown. Voltaire had much justification for his celebrated jibe at the Middle Ages as "A Thousand Years Without a Bath!"

Since lack of baths was only one aspect of the filthy, unsanitary conditions which then prevailed, there was an enormous death-rate among children of even the highest social grades. The waste of child-life was terrible, and medieval "medical science" was so grotesque that doctors probably killed as many patients as they cured.—From the "Schoolmistress" (quoted from "The Story of Youth.")

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON.

INDOOR.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 59 Finchley Road, N.W.8, near Marlborough Road Station): 11.15, Mr. H. Snell, M.P.—"The Arab and the Jew in Palestine."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road): 7.0, Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker—"Men, Morals and Machines."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, John A. Hobson, M.A.—"Sixty Years of Changing England."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree, Euston Road, N.W.1): 7.30, Lecture—"What Effect Would the Proved Existence of Spirits have on Materialism?" Mr. H. W. Seton-Karr. After the lecture and discussion a General Meeting will be held. Thursday, May 8, Social and Dance, at 101 Tottenham Court Road, 7.30 to 11.30. Admission 1s.

OUTDOOR.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.30, Mr. James Hart, A Lecture; 3.15, Messrs. E. Betts and C. E. Wood; 6.30, Messrs. C. Tuson and B. A. Le Maine and A. H. Hyatt. Freethought meetings every Wednesday at 7.30, Messrs. C. Tuson and J. Hart; every Friday, at 7.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. The *Freethinker* may be obtained during our meetings outside the Park Gates, Bayswater Road.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Kennington Road, outside Kennington Theatre): 11.30 a.m., Mr. F. P. Corrigan. Clapham Road (Stonhouse Street): 7.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S.—A members' Meeting will be held on Sunday, at Still's Restaurant, Bristol Street, to discuss the summer programme.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S. (Socialist Club, Arcade, Pilgrim Street): 3.0, Members Meeting.

OUTDOOR.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S.—Chester-le-Street (weather permitting) 8.0.—Mr. J. T. Brighton—"Religion, Russia and Persecution."

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THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.4.

The Secular Society, Ltd.

Company Limited by Guarantee.

Registered Office: 62 FARRINGTON ST., LONDON, E.C.4.

Secretary: MR. R. H. ROSETTI.

THIS Society was formed in 1898 to afford legal security to
the acquisition and application of funds for Secular purposes.

The Memorandum of Association sets forth that the
Society's Objects are:—To promote the principle that human
conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not
upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this
world is the proper end of all thought and action. To promote
freedom of inquiry. To promote universal Secular Edu-
cation. To promote the complete secularization of the State,
etc. And to do all such lawful things as are conducive to
such objects. Also to have, hold, receive, and retain any
sums of money paid, given, devised, or bequeathed by any
person, and to employ the same for any of the purposes of
the Society.

Members pay an entrance fee of ten shillings, and a
subsequent yearly subscription of five shillings.

The liability of members is limited to £1, in case the
Society should ever be wound up.

All who join the Society participate in the control of its
business and the trusteeship of its resources. It is expressly
provided in the Articles of Association that no member, as
such, shall derive any sort of profit from the Society, either
by way of dividend, bonus, or interest.

The Society's affairs are managed by an elected Board of
Directors, one-third of whom retire (by ballot), each year,
but are eligible for re-election.

Friends desiring to benefit the Society are invited to make
donations, or to insert a bequest in the Society's favour in
their wills. The now historic decision of the House of Lords
in *re Bowman and Others v. the Secular Society, Limited*, in
1927, a verbatim report of which may be obtained from its
publishers, the Pioneer Press, or from the Secretary, makes
it quite impossible to set aside such bequests.

A Form of Bequest.—The following is a sufficient form of
bequest for insertion in the wills of testators:—

I give and bequeath to the Secular Society, Limited,
the sum of £—free from Legacy Duty, and I direct
that a receipt signed by two members of the Board of
the said Society and the Secretary thereof shall be a
good discharge to my Executors for the said Legacy.

It is advisable, but not necessary, that the Secretary
should be formally notified of such bequests, as wills some-
times get lost or mislaid. A form of membership, with full
particulars, will be sent on application to the Secretary,
Mr. R. H. ROSETTI, 62 FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

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