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Views and Opinions.

A Parson—after all.

DEAN INGE is a man of some ability, but we question whether his ability is of so great a quality as to have secured general attention if he had not been a parson. How he manages to combine what he says with what, as a parson, he ought to believe, is his concern. In these days the Christian Churches are satisfied if a man will only call himself a Christian, even though he may not honestly and clearly accept a single cardinal Christian doctrine. He may believe that Christ is an ideal, heaven a state and not a place, the soul a psychological generalization, and God a mere force or a tentative hypothesis, but if he will only tell the world he is a Christian that is enough—for advertising purposes. For the statement is required for the same purpose as a testimony to the value of having somebody's pills or disinfectants in the house. You do not have to say you use them, simply that you are never without them. In the same way, if a man who stands before the public will only say he is a Christian, the Churches are not to-day indiscreet enough to ask him to explain what he means by it. If he will say he is one, that may serve as a good advertisement among the unthinking, or with those whose sheep-like brains prevent their taking a stand of their own.

In the case of a man like Dean Inge, or Bishop Barnes, it is fairly clear that their position before the world is due, not to their being men of transcendent ability, or encyclopedic knowledge, but entirely to the fact that they are parsons. And in these days when intelligence in the pulpit bears about the same relation to the first class article as does a bottle of water to brandy when all there is left is the aroma lingering round the cork that once sealed the fermented juice, to find a parson showing intelligence is enough to give him a head-line value in the news-

papers. On most subjects, what Dean Inge has to say is neither daringly original nor strikingly profound. But he displays, for a parson, unusual intelligence, and that is enough to draw attention. The prominence of such men on account of what they have to say is a terrible indictment of their brother clerics.

* * *

God and the Dean.

In a recent issue of the *Evening Standard*, Dean Inge looks back over the seventy years of his life, and indulges in a number of reflections, most of them obvious, and others that might have been suggestively helpful had they been treated differently. I noted the article because of its quite accidental bearing upon the subject on which I was writing three weeks ago, that of dying unbelievers. Dean Inge says that he feels that during his life he has been guided by a gracious and mighty hand which has made things possible to him that otherwise would have been impossible, and the "conviction of this loving care has grown stronger . . . as the years go on." To the Christian this conviction is taken as evidence of modesty; to the scientific psychologist it is just as clearly evidence of a very profound egotism. Without the slightest desire to be offensive, one may very reasonably ask why out of the millions that exist Dean Inge—along with *some* others, of course—should have been selected for special guidance? There must be a selection, because if all are guided, then the same guidance that preserves one from pitfalls graciously guides them and allows others to fall in. It is the kind of reflection that genuinely sound thinking would reject as being on no higher level than unlucky days or lucky mascots, and anything approaching suitable modesty would never entertain.

But the particular passage that led me to write on Dean Inge's article is the following. Speaking of the conviction of the "loving care" of God having grown stronger as he has grown older he says:—

This experience I believe to be normal, and it is the most natural explanation of the fact that most agnostics, if they live to old age, end by believing in God, though they may not be orthodox Christians. In a matter of this kind we need not think of senile decay. It is the experience of life when life is prolonged to its natural termination, which in many cases, judging by their writings, has taught sceptics to become religious.

As I have before said the question of what men become is one that does not seriously trouble me, so far as their opinions are concerned. I am only concerned with what they are; and if they are *what* they are because they know *why* they are what they are, their after development is likely to be of an expected character. Nor am I interested in what some agnostics have come to believe in their old age. "Agnostic" is such a cloudy and indefinite kind of a word, used,

I am quite sure, in most cases, because its indefiniteness prevents the orthodox world seeing exactly where certain people are, that it is possible some of them may, as they grew older, have shown an even greater readiness to yield to the pressure of conventionality than they showed when they were young. Naturally, if a man is only doubtful about what kind of a God exists—and if religious agnosticism is logically defensible, that is what it must mean—then an Agnostic who lives to be an old man may easily persuade himself that he knows more about God than he thought. In any case Agnosticism, in relation to God, appears to be a very little thing to make a bother about. In the last sixty or seventy years it has given religion considerable help, and religionists may be expected to show some tenderness where it is concerned.

* * *

Finding God.

All the same I should like to know on what basis of fact the statement of Dean Inge's rests. I think I may claim to know as many aged sceptics as does the Dean, and my experience is strikingly bare of the aged unbeliever who is driven to become a believer in God when he looks back on his past life. Note he is assumed to be forced to believe in a God because he is able to detect the "loving care of God" in his past life. But during his past life he was, *ex hypothesi*, a disbeliever in God, so that—if he still retains any rationality at all—he has to believe that the loving care of God guided his mind so as to force him into disbelieving in a God so that he might come to believe in him just before he died! Could anything be more hopelessly stupid than this kind of argumentation? I am not seventy, although I am getting that way, and if there is one belief that is to me inherently ridiculous, it is this same belief in a God, and especially in a God who manifests his existence by the loving care he shows in guiding the footsteps of man. To call the experience normal is still more absurd. One need go no further than theological literature to realize how very difficult it is to keep the belief in a God alive in spite of the powerful adventitious aids it gets. It is weaker to-day than ever it was; with large numbers it is definitely and authoritatively rejected. With millions it is perceptibly weaker, and if one were permitted in any country in the world to bring up a couple of generations without inculcating it during childhood, and establishing it in numerous social institutions, it would exist only as rudimentary physical structures exist. Dean Inge finds God in his life because he has never been without him. And he has never been without him because he has never brought a trained and critical intelligence to bear upon his belief. If I may venture on a word of advice to Dean Inge I would suggest that it is wise never to argue, or attempt to justify a ridiculous belief. Be content with affirming it. The more intelligent will not be convinced by the affirmation, neither would they with any argumentation that may be attempted. But in refraining from argument in support of an absurdity you will prevent the less intelligent seeing how foolish is the affirmation.

* * *

The Benefits of a Fog.

I have been writing about Dean Inge mainly because he represents a type. He is, for example, careful to state that he does not mean by saying that a conviction that he has been guided by a "gracious and mighty hand" means that he believes in a special providence. But that is precisely what is meant by a "special providence," it is exactly what earlier generations meant when they spoke of the "Provi-

dence of God"; and if God guides each of us, or selected individuals among us, that is affirming a special providence. The truth is that Dean Inge has too much intelligence to believe in God and a special providence when the beliefs are plainly and properly stated, but he has no objection to them when they are stated in such a way as to mean anything that one cares to make them mean. In this he is on all fours with all the apologetic theology of to-day. The great feature of Christianity to-day is its invertebrate character. It means either everything or nothing. Dean Inge's position in the press actually depends on this. In the name of Christianity he is able to preach whatever he pleases, and no other Christian is in a position to say he is wrong. And as to laymen, particularly those who take no special interest in religion, they are so genuinely surprised at finding a parson exhibiting the intelligence of an educated layman, that they acclaim the marvel. The clergy form an interesting study, whether one examines them from the point of view of anthropology or from that of a study of social anachronisms.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Some Knocks from Father Knox.

Caliban in Grub Street (Sheed & Ward, 7s. 6d.) is the strange title given by Father Knox to a book, dealing with the various symposia on religion, which have been appearing in the daily papers during the last year or two.

Grub Street, of course, is Fleet Street. But why the contributors to these series should be labelled "Caliban," the most disgusting, repulsive, and bestial of all Shakespeare's characters, is difficult to say. Unless, perhaps, as a good Catholic, Father Knox regards all those who break away from the faith as Calibans? We wonder what Father Arendzen, who contributes to the series, thinks about it!

For our part, the great majority of these contributors, remind us of the leading character in a novel published about a year ago; we forget the title, but it opens with a girl coming into the room, and announcing to the family, "Father has lost his Faith again," they resemble the father. They are, for the most part, sentimental people who have lost faith in the Bible, the sheet-anchor of their early religious training, and yet are unwilling to part with the ideas planted so early, and associated with the recollections of childhood. So they try to reconstruct a religion to suit themselves. All treacle and no sulphur. All love, and no afflicting rod. Without hell, or future punishment, without dogmas, and without the supernatural.

There are not two of these fantasies in agreement, but their authors are agreed upon one point, and that is in rejecting the title of Atheist, even when, as in two or three cases, they have no belief in God; it simply "Is not done" in Society, and when they do agree their unanimity is wonderful.

Father Knox must have enjoyed himself immensely in writing this book. We may say—although, no doubt, the author would take it as a dubious compliment—that we have enjoyed it too. The spectacle of a man who knows what he does believe, harrying this band of sentimental half-believers, resembles a wolf among a flock of sheep.

As everyone acquainted with current literature knows, Father Knox is a satirist. In fact, he may be entitled a professional satirist, for he has written a book *On Humour and Satire*, and another of *Essays in Satire*, and he makes great play with it in this book. The opening chapter is entitled *The Boom in*

Religion, and deals with the alleged "reawakening of public interest in religion." This public interest is not registered in the statistics of Church membership, which show a decline, or in Church attendance, says Father Knox:—

Our modern religiosity is not incompatible with an increase in the proportion of registry-office marriages, or with a series of Sunday mornings spent on the roads and on the golf-links. It is in the inner core of man's nature that the change is to be found; and those delicate yearnings after higher things, tender buds of spirituality, must not be exposed to the rude blasts of pulpit declamation, or the materialistic test of a collection plate. It is rather in the great open spaces, particularly when these are traversed by metalled roads, that man, modern man, acclimatizes himself to thought of eternity.

The clerical optimists have been feeding us with these assurances for years, until "It has come to be almost an understood thing that absence from religious worship betokens a higher kind of spiritual temperament; the pastor leaves the ninety-and-nine to breathe the invigorating airs of the wilderness, and devotes himself to the needs of the one poor weakling which shivers in the fold." And our author entertains: "the uneasy feeling that the symptoms of our time are being widely misread. There is no evidence that people are more religious; there is evidence that people are fonder of talking about religion, and of talking about it in public." But this is not a healthy sign: "while men are in health, their health is the last subject which preoccupies them; that it is only when symptoms of age or decay begin to set in that they air their maladies for public inspection." And similarly:—

It is difficult not to conclude that a society talks about religion more freely and more publicly when religion is beginning to die out. Like the enfeebled pulse or the dwindling exports, the empty pew begins, for the first time, to arrest our attention.

The facts, indeed, have been patent enough throughout this century. The ripples of that agnosticism which was fashionable among intellectual circles in the later Victorian period widened out slowly over the surface of the public mind, but none the less effectively.

Meanwhile many other causes were at work, the spread of education, the increased facilities for worldly enjoyment, a move away from unadventurous conservatism, and the Great War brought it to a climax. And "now that theologians themselves have given up treating the Bible as a last court of appeal, and fall back on their own inner consciousness to justify their doctrinal statements, it seems hard to see why Hobbs, Nobbs, Noakes, and Stokes should not have their inner consciousness too . . . Once you invoke that 'something in here,' you put doctrine at the mercy of a multiplicity of chests, varying much in their capacity. And that is exactly what has happened. Man, who is the measure of all things else, has become the measure of theology. Every passer-by can join, nowadays, in the hue and cry after ultimate truth. And then the press came into the business." And we must be prepared "to open the morning paper and find such headlines as 'If You should Face Christ To-morrow,' and 'Hell's Lost Prestige.'"

Moreover, continues Father Knox, in picking your contributors for a religious symposium:—

The best type for your purpose is the journalist who signs his name, or the popular novelist who does occasionally write an article for the papers. A philosopher or a scientist will be too technical; a tennis champion will have no idea how to write, and the sub-editor will be put to the trouble of reducing

the thing to English. Gigadibs, the literary man—he (though he has an unfortunate habit of knowing his market price) is the most valuable witness you can subpoena for this inquest upon the late religion of our country . . . your literary man becomes a simple soul at once when you can induce him to talk about his private feelings. The spiritual experiences of Gigadibs are not on a more rarefied level than those of Hobbs, Nobbs, Noakes and Stokes, although he may have learned to express them lucidly and to set them forth attractively. Mr. Arnold Bennett, as we shall see, has been granted the faith of the charcoal-burner—assuming, of course, that the charcoal-burner has never heard of Christianity . . . to the ordinary man—and most popular authors are quite ordinary men—the abandonment of the religious beliefs with which he was indoctrinated in childhood is no more difficult than falling off a log.

The rest of the book consists of criticisms of many of these contributions to the press.

W. MANN.

(To be concluded.)

The Gas Man's Gesture.

"Lead, kindly light."—*Popular Hymn.*

"Light, more light."—*Goethe.*

"There is no darkness but ignorance."—*Shakespeare.*

COUNTING noses appears to be a popular method of appraising the value of a policy, a religion, or even an article of commerce. Should the owner of the nose be notorious the value of his adhesion is enhanced. Hence it happens that patent-medicine proprietors publish portraits of famous sportsmen and charming ladies of the chorus who are alleged to have suffered and been cured of a number of maladies, ranging from hay-fever to the horrors of hydrophobia.

Even in religious circles the same phenomenon is observable. Should a man swim the Atlantic Ocean some Christian sect is sure to claim him as a devoted member. Should a citizen amass a fortune by picking up cigarette-ends, some editor will publish an article showing that he owes his success to prayers learned at mamma's knees. In far-away China the only general with a printable name has been claimed as a Christian on the slender ground that his methods are very similar to other financial gentlemen nearer home.

There are so many other avenues to big business and its attendant notoriety, but the pious editor of the *Sunday Express* has out-Heroded Herod by printing a testimonial to the Christian Religion from the pen of an employee of the Gas Light and Coke Company. It is true that the writer is "Controller of Gas Sales," and has been the recipient of a knighthood at the instigation of a Socialist Government, but Sir Francis Goodenough is regarded as a real asset in the cause of Orthodoxy.

The new Knight writes on "Why I Read the Bible," and his article is a most unsophisticated production. To call his attitude Early Victorian would be to use the language of exaggeration. It is frankly antediluvian, and only shows that one editor is hard-pushed for copy in these midsummer days.

Brother Goodenough wears his rue with a difference. Like that placid dachshund which Mark Twain saw in the possession of a sportsman who was taking it out to hunt elephants, he lacks bitterness. He also lacks so many other things, and clarity is one of his most important omissions. Listen to this outburst concerning "Christ":—

He preached love—His divine genius visualized

the centuries to come, knew that men would have dire need of co-operation, etc.

This is the sort of writing that drives critics to a rebellious humour. For there is an irritating air of dogmatism in Brother Goodenough's pious propaganda, and a note of patronage. There is also an echo of the Sunday School superintendent, which is the direct opposite of those methods adopted by, what the little girl called, "the gentlemen from the Prudential." The latter are quite as much in the public eye as the employees of the Gas Light and Coke Company, but they usually contrive to steer clear from religious controversy.

Brother Goodenough has not read his own Bible too closely, or he would be aware that "this sacred" volume stresses the doctrines of "original sin" and "eternal damnation," which modern sob-stuff Christians would like to forget. As for the nonsense concerning co-operation, does Sir Francis suggest that "divine genius" had to wait for twenty centuries for the appearance of the Rochdale Pioneers and the beginnings of the Co-operative Movement?

As a defender of the Faith delivered to the Saints, Brother Goodenough is not a great success. He tells a tale of an anonymous Yankee firm in which practical Christianity was "tried out," and this business is now one of the most flourishing of its kind in the United States. America is a long way off, and there is no means of checking his story. In this country, however, living by faith is an easy profession as the clergy well know. Living on faith, on the other hand, is a precarious business. The prophet Elijah is said to have subsisted on food brought him by inspired ravens, and forty thousand clergy to-day, in this country, subsist comfortably on the offerings of the pious. The unemployed millions of this country ask "God" to give them their daily bread, and the answer is that they are half-starved. If there were no other indictment of Christianity, the sufferings of the working class in times of industrial depression would condemn it everlastingly.

According to Brother Goodenough, the Christian Bible is "the one great book that will improve their technique of living." He is obsessed with a delicious illusion. Christians have no monopoly of the finer feelings. It is very doubtful if the average hymn of to-day has any more claim to be considered as literature than the usual music-hall song. And the glaring, highly-coloured lithographs of sacred subjects framed in so many Christian homes suggests that colour-blindness is not confined to the heterodox. As for the alleged benefits of the Gospel message, Abyssinia has been a Christian country longer than Britain, and, after two thousand years' experience, is still some centuries behind the Chinese in civilization.

Brother Goodenough had better stick to the secular work of the Gas Light and Coke Company, for which he is better suited than as an intellectual illuminant. In the bad old days of absolute monarchy it was a law with all good citizens that "the King could do no wrong." This adage Sir Francis has applied to himself. He magnanimously lays the law down to all those who have the honour to absent themselves from the conventicle he himself adorns. His own theology, however childlike and bland it may be, has not yet reached the level of Freethought, nor can it ever do, so until it ceases to be theology and becomes simple Secularism. For any purpose connected with the real welfare of the working class, the Christian Religion might as well be dead and buried, as it will be when the people are sufficiently educated to see the truth that they must work out their own salvation, and no longer trust the lie at the lips of the

priests. The welfare of mankind and the attainment of a higher level of culture and civilization can be achieved only by the destruction of that clerical caste which fosters reaction and is the hereditary enemy of all progress.

MIMNERMUS.

The Black Army.

GENERAL CROZIER has performed a great public service by helping our nostrils to smell the real stink of war. War is like low-grade methylated spirit. It does not want something pleasantly aromatic to make it go down with the public: it wants something to make it so unpalatable that the human stomach will inevitably reject it. And that latter something is supplied by General Crozier's withdrawal of the curtain of glamour in order that we may see in all its stark reality the horror and hideousness of war. He has been bitterly attacked by some writers and publicists—lay critics with the clerical mind and religious bias—who have protested against what *they* think is the undesirable presentation of the most unpleasant aspects of war. But the Truth, however horribly garbed, is always Humanity's best friend; and the greatest lovers and makers of Peace will wave aside Ian Hay's and Sir Philip Gibbs' offers of the rose and lavender water.

Freethinkers have ever been the sternest denouncers and most active opponents of war. This is not a boasting assumption—it is merely a statement of historical fact. When the Great War broke out, Hilaire Belloc tried to show that the root cause of it was "Prussian 'Atheism.'" This was intensely interesting to those Atheists here who had some knowledge of Prussia; and who reflected upon the number of theological students who for many years before the war had been periodically sent hence to Germany to sit at the feet of theological and philosophical German teachers to finish their education. Prior to the war, every British religious sect acknowledged the superiority of the German theological seminaries to our own. If Germany, including Prussia, was not in 1914 one of the most Christian nations on earth, it would be instructive to learn which other nation surpassed it in piety.

Of course Mr. Belloc was wrong. Each of the belligerents in the Great War claimed the Lord of Hosts as its God. What booted it that an English journalist should presume to judge as to whether "God" was British, German, Russian, American, French or Italian? What rubbishy expedients are resorted to to justify war in the name of God!

Nobody has ever put forward any reasoned or substantial contradiction of General Crozier's assertion that the clergy are the greatest creators of the blood lust. Here we have this eternal standing black army of clerics in our midst which ought to have been demobilized long ago. They simply trade, live and batten—as do the oppressors, their rich constituents, who employ them to keep the *common* wretches in order—upon the rest of the population. My comments apply not only to the Government religion, but to all religious sects which are presided over by "men of God," who bear the title "Reverend." It is fatuous and futile for the most broad-minded men in the clerical profession (who are to be found in largest numbers in the Congregational bodies) to ape the style and wear the distinctive dress and badges of the traditional priesthood of Episcopacy and Roman and Greek Catholicism. They cannot have their cake and eat it. They cannot run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. They cannot face both ways. Their intercourse with

Freethinkers is all on the humanistic side. At heart they may be to the extent of 99 per cent with their Freethinking friends and associates. But when it comes to a national, Royal or Government function, the liberal-minded lamb lies down with the most conservative and orthodox lion.

Most of us used to say—even many who were not Freethinkers—that we were astonished at the meagre influence of the Churches in trying to prevent war. We now know from men like General Crozier that, far from the influence they had, being in the main engaged *against* war, it was actively employed in fomenting war and firing the war spirit; in short in creating the bloodiest blood lust.

And in the "Peace" (save the mark!) the clergy, despite all the frenzied efforts for combinations, unions and the presentation of an undivided ecclesiastical front, are being found out. Are the intelligent and enlightened youth of to-day, who know the history of the war and appreciate its significance, going to fall into such a trap as the Churches led the youth of sixteen years since into? I trow not. Science has shown beyond doubt that the real enemies of man are disease and weakness (especially mental disease and weakness) and subjection to tyranny. Man can only remain subject to disease, weakness and tyranny so long as he is the victim of ignorance and fear. Once we eliminate ignorance and fear all round, the early demobilization of the clerical black army is clearly inevitable.

Happily for manhood, the God of Battles nowadays "cuts no ice" with the mass of the people. Any particularized deity is laughed out of court. Jehovah is deposed, and hell has been dismissed with costs. To all thinking minds the only appealing conception of God is in essence that of Thomas Paine, the great deistic reformer. This spring I have been daily feeding the smaller birds in our little green. Their movements and sounds are more fascinating than the greatest of plays or operas. To-day I have closely observed a mother sparrow with one of her young, whom she has evidently been just beginning to teach to fly. She brought him to our small feeding area, and selecting the softer crumbs for him, fed him out of her own bill in the most charming manner. In some way it led me to think of the vain pomposity of man and his exaggerated sense of his own importance and superiority—which, too, he got from the Bible.

The story of the production of the Biblical God by Biblical magic naturally takes its place beside such childish tales as Jack and the Beanstalk. The great facts and laws of Nature; the birth and moving life of a human child, a young animal or a bird, the growing of a fruit tree, a rose or even a single blade of grass are far more impressive and far more likely to form the basis of belief in a deity than the fantastic and incredible Bible representation. But, again, belief is not *knowledge*; and the wide-eyed and impartial Freethinker cannot, in the light of the knowledge available to man in this twentieth century, accept any declared revelation which will not stand the tests prescribed by the ascertained truths of Science—using the term "Science" in its widest connotation. Therefore the standing black army is getting wobbly at the knees!

IGNOTUS.

Man is physically as well as metaphysically a thing of shreds and patches, borrowed unequally from good and bad ancestors and a misfit from the start.—*Emerson*.

No man lives without jostling and being jostled; in all ways he has to elbow himself through the world giving and receiving offence.—*Carlyle*.

Dem God-palava Men.

"Nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee,
Yes we have no bananas,
Even in my dreams I'd be,
We have no bananas to-day."

THIS verse is not the attempt of a Freethinker to be blasphemous . . . it is merely the song which was sung by a beggar of Freetown.

This beggar rowed out to a ship, and all he wore was a celluloid collar, and somebody's cast-off silk hat.

Sidney de la Rue tells us about him in his *Land of the Pepper Bird* (Putman's, 15s.), and Mr. de la Rue suggests that the beggar must have attended a mission.

On seeing the passengers looking at him the beggar roared out "Good morning—God bless you. I beg you one shilling," and then after retrieving coins thrown into the water he cried, "Thank you Sah, my children go chop to-night, praise the Lord."

It seems that if he learnt nothing else at the mission, he learnt how to beg.

I am not so sure that *The Land of the Pepper Bird* ought to be published, for reading between the lines I can see several anti-Christian digs.

We are told to-day that God looks after his own and that those who worship him will be all right. When we ask why God's children sometimes suffer, we are told blandly that they get their reward in another life, and as we cannot disprove that statement we marvel at the logic of Christians. Yet it seems as if all gods are the same, for the author of this fine book on Liberia tells us of a crocodile which comes to be fed when the priest calls, and which never harms children and villagers swimming in the lake, but which kills any stranger crocodile which comes into the vicinity. At any rate the priest said so.

We are also told by Christians that every man has within him the desire to worship. The natives of West Africa are striking examples of this, for when they saw a friend of the author's remove a set of false teeth they worshipped the owner with awe-inspired respect.

As God made all things large and small, He doubtless is fully aware of the insect pests which abound in West Africa, but it is rather unkind of Mr. de la Rue to tell Christians about the jigger which burrows under human flesh, and the tumbo which lays its egg on clothing so that the grub can get into human flesh and develop into a nice fat white grub which has to be dug out.

The Liberians in common with all other races, have their legends of the creation of woman. "First, first time a Kru man complained to God that he had no woman, so God said, "You got best, that you go catch one fish, you no chop him, you den put fish in your house and go sleep." When the first man woke up he found a beautiful girl instead of the fish.

And here is part of the Bible translated into pidgin English: "First first time, nothin' no live, just putta putta (mud)." God say, "Whassa matter?" He go to the carpenter shop and take one big lantern an' hang him in de sky. He say, "You stay so—o you be sun." Den he go take one small lantern, an' he go hang him round de other side an' he say, "You stay so—o, you be moon."

A native once asked the author, "what kind of gods be dem Baptist God and dem Methodist God and dem Presbyterian God? De God-palava man each place say he God got best. I go send my pickin' for learn book. Which place you tink he must go?"

De la Rue tried to explain to the native that all the gods were one god, but that various sects called him by different names. This was entirely compre-

hensive to the native, and I hope it cleared his mind as much as it relieved mine to have avoided saying, "I do not know."

This confusion of gods was well illustrated by the two natives: one a Lutheran, the other a Catholic, who discussed the respective merits of their gods. The Lutheran said, "De God belong we church be big past you, an' we God-palava man he make big mouth an' he all dress in so-so black. He be fine for true." The Catholic retorted and silenced his opponent with the following: "You big fool, de God-palava man we church when he go talk we God, he clothes be so-so silk, an' he drink plenty gin, an' he wear one fine-fine hat like alligator's mouth, an' he got one medicine ring. You go kiss dat ring, you goin' live for forevahu, have plenty women, an' no work."

No doubt that boy was trotted forth by missionaries as a shining example of how the Catholic religion has brought him to worship God.

Before the coming of the foreigner the native had no idea that his body was disgraceful and should be covered up, so that Christianity has taught him something.

In Liberia every sect has its missionaries, but curiously enough native wars lasted for thirty years, and only when secular administration became perfected did the wars cease.

There is a striking indictment of the missionary schools which churches in England support so enthusiastically. They trained boys as ministers of the gospel and as native workers, while all the time the country was crying out for trained workers.

The author once visited a school and found that an American text book on physiology was being used, and the children were being advised to eat plenty of beefsteak, baked potatoes, good fresh white bread with plenty of butter, and to drink milk three times a day. The absurdity lies in the fact that the average African is lucky if he gets one piece of beef in a year, that butter comes in tins and costs a dollar a pound, and that ninety-five per cent of the children never see cow's milk, butter or potatoes in their homes.

Doubtless, if a church paper reviews this book it will appeal to its readers to send more money for foreign missions. But those who read the book itself and not merely the reviews, will prefer to keep their money in their own country.

NECHELLS.

Dives: A Sonnet.

Cool water's touch to that tormented tongue
Had been denied him, but, undaunted yet,
And now on one last selfless purpose set
He groaned this prayer, by love and horror wrung:
"I pray thee, father, let then Lazarus go,
"Nor, of thy pity, this petition spurn,
"To warn my brethren five, lest they too burn
"In this horrific holocaust of woe!"

Over the fearful and the fixed abyss,
O'er dread, lugubrious clamour rising clear
The Patriarch's voice replied: "Son, let them hear
"Their prophets and preceptors; nought but this
"Can aid these unrepentant."

Straightway fell
Convulsed the very noblest soul in hell.

GEORGE W. DUNN.

The supreme incongruity of our celestial world is that it simultaneously proclaims us responsible for the lives we lead, and admits that we are not responsible for our birth, which determines our lives.—*Georges Clemenceau.*

Whit-Monday in Brussels.

ON Whit-Monday I met in the main boulevard a procession of men, women and children, led by a band. They carried beautiful silk embroidered banners and flags—bearing words setting out the ideals of Freethought.

I asked to be allowed to join the procession, explaining that I am an English Freethinker, and was cordially welcomed. We made for the noble monument erected to the memory of Ferrer, on which a bouquet was placed, and the processionists threw small bunches of pansies upon the base.

After this halt, we proceeded to a large hall, gaily decorated—and already partly filled with children.

My neighbour informed me that the object of the demonstration was to give the enfants a fête—corresponding to that given by Catholic parents in connexion with the first communion.

The latter is a great time for the Catholic children—presents and jollifications always follow the solemn ritual. Freethinkers do not wish their children to be outdone, and organize this fête each Whitsuntide.

After a short speech by the President, an eloquent address to the children was given by a lady.

She congratulated them upon their good fortune in being brought up in an atmosphere of light and reason, and reminded them of the darkness and superstition around, and the great work yet to be done, how they could help, and the great joy of the pioneer. I was delighted to notice the serious attention with which the older children followed the words.

The short meeting was followed by the gala—games, presents, fun of all sorts and plenty of good things to eat and drink. I came away delighted, and wondering when, in England, we shall think about our children in a similar way, and when we shall parade with banners, letting all the world know what we stand for.

This demonstration was not of one society, but many united for the one purpose; not the "proletariat" section only, but the "philosophes," the "rationalistes," and the "libre penseurs."

That monument to Ferrer is, to my mind, the finest thing in Brussels.

Many English visitors if asked to name the most remarkable public monument, would probably refer to the vulgar little "Mannikin"—who excites so much curiosity in a certain type of mind.

It is a relic of the days when Religion was supreme, and a sinister reminder of its "refining influence."

But that noble figure standing under the shadow of an old old church—that figure of MAN—tense in every nerve and muscle, holding high the torch—that figure dedicated to "la glorification de la Liberté de Conscience," redeems Brussels from the verdict which a superficial observer might pass upon this very cosmopolitan city.

I hope that every Freethinker who visits Brussels will seek out that sublime symbol.

A. H. MILLWARD.

It is a sad thing when men have neither art enough to speak well, nor judgment enough to hold their tongues; this is the foundation of all impertinence.

La Bruyere.

Some impose upon the world that they believe that which they do not; others more in number make themselves believe that they believe, not being able to penetrate into what it is to believe.—*Montaigne.*

Acid Drops.

"In my opinion," says Dean Inge, "the man of the future will be a Protestant, but a Protestant of a scarcely recognisable type." We suppose it would have been too straightforward to have said, the man of the future may call himself a Christian, but he will not believe in anything that is genuinely Christian. And yet, if Dean Inge does not mean that, what on earth does he mean?

From the *Advertiser's Weekly* :—

I think I have never seen quite such an audacious claim made for a product as that which appeared in an advertisement for an asphalt published in the *Times of India's* engineering supplement. "Noah's Ark was 'pitched within and without' with Iraq Natural Asphalt, which kept out the rains of the Great Flood," is the bland announcement it makes.

But why not? The advertisement is quite as truthful as the story, and we defy any theologian to prove that this particular pitch was not used. But we wonder whether the writer has ever heard of the story that when Jesus refused the vinegar-soaked sponge, he said "Take it away, it is not Sarson's." We believe this was actually proposed to Sarson's as an advertisement.

Gravelled for matter, inspiration from the old Book having run dry, the Rev. R. Gardner gave the following description of the cinema to his congregation at a service :—

Too many men behaving like good-looking rabbits.

Too many women who appear almost to believe in "a wedding a day to keep boredom away."

Film producers who appear to be too much concerned with the morals and mentality of the monkey house.

This, in scholarly language, is pungent criticism; it is a black eye for the cinema—until one remembers that the cinema is a rival establishment to the Rev. R. Gardner's Church. In addition, silly people queue up to go into cinemas; and if that wasn't rubbing it in to the churches, the people who queue up *pay* for their seats. And until we see the same conditions prevailing inside and outside churches, we shall be just the least bit sceptical about that religious revival, and the hunger and thirst of the people for the teachings of medieval black magic.

Religion is always comforting whatever be its nature. A young man who was sentenced to be hung for the murder of two people in Trebizond, said as the Hangman was adjusting the rope, "Lord, I am coming, receive me in heaven." In England we should call that a Christian death. It is decidedly Christian in character.

A newspaper editor, pleading for common-sense in fashions concerning clothes, contends that "clothes are decoration." How these pagan notions do creep in! Every Christian knows that clothes are meant to camouflage the handiwork of God, because man is ashamed of it.

Educating young people in Christian knowledge, says a pious weekly, and winning them for Christ is not easy work. In other words, we presume, that natural instinct for religion which everyone possesses, has to be nourished with a lot of Christian fertiliser before it can be induced to blossom.

It is quite certain that a section of the people in Belfast are not far removed from the mental level of Dayton. In that city an exhibit showing the evolution of man has just been placed in the Museum. This has roused the British Israelites to demand its removal as teaching something that is contrary to Scripture. Others have chipped in denouncing the exhibit as anti-Christian and

contrary to the national character. We do not quite understand what is meant by the last expression. Perhaps it means that the final stages of the exhibit have carried the process further than the actual fact. But what we should like to get is the candid opinion of some intelligent ape on the British Israelites. He would probably wonder whether, looking at the product, it was worth while troubling to evolve.

If you want to check the activities of any party, declares Mr. Bernard Shaw, put them into office. We think there is an exception to this rule. If our Puritans were to be given full political power, how busy they would be, and what an unlovely crop of prohibitions and repressions they would produce!

Warning has been given in regard to the possibility of transport by air introducing a new peril to health. Travellers by aeroplane may convey infectious diseases from one part of the world to another. For instance, a person bitten by a mosquito in West Africa may cause an epidemic of yellow fever in Asia. Our Christian friends whom the Design Argument exhilarates should make a note of this. We hope, too, that those who invite us to see God in the beauty of Nature will not overlook this entrancing aspect of the lovely handiwork of God.

Of a lately deceased Methodist parson, an obituary notice declares his preaching was "cultured and refined and most helpful." We presume that, among the Methodist fraternity, this is so exceptional as to be worthy of special comment? We can quite believe it.

At the British Missionary Societies' Conference, the Rev. Wilson Cash was anxious that no one might think the basis of the Conference was expediency. They did not merely tolerate one another, he urged, for the sake of the gains they hoped to secure for their Societies. Of course not! The dear, innocent missionary society officials don't even know what expediency means. It is their innocence of the wicked ways of the world that secures them their jobs.

A Roman anchor, 2,000 years old, has been recovered from Lake Nemi. Let us hope for even better things. Someone may yet discover the balloon by which Christ ascended into Heaven.

Five-sevenths of the national expenditure, says Mr. Philip Snowden, is for war or military purposes. After that, let no man have the nerve to call Britain, or any other nation spending a like amount for similar purposes, a civilized nation. For no nations that were truly civilized would have any use for an expenditure which committed them to the principle of settling disputes by the methods of the hooligan.

There are, it appears, grave doubts whether King Arthur of "Round Table" fame ever existed. Scholars from Europe and America intend discussing at Truro the problem of whether he was a man or a myth. Some say the tale was concocted by the vivid imagination of a romantic monk named Geoffrey. A possibility is that he invented the story to inculcate admiration for what was regarded as the best ideals of the age. No doubt the same kind of imagination was responsible for the Jesus story. But, of course, it would be irreverent to discuss that question in the way King Arthur is being discussed.

A parson has been talking about the "progressive revelation of God as seen in the Old Testament." And we cannot help wondering why the revelation of this wonderful notion was so long held back by God. Had it been vouchsafed to man only a thousand years ago, what

a lot of torture, cruelty, persecution and bloodshed might have been avoided. It is only a question of time, we presume, and the "advanced" theologians will begin to mumble about progressive revelation in connexion with the New Testament also. When the theologians have had their sensibilities quickened by Freethought criticism and ridicule, they usually begin nowadays to wonder whether there is any "progressive revelation" awaiting discovery.

Headingley Theological College, a manufactory for Wesleyan ministers, has been saved! Closed during the war and since, it needed (according to the parsons) £170,000 to re-open it, of which sum £146,000 in gifts and promises has now been cadged, with the help of God. Training a comparatively few men to spout, the simple—very simple—gospel of Jesus seems a costly business in these days. Jesus trained twelve human gramophones for next to nothing. But perhaps it should be remembered that their job was simpler. They had merely to repeat what Jesus said, and everyone knew he really meant it. On the other hand, the modern parson needs a much more expensive education. He has to explain that Jesus didn't mean exactly what he said, but something. God alone knows what. The cultivation of the ability to do this is quite naturally expensive. In conclusion, we hope what we have said will convince doubting Wesleyans that they really are getting value for their money.

The effects of an age of Puritanism and of Puritanic revival are far-reaching. We are reminded of this by a remark of Mr. Lawrence Haward. He said:—

If you regard Art as a luxury, what a queer, drab world you are building up for yourselves.

What should be remembered is that the Puritans and their successors regarded art and things of beauty appealing to the senses as of the devil, and as luxuries to be eschewed by the truly godly. This viewpoint is today not extinct. The ugly weeds of Puritanism are not yet all uprooted. They are still growing in some few Christian heads.

Mr. Kennedy Williamson has been warning the readers of a pious journal about the sinfulness of "the evasive answer," especially in connexion with a question such as "What think ye of Christ?" We invite the writer to note that there are Blasphemy Laws in existence. The object of these is to prevent Freethinkers from publicly giving honest answers to the above question and to other Christian questions, spoken, suggested, or implied. Also, the result of such laws is to encourage mental timidity and "the evasive answer." This being the case, we hope Mr. Williamson and other Christians will appreciate the "sinfulness" of the Blasphemy Laws. If they are unable to do so, then we must request our readers to pray for "progressive revelation" to come to the rescue.

During a recent Wesleyan mission, the Rev. F. L. Wiseman, after announcing the collection, said:—

You know why we have so many collections in Methodism? (No response). Perhaps you don't know that we do have many? (Much laughter.) The reason is to help you save your souls.

Hallelujah! The poor deluded believers don't realize that the whole policy is substantially one of obtaining money under false pretences. Promising people a sure seat in a Heaven which no one knows exists is certainly fraud. But we presume that so long as thousands of priests and parsons are not prevented by law from committing the fraud, Britain may still claim to be a Christian country. Hallelujah!

Mr Ernest Hayes, a Sunday school expert, has been asked whether it is advisable to teach any history of the Christian Church in Nonconformist Sunday schools. Part of his reply is:—

There are whole tracts of Church history that have little interest for children to-day, and if taught in

detail might re-act against Church loyalty! . . . The lives of the Popes, and the policy of some Protestant Church statesmen in the past are best left in oblivion.

Quite so; silence is obviously the wisest policy when there are many matters of which Christians are ashamed. Needless to say, Freethinkers will see that Christians are not allowed to forget the ignoble happenings of the past. It is a Freethought duty to try to prevent pious heads from bursting with conceit and self-righteousness.

The Free State Board of Censors have banned the *News of the World*, the *Empire News*, *Thomson's Weekly News*, and the *People*. On the grounds that these papers devote an unduly large portion of space to the publication of matters relating to crime, they are not allowed to enter the Free State. These papers, if they have any "innards" might cut out all mention of crime, and substitute, in serial form, Bale's *Pageant of Popes*, Lecky's *Rationalism in Europe*, and Lea's *Sacerdotal Celibacy*. In the meantime *The Irish Statesman*, edited by A.E., a weekly journal which contained as much commonsense to the square inch as any in Europe, has been suspended in the Free State. Perhaps, in the miner's dream of home vein, Mr. Chesterton and Mr. Belloc will be able to have their heart's desire, and also be able to return to the Middle Ages—we should have said the Free State.

There is quite an interesting *History of Science and Its Relations with Philosophy and Religion*, written by William Cecil Dampier Dampier-Whetham, F.R.S. The author, in the following passage, evidently cannot get away from the apron-strings of religion, and is busily engaged in trying to mix oil and water:—

To see life steadily and to see it whole we need not only science, but ethics, art and philosophy; we need the apprehension of a sacred mystery, the sense of communion with a Divine Power, that constitute the ultimate basis of religion.

How those representatives of sacred mysteries welcomed science in the past is well known and fortunately accessible in cheap book form; how science, ethics, art and philosophy can have any need for the other vague matters is for the author to prove in his book, and that he does not attempt.

Those who are interested in fighting with bladders might buy *No Popery*, by Herbert Thurston, S.J. With its historical record for fairness ever since Popery afflicted the thoughts and bodies of mankind, the publishers state that it is only fair to hear the other side, which is Fr. Thurston's reply to Dr. Rappoport's *Love Affairs of the Vatican*. There may also be a vast body of the reading public who, it is only fair to state, would prefer a glass of beer.

A good sample of reasoning occurs in the *Times Literary Supplement*, under the heading of "The Gardens Wither." For the benefit of book publishers chiefly, the bugle is blown every week—there are no bad books, and in the maintenance of the reviewer's thesis—a Janus-like attitude towards war, he writes:—

The scenes in the operating wards of hospitals to-day after an accident are no prettier than those of a casualty station twelve years ago after a battle, though no writer feels himself called upon to write sensational descriptions of them.

It never dawned on the reviewer that his comparison is askew because the causes were different. He makes amends later on by stating:—

The secular hope of future peace lies in the realization of the world that wars between nations are no more necessary than duels between individuals or combats between clans. The new path is a difficult one.

And if as much money was spent on assisting people to thing, as there is on chloroforming them with religious nonsense, War might be put in its proper place.

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.

E. BOTT.—Thanks for cuttings. The Christian Church has never suffered from a shortage of either liars or bigots.

E. BURGESS.—No, the charge against la Barre was that of defacing a crucifix. He was only twenty years of age, but where religion is concerned the Christian Church has never known the meaning of either truthfulness or humanity.

H. S. STEWART writes: "Permit me to add my thanks to those that I am sure you must have received, for your *Foundations of Religion*. There is a punch in every paragraph, and material for an essay in every page. It is a marvel of compression and lucidity." We have permitted Mr. Stewart to have his say—or as much of it as our blushes could stand.

WILL W. OSBORN please send his new address to this office. Some letters await him. Our communication has been returned marked "gone away."

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 connection 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 Annual Report of the Executive of the National Secular Society, which the Conference ordered to be printed, is now ready, and is published at the nominal price of one penny. It makes a readable pamphlet of sixteen pages, and should prove useful to all Freethinkers, and also to those who wish to have some idea of the work of the Society. For that reason we suggest to friends that they should send for a dozen copies for distribution. These will be sent post free for one shilling.

May we also point out the good that may be done by Freethinkers who are away on holiday, by taking a few copies of the *Freethinker* with them, and distributing it in likely places. Many new readers, and some permanent friends to the movement are gained in this way.

We are pleased to receive the announcement of a "Canadian Atheist Association." Full information is promised later, but we note that the headquarters is to be in Manitoba, a very strong Roman Catholic centre, so that it is likely to meet with strong and—judging from the past—not over-scrupulous opposition. The name of the new organization is itself a challenge, and may do something to correct the general flabbiness and timidity of many who are really outside the religious fold, and opposed to its teachings.

We gather that the *Two Worlds* is not altogether pleased with Mr. Cohen's *Foundations of Religion*—probably because it leaves so little room for any kind of superstition, including Spiritualism. So it says:—

Mr. Cohen is well known as a clever and witty speaker, who takes things as they appear on the surface. I wish he had given us a work on the foundations of Atheism, for his references here to religion, although pointed and cynical, lack the ability to withstand close scrutiny. But, then, a work on the latter would form very questionable "propaganda" to the Atheist movement. It might even bowl it completely over. Mr. Cohen appeals to us to reject our old beliefs and to accept the conclusions of modern science. He thus shatters his own philosophy, for modern science has not only rent Materialism asunder, but is bringing us daily nearer the belief in an invisible world. Science now tells us that there is NOTHING dead in the universe, except perhaps, Materialism, although this pamphlet is evidence that its "spirit" still survives.

It may interest the *Two Worlds* to know that Mr. Cohen has already written a work on the foundations of Atheism, *Theism or Atheism*, which can be obtained by anyone for 3s. 6d. We should be very interested in seeing an attempt to reply to that work by someone competent to perform the task. But there is one thing in which the *Two Worlds* is quite Christian. Having learned a phrase it goes on repeating it without troubling to find out whether it means anything. Hence the rubbish about modern science shattering Materialism, and bringing us nearer to an invisible world. Materialism is, as always, the very life-blood of science, and the "invisible" world has always been dealt with by science. But when the *Two Worlds* says "invisible," what it means is "spooks," and that is a very different thing. Read the sentence "Science is daily bringing us nearer the belief in a world of ghosts," and you will get the true inwardness of the statement.

Now that there is talk of reconstructing the policy of the B.B.C., it is fitting that Freethinkers should renew their protests against its attitude with regard to religious questions. The many thousands of Freethinkers who are holders of licences ought to make their influence felt, and the more assertive they make themselves the more likely they are to secure. One of our Irish friends, Mr. J. Brown, who is to be commended for his unflinching efforts, recently sent the following letter to the B.B.C. organ:—

In your issue of June 13, 1930, page 594, you make some statements which I respectfully beg to challenge (1) on the authority of some unknown gentleman you make the astounding statement that the B.B.C. is five years ahead of any similar organization in the world. This is pleasant reading, but unfortunately, it is not true. The United States, France and Germany allow Atheistic debates on the wireless—whilst you (and I have your letter in black and white) refused similar facilities to listeners here. This is proof positive that while these countries cater for all citizens—the B.B.C. does not—thereby being years behind the others—a delightful sidelight on so-called British fair play. (2) You give the Licences issued here as proof of your statement that in numbers we have a greater listening public, proportionally than the States—but you fail to give the figures for companies in America—in other words, it is an assertion without proof—and cuts no ice.

Such letters serve to make many keenly feel the injustice of the present way of managing things.

Mr. Cohen has promised the Liverpool Branch of the N.S.S. to open their winter season, and their new hall with a course of four lectures on "Man and God." The first lecture will be delivered in the Picton Hall, the remaining three in what will be the regular hall for the season. Fuller particulars will be given later.

We regret to inform our readers that Mr. Walter Mann has met with a slight accident, which will prevent anything appearing from his pen in these columns for a week or two. He was knocked down by a motor-cycle on June 21. The accident, we understand from his daughter, is not serious, but is painful enough to prevent his writing for the moment.

We have received some replies to our query as to the experience of parents who have withdrawn their children from religious instruction, but not so many as we should like to get. We intend giving an outline of these letters, next week, if possible. Meanwhile we should be pleased to hear from those who have withdrawn their children whether any inconvenience has been experienced.

Our congratulations to Deal. A few weeks ago the Council decided to open the parks for Sunday games, it has also licensed a woman to act as a qualified boatman. Lastly, members of the Council have been invited to witness a Sunday performance of a film, and several have accepted the invitation. There will be *some* preaching on this last point.

The following resolution has been passed by the Secular Education League, and forwarded to the proper quarters:—

The Committee of the Secular Education League, which advocates the principle of State neutrality in regard to religious teaching in State-aided schools, approves of the Education Bill now before Parliament in so far as it proposes to extend the present school-leaving age; it records, however, its emphatic disapproval of the sectarian proposals of the Bill, the only result of which will be further to divert the attention of the nation from educational progress to sectarian controversy and to extend the vicious principle of civic and religious inequality which the present system involves.

Glaciation of the Conscience— Civilization's Real Disease?

"HAPPY," according to a certain school of philosophy, "is the nation which has learned how to enjoy its enemies: using them as a remedy against boredom, and as a means of reaching the Promised Civilization, if not the Promised Land."

Now, if we go back far enough, according to a well-known American writer on racial psychology, we find that "the first Moses was a monkey," and that the first potentiality of human happiness—as distinct from a purely monkey or philanthropoid condition of sensual pleasure—began with the invention of the faculty of speech. "In the beginning," says this writer, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In other words, sheer language itself, or the capacity for so using the chin as to make a definite and coherently systematic kind of noise, was the great psychological watershed; dividing-off a dumb but happy Apehood from a forever-vocable, religion-inventing Humanity: the detritus of whose avalanche, still rolling and now visible everywhere, registers itself as Socialism, Bolshevism, Trade-Unionism, and as sundry other 'Isms from Sydney to Shanghai.

Enemies, definitely recognizable as such, it would

appear first appeared for Man, upon the earth, contemporaneously with the discovery of this faculty of speech. Assembled in their favourite, long-chosen river-valleys, it is probable that the Grunters were the first snobs in history, as they would undoubtedly look down, in the would-be superior English "climber"—class fashion, upon all apes who would not or could not speak. Philologically, as a matter of fact, it is highly probable that the real name of that disastrous female, whom we know as Mrs. Grundy, was Mrs. Grunter; the Grunters being very strong, the world over, upon the issue of morals, and seeing no place whatever available in heaven for those who do not conform to all the conventions: the whole lot—marriage, religion, property, economic probity, etc.—having their king-bolt in the faculty of speech.

Now, assuming, as we may, that one particular tribe or agglutinative clot of apes, in one particular river-valley, first invented humanity, through the discovery of the diabolical art of Talking, I have no doubt whatever that another tribe, in the next valley, soon reciprocated by the discovery of another hostile weapon, called Arithmetic. For, knowing this post-war Humanity as we do at the present hour, it is quite easy to perceive how the Grunter Apes went wrong at the start. Early Man, all puffed-up and rendered socially lopsided, by his new-found faculty of swinging by a vocal tail; so soon as he had a distinct surplus of nuts in his own valley, must have assumed an important swagger and learning from the hunters of his tribe that there was a shortage of the same in the next valley, must have rapidly developed in him the habit of carrying a bushel or two of nuts over the hill: trading them there, to the nutless, Silent Apes, for such commodities as they had; thus gaining an economic advantage, such as millions of Talkative Apes called bankers and employers, are still using, with the like coercive effect, from Birmingham to Broken Hill, at the current hour.

They saw no harm in it. The enterprising Grunter Ape of 30,000 years B.C., I assert, exactly like the sharp and cold American banker of 1930 A.D., saw nothing wrong whatever with the tribal process of relieving the other fellow of his commodities, in exchange for nuts. But right there, alas, if anywhere at all in history, began to emerge that sinister and haunting apparition known as Original Sin—an ectoplasmic substance concerning which the churches, during the past 2,000 years, have told us so little, although they have talked so much.

Taking advantage of the other fellow's necessity, and calling it Trade, when its real name is time-payment theft and murder—that, I sincerely attest and believe, is the real Original Sin. And that same Sin, stalking like a psychological shadow through all the thoughts of the Nutless, in due course became Arithmetic—or the capacity for counting the strength of the Other Side. Having so much time to spare, and also having so much hunger for their portion, the Silent Apes soon found the effective fighting range of the Grunter-Apes or Talkers: and—finding them to be in a minority—went over the hill against the swanking, pride-puffed Nut-Traders; killed all the males that they could catch, seized their women and children, and called it War.

Thus, for countless thousands of years, and in all countries, from Spion Kop to Samarkand, Original Sin has been working overtime; and nations have become happy upon the American plan, by enjoying their enemies when well-cooked in an economic or purely cannibalistic pot. Arithmetic, called into being as an antidote to Speech, still brings exactly the same savage thrill of joy to the authors of the

Dawes-Young Plan; who, since the termination of the so-called World War in 1918, have rejoiced like true and unmistakable Grunters in relieving Germany of her commodities, such as coal, in exchange for a certain very meagre supply of Nuts.

Bloodshed, for at least 20,000 years, has certainly been on the boom, and Mrs. Gunter has moved backward and forward constantly, as a tribal asset, during the whole of that period, as a direct result of the invention of these three explosive substances—Trade, Arithmetic, and Speech. Right up the whole hard highroad of the centuries, or down the whole perspective of human experience, as you may personally prefer to incline the plane of vision, Man has been travelling like a wretched school-child, beleaguered by an unsolvable problem upon his slate. In every age, whenever the answer that he gets out of himself is discovered, when written down, to be wrong, he is told to rub it out and to do the sum again. Thus, away back in history, when the swanking Grunter-Apes, blown up and over-inflated with a sense of their own importance as Talkers and promoters of Trade, tried to impress a due sense of their own great superiority upon the hungry Silent Apes, they were soon rubbed out, and the first tribal transfer of Mrs. Grundy, *alias* Grunter, was speedily arranged. All human history whatsoever, I mean to assert, is nothing but the spectacle of that same puzzled school-child, engaged in rubbing out the botched-up nations, and in doing his own dreadful economic sum all over again. For instance, during the four years 1914-18, practically the whole of the peoples of the earth conspired together, in a frantic effort to rub the German nation, and its few assistant nations, off the slate. But, although somewhat dislevelled in the process, the Germans are still there: and what is far worse, the whole infernal economic problem has shifted bodily, across the Atlantic, some 3,000 odd miles to the westward, and is still there—only three or four times bigger—presenting a horrible mass of hostile Arithmetic upon young Europe's slate.

Now, the whole trouble with Europe is not merely that it is young, but that it has persistently stayed so; and has grown up, during the last few thousand years, somewhat after the manner of a pumpkin, which steadily increases in mass, up to a given point, without any material change, of a corresponding quality, in its general structure: which is mushy, soft, and of a more-or-less inferior, hard-shelled-but-soft-inside description. Exactly the same thing—*i.e.*, the egg of another Europe—may be seen here in Australia, where I write, at the present day. When Europe itself began to take shape, as a home for the Grunter pioneers of humanity, it probably had a climate substantially identical with that of Australia; and so, right here again, I am inclined to think, as I study these soft and mushy Australian cities—things which expand like pumpkins, great in mass, but intellectually as soft in their material as the content of any lunatic-asylum or home for the aged and brain-softened—we may see young Europe as he lived between the glacial epochs, in Aurignacian times:

What I am getting at, in short, is the argument that Trade and Arithmetic, festering within the skull of Europe for centuries uncounted, have had the cumulative effect of producing a long series of artificial glacial epochs, called for convenience Trade-depressions, in which men and women are uprooted by wholesale, and more-or-less forcibly transported beyond the seas.

Australia itself, as the present habitat of an English-transported and pumpkinized Grunter race, re-

ceived its first anti-cultural start in settlement, precisely as the result of such an artificial glacial epoch. When the rich landlords of England, Whig and Tory alike, had enclosed all the common lands of England; and when the long-accumulating cost of the Trade-wars with France began to weigh heavily upon the mind of William Pitt and his political congeners, the shortest way out of their Whig-cum-Tory difficulty—and the way, too, which Georgian statesmanship actually took—was to declare in round language that all poor people were habitual criminals, and to cast them out by wholesale, upon any pretext whatsoever, upon Australia's distant shores.

Glaciation of the conscience of the English Grunters—people like the Cavendishes, the Pitts, the Northumberlands, the lordly Russells—this and this alone was the force which erected, a little more than one hundred years ago, a kind of social sewer-system, through which Englishmen and Scotchmen and Irishmen were pumped to Australia in gross: to lead here, in the language of Lucretius, the wild lives of beasts; whilst the Cavendishes, the Pitts, the Northumberlands and the lordly Russells again settled themselves quite comfortably where they were, to enjoy all the hereditary privileges of the superior Grunter-Apes of England.

That exactly such another period of artificial glaciation is now at hand for the British race, requires no stress by me. Things throughout, as the sage Lucretius remarks, "proceed in firm, undevious order, and maintain, to nature true, their fixt generic stamp"; and nothing in England is more "fixt" than the firm intention of the contemporary Cavendishes, Pitts, Northumberlands and Russells to cast out the Silent People into whatever antipodean wilderness comes handy; whilst simultaneously reserving for themselves—the would-be superior Talking people—all due comforts of shelter, food, and fire.

Thus, discounting for the moment any further consideration of the economic slate-plight of pumpkinized young Europe, *vis-a-vis* his American arithmetical torturer, we may see quite clearly what a splendid faculty of enjoying one's enemies really is. Here we have a class—the hereditary governing class of England, entrenched in the House of Lords, the Church, the land, and I know not where—which, out of Lucretian cold, of varying viands, and disease—which are, of course, the common portion of the Silent People—rises each hour superior. With missile stones they hunt, and with the force of clubs enormous, such as the Carlton, full many a tribe of the Nutless Apes have these high-class, aristocratic savages felled.

"This ne'er distressed them, but the fear alone
Some ruthless monster might their dreams molest"—
and so, "when the nuptial or ex-nuptial bed has broken their wild vigor," it is wonderful with what benevolent aplomb these superior persons decide that the Hour of Glaciation is now ripe; and arrange their schemes of Big-Brotherhood, and suchlike mephitic, stinking lies, for the purpose of sewer-pumping Young England across the seas.

JOHN MCCRASIAN.

Australia.

"I found the original of my hell, in the world which we inhabit," said Dante, and he said a greater truth than some literary antiquaries can always comprehend.

Isaac D'Israeli.

The Universe is a book, and we have only read the first page, if we have not been out of our country.—Anon.

After a long experience of the world, I affirm I never knew a rogue who was not unhappy.—Junius.

Religion and World Politics.

TO-DAY there is much ado about the awakening of Asia! but for the most part, those who use the phrase so glibly do not give serious thought to the meaning of the words, not only in its social, but in its ethical and religious aspect. We Freethinkers above all should be interested in this connexion, in the religious revolution that is developing before our eyes, from Constantinople to Calcutta. It concerns us greatly to know what influence religion has in the political and social life of Asia. We are interested in the decay and tottering of century old religions and churches, and we cannot be indifferent to the roll of religious-social movements in the national and social fights for freedom of the oppressed classes in neighbour countries.

A correct appreciation of the social-religious changes is only possible, however, if we do not regard ourselves as isolated units, but as partners on the one hand in the imperialist permeation of the whole of Asia, and on the other hand, partners in the opposition (I speak as a proletariat Freethinker) of the masses against the oppression of High Finance (capitalism).

Let us look at the past few years. The dissolution of the Kalifat, the religious centre of Islam and the impotent attempts to restore the power of the Kalif: the radical breaking of the relations with Islam in Turkey under the leadership of Kemal Pasha: the various Islamic reformation movements of which the Wahabit movement, the religious-social movement of the arabic nomads has been of greater importance: the movement of which Gandhi is leader, and in whom is mixed the qualities of political leader and religious reformer: the substitution of religion by nationalist sentiment in general. All these phases have passed before ours. "Allah" becomes "Fatherland," whereby is born a remarkable mixture of religion and nationalist sentiment.

The missionaries of European countries play the roll of ground preparers for Capitalism in the East, especially in China.

It would be erroneous, however, to declare that every religious movement in Asia is reactionary, and every Atheistic movement revolutionary. We find in this respect the same conditions operating as in the early days of European capitalism. The masses rebel against exploitation, while at the same time remaining true to old religious ties. They set about to put up a barrier of new interpretations of their old religions against that of the exploiting class. As Luther with the Reformation, so Islam is purifying itself from overgrown parasitical growths. The most prominent sect undertaking this work is known as the Wahabits, a puritanical and warlike body, which founded an Arab State under the leadership of Ibn Saud. But an Arab State and Beduin prince must reckon with modern world politics. Ibn Saud took money from England and put himself into a compromising position, which has resulted in his not being able to carry out to the full programme the work of fanatic purification. It is interesting to note that as an example of this unique culture compromise that Ibn Saud ordered several specially constructed automobiles for his Harem. He did not wish to be deprived of this useful aid of the infidel West, but he dare not offend against the Islamic law, so he had rooflights installed but no windows, in order that the ladies might travel safe from infidel (and other) eyes.

This is a sign of the times: a sign of the religious-social movement. It is necessary while man is still floundering in ideological morasses to prepare the way, by some means or other for modern capitalism. Unconsciously or consciously this is being done. Take Gandhi, for example: his fight against the damnable "untouchability" curse, and for simplification of the cast system is in conformity with old Buddhist ideas, yet from the successful simplification of the cast system will evolve a modernized system of society stratas and the taking over of the social order by the capitalist system made so much earlier.

The higher castes whose sons are studying in Europe will be easily attached to and influenced by the atheistical philosophy, scientific conceptions of the West, and

accept a rationalism that resembles that of eighteenth century France. Following this short transition period will come a stronger emphasis on the religious-national character of the Fatherland, and hereby a closer bond with the movements of the masses will follow. The intelligenza, which springs from the landowning and younger capital controlling classes then conceives its own ideology of national independence and turns from the mother country (in the case of India, from England). The leaders of this national movement need the strength of the peasants and proletariat to fight successfully. After independence has been won the group and class barriers are again put up, as the history of Europe indicates. This, of course, is only an outline of the line of development which varies according to geographical conditions, historical tradition and the political conditions. It is necessary to recognize this outline in order not to be deceived by the religious waves that are flowing. Generally, this breakdown of feudalism postulates severe shakings to the religious structure. This process has been well illustrated by one of the best informants on this matter, Hans Kohn, in his book, *Geschichte der Nationalen Bewegung im Orient* (publishers: Kurt Vowinkel Verlag, Berlin-Grünwald, 1928) which is a history of the nationalist movements in the East.

Without taking up a strict Marxist position, Kohn gives numerous illustrations of the theory of the awakening of the unknown races (geschichtslosen Nationen). In all cases the *Nation* takes the place of the old religious bonds as the central idea. Religion still continues, of course, but it is altered and varied into mental belief without too close an application to everyday, factual life.

This process, or processes, which we in Europe experienced as the Renaissance and Reformation, are now occurring in Asia at a much quicker pace and far more intensively. There is no oppressing Church as the opposition, such as the Catholic Church was, but the pressure on the old religious-feudal culture comes from outside, with the mighty weight of highly developed capitalism of Europe and the super-capitalism of America. The new world becomes known to the awakening masses through the cinema, the newspaper and books. The masses learn from autos and radio and through the industries, supplied with foreign and native capital, founded in their own lands. Even when the old social order, as in China, puts up a fight against the intrusion of capitalism, the old moral laws, based on the authority of the priest, the family head, and prince, suffers severe damage. The new development brings excesses, and undermining the social life creates in the uncultured masses religious protest, together with dreams of the good old times, but the ultimate end finds the religious tenets garbed in modern clothes to fit the intrusive capitalism. In Mongolia, for example, a section of the young Lama priests have been active in helping the revolution, led by Mongolia's neighbour, Russia. They are not yet conscious Atheists but have lost the old belief. So it is also in India with the greater part of the Intelligenza, but especially amongst the Turkish upper classes. In China, where the non-deistic religion of Confucius rules, the process of casting off the gods is not so brutal and is generally connected with a rejection of Christianity (Upasaka, for instance, is an example known to *Freethinker* readers). The mission and politics of the Big Powers in China have done their damndest to bring about this state of affairs, although the intention was otherwise.

These religious or anti-religious movements run the risk, however, of being twisted and corrupted and used as tools by the competing powers in the imperialistic race. The last great war gave us sufficient evidence. Read the history of the British Near East politics, especially concerning the Suez Canal.

The Arab nationalist movement is another example: The English did whatever was possible by gold and war booty to establish the Arabs in their own land. On the other hand the Germans had laid their bets on the holy war and the green flag of the Prophet. As often before, they had bet on the wrong horse.

Then the American Imperialism camouflages itself under the many religious banners from China to the

teachers and pedagogues are its pioneers. Dollar Diplomacy Near East. The doctor-missionaries, the Christianity of American derivation, modern science, modern technique and not least, modern commodity production.

The tables are turning, however, for the young people who have studied in American colleges and who were to be found in the Y.M.C.A. institutes are now deserting, and on the wave of revolutionary anti-imperialism, are turning to the Communist ranks. At present they are helping to build up Tchang Kai Cheks force and Chinese Nationalism.

What task then has the proletariat Freethought movement? It is to be found in the building up of a proletarian movement in the countries of Asiatic exploitation. By reason of the ignorance and depressed condition of these people this task is almost impossible on a modern Marxist religious-critical standpoint. Unfortunately several tactics of the Communists there have not made towards the easing of the work. Also the English workers' movements are so docile under the rule of the Church that no broad Atheist propaganda from them can be expected. First it is necessary to bring the Asiatic mind in contact with Marxist criticism of Christianity in order to lessen the influence of the missionaries. Kausky's *Origin of Christianity* has already been translated into Chinese and Japanese, but there is still much to do. At a certain stage in proletarian development special Freethought propaganda becomes vitally necessary. It will be easier, of course, in proportion as the Church in Europe decays and takes up a new stand towards colonial problems.

The Asiatics are often intimidated by the lie that European "Materialism" is the reason of the exploitation of Asia, because the old religious-moral ties have been shattered by modern Atheism. Socialism, relying on a Materialist basis for its teachings and introducing a new moral code in proletariat solidarity, offers the direct challenge to that lie. We can see here how all the really effective proletarian, progressive currents will eventually flow together. A real effective proletariat international could take care of these weaker flanks.

Freethought must study the religious-social change of Asia, and not be intimidated by religious masquerading. Lastly, an endeavour by the effective proletariat culture movement must be made to influence the growth of the Asiatic workers' movement in the correct direction.

Thus the heroic fight against opium and alcohol which are part of the revolutionary movement in India and China should have our warmest sympathy. Above all it is necessary to make a stand against the Missions. The Asiatics have sufficient religions of their own of the most diverse origins and tendencies. They do not need European Christianity, but they do need our science, especially our medicinal science. They need the modern social theories and practice, especially in relation to women's freedom, and also the experience and help of European Socialism. When these influences begin to work, the modern Freethought movement can come across to Asia and help in the fight against religion and world politics, so that both the religious systems of the feudal ages and modern exploitation will crash.

O. JENSON

(In the *German Proletariat "Freidenker,"* May, 1930).

Englished by I. CORINNA.

Equal and exact justice to all men of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations—entangling alliances with none; the support of the State Governments in all their rights as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns, and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies; the preservation of the General Government in its whole constitutional vigour, as the sheet anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; freedom of religion; freedom of the press; freedom of persons under the protection of *habeas corpus*; and trials by juries impartially selected—these principles have guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation.—*Thomas Jefferson.*

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

VOLTAIRE AND DE LA BARRE.

SIR,—Mr. Bazin points out that the monument to de la Barre, at Paris, records that he was executed "for not having saluted a procession," and not, as I have stated, for damaging a Crucifix; and he wishes to know which statement is true.

I may say at once, that the statement on the monument is, from a legal point of view, technically correct. But it is not the whole truth, and is somewhat misleading to those unacquainted with the facts of the case. Nearly all writers who refer, without going into details, to the case, state, and quite rightly, that he was charged with damaging a Crucifix.

The facts are these. A wooden Crucifix on a bridge over the Somme, at Abbeville, was found to have been hacked with a knife. The people were panic stricken, for fear of divine vengeance. The Bishop, a bigoted and fanatical prelate, arranged a solemn procession, and the religious fervour of the people was worked up to a high pitch. A warning was issued from all the Churches, threatening terrible spiritual penalties upon all those withholding information in the matter. The usual crop of mad rumours was started, and suspicion was centred upon la Barre, who, with some companions, was accused of passing within thirty yards of a religious procession bearing the sacrament, without baring their heads, and with singing irreligious songs. Also with "profaning the sign of the Cross."

La Barre admitted the charge of not taking off his hat, and the singing of songs, but pleaded that he was in a hurry and meant no insult. He firmly denied mutilating the Cross, the principle charge against him, and maintained his denial under severe torture; no proof was brought forward, none was ever discovered, that he was the offender, and he was condemned on the other charges. Nevertheless, it was for the mutilation of the Crucifix that he suffered, such was the popular view at the time, and rightly, for if the Crucifix had not been mutilated the case would never have happened.

W. MANN.

SIR ARTHUR KEITH'S ATHEISM.

SIR,—I am rather amazed to find you claiming, in your current issue, in answer to a correspondent, that "Sir Arthur Keith is clearly an Atheist." I have read a good deal of Sir Arthur's writings, and would judge him thereby to be about the last of our "public men" to agree to such a description of himself. But what you state is more amazing still in view of what Sir Arthur Keith wrote so recently as June 4 last. In the *Daily Herald* of this date, in a contribution to a series entitled "Have the Churches failed?" he asserted:—

Whether we are laymen or scientists, we must postulate a Lord of the Universe—give Him what shape we will. . . I cannot help feeling that the darkness in which the final secret of the universe lies hid is part of the Great Design.

All the capitals are his (note the small "u" for universe, and capitals for "Great Design") and how such expressions could be reconciled with Atheism beats me. I have been surprised—not to say amazed, again—and others with me, that not a solitary word of reference to this *Daily Herald* series has appeared in your columns.

DAVID MACCONNELL.

[As Sir Arthur Keith said he did not believe in a God, we take that as a public avowal of Atheism. We are not concerned with what it is alleged he said privately.—EDITOR.]

Society News.

MR. WHITEHEAD's visit to Cardiff seems to be the only Freethought propaganda which has been conducted there for many years. As the city is intensely religious with a strong Roman Catholic following the powers that be and the powers that would like to be provided a lively

week. We had four pitches. The first meeting opened at Victoria Park, was well attended, and passed off in good style. The next evening at the same spot encountered police opposition. As Mr. Whitehead announced he intended to hold a meeting in spite of prohibition his name was taken, but matters were afterwards amicably arranged with the police, who are exceptionally strict in Cardiff. The second meeting after the lecture produced elements of liveliness, which needed some tact to prevent it developing into a row. Next evening at another pitch, we had a repetition of Christian bad manners and many threats were made, one from a lady, who was strongly tempted to pour paraffin on the platform in order to burn it and the speaker. Some straight speaking from Mr. Whitehead was appreciated by the more sympathetic auditors, and eventually the meeting finished with good temper, leaving a large crowd to argue out the details for an hour or two after. The next meeting held among the Catholics was the most threatening of the series, a good feature of it and all the others, however, being that order prevailed all through the lectures. After the meeting, the speaker and two supporters were followed by crowds of children and some adults, who rejoiced very audibly that God was on their side, but nothing more serious than having hats knocked off resulted. Still another pitch was visited on the last evening, where a very good meeting finished the series, a rather vindictive drunk being the only serious disturber. Enough new members were enrolled to form a Branch, and many others expressed their support of our point of view. Mr. Davidson of Newport acted as chairman, and Mr. Marsh of Cardiff worked fearlessly and enthusiastically under very trying circumstances.—G.W.

THE week has been a busy one with outstanding meetings at several places. We gathered a very large crowd at our first meeting of the year at Great Harwood. In the crowd was a Free Church parson, who offered opposition, and thus added to the interest, while questions were numerous. A first visit was paid to Trawden, and though rain prevented discussion, there is promise of some good meetings here in future. The afternoon meeting, at Preston, had a rather small attendance, but this was compensated for at the evening meeting. We had a fair amount of what was clearly Catholic opposition, whilst an oldish man took the platform and illustrated our evening theme by some crude remarks.—J.C.

Neighbours.

Why do I keep my garden fair?—
My neighbour on the right,
(Though mine of such great glory is bereft!)
Toiling in secret night,
His radiant blossoms everywhere!

But oh my neighbour on the left,
He . . . owns a wilderness,
With naught of Joy his aching eyes to bless!
Sometimes I think
I'm here to make a link—
And so I keep my garden fair!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

Nigeria.

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INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, John A. Hobson, M.A.—“New Thoughts on Democracy.”

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree, Euston Road, N.W.1): Thursday, July 3, Social and Dance at 101 Tottenham Court Road, 7.30 to 11.30. Admission 1s.

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. R. H. Rosetti—A Lecture.

FINSBURY PARK BRANCH N.S.S.—11.15, Mr. L. Ebury—A Lecture. The *Freethinker* can be obtained from Mr. R. H. Page, 15 Blackstock Road, Finsbury Park.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road): Saturday, 7.30—Various speakers.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6.0, Mrs. Grout—A Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.—Sunday, 11.30, Wren Road, Camberwell Gate, Mr. J. Payn; 7.0, Stonehouse Street, Clapham Road, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Wednesday, Rushcroft Road, Brixton, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Friday, Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (outside Municipal College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.30, Mr. James Hart and Mr. A. D. McLaren; 3.15, Messrs. E. Betts and C. E. Wood; 6.30, Messrs. A. H. Hyatt, B. A. Le Maine and E. C. Saphin. Every Wednesday, at 7.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and J. Hart; every Thursday, at 7.30, Messrs. E. C. Saphin and Charles Tuson; every Friday, at 7.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine and Mr. A. D. McLaren. The *Freethinker* can be obtained after our meetings outside the Park, in Bayswater Road.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.15, Messrs. Charles Tuson and W. P. Campbell-Everden.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BLACKBURN MARKET.—Sunday, June 29, at 3 and 7, Mr. J. Clayton.—A Lecture.

CRAWSHAWBOOTH—Friday, June 27, at 8, Mr. J. Clayton.—A Lecture.

COLNE (Colne Lane): Monday, June 30, at 8, Mr. J. Clayton.—A Lecture.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble to Clohodrick. Meet at Paisley Cross, 12 noon prompt.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of High Park Street and Park Road): Thursday, July 3, at 8, Messrs. A. Jackson, D. Robinson and J. V. Shortt. Current *Freethinkers* will be on sale.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Moor, near North Road entrance): 7.0, Mr. J. T. Brighton—A Lecture. Members meeting will be held at 3.0, at Pilgrim Street.

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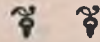
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