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Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc.

Views and Opinions.

The Revolt of Youth.

WITH most young people there is a very healthy vein of scepticism. A child with a watch wants to know what makes the wheels go round, and generally, when the impulse is not checked by parents or teachers, or parents and teachers, youth is a period of perpetual questioning. Wise educationalists regard this curiosity as good, and encourage it as much as possible. The lazy ones, or those with some sinister interest to serve think of it as a nuisance to be suppressed as completely as possible. The child is then expected to believe what it is told, and because they who do the telling are the older, forgetting that if increase of years meant growth in wisdom, the wisdom of the world would be something to be calculated in strictly mathematical terms—which it obviously is not. Even to-day I am not quite sure what would happen to a child who frequently put its teachers the question it must often think, "How do you know?" If the teacher were strictly honest he would reply in a large number of cases, "Well, I don't know, but some old men before my time told me so, and some other old men before their time told them, and so I suppose it is true." Generally the child is not encouraged to find out, only to learn, which may account for so many of the subjects of expensive education, while quite satisfactory specimens from the point of view of the old men, are not quite so pleasing to the younger ones. The old men of the tribe are too fond of telling the rising generation what it ought to believe about everything on earth and in heaven—particularly in heaven.

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The Burden of Old Age.

A very great deal has been written about the burden of old age, but the lamentations have referred in almost every case to the fact that the old man could

not get about as nimbly as he used to do, and could not grasp things as easily as he once did. But the real burden, the grievous burden of old age is the one that it places upon the shoulders of the young—and does it in such a way that the young seldom know where the weight they feel has come from. All they know is that it is there, and one great aim of education appears to be to persuade the young that in the absence of this burden life would not be worth living. In the days of chattel slavery there were always a number of slaves who could not see how society could continue if there were no slaves to do the rough work. I have myself come across many people in this country who cannot imagine how we could get along if there were no landed aristocracy to keep things as they are. In both these cases the education given had been through, and had been completely assimilated.

Now this rule of the Old Men of the tribe is a very ancient one. It goes back to the time when people could neither read nor write, and when man's chief superiority over the animal world consisted in the ability for articulate speech. In such circumstances the old men became the natural vehicles for the transmission of such laws, and lore, and such customs as the tribe possessed. In this way age began to be identified with wisdom, with which it has only an accidental connexion. Indeed, when Bacon said that the ancients were not the oldest but the world's children, so we might say that from a cultural point of view, it is the old men who are the children and the youth the older generation. Old men have indeed lived in vain if they do not leave their children older in a knowledge of the world than they were themselves.

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The Curiosity of Youth.

But the old men were really the first educationalists. Accident delivered youth into their hands, and they have worked their hardest to see that the institutions of Society were such as to perpetuate their rule. There is plenty of praise for youth, but for age the world's maxims are all in the direction of veneration, and to leave age in charge. Look at the case of the last war. It was an old man's war if ever there was one. Everywhere in Europe Governments were dominated by men who had learned their lessons in a school of diplomacy or of statesmanship that was already getting out of date when they were initiated into the "Mysteries." And in these days when changes occur with such rapidity, these men simply could not adapt themselves to the changing conditions of the world. Youth fought the war, but it was at the behest of the old men. Let alone, or rather, trained properly, youth is open to new ideas; age is susceptible to only change, which breaks across all its habits and disturbs it long cherished equanimity. Youth

says, "Let us try something fresh." Age moans, "It will last my time."

To-day in social, ethical and religious questions youth is asking the Old men, "How do you know?" and the old men do not like it. Particularly is this the case with religion. Look how both Nonconformist leaders and Churchmen have been fulminating against the revolt of youth! Naturally they do not like to see young men and women finding things out for themselves. They might find out too much. Particularly in religion. For here there is nothing but the word of the old men to warrant belief in what they say. The present generation of religious teachers hold certain beliefs because the old men that went before told them. These other old men got their information from the old men that preceded them, and so we might go back through stratum after stratum of fossilized intellectual senility until we arrived at the original Old Men of the tribe who are the "onlie beggetters" of those queer beliefs and monstrous customs over the decline of which three hundred bishops and archbishops are gathered in congress mourning over the revolt of youth.

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#### The Tyranny of the Dead.

It is an old maxim that custom makes men cowards, but the worst of customs is the custom that establishes custom as a teacher who must not be questioned. The old men have seen to it that this shall be one of the first and firmest of customs; and shall hold a firm place in all education, not merely the old men who are living but those who are dead. They rule us from their graves, and the better they were while alive the greater the tyranny they exercise when they are dead. Society is fairly secure against bad men—obviously bad men. They are not cannonized while they are alive, they are not held up to our admiration when they have ceased to live. But the good men, the men who found creeds and create parties, the men who establish institutions and make laws, these are the men who from their graves hold the present in their grip, because they forge chains that cannot always be seen by those who wear them, and those who do find it one of the hardest tasks to convince others of their existence. The real tyrants are the dead ones, the real burden that humanity carries is the burden created by its own illusions and its own mistakes.

What are the three hundred bishops now in conference in London doing but seeking some method by which they may continue to impose upon the youth of the present generation the ideas of the dead—not the physically dead, but the mentally dead? There is not a single idea for which they stand that has any direct reference to the life of to-day or to the thought of to-day. The doctrines they preach belongs to the past, the phraseology in which they express them belongs to the past, the very dress they wear while they express them belongs to the dead. The utmost of their endeavours is to devise some means which, while using a language that has a closer relation to present-day existence shall perpetuate the rule of the dead. Quite appropriately they worship a dead god. A dead god and a dead creed go well together.

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#### The Burden of the Past.

I really commenced these notes with the intention of dealing with an article by Mr. Randolph Churchill, son of Mr. Winston Churchill, who writes in the *Sunday Express*, an article on "Youth Challenges the Church." It is not a very drastic challenge, or it would not have appeared in that paper, but it is

deserving of notice, and it will keep for another week. I need only say now that Mr. Churchill does not apparently, recognize the root of the revolt. The real enemy against which youth is unconsciously in revolt is the power of the dead hand. The existence of that power is unavoidable, and its influence inescapable. It is all a question of how to confine it within limits which will do the least harm. Society progresses, it grows from knowledge to knowledge because man alone in the animal world possesses an articulate language, and is able by writing symbols to hand on to one generation the knowledge acquired in an earlier period. But it is not an unmixed blessing. It hands on bad things as well as good ones. They come by the same channel, and most people lack discrimination to select the good from the bad, the useful from the outworn. The older the world grows, the greater becomes the dead weight of the past. That is unavoidable, but we need not consciously increase the burden by cherishing institutions the only purpose of which is to give the dead increased power. Education wisely directed will seek to minimise its influence. It would teach the youth of to-day, not merely the right to question, and even to try experiments, but the duty of doing so. It would listen to the Old Men of the tribe, I trust, with respect, but always with a considerable amount of suspicion.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

### By Hook or By Crook

"The difference between a church and a theatre is that you pay to go in one and pay to get out of the other."—*Mark Twain*.

"It is wicked to cheat on Sundays. The law recognises this truth, and shuts up the shops."

*Ambrose Bierce.*

THE artful advertisements of such bodies as the Young Men's Christian Association and the Church and Salvation Armies, besides the unending appeals of so many other religious associations for money for secular purposes, reminds us that the Christian Religion is actually a money-making business, and is worked on time-honoured commercial lines. Missions and meetings are advertised in precisely the same way as liver-pills, or the latest musical comedies and blood-and-thunder films. Preachers and evangelists adopt similar methods to circus proprietors and cinema managers with, presumably, the same highly-pleasing results. The purely business side of the faith once delivered to the saints, however, is seen clearest in the methods now adopted in order to raise revenue for an evangel alleged, facetiously, to be without money and without price.

The extent to which ordinary trade tricks have displaced voluntary contributions so long in vogue in connexion with Christian congregations is very significant. The old-fashioned methods of collecting copper coins and threepenny bits during a service is no longer considered adequate. Even the once-popular Jumble Sale is being superseded by more up-to-date and efficient substitutes. So much is this the case that trading by religious bodies is considered by business men as a menace to the welfare of the trading community. Bazaars, conducted on a strictly commercial basis, are held for the reduction of church and chapel debts, and the erection of costly places of worship. Missionary and other religious propagandist societies owe a good deal of their incomes to sales of goods, and many thousands of pounds are raised annually in this manner for religious interests. At a bazaar held at Lincoln over £1,000 was realized, and a week's missionary exhibition at a seaside town

brought £200 clear profit. A sale of work in South London produced £250, and a dozen similar functions in one week realized over £2,500.

Imagine the many similar exhibitions and sales held annually throughout the country for the various organizations associated with Priestcraft. Add to these 13,000 parish churches, and 12,000 chapels, mission halls, and tin-tabernacles, all of which now look to bazaars, exhibitions, and sales, as an easy and quite legitimate means of raising money, and we begin to realize the extent of the commercialization of religion.

Where is all this to end? The logical outcome is seen in the vast trading organization of the Salvation Army, which sells regularly among its members, and also from door to door, tea, clothing, children's toys, books, musical instruments, and all manner of requisites, and uses the profits for its religious propaganda. The Salvation Army touts for emigrants, and gets a substantial rebate from the shipping and railway companies. Insurance business is also encouraged, thus justifying the pleasantry that Salvationists are insured against fire in this world and also in an alleged existence to come.

This inclusion of Mammon as the fourth person of the Christian Trinity has had an unforeseen result, which would have shocked the sober believers of the ages of faith. It has led to the desire to make religion a pleasant, as well as a profitable, pastime. To attract audiences, painful Sabbaths have been replaced by Pleasant Sunday Afternoons. String bands and soloists take the place of lantern-jawed and leather-lunged preachers. Socialist Members of Parliament, old enough to know better, share the pulpit or platform with reformed burglars and converted (and wealthy) policemen. We wonder sometimes how the so-called spiritual work of the churches and chapels was conducted before the introduction of these very worldly attractions. Faith, we must suppose, was stronger in those days of auld lang syne, not needing the artificial impetus of secular amusement. Our believing ancestors attended a place of worship because they were convinced that if they stayed away their souls were in dire peril of eternal damnation. Now, Mr. and Mrs. Everyman are not sure if they possess souls or not, but attend church because it is considered respectable, like living in a nice neighbourhood.

The tricks of priests are calculated to make the raven hair of an ordinary tradesman turn white and curl afterwards. When the present St. Paul's Cathedral was in the course of erection a tax on river-borne coal was imposed to assist the cost of building that sacred structure.

The Cathedral has been left unfinished, so that the money can be drawn in perpetuity. Recently, the Pope canonized two Roman Catholic missionaries who blazed the trail for Popery in Canada nearly three centuries ago. To excite sympathy for Catholic martyrs it was stated in the newspapers that these priests were "burned and eaten" by the natives, thus branding the North American Indians as cannibals.

The unpalatable truth is that the majority of our population is only half-educated, despite two thousand years of Christianity. The strength of Priestcraft lies in the unthinking and uninformed masses. In nine cases out of ten the Christian is a man who does not understand the religion he professes so loudly. Priests batten upon ignorance and the inferiority complex of their fellow citizens. Their greatest strength is the tail-end of civilization, and they represent the lowest culture of modern society. What Thomas Carlyle called bitterly "The Great

Lying Christian Church" is but a trade, and the record of such organizations as the Salvation Army shows to what an extent commercialism can attain under the cloak of religion. A study of religious methods from those of the greedy American Evangelists to those of the equally greedy Ecclesiastical Commissioners should convince anyone that priests are not self-sacrificing evangelists, but that they are tradesmen, and not very honest ones either.

MIMNERMUS.

## The Folk Lore of the Discovery of Fire.

THE discovery by primitive man of the utility of fire forms the theme of innumerable myths and legends. In all divisions of the earth; among savage, barbarous and cultured communities alike, strange stories are told of the manner in which the possession of fire first entered into the service of man.

Despite the high intelligence displayed by the social insects, mammals and birds, not even the man-like apes manifest the slightest acquaintance with the power to generate flame. Holding as we must the doctrine of man's descent from some anthropoid form or forms of life we are logically bound to believe that at any early stage of human development the discovery of the art of fire production was made by purely natural means. It has been asserted that lowly races still exist to whom the use of fire is unknown, but in truth all savage peoples so far discovered are demonstrably in possession of the use of fire, as well as the knowledge of its mode of genesis.

In his recently issued essay, *Myths of the Origin of Fire* (Macmillan, 1930), Sir James Frazer has collected and arranged a series of myths, legends, and traditions relating to this fascinating problem. The extinct Tasmanians, the native races of Australia, Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia, as well as those that linger in the greater continents are all drawn into requisition to illustrate the folk lore of the origin of fire and the means devised to retain it for human use.

That the knowledge some savage communities now possess concerning the production and use of fire is a relatively recent acquisition is suggested by the circumstance that various traditions tell of the time when their ancestors were destitute of its benefits. These stories speak of the period when the fore-runners of the race first procured the flame by means of friction. Stones or fragments of wood were rubbed together until fire was kindled. These tales may possess little value as history, but they serve to illustrate savage thought. The legends universal among peoples of the lower culture concerning the creation of the world, and of animal, plant, and human life, with the countless accompanying myths invented to explain the origin of customs and beliefs, whose real beginnings have long vanished in a dateless past, prove conclusively that the savage, in his humble way, is ever prone to surmise when reflecting on the puzzling phenomena of Nature. Moreover, some element of truth may reside in the curious traditions so religiously handed down generation after generation by the wise men of the race.

The imposing array of evidence presented by Sir James Frazer in his excellent volume, provides powerful support for the opinion that humanity has slowly developed from a fireless phase to one in which the knowledge and use of fire has become a world-wide possession. Three successive stages may be dimly discerned in the folk lore of the flame. Frazer

terms these three periods: the Fireless Age, the Age of Fire Used, and the Age of Fire Kindled.

That at least a modicum of truth underlies the various savage explanations of the genesis of the use of fire seems fairly certain.

"However these conclusions may have been reached," writes Frazer, "whether by speculation or by actual reminiscence orally transmitted, it seems highly probable that they are substantially correct; for if, as is now generally believed, mankind has been gradually evolved from much lower forms of animal life, it is certain that our animal ancestors must have been as ignorant of the use of fire as all animals but man are to this day; and even when the race had attained a stage which deserves to be called human, it is likely that men long remained ignorant of the use of fire and the methods of kindling it. Thus we conclude that the myths of the origin of fire . . . despite the extravagant and fanciful features which adorn or disfigure many of them, contain a substantial element of truth."

Australian traditions speak of the time when the people were fireless. No camp fires existed, and all food was eaten raw. In the days of old in New Guinea, in default of fire, sustenance was limited and monotonous and the people were compelled to dry their fish in the sun. Many stories suggest the time when the solar rays were necessary to cure or cook the food as no earthly fire was available. Again, in many traditions of the coming of fire the welcome flame was conveyed by birds from the sun to earth for human enjoyment. One realistic story current in aboriginal America recalls the time when the people were compelled to devour raw food and pass their evenings in melancholy darkness or twilight grey.

At last fire became universally available and was utilized in various ways, yet knowledge of the kindling art remained to come. One primitive legend tells how the natives adventitiously acquired fire for the first time from burning material ignited by the lightning flash. They consigned the care of the precious flame to an elderly female who was strictly forbidden to permit it to expire. She fed the flame for several seasons, but it was at last extinguished by a nocturnal deluge of rain. In deep distress, she searched everywhere for fire unavailingly until losing all patience she angrily snapped two branches from a tree and eased her vexation by rubbing them violently together, when to her astonishment and delight fire arose from the rapid friction.

Many other tales of similar significance exist which relate to a time when fire, once possessed was jealously preserved, presumably in the absence of knowledge of the means of restoring the flame. The Creator sometimes gave the people fire, but forgot to instruct them in the art of rekindling it. In the Congo Valley, in the days of old the early ancestors obtained fire from burning wood set aglow by the lightning flash, but as yet were incapable of creating it anew. Very probably, forest conflagrations caused by lightning have many times served to furnish primitive man with the useful if devouring flame which he was unable to kindle himself.

In various ages and lands, the tree torn by lightning has been endowed with sacred properties. Even when the fire-generating art has become a common possession special veneration is paid to the fire kindled during a raging thunderstorm. Quite recently in India when a forest giant was smitten by lightning the natives of the district declared that "Since God had sent this 'lightning-fire,' all existing fire in the village should be extinguished, and a portion of this 'heaven-sent fire' should be taken and carefully preserved in every house and should

be used for all purposes. And this was accordingly done."

Tales are narrated of the time when the forbears of the race obtained their fire where ignition had been occasioned by the friction of two branches swaying in the breeze. The people made their acquaintance with fire from the flames arising in this way. In Pagan Rome, the celebrated rationalist Lucretius in his imperishable poem on "The Nature of Things" (*De rerum natura*), when inspired by the power of genius that all real poets possess, suggested that man's earliest knowledge of fire was derived from the conflagrations occasioned by lightning, and that he probably discovered the art of ignition by noting the smoke or flame caused by the friction of branches in the wind. As Frazer comments, each of these hypotheses is supported by current savage myths and legends.

In days when our habitations are illuminated with gas or electricity; when matches—despite the tax—are in universal use, it is hard to realize the age-long centuries when these essentials of modern life were entirely unknown. The burning lens was utilized in ancient Greece for the production of fire, and Plutarch tells us that this in subsequent centuries remained the means of solemnly rekindling the sacred flame in Rome. Observances such as this point back to a period when all fire-making retained a religious significance. Other survivals persisted in Europe in the need-fire of rustic England, and the Notfeuer of agrarian Germany through the smoke and flames of which the cattle were driven to ward off disease. These ancient customs continued to the nineteenth century despite their Pagan associations so repugnant to the clergy.

When advancing man at last mastered the problem of procuring and perpetuating fire, he appears to have employed two leading devices—the friction of wood and the percussion of stone. The rubbing of sticks together appears to have come first, and this method frequently figures in the folk tales. Friction is utilized in the production of flame in several ways. Three outstanding methods are found in the fire-drill, the fire-saw, and fire-plough or stick and groove. Some contemporary savages produce fire by striking stones together, while in a more advanced stage of culture flint and iron are requisitioned for this purpose. But the more widespread custom among savages is the use of wood.

Women sometimes figure as the custodians of fire to the complete exclusion of men. But as the female sex appears to have played a large and important part in the early stages of agriculture, spinning, weaving, pottery-making, and other industries, this is not surprising. Quaintly enough, fire is occasionally regarded as having arisen from various parts of the woman's body. Indeed, several of the myths suggest an analogy between the friction essential to ignition, and that which accompanies the act of coition. Again, among the Mirand-Anim in Dutch New Guinea there flourished quite recently a Secret Society which celebrated annually the rite of the sacred kindling of the fire with generative orgies which were regarded as indispensable in preserving the holy element of fire from destruction.

T. F. PALMER.

In general the art of Government consists in taking as much money as possible from one part of the citizens to give it to another.—*Voltaire*.

I have not the gifts that go to make a good citizen, nor yet the gift of orthodoxy; and what I possess no gift for, I keep out of. Liberty is the first and highest condition for me.—*Ibsen*.

## Priestcraft in Malta.

TWENTY-FOUR years ago a Gospel Mission was planned for the benefit of Protestant civilians, sailors and soldiers in Malta. It was stated in the *Malta Chronicle*, that talks by the Rev. John McNeill were to be given to his fellow countrymen, English, Scotch and Irish. The Roman Catholic Archbishop wrote to the Governor that the holding of a religious service, by a Protestant minister, even inside a public building in Malta constituted a scandal, and with Roman Catholic impudence, the Archbishop peremptorily demanded that the Governor should at once prevent this outrage. The Governor, however, was not so soft and the meetings were continued until the Sunday, when they were abandoned. But the home Government was communicated with and a Royal instruction was sent out to the effect that "It being our intention that all persons inhabiting our said Island shall have full liberty and the free exercise of their respective modes of worship . . . the Governor must allow such meetings." The priest continued his impudence. He wrote to the King, "I can but signify my deep displeasure and that of all my diocesans at the sanction of liberty of religious worship in this island . . . after a century and more that the exercise of public religious worship has been exclusively reserved to the Catholic religion."

I do not know if it is the same Archbishop that Lord Strickland has been up against, but if not the same it is an entirely similar scamp, behind whom again is the gang of blackguards at the Vatican.

Our Government has issued a Blue Book (Cmd. 3588, price 1s. 6d.) which all our people should read, though as it consists chiefly of correspondence in chronological order it needs a little study to get the facts in proper perspective.

The native Maltese are a Punic race (*i.e.*, Carthaginian) *not* Italian, 80 per cent not even speaking Italian. A new Constitution has been given them. The difference this has made is concisely this. *Before*, 6,000 Italian speaking electors bossed the show. They were hostile to the establishment of the Maltese language and to British culture. The new Constitution has added 40,000 electors who are Maltese and as a consequence they are now getting (amongst other things) (p. 25):—

- (a) The right to be tried in courts of law in Maltese, *i.e.*, their own tongue, a Phoenician language, and the only language 80 per cent of them can speak.
- (b) The right to record notarial deeds in Maltese.
- (c) A press law that protects the weak and workers who aspire to political life.
- (d) Equal justice for the weak and poor without favour to judges or nobles or priests or politicians.

These and other similar acts of justice are due to Lord Strickland and the party he leads.

The Italian faction is led by a man called Mezzi, who (p. 15) "has been notorious for his Anti-British propaganda in both Italy and Malta, and for being condemned during the war for disloyalty and sedition." According to him "the only solution of the Maltese question is the annexation of Malta to Italy."

Which side does the Vatican gang take? The anti-British side, *of course*.

Now Lord Strickland is a Catholic, but of the Old English type which looked after its own politics. He is not a Vatican's lackey, like, *e.g.*, the half-breed Belloc, or the renegade Chesterton. I should guess that after this bother has subsided he will be disillusioned and will throw over the Vatican gang. As

the native Maltese are Catholics, he had no objection to helping them, especially as they had very serious grievances.

Irish chattels of the Vatican might take notice that when it suits the Vatican there is no hesitation in betraying the racialism of the chattels. It is a remarkable fact that the priests are now getting their nastiest jars in Roman Catholic countries. Mexico is an outstanding example. It is noteworthy that in Malta the cry of "Long live Calles," has been hurled at the priests. (p. 48). There is a very significant quotation from a newspaper article by Lord Strickland, which is the first hint I have had of the matter. Evidently speaking as a Catholic of independent views, he accuses the Maltese priests of provoking (in Maltese Catholics) a "reaction *such as has happened in Ireland*." (p. 49.) Are some of the Irish chattels beginning to have a glimmer of sense? That some of the Maltese dupes are getting disillusioned is shown by a statement asserted to have been made by Lord Strickland. (p. 48.) "A prominent member of the Labour Party, who has recently been in Rome, has informed his friends that for a small amount of money he would get his horse made a (Pope's) Marquis."

This happened during a debate on a proposal to give official recognition to Papal titles.

Another thing that lacerated the feelings of the gentle gangsters was referring to the Vatican as "a business concern." Truth will out! Do not the Italians talk of Holy Shop?

We may not have got these little side lights on the quarrel, but for the fact that they are contained in a list of complaints sent by the Vatican, and which somebody in our Foreign Office has had the sense to include in the Blue Book. There are eight pages of them. Here are a few things said in Malta by individuals of "the most Catholic population in the world":—

"When priests come to meetings they should be exemplary and not spread lies." (p. 51.)

"Fifty years ago Catholics in Malta were taught that it was disreputable for a priest to make money otherwise than 'by the altar,' but . . . our morals are changing."

"Priests who go in for making money." (p. 51.)

"Priests who are Italian politicians first and priests afterwards. We are tired of them and so are the people." (p. 50.)

"After 120 years you have kept 80 per cent in ignorance." (p. 50.)

In a statement signed by the ministers of the Maltese Cabinet (only one name, that of Lord Strickland, appears to be English, though all are Catholic) we find "It is greatly to be deplored that the Holy See has been unconsciously misled into lending the assistance of its great prestige and power to what is nothing less than a conspiracy against British rule in Malta" (p. 14). And it is followed later (p. 21) by this description of how it has been done; an "incessant campaign of calumny, the concoction and use of a perjured affidavit, the distribution thereof by priests and laymen inside the churches on the morning of election Sunday, the scurrilous, obscene, and even sacrilegious publications in their press, the consistent abuse of religion and the Church for political purposes, and the exploitation by not a few priests of their sacred ministry in support of the opposition and against the Government."

Although the Maltese Cabinet and our own Foreign Office have stuck to their guns very well, yet there is a kind of crawling politeness about their letters to the Vatican that grates. Especially is this so because the Vatican letters, etc., show the usual Jesuitical double dealing at every turn. Lord Strickland and a member of his Cabinet went specially to Rome to talk matters

over. (Fancy a Prime Minister of a British colony doing this. The Vatican ought to have been "told off," and no dealings whatever had with it). And the Pope refused to give them an interview! and Cardinal Gasparri wrote to the Maltese Bishops to tell them this. (p. 10.) Lord Strickland then produced a letter from Gasparri to himself, in which the Cardinal liar said, "It must be well understood that the Holy Father has not refused the desired audience, but . . . simply considered it should be put off to a more opportune moment, in order that it may take place in the form due to the high office held by your Excellency."

Here you see Jesuitical economy of truth (which plain people call lying) in action.

Our representative at the Vatican (where we ought to have no representative) was impudently informed that "the head of the Maltese Ministry was no longer persona grata, and that instructions had been given that he was to be received by no one whatever at the Vatican."

What our Foreign Office ought to have done now was to withdraw the representative from the Vatican and demand a public apology, at the same time ordering the Bishops of Malta to be tried on a charge of treason, and if found guilty to have them hung. Instead they sent this note, "If in the face of the situation thus created by the Holy See, His Majesty's Government now adopt an attitude of moderation, Cardinal Gasparri should understand that such moderation is prompted not by the circumstances of the case, but by sincere regard to the high office and sacred function of the Holy See."

This is the sort of crawling politeness to a gang of blackguards that I as an Englishman object to so strongly. The Catholics are a pestiferous sect. They are not a sovereign State to be dealt with on equal terms by the British Empire.

It comes out in the correspondence, etc., that the Vatican liars made very smooth promises to try to smooth things in Malta, and all the while were sending instructions to the Maltese priests to behave in a way to make things worse, until at last our Foreign Office tells them that any continuation of the discussion is useless. It also adds that it will receive no more complaints from the Vatican against the civil administration of Malta. (p. 66.)

As a sample of what sort of language these priests use there is given the Archbishop's address to parish priests. (p. 42.) If both Roman Catholics and non-Roman Catholics do not realize that Roman Catholics are mere chattels of the Vatican (at any rate in the Vatican's opinion) it is not for lack of being officially told. The Archbishop refers to the address of the Holy Father, delivered to the pilgrims of Malta in August, 1929. "Some of your were there . . . for my part I can say that what struck me while near the Holy Father was the tone of authority with which His Holiness spoke. One forgot all the great pomp which surrounded him; the Swiss Guards and Monsignori who encircled the Papal throne. I saw only the Vicar of Jesus Christ speaking with full authority. And the entire address turned on this one point: *Authority*. 'Those who wish to be with Christ must stand with His Vicar . . . the Pope rarely speaks or writes to his faithful; often, however, he speaks through the medium of his bishops, and the line of transmission which leads to Jesus Christ is the bishops and the Pope. It is thus that Jesus Christ makes his voice heard . . . The Pope says: It is necessary to think with the bishop, to follow the bishop's action, to speak as the bishop speaks because the bishop is the authentic interpreter of the Pope's

thought . . . If the bishop tells us to take five steps we must not take three or seven, but five.' "That is giving the chattels their orders isn't it? But listen what this swelled head said a little further on in his address. (p. 45.) His Holiness has said: "A certain Minister is not persona grata with us. The Pope refused to receive him, and will not receive him until he gives signs of sincere repentance. So have I done recently. On my arrival in Malta I sent word to the head of the Ministry that I should not receive him until he gave signs of sincere repentance." This is the way a Dago priest talks about an Englishman, Prime Minister of a British Colony! And in a pastoral letter read in all the churches are the following statements. (p. 81.) "These last" (the Maltese Ministry) "far from submitting to the paternal word of the Pope and obeying . . . dared to dispute the august word of the Vicar of Jesus and rebel . . . we have again insisted upon public and unmistakable signs of repentance . . . the state of rebellion against the word of the Pope still persisted on the part of the Government of Catholic Malta . . . and to come to the concrete and in order not to leave your souls any indecision, (1) You may not without committing a grave sin, vote for Lord Strickland and his candidates. (2) You may not present yourselves as candidates to support him. (3) You are also solemnly bound to vote for persons who offer guarantee for religious welfare."

\* \* \*

Everything I have said about Roman Catholics politically, especially in my book *Priestcraft* (and I have said some strong things), is amply confirmed by these occurrences in Malta. The Vatican gang has shown itself to be our enemy. Its Bishops and priests in our territory have shown themselves to be traitors. All those who are members of their organization are implicated in sedition and treason. They do not deserve citizen rights and ought not to have them.

C. R. BOYD FREEMAN.

### To My Love.

AND once again you come with outspread hands,  
And once again you greet this walking frame—  
Take then, my love, my thanks—your sweet commands  
To nourish hope—O what shall be thy name?

The gorse glows on the little sunny hill,  
The birch is putting on her robe of green,  
The crowfoot buds sway on the tiny rill,  
That sings a song—the singer is unseen.

Crab-apple blossom flutters to the ground,  
The wind's light sigh has tumbled beauty down,  
A chirping sparrow, sits and looks around  
For busy parent can not be found.

The swallow skims o'er dappled country lanes,  
White galleons float across the sea-blue sky,  
My love, I'll tell the world that my love reigns—  
But I am out of fashion—I am shy.

My life has taught me how to boldly curse  
The wrongs I felt for those who could not speak;  
But now I turn my steps and in this verse  
Bid bitterness depart, and solace seek.

Come then my love (I'll whisper not your name),  
With fairest fingers touch the barren earth,  
No man forget, nor woman, and proclaim  
This precious hour of hidden love's rebirth.

C-DE-B.

## Acid Drops.

There ought to be an International Copyright Act in ghosts. The *Daily Express* reports news from America that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has "manifested" through a medium there. An account is given of his reception in the spirit world, with a summary of Sir Arthur's address to the spirits. This is not fair. Sir Arthur is an English ghost, and his first appearance should be here. That is why we say there should be an International Copyright Act governing these things. American "hustle" is all right in its place, but when it comes to snatching British ghosts—well, at least a question might be asked in Parliament about it.

The genuine meeting to greet Sir Arthur's ghost took place at the Albert Hall on Sunday last. A two minutes silence was arranged, a vacant chair placed on the platform, and precisely at the beginning of the two minutes silence the ghost of Sir Arthur walked in and sat on the chair. The silence and the chair were part of what an actor would call the "props," and it was kind of Sir Arthur to fall in with this arrangement. It was announced later, that Sir Arthur wore evening dress. That was the most convincing touch of all. No one in the audience saw the ghost, but a clairvoyant was engaged, who told the audience she saw it, and that was quite evidence enough. It should be said that the clairvoyant gave a message from Sir Arthur to Lady Doyle, and that lady was quite satisfied. No one knew what the message was. But it was quite unnecessary they should know. The meeting had been arranged, the chair was set, the papers had informed the ghost of Sir Arthur that he was expected, a clairvoyant had been engaged to see him when he came, and everything came off according to plan. The nation ought to revert to Spiritualism at once.

We see that prominence is again being given to the statement that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was saved from Agnosticism by Spiritualism. If that very hazy term is taken to mean that Sir Arthur was ever without belief in a God, then he was never an Agnostic, for his belief never amounted to more than a slight doubt about what God was doing or why he was doing it. If by it is meant one who is troubled by doubts about God, that would fit Sir Arthur, but it means no more than a dubious theism. The trouble is that it is being used to discredit genuine disbelief in God by using a well-known name as one who was converted from Atheism.

On the authority of the Rev. Wilton Rix, of Ealing, we learn that modern youth has *not* abandoned Christ. It is not doubtful about Christ, but only the Church. Mr. Rix has discovered something more. The outlook of youth, says he, has changed, and the Church (meaning the parsons) is baffled about youth, and doesn't know how to guide youth into vital membership of the Church. This state of affairs has its sad side. For unless the young people can be captured, the parsons are in for a lean time when the older adherents die out. But this, of course, is a really unimportant aspect of the situation. What troubles the parsons is that youth is trying to get along without them. Or, as Mr. Rix puts it: "Youth is attempting to occupy a new promised land, but the road is dangerous, and they need God as a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. So the Church must go up with them, carrying the Gospel committed to her charge." Still, what the Church "must" do and what youth will permit her and her priests to do are different things. Youth's outlook has changed. It no longer believes that parsons have been—as they claim—divinely appointed to advise, lecture, scold, and bully youth nor anyone else. And that is a barrier between youth and the parsons which they and their pillars of fire and smoke will be a long time getting over.

The cause of true Progress is not lacking encouragement. France has ratified the General Act, drawn up by the League of Nations in 1928, for the arbitration of

all disputes. Belgium, Denmark, and Norway have already ratified. Finland, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, and Czech-Slovakia have registered their intention to do so. But France is the only Great Power to have ratified. The others still believe that questions of truth and justice can be settled by a war, and still boldly trust in the Christian God to award a victory to the most deserving nation. We hope no one will be wicked enough to disturb this beautiful trust in the Lord engendered by generations of Christian priests.

The Rev. A. Price Hughes told some young Methodists the following story:—

In a railway carriage, the other day, there were two Methodist ministers and an Indian student, who were deep in talk, when some rowdy girls who wanted to show off shrieked with laughter. One minister said, "Excuse me, but we have been preaching the Gospel and were having a quiet talk. Could you moderate your laughter?" "Oh, religion," said one girl, "we have no place for that." "Haven't you ever thought what you owe to Jesus?" "We don't owe anything to Jesus," said the girl. "All that is done with, and you've had your day." Then the Indian student spoke. "Allow me to say, madam," he remarked, "that in my country I am supposed to be somebody, and in some trains, if you were travelling, you would not be with me, but in a cattle-truck behind. That might help you to remember what you owe to Jesus in this land."

We presume this fairy-tale of Mr. Price Hughes is meant to point the moral that women in England own their liberty to Jesus, and, of course, to the Church of Jesus. Fancy a parson having the nerve to trot out that dog-cared piece of fiction! The subjection of women in Christian England, and the part played by the Christian religion of the Church in causing that subjection are historical facts. But apparently Mr. Price Hughes thinks it safe to trade on Methodist ignorance of these facts.

Artists, it is said, are spoiled by social recognition. This doesn't apply to those Christian artists who specialize in "lying to the Glory of God." The more they are recognized for what they really are, the sooner will they lose public patronage.

A weekly periodical with a leaning towards piety is anxious for the countryside to be kept beautiful. We hope our friend has not overlooked the unlovely tin bethels which disfigure most village beauty. It might also dissuade pious lunatics from chalking on gates and walls. Terror-inspiring messages such as "Sin," "Eternity," and "Are you prepared to die?" may be in keeping with the religion of Love and the beauty of the Infinite, but they do not enhance countryside loveliness.

God's Providence is a wonderful thing. During a Chorley fire it inspired a rabbit to jump into a bucket of water and save its life. Elsewhere, a woman has died at Barking through being pricked by a thorn. A warrantable assumption therefore is that Providence, not being able to be everywhere at the same time, must be selective.

Gipsy Smith, at Southport, said: "None of us is as good as he might be. I know I'm not." This pretty humility and engaging frankness—how sweet it is! But somehow it never prevents the professional Christian from pointing out other people's badness, and claiming the right to show others how to be as good as he.

Apropos of Alderman Mathews speech against Sunday trading, the *New Chronicle* (of Christian education) remarks that the Chambers of Trade and the Churches should now get together and "form a strong body of public opinion in favour of reasonable restrictions on Sunday trading." Well, we know what the Churches mean by "reasonable restrictions." They mean total suppression as far as possible; in order to prevent the majority of citizens enjoying Sunday as a day of recreation, and to ensure a day of stagnation. We think there is a strong body of public opinion against that.

Alderman A. W. Mathews, at the Conference of the National Chamber of Trade, stated "The Case for the

Restriction of Sunday Trading." We notice that he included in his case most of the parsons' trade-union objections to competition with *their* Sunday business. Admittedly, Sunday trading is preventing many people from enjoying Sunday leisure. But the real remedy is not an Act of Parliament for suppressing all Sunday trading and compelling all citizens to treat Sunday as the parsons wish—as a day of stagnation. The majority of the citizens of this country are determined to enjoy Sunday as a day of recreation. If this decision presses hard in other members of society, the remedy is that of passing an Act of Parliament which will ensure that no person works more than six days a week, and that any shop may open on Sunday provided it closes on some other day. Naturally, such a solution will not appeal to the parsons. But the common-sense of it will be apparent to all except the very pious and those in the ecclesiastical line of business.

The "terrific drum-banging and bugle-blowing" with which boys belonging to Scout and other organizations "disturb Sunday quietude," has rather upset a *Methodist Recorder* reporter. In Birmingham, the other Sunday, he says, the almost continuous din was horrible and must have disturbed people in the churches. He adds: "What is the sense of it—and why should not invalids be considered?" These be pertinent questions. But they are equally applicable to the hideous din made by bands, and howling preachers and adherents of the Salvation Army in nearly every town of Britain, both weekdays and Sundays. Naturally, a Methodist reporter cannot be expected to notice that or complain about it. Nothing must be said against the "Army." It commits its nuisances in the name of the Lord. And in this Christian country, that is assumed to excuse any and every annoyance the pious may inflict upon the non-pious minority.

All sorts of secular activities, such as sports, clubs, Scout and Guide organizations, have been tacked on to the churches of late years. The parsons explain the necessity for these as being due to the Church's anxiety concerning the physical and mental welfare of the members as distinct from the purely spiritual. Seemingly, this is a case where heartfelt gratitude would be in order. But it transpires that the professed anxiety is only another slab of parsonic cant. A Nonconformist minister has shown up the whole sorry pretence by mentioning that tennis clubs, etc., "may be a useful means of drawing youth to the Church." The cat is out of the bag! But the annual reports of the Churches will still trot out the old cant, so long as there are fools to be impressed by it.

Says a parson, modern young people are in danger of leaving the Kingdom of God out of their lives. Yes, there is a grave danger attached to that. It doesn't threaten the young people but the parson. His prestige, influence, and living are all threatened when people cease to concern themselves about the Kingdom of God. Still he ought to be cheered by the thought that he will receive compensation for his loss in Heaven.

The latest piece of Progress in what is called Christian civilization takes the shape of an electric gun, small enough for a child to carry, which can fire 6,000 shots a minute and be directed half a mile away. The cause of true Progress will be satisfied if the gun is directed to the scrap heap after being tested on all the war-mongers of Europe.

Permit a Christian to prevent other opinions than his own being heard, and he will announce to the world the progress that is being made by religion. Prevent his doing this and he begins to talk about religion being persecuted. Thus, the *Liverpool Echo*, noting the action instituted by Mr. Joseph Lewis, of New York, to prevent the Bible being used in the State Schools, heads its note "A Ban on the Bible." Technically the statement is correct if the Courts decide in favour of Mr. Lewis. But the implication is, we suspect, that the Freethinkers of America are persecuting the Bible. The Bible would be no more "banned" in the schools than

would be the Koran. The sole objection is that the Bible is the religious text book of a religious sect, and as such should have no place in the public schools of the United States. The Freethinkers fight against the Bible itself would be conducted outside the schools.

America is having some trouble with the Russian sect of the Doukhobors. These people insist on going naked for "Christ's sake," and when some of them insisted on disrobing in the public highway, another Russian sect, the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood attacked them. Ultimately the police joined in and sprayed the two lots with *disinfectant*. This appeared to have ended the fight. The next move was in the police courts, where fines and terms of imprisonment were inflicted.

Mr. Paul Robeson would love to produce *Green Pastures*; but he will have his work cut out in getting through the barbed wire entanglements protecting the national superstition. There is much talk about the Heavenly Father, in religious circles, but no decent earthly father would desire or be pleased to see his children on their knees when they wanted to have a few words with him. *Green Pastures* goes a step further; the Heavenly Father is simply a big office boss—with cigar complete, and Christians must thank themselves for this travesty; the coloured race has simply accepted the jumble of nonsense from Europe—all men are equal, washing in the blood of the lamb—and all the other amazing and meaningless phrases of a Janus religion. Mr. Robeson, in a *Morning Post* interview stated that it is only when a man believes fervently in something that he can really afford to make jokes about it. This is the Chestertonian vein of talk—so easy to acquire, because not much thought is necessary.

Mr. Justice Hill, in a statement recorded, emphasizes the civic nature of marriage even if the service has taken place in a religious building. He says:—

"I do not wish to bring pressure to bear on a petitioner who is actuated by religious views although it is sometimes surprising that people with religious convictions seek the aid of the secular arm."

It has always been a matter of wonder with us that divorced couples do not ask for their money back from the priests.

The great German Empire, thoroughly Atheistic during the war, according to popular novelists and other variety entertainers is now recovering. A reviewer of *Goethe und Christentum*, Wilhelm Von Flidner, notes the author's conclusion—"Goethe may offer us refreshing drink, but not our daily bread." When it comes to a question of leather, we feel sure that the German Christian apologist is no better than our own variety.

An interesting occupation is the collecting of newspaper placard announcements. Here is the result of one day's bag:—

*Sunday Dispatch*: "Dare-Devil Sampson's Bayonet Charge."

*The People*: "Spy Adventures in Britain."

*News of the World*: "New Light on Strangled Girl's Fate."

*Sunday Dispatch*: "All the Holiday Winners."

*Reynolds*: "Dramatic Developments in Strangled Girl's Fate."

*The People*: "Woman Pirate's Desperate Conspiracy."

*Sunday Dispatch*: "Cocktails," by Father Knox.

This is the tone set to the reading public by our Christian Press, and if there was nothing else in favour of the *Freethinker's* existence, it would be that it had accepted no quarter from such beauties, and that what they had not made they could not break.

According to the Bishop of Chelmsford, the Churches are factories for turning out Christians with finer characters than non-Christians. He adds, "The goods we deliver aren't up to specification." There really was no need to point so obvious a conclusion. But from another point of view it might truthfully be said that the men and women the churches turn out really are better than those they keep in.

## 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.

"GRATEFUL."—Letter received, for which we are obliged. Your wishes shall be carried out. Mr. Cohen is not unwell, only a little tired, and intends going away towards the end of next week for a few days rest and change.

F. BUDGE.—We are obliged for cuttings.

A. GURNEY.—Your letter did not reach us until Friday afternoon, too late for the information to be of use.

H. TRAIN.—Mr. Cohen will probably be visiting Bradford again some time during the coming winter.

J. G. LUTTON.—Shall be obliged for any information you can supply.

J. BRIGHTON.—Glad to know that you are keeping busy in the lecturing field, and hope to find you more active in the future.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Sugar Plums.

Mr. Cohen's address at the cremation of Miss Vance appears in another column. The Crematorium at Golder's Green was quite filled, in spite of the brief notice given. Among those present were Messrs. A. J. Mathie, W. Aley, Fulham and Chelsea Branch; Mr. Le Maine, West London Branch; Mr. A. C. Rosetti, Manchester Branch; Mr. F. C. Warner, Mrs. Warner, Mrs. Warner, Junr., Messrs. W. B. Dixon, Brewster, H. S. Wishart, West Ham Branch; Mr. Moore, Glasgow Branch; Miss Spencer Jones, Matron St. Pancras Infirmary, Miss Stuart, Lady Gowers, Miss Isabel George (Canada), Mrs. Collings ex Guardian, Mr. Simpson, for The Divorce Law Reform Union; Miss Beechey, Mrs. Jeffery Russell, Mrs. Leggo, Miss O'Donoghue, Mrs. R. Witcop, Mrs. Baker, Mr. and Mrs. Minnett, Mr. and Mrs. Carroll, Mr. and Mrs. Saphin, Mrs. Hornibrook, Mrs. White, Mr. and Mrs. King, Mrs. M. Smith, Mrs. G. Scott, Miss Fry, Miss Stanley, Miss Irene Oppemum, Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Watts, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., Messrs. H. R. Clifton, C. G. Quinton, Howe, H. Theobald, Harrison, F. A. Davies, Aley, Harry Reeve, Reynolds (Woolwich), H. Jones, J. Boyd, C. Tuson, G. Wood, Cowne, E. Snelling, Dent, Oscar Friedman, F. Skidmore and Col. Lynch.

Mr. Ralph Chapman writes on behalf of the South Shields Branch of the N.S.S. expressing regret at the news of the death of Miss Vance, and recalls that it was at South Shields that she first joined the Society. Mr. A. B. Moss writes expressing his regret at inability to be present, and Mr. Keast also expresses his appreciation of the kindly letters he received from her, from time to time.

Miss Kough asks us to express her thanks to the many friends who have written her concerning the death of Miss Vance. She is unable to write each individually, at present, but hopes to do so later. For the moment they must all rest content with the knowledge of appreciation of the sympathy expressed.

We mentioned, the other day, that there was about to be formed an International Society of Rationalists, with the aim of promoting intercourse between Freethinkers all over the world. The medium of communication is to be mainly Esperanto. Mr. Cohen has been asked to permit his name to be placed as Vice-President and he has agreed. The address of the Secretary is Mr. A. Hubbard, 98 Cromwell Road, Grimsby, who will supply whatever information is desired. The annual subscription is nominal.

Two meetings have been held at the N.S.S. Offices between representatives of several organizations, to see if joint action can be taken in favour of Secular Education. Nothing decisive has been done yet, but the meetings are continuing, and we should like to see a policy agreed upon. But agreement can, only be on the single point the co-operating parties have in common, namely, Secular Education. All party questions of religion, politics, or economics must be kept outside any such concerted action. That is the avowed policy of the N.S.S., and it is one from which it cannot depart.

With reference to the article which appeared in our last issue on civil marriages, by "A Plain Man," the author gives us a good humoured rap on the knuckles for printing "Register office" as "Registry Office." We noted the mistake when it was too late for correction.

The Swansea Branch is continuing its open-air work, following Mr. Whitehead's visit, and reports good meetings. It has samples of the usual kind of "fooling" opposition, but this should help to make the more intelligent believers the readier to look at the other side. We wish the Branch every success.

## Edith Maurice Vance.

Address by Chapman Cohen at the Cremation Ceremony, Golders Green, July 11, 1930.

SOME years ago I promised Edith Vance that if ever the occasion arose I would do what it falls to my lot to do to-day; and now that the time has arrived for the fulfilling of that promise, I could wish that this duty had fallen to others. For the most that one can say is "farewell," and so far as my own feelings are concerned, I would say that in as few words as possible. But in this matter, perhaps for the better, custom has decreed that birth and death are things that go beyond the province of the individual, that they touch the larger issue of social life. And so I must try to put into words what we are all feeling when we think of the passing of one whom we have known for so long.

Edith Maurice Vance had passed beyond the period marked by a biblical writer as the allotted age of man. She was just over seventy years of age, and of that term all but her youth had been passed in close connexion with a movement which, because of its unpopularity and its absence of social bribes, is peculiarly selective of the type of character it attracts. Self-seeking men and women may join it, but they do not remain, and therefore to say one has passed about fifty years in its service is to assume the existence of abilities that might easily have made their possessor prominent in other directions, and betokens a quality of idealism that, when all is said and done, remains one of the most valuable of our social assets.

Like so many who have given their energies to the cause of Freethought, Edith Vance was early associated with religious activities. She worked in a Church and taught in a Sunday School. Her conversion to Freethought was directly due to the influence of one of the most remarkable women of our time, Mrs. Annie Besant, and she first saw service in the National Secular Society under its great President, Charles Bradlaugh. After his death she became its General Secretary and held that post for thirty-five years, until failing health compelled her resignation. Hers was an office that called for tact, judgment, good humour, and, above all, unswerving devotion to the great Cause. She showed these qualities to a very marked degree, and along with them displayed an energy that was almost inexhaustible. She was also a woman of wide, if promiscuous reading, with a very retentive memory for anything connected with her work.

There were two marked features of her character that are worth noting. The one was an extreme sensitiveness which she masked, as so many do, with an occasional abruptness that would sometimes deceive the unobservant. She was very susceptible to a slight, and equally so to a kindly word. In her position she was much more than Secretary of a Society, she was a confidant and an adviser. Many—of both sexes—came to her for advice, and to them she was always helpful and sympathetic. Others came to her for help, and among her friends it was a by-word concerning the number of helpless and forlorn folk, fortune's outcasts, who came to her for relief. She helped them generously, and was, of course, victimised frequently. But she probably felt that it was better to occasionally assist the undeserving than to permit the deserving to go unhelped.

But the fact was in itself complimentary. People requiring help and sympathy do not go where they

are not likely to get either, and all such applicants were unconsciously complimenting the one to whom they applied. Hard and ungracious natures are not so bothered.

I have mentioned her devotion to the Freethought cause. This, however was only one side of her keen interest in all reforms—particularly those affecting the position of women. She took a very active interest in quite a number of advanced movements, and at a time when public feeling concerning them was very different from what it is to-day.

To such a woman, wide in her interests, with intense bodily and mental activity, there came some twenty years ago, the terrible affliction of blindness. Many would have sunk under the blow. She took it with a courage and a degree of cheerfulness that surprised and delighted her friends. She set to work to learn new habits with her hands, and thus kept both body and mind exercised and employed. Other ailments, unfortunately followed, and the last few years of her life is the story of a gallant struggle against increasing bodily weakness and pain. Often she said that she wished it was over, and that she could be at rest. There is no reason to think that this was not said with all sincerity, but she was as ready as ever to assist with her advice all who came to her for it.

Even so, with all her courage and resignation, life would have been impossible but for the untiring attention of one of the most devoted of friends. For years she had the kind of attention that no money can purchase. Some of us may have given the kind of help needed for a month, or for a year, but twenty years of such care demands a word of recognition from those who have watched its unwearying and undiminished manifestation.

She had no fear of death. Why should she have? She had broken with the superstitions about death, in her youth, and had never regretted the break. She knew that at its worst and at its best, death meant an unbroken rest, that when one's course is run one sinks to sleep feeling that one's work is done, and hoping that what one has done will have left some enduring mark on the life of those who come after us. That is all death means to us; it is all death meant to her.

To-day we stand in the presence of death, to mark the passing of a comrade of many years. Many of us have reached an age when we no longer make friends quite so easily as we did, or part from them with the casualness of youth. The death of a friend means the opening of a gap that can never for us be bridged, the snapping of a relation that nothing can re-knit. But we face death free from the idle fears and stupid terrors with which all the centuries of superstition have burdened it. We know that if death be the cause of present grief, it is the seed-plot of whatever life gives us of love and friendship. Life would not have the sanctity it has, nor the value it has, but for the underlying awareness that sooner or later we must all tread the way of dusty death.

The dead claim our affection and our memory; and when the sharp pang of a recent loss is dulled, the memories of our dead continue as our most prized possessions, and if we are worthy of them, and they are worthy of us, they form the source of many of our finest aspirations. In a far deeper sense, and in a far worthier sense, than that expressed by the religions around us, we may say that Edith Vance has put on immortality, for she has joined that immortal caravan of men and women who have through the ages worked to make the world they lived in the better for their presence. Nothing better can be said of any man or woman. No good man or woman ever desired that more should be said.

## Blasphemy in America.

THE refusal of Parliament to repeal the Blasphemy Laws recalls to my mind some incidents of prosecutions for that offence in America. Few remember that we here have had many struggles with this relic of bigotry though without as serious consequences to the victims as in England. It must be remembered that United States Blasphemy Laws are old colonial statutes enacted before the Constitution was formed, though attempts, which we will later refer to, have been made to enforce the "common law."

The most noted case in American history is that of Abner Kneeland, in Massachusetts, in the 1830's. He was the founder and editor of the *Boston Investigator*. His offence was in saying "The Universalists believe in a God which I do not." He was found guilty and sentenced to two months in jail. An appeal was taken to the State Supreme Court, which sustained the conviction. There had been no previous prosecutions in fifty years.

The next noted case was that of Charles B. Reynolds, in Marristown, New Jersey, in 1887. Mr. Reynold's offence lay in a pamphlet he had circulated ridiculing the Christian scheme. He had written this in protest against a mob of Christians who had attacked him while delivering a course of Freethought lectures. Robert G. Ingersoll defended him. He was found guilty, fined twenty-five dollars and costs—in all seventy-five dollars, which Ingersoll paid.

The next case was that of Michael Mockus, both in Maine and Connecticut. In the latter State, the case was taken up by the well known Freethought lawyer, Theodore Schroeder, who prepared a brief, afterwards placed in book form, a veritable encyclopedia of the question. It went back both into history and law. The judge would not even consider it after pronouncing it "very learned." Here they will *nolle prosequere* a case if they find they will be compelled to finally face the issue. In the meantime, Mr. Mockus disappeared, and for a long time his whereabouts were unknown. This was probably most gratifying to religionists, as they were spared the further duty of justifying the law.

Some three years ago a man was charged with Blasphemy and Sedition in Brocton, Massachusetts, but they were afraid to try the case as they were in the case only recently of Albert D. Philfu, in Reading, Pennsylvania.

Where there is no statute law on which a blasphemy prosecution can be based, attempts have been made under the "common law." The most noted of these was the case of Charles C. Moore, in Kentucky, in 1895. Mr. Moore was the editor of a Freethought weekly called *The Blue Grass Blade*, an article in which caused his arrest. The case was carried to the Court of Appeals which decided, that as under the Constitution of the United States there was not State religion recognized there could be no offence against religion; that statute law took precedence over common law. Mr. Moore was therefore discharged.

After Michael Mockus disappeared from Connecticut he reappeared in Illinois, where he was again in trouble. Once more the common law crime was invoked, and once more frustrated.

In the fall of 1928, it was once more called up against Charles Smith in the State of Arkansas. Mr. Smith is President of the American Association for the Promotion of Atheism. He visited this State to oppose the enactment of an anti-Evolution law. He was twice thrown into jail—and denied the right even of defence, not being, as an Atheist, permitted to testify. Under the common law he was sentenced to three months in the Penitentiary. The case has been appealed, but though nineteen months have passed no decision has been rendered, and it is not likely there will be. Mr. Smith hopes at the least to show that no citizen can be sent to prison without being permitted to defend himself.

In these cases of prosecution for opinion there are two disadvantages. In the first place, if Christians can succeed in placing a Freethinker in prison, they will do so and throw the key away. If they fail, and are certain they will be thwarted in a higher court, the case

will never come up for judgment, or it will be decided upon some technicality, while the main issue will be evaded. It must be remembered that in the United States, except in the Federal Courts, judges are elected, not appointed as they are in England. When they render a decision they have an eye upon re-election. The Church is to-day the most powerful political influence in this country, and, above all things, must not be offended. I have known judges, when a religious question was involved, to refuse to decide the case, leaving the responsibility to a higher court, which perhaps had the same fear of the upraised religious bludgeon.

In all countries these prosecutions and persecutions, to say nothing of slander, are a compliment to Freethinkers, as well as is the fact, that while politics, science, art, etc., need no law to protect them from criticism, religion, being the weaker vessel, must have them. The man who in an argument with another, is driven to demand that his opponent be jailed, stands naked in his weakness and imbecility. It proves that he has no real confidence in his own professions, and is a virtual confession that his opponent is right and that he is wrong.

I was present at the blasphemy trial of E. V. Sterry in Toronto, Canada, three years ago. Your state of mind on that occasion could not be other than anger or mirth, angry at bigotry, while you laughed at idiocy. These sensations are unavoidable when blasphemy is mentioned.

FRANKLIN STEINER.

Sec., American Rationalist Association.

## Burma—Land of Secularism.

It is a cardinal rule of British administration overseas not to interfere with, and to respect all native religions, and also to give religious organizations complete autonomy within the law at their places of worship. In the case of Burma, this attitude has been of the utmost value to generations now growing up, but there are still some failures which might be remedied. It is natural that the monks should dislike the Government rule in religious and educational matters, two subjects that have always been closely connected in all lands. The experience with joint schools, religious and secular Government schools, has led the British administration to take over all teaching and the monks themselves, like all religious bodies, fear that education not controlled by themselves will weaken religious belief, although their attitude is not so despicable as with our religious bodies at home as will be seen later. The attempt to help the monastic schools failed because the Buddhist Church disapproves the teaching of such subjects as geography, and naturally a student must believe one concept to be true at one time or else the mind is likely to lose its rationality. Also the men with the requisite educational qualifications for a lay teacher do not enter the Church. The Burmans who leave superstition behind and acquire a keen sense of the value of Western education are tending to support the lay schools instead of the monks.

Economic freedom, indeed, is not one of the blessings conferred on our own people by modern civilization. But among those blessings we count social and religious freedom of such a degree as to be able to look down on other peoples less advanced than ourselves. In India, despite a Government which enforces some respect for liberty, there still flourishes the caste system and the harem, which have the qualities of being the very antithesis of social freedom, and religious intolerance and priestly domination recall the bad days of England's ecclesiastical history. Burma has taken from India whatever good she had acquired in the past, and we might expect similar conditions to rule in both countries. What we do actually find is a complete absence of caste than anywhere in Europe, and no seclusion of women and an approach to equality between the sexes. A degree of religious freedom and tolerance, hardly yet attained by Western nations, exists there, for the Burman generally does not concern himself with the post mortem destination of his neighbour, who can believe in whatever ultimate abode he likes. The monks,

though influential, have no power like that of the Brahmans in India, or of the priesthood in Catholic countries. The chief factor in the difference lies in the character of the people, a mixed and quickly assimilating, clever people of whom it will pay the reader to study further elsewhere. The Burmans had universal education of a sort long before the idea arose in Europe. Literacy was well spread despite the complexity of the written word. This statement applies to males only, the number of females being educated in monasteries was, and is now, negligible.

The elementary education of Burma is co-extensive with Buddhism, and in Burma the failings of that Church seem to have been ameliorated to a large degree. In India, Ceylon, Tibet and Siam, all Buddhist countries, the monks do not occupy themselves in education to anything like the extent that they do in Burma. Again a desire on the part of the Burmans for education must be given as the reason.

When the British took hold of the Burmese educational system, or at least, tried to weld a system out of the unsystematic methods, it was found advisable to weld the European system on to that of the monasteries. This idea, mooted in 1805, practically made the monasteries lay schools on European curriculums, and instructors were sent round to instruct probationer monks with a view to their becoming teachers.

The language was the vernacular, and after many trials a method was adopted that ran smoothly. To-day nearly two thousand monasteries receive grants, and the attendance is eighty thousand children. This number is only one fourth of the total receiving education in elementary schools, the rest being classed in Governmental lay schools recognized by the Department: a quarter of a million children attend unrecognized schools: girls and non-Burmans, between the ages of six and eleven, who attend no school at all account for at least one million children.

Undoubtedly Western civilization has lessened the hold of religion on intelligent Burmans. With incomparably greater opportunities of the honest acquisition of wealth, and with many occupations open to them, the thinking men are no longer entering the monasteries. The monks are generally ignorant and disinclined to teach even the rudiments of reading and writing. When possible the children are sent to a lay school in preference to a monastery even if, as is provided for by the law, they have to support the schoolmaster in addition to the monks.

The Buddhist hierarchy seems to be falling from its former high position in educational matters. The Buddhist hierarchy is making no efforts to raise the standard of educational acquirements within the ranks of the Buddhist Order. In 1924, its head at Mandalay disapproved of the participation of monks in secular education. The Order is more honest, however, than some of our own religious bodies, for the receipt of money from the Government and the acceptance of Governmental control is against the rules, and thus the Order offers no resistance to the establishment by Government of lay schools. If this attitude is maintained it will save Burma being made the battle-ground between Church and State, as has happened in so many countries.

The co-working in education has, however, failed during the last few years, and it must in future be dropped for education independent of the monasteries. Individual monks are invited, however, to take part in the schemes for educating the people, the cost of which has increased rapidly within recent years. Not from sheer lavishness, but because the problem has never been tackled so energetically before. In the year ending March, 1923, the last year for which details are available, it was a third of a million pounds, but there were local and municipal funds in addition, bringing the total to one half million.

Nearly all the schools classed as "private" are taught by Christian missionaries, and they account for about six per cent of the children attending recognized schools. The Christian religion is here taught on similar lines to English schools. The managers receive grants according to the number of scholars, equal to half the standard fees and the approved expenditure. The arrangements

are not wholly satisfactorily worked out for either this class of school or the ordinary lay school, but vast improvements in the towns are being undertaken. It must be remembered that the Burmese are an agricultural people, and there are three-fourths living in villages of less than four hundred houses and well over half in villages of less than two hundred houses. University education is a monopoly of the people of Rangoon, and a few rich individuals outside. Burma is the most literate province in the Indian Empire.

The dramatic interest is strong in the Burmans. Nearly all small towns have a permanent theatre, but the national theatre is the open air, or a temporary shelter of bamboos, and is free to all. A selfish Burman, when he saves a little money, spends it on religious works for the good of his soul, a generous one bears the cost of a play for the entertainment of his fellows. This generosity though it may make him popular, brings him no merit in the Buddhist next existence.

Rather the contrary, for strong feeling and emotion are frowned upon by the Buddhist religion, and we all know the power of a good play to arouse these feelings.

The monks, despite a rule of their church that they should not take part in politics are sometimes to the fore in political questions, the most vital at present being the political separation of Burma from India, but generally speaking, Burma is a land of progress compared with her religious neighbours, a bright star in the dark depressing clouds of the East, and mainly because the curse of superstition is rapidly losing its hold on her awakening people.

L. CORINNA.

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### Poor Beggar!

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Is not mere money worshipped more in England than in any other country bar none, in the world?

Years ago, before I had travelled, I left off reading Ralph Waldo Emerson, because he asersted that this was so, and that the greatest term of reproach, was "poor beggar." But now I not only apologise to the shades of Emerson, but go one better, and assert that the Almighty half-penny is worshipped more in England than the dollar in the (anyhow Western States) of America; where however poor, as long as one is not a "quitter" or "slacker" and always strives to keep his end up, you are respected, at least as much as, and probably more than a millionaire, for there is always a doubt as to how his millions were gained.

Did not Lord Chesterfield in his letters to his son, advise "Get money; honestly, if you can—but get money?"

The financial status of any member of a family, can accurately be guaged, when he is generally denominated, "poor old ie," that ultimate "ie" being the very hall-mark of wordly unsuccess, and of whom it is said, he is no-one's enemy but his own. This latter phrase means that he has all the qualities to make a good citizen and member of society, but that he lacks the one thing essential to make a success of life; which is guaged by money; a kind of sensitiveness which disenables him to assert himself, to advertise himself, to push, shoulder and shove others off the ladder he ought to climb. Such a one would probably carry on a business quite well, but could never make one.

If with such a temperament as above he had been lucky enough to go into the Civil Service, a Bank or something akin where the main attributes required, reading, arithmetic, writing, punctuality and the other somewhat pawky wits required to hold down such a job, he probably would retire at the age limit with a pension and be saved from the "poor old ie." But should he have sought fortune, which from no fault of his, has proved elusive, in the lone and desolate places of the earth, and gone through hardships which the stay-at-homes are quite unable to grasp, with what grace he best can, he must perforce accept the "poor old ie." Should he, however, come into money, or attain wealth by any means however illicit such as murder, robbery, forgery, or Company Promoting (having seen the error of his ways) so long as he has not been found out in his

wrong-doing, this is essential, and has really attained tangible wealth, the means by which he may have so acquired it, will be very leniently questioned. Relations by whom he has been ignored will be the first to congratulate him, his advice will be sought on all and sundry questions—no family conclaves will be complete without him—no family funerals or weddings, but he must be an honoured guest—at once he reverts to the name given by his sponsors at his baptism—he is no longer “poor old ie.”

E.P.B.

### Civilization in U.S.A. 1930.

His Holiness the Pope, together with the Anglican Archbishop and bishops, might well turn their attention to a very real case of religious persecution, which presumably their holinesses and reverences eagerly desire to condemn.

In the case of Russia, where these censors were recently protesting against intolerance, most of all of the “religious persecution” is discovered to be nothing worse than the withdrawal of ancient privileges. The saloon keepers of U.S.A., objecting equally to their own sources of profit being disturbed by the Prohibition law, have not regarded it as a case of illegal persecution. There was nothing in the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution guaranteeing that every existent trade should remain legal for ever.

“The Government of the United States is not in any sense founded on the Christian Religion,” are words in a State Treaty.\* The Declaration of Independence said that “All men are born equal.” The terrible war between the North and South was waged by Lincoln to prevent any of the States of America from lowering the high standard of liberty and emancipation which the more enlightened States possessed.

Last week, in New Jersey, only a few miles away from New York and the Statue of Liberty, a Communist was charged with inciting a crowd to violence. It is no part of the present case to argue that Communists are more prone than others to defy the ordinary police and traffic regulations. This man pleaded “Not guilty.” He produced seven witnesses who say they were prepared to prove beyond all question that the prisoner was not in any way guilty of the charge.

It was a meeting of the Communist Party at which the alleged offence took place. Not unnaturally, all the witnesses, besides the defendant, were Atheists. The trial took place before Judge Van Riper, in Newark Criminal Court. The counsel for the prosecution stopped each witness before he was sworn, and asked if he believed in God. Each one answered in the negative. The Assistant State Attorney appealed to the Judge, who decided that under the laws of New Jersey, no Atheist can be heard as a witness, however material his evidence may be.

The result was the immediate collapse of the defence and conviction of the prisoner, who now awaits sentence.

Such is justice to-day in the New Jersey section of “God’s Own Country.”

Being unable to wait for the highly problematic interest of Popes and bishops, the Workers’ International Defence Committee organized a Protest Demonstration in Washington Park, Newark, last Saturday. A very miscellaneous crowd, chiefly of the working class, gathered, and appeared to be enthusiastic in its indignant protest. The principal speaker was Charles Smith, President of the “Four A’s.” He made a striking speech of unusual power and relentless logic. About a dozen other speakers were listened to with obvious sympathy. I was glad of the chance to assure the audience that the N.S.S. of England added its weight to their indignation. There was not a single hand held up in opposition to the resolution.

It was my first experience of outdoor popular demonstrations in U.S.A.

In some ways it resembled Britain in similar meetings. It had other and less familiar features.

\* The Treaty of Tripoli of 1796.

A posse of police stood in the midst of the crowd, not together, not at all like our own demonstrations where the police at least look as if they were there to protect the speakers from disturbance. Here they were scattered as if they were occupying “strategic points” in an enemy camp. Very conspicuous on the outside of the crowd was the police ambulance, our old friend the “Black Maria.” Although every other sign showed that the crowd was a friendly one, there was not a single interruption or friendly comment or a solitary “hear hear.” Each speaker was clapped as he climbed off the platform. We were a rather solemn lot, I admit, and I purposely uttered a few familiar “Blasphemies,” suitable to the occasion . . . all taken quite seriously, even when I alluded to various funny “gods,” belief in whom (or which), would be sufficient to qualify one as a New Jersey witness.

Mr. Smith drew attention to the chief citizen of Newark being no other than Edison himself. Anywhere else the incongruity would have been recognized by a burst of Homeric laughter . . . but in such an atmosphere such incongruities would be impossible. Ridicule would kill this monstrous law.

The Chairman was a clever and cultured young woman of about eighteen. Lottie Bloomenthal, of whom one day more will be heard. There were Negroes, of both sexes, Italians (reminding one irresistibly of Saccho and Vanzetti), Germans, and fine altruistic young men, risking liberty to witness for liberty.

The banners were all, or nearly all Communist or Labour; a bad mistake, this. It is natural to these hard working devotees of a particular political creed to want all the credit for this freedom crusade to attach to their own party. It defeats their own ends. The Communists will gain credit for their protests when they join to protect free speech and liberty wherever it is attacked, as the Freethinkers of England have always done. All the same, the Communists have a right to protest in their own name against injustices done to their fellow-workers. Freethinkers worthy the name all the world over will add their voice to all such protests.

A novel feature of the demonstration was a big aeroplane flying very low, with an immensely loud speaker on board, which, in addition to the usual engine noise, made the hearing of speeches very difficult on the outskirts of the crowd. The aeroplane continued its “low” flight round and round the gathering until the meeting was over.

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

### Mutability.

THE things we love are those we kill;  
The man, a maid; the sun, a flower;  
For nothing in this world stands still;  
Few pleasures last an hour.

Yester, the sun the sweet flowers kissed  
In gentle, tender fashion;  
To-day, lies no protecting mist  
Between them and his passion.

To-morrow will his burning breath  
Wither and scorch, and careless slay;  
A casual and indifferent death  
After his love to-day.

Then will he pass to other flowers  
And them will love and likewise burn:  
A man’s love in a few short hours  
Will pass and not return.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

Insolence is not logic, epithets are the arguments of malice.—R. G. Ingersoll.

## Glimpses and Gleanings.

"SCOTLAND my auld respected mither," how much I owe you after all; in so many comings and goings on so many Sundays on the same old pedal bike—how much I owe to that; the *Freethinker* always with me, in my breast pocket, in my mind, in my philosophy of life—how much I owe to that!

Due South from the Ayrshire Coast one comes upon the Valley of the Coyle, rising in a lone and bare Moorland, but growing in sylvan beauty as it flows, deviously winding, deeply channelling its way. The Paradise really begins after the redstone Clachan of Annbank, with its Labour Lord High Commissioner M.P. and staunch Churchman—in Prestwick, near by, lives the champion of a greater Cause—the cause of man and manhoods' ministers, who at four-score-and-four still wields the pen, still stands erect in body and mind, whose honours are not expressed in fancy, rich, and gaudy, who bears the good name and fame of Wallace Allan; so gratefully one glimpses this veteran in passing. The very heart of Paradise—not the eternal one, if the sweeter for that, seasoning with a little sadness the temporal scene, touching to a richer melancholy, refining joy and deepening humanity—Paradise at Gadgirth, a bridge over the Ayr, where still waters flow deep under the fairy tracery and majestic greenery of the hanging woods, or fed by rippling rapids from an upper bend. "Oh, could I flow like thee! . . ." Angels often pausing there doubt if Eden were more fair—but there is no doubt about it.

Will the long-suffering printer forgive this pencil for these brevities: it is the easier medium for the tousy muse.

COILA.

## Edith M. Vance.

YOUR eyes ne'er looked on me,  
For when we met  
Fate had ordained no more should see  
One who saw well and, seeing, was among the free.  
This stern and cruel decree,  
At which you did not fret,  
Was a strange irony.

Now are your ears closed too,  
And all your faculties  
Faded and gone like dried-up dew.  
But the great thoughts that stirred in you  
Dwell in the minds of the enlightened few  
Who, breaking superstition's ties,  
Abide by what is true.

B.S.

## Society News.

THIS week Mr. George Whitehead addressed a series of meetings in the Bull Ring, Birmingham. All the meetings were well attended and seemed to be appreciated. There were numerous questions and the crowds remained discussing various points for a long time after the close of each meeting, but nothing noteworthy occurred unless mention is made of hearty congratulations given to the speaker by a policeman, as a variation from the police censure which has been in evidence during the previous three weeks. We have, as usual, to thank Mr. Dobson, who, approaching eighty, sets an example to younger men, for his enthusiastic assistance during the week.

MR. B. A. LE MAINE lectured on "The Old and the New," and "Christianity and Truth," in Finsbury Park in the morning, and Victoria Park in the afternoon respectively. Both meetings attracted large and attentive audiences. Many questions were answered and a general desire was expressed for an early return visit from the lecturer.

## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

## LONDON.

## INDOOR.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, S. K. Ratcliffe—"Your Daily Paper: What is happening to it."

## OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mrs. Grout—"We Seek for Truth."

FINSBURY PARK BRANCH N.S.S.—11.15, Mr. F. P. Corrigan—A Lecture.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road): Saturdays, at 7.30. Wednesdays, at 7.30, Effie Road, opposite Walham Green Station. Various Speakers.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 6.0, Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.—Sunday, 12.0, Wren Road, Camberwell Green, Mr. J. Payne; Clapham Road, 7.0, Mr. J. Payne; Wednesday, Rushcroft Road, 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury; Friday, Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, 8.0, Mr. F. P. Corrigan.

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. B. A. Le Maine; 3.15, Messrs. E. Betts and A. D. McLaren; 6.30, Messrs. A. H. Hyatt, B. A. Le Maine and E. C. Saphin. Every Wednesday, at 7.30, Messrs. Charles Tuson and W. P. Campbell-Everden; every Thursday, at 7.30, Messrs. E. C. Saphin and Charles Tuson; every Friday, at 7.30, Messrs. B. A. Le Maine and A. D. McLaren. The *Freethinker* can be obtained 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.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. George Whitehead will lecture at the Bolton Town Hall steps on Saturday, July 26, and the following week in the surrounding districts.

BRADFORD BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. George Whitehead will lecture on Sunday, at 7.0 p.m., in the Dewsbury Market Place. Rest of the week at the Motor Park, New Bank Street, at 7.30.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. J. T. Brighton will lecture at Thornley at 7.30 on Saturday, July 19.

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—Ramble to Ben Lomond. Bus leaving Cathedral Street 10.20 for Balmaha, returning 8.40.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) Branch N.S.S. (corner of High Park Street and Park Road): Monday, July 21, at 8.0, Messrs. A. Jackson and D. Robinson; Thursday, July 24, at 8.0, Messrs. Morris and J. V. Shortt. Current *Freethinkers* will be on sale at both meetings.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Moor, near North Road Entrance): 7.0, Messrs. Keast and Brighton. Literature on sale.

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Secretary:

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Secularism affirms that Progress is only possible through Liberty, which is at once a right and a duty; and therefore seeks to remove every barrier to the fullest equal freedom of thought, action, and speech.

Secularism declares that theology is condemned by reason as superstitious, and by experience as mischievous, and assails it as the historic enemy of Progress.

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