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

Views and Opinions.

Religion and the Child.

EVERYONE who has paid attention to the question of religious teaching in elementary schools must be aware of two things. In the first place for one reason or another there is a considerable body of people in the country who are opposed to the teaching of religion in State-supported schools. They may be so opposed because they believe religion to be untrue or harmful, or because they do not think religion is a subject with which the State ought to concern itself. The first class would embrace the other, although their opposition would be intensified by their opposition to religion, as such. The second thing that is very obvious is that considering the number of people who are opposed to religious instruction in the schools there is an astonishingly small number of parents who avail themselves of their legal right to withdraw their children from the religious lesson. This is so much the case that teachers are inclined to treat the number withdrawn as a negligible quantity, and to draw from this the conclusion that the opposition to religious instruction is neither wide nor strong.

For this non-withdrawal of children there are several reasons given. One is, that it does the children good to hear the religious side of the case, and is preferable to permitting them to grow up in ignorance of religious beliefs. The other, and the more customary, is that to withdraw children from the religious lesson exposes them to the ill-will of teachers in some cases, and generally to the petty persecution of their school mates. As Augustine Birrell once said, children would rather be wicked than singular, and it is argued that to protect the children they are permitted to receive a religious instruction in which their parents thoroughly disbelieve, and which the law stipulates they may decline if they choose.

Why Not Withdraw?

It was with this situation in view, that some weeks ago I asked *Freethinker* readers to let me have their experience in all cases where children had been withdrawn from religious instruction. I received quite a number of letters from different parts of the country, but in not a single case did I receive a specific instance where the children had suffered either gross inconvenience or actual persecution. This result agrees so far with my own experience, and also with the results of talks with teachers. I feel quite sure that if actual persecution had taken place, those who have experienced it would not have hesitated to say so. Their names and residence need not have been disclosed, and I think I may say that if the plea of permitting children to have religious instruction for fear of inviting persecution had been justified by the facts, there would have been no hesitation in making the fact public. The tendency would be, in the circumstances, in the other direction.

I do not think that the predominating motive here is the fear of the child undergoing persecution. But if that is not so, what is the alternative? The rather saddening conclusion is that the child is being used as a cover for the parent. Religious terrorism is still very powerful, not so much in the positive form of inflicting public punishment for heresy, but in the covert form of social and public boycott.

To withdraw a child from religious instruction is a public avowal that one is without religion, or at least that one believes that instruction in religion will be injurious to the child. The fact cannot be hidden once the step of withdrawal has been taken. It is easy to-day to dissent from any one of the religious sects, but to dissent from all, and not merely to dissent from all, but to make one's dissent public, is quite another question. If one is really religious, religion makes a parent the unconscious enemy of his child by robbing it of that mental freedom and independence which should be the birthright of every one born in a civilized society. And if he is not religious it still acts in the same way by terrorizing a parent into permitting a child to receive instruction which he knows to be false, and therefore injurious.

* * *

Combination Needed.

Let us look at the matter from another point of view. Allow that in some instances, very few certainly, children who are withdrawn from religious instruction do become marked among their school-fellows, and that there are some teachers who so far forget themselves and their responsibilities as to be religiously spiteful towards them. Is it altogether to the bad that a child should be brought up to the recognition that it has a right to assert its independence in mental affairs, and in the recognition also that opinions are something of which one should be as proud as of

rewards for efficiency in ordinary school subjects? Either we must do that or we must unconsciously instil into the child the lesson that the great thing that matters is ease and approval of one's fellows. Whichever line we adopt we are helping to form the child's character, and it should not need much consideration to decide on which side our weight should be thrown.

Or yet another point of view. I find there are quite a considerable number of members of Borough and Town Councils who are in ignorance of the fact that the Education Act does not make religious instruction compulsory. It is permissive. Education authorities may have religious instruction if they please, they may also do without it if they please. Any Council in the country could by a simple vote decide that in future it would not have any teaching on religion, and it would not affect their right to the Government grant in the slightest degree. In cases where this has been brought before members of Councils, the reply has been that there is no demand for the abolition of religious instruction, and that reply is almost unanswerable. But let us suppose that in every town in the kingdom where there existed a body of people who disbelieved in the State giving religious instruction, they were, not only to say so, but acted upon it by exercising their legal rights under the Act. I do not think it would be very long before some Council would take the decisive step, just as they have done with regard to Sunday games, and—in open defiance of the law—with regard to Sunday entertainments. At any rate, both Councils and the Government would be more resistant to the demands of religious sects if the extent of the objection to religious instruction being given in the schools was made quite plain.

It would also give greater mental independence to teachers. Every one engaged in the teaching profession knows that a very large number of teachers have a decided objection to the teaching of religion, but they do not say so because they dare not say so. Nearly all of them carry about with them the evil influence of their own early religious instruction, and have never learned to attach the importance to mental independence that they should do. They feel that a proclamation of dissent, unless it is in terms of some heretical body that has an established respectability, means a sacrifice of promotion and of comfort. But let them realize the number of parents who do really object to religious instruction, and who signify their objection by withdrawing their children, and teachers would probably become a little more outspoken on the subject than they are at present.

* * *

Danger Ahead.

There is at the moment a very urgent need for Freethinkers and others in favour of Secular Education showing more activity in this matter than they have hitherto done. The last Government Bill, designed to give more to the sects than they have at present, was abandoned only because it did not give enough to the Roman Catholics. It is almost certain that another Bill will be brought forward in the autumn dealing with the raising of the school age and maintenance of children. But before this can be done, a great deal of secret bargaining will be going on between the Government—a Government pledged to open diplomacy—and the sects. This is certain to be so because, as the new Bill will throw extra burdens upon the sectarian schools, religious opposition to the Bill can only be brought off by the Government giving the sects almost all they desire. And the Government will certainly act along lines of the greatest pressure. If those who believe in the policy

of Secular Education permit the Churches to do all the pressing, an excuse for "selling the pass" will be found in the plea that there was no "effective pressure" behind the demand for the abolition of religious instruction in the schools. It is high time it was made plain that others beside the churches should be considered. What use is there, after all, talking about the decline of the Churches if we permit the Churches to have their own way in the things that really matter?

Now I suggest that for the moment the really effective protest that can be made is a general withdrawal from religious instruction of all who believe in the non-interference of the State in matters of religion. There are enough who believe in this to make the protest spectacular and effective. There must be at least half the Socialist Party in the country who are on that side. There are all the Ethicists, Agnostics, Rationalists and other shades of non-Christians, with the thorough-going Freethinkers, and in addition there is the very considerable body of religionists who believe in keeping the State out of religious affairs. Consider the effect in a school of the withdrawal of even twenty or thirty children? It would strengthen the hands of the Government in dealing with the sects, it would impress the general public, and it would induce teachers to make a stand for their own mental independence. It is high time they ceased to stand in awe of local parsons and chapel-mongering members of Councils.

* * *

Protect the Child.

The fight for the child is ultimately, as I have so often said, a fight for the direction of civilization; and to make civilization secure it is essential that its directing should be in the hands of men and women who realize the importance of sane and sound ideas. But we are not doing this, or are doing it in the least effective way, if we fail to make a sense of this progressive factor an active element in the environment of the younger generation. We impress on the children the importance of cleanliness of body and of mind, we impress upon them—far too insistently so long as we mean by it little more than financial advancement—the need for getting on in the world. Why not lay equal emphasis upon the importance of having ideas of one's own, and to stand for them against the world? Let it be granted that it may expose children to attacks from others—although as already said, the non-withdrawal of children from religious instruction is a policy for the protection of the parent rather than for that of the child. Is it altogether a bad thing for children to learn at as early an age as possible, that life is not all cakes and ale? How can we hope that our children shall grow up ready to take a part in the vital work of the world if we permit them during their most impressionable years to acquire frames of mind which we believe to be false and injurious? At present many are doing what they can to impress upon children the unimportance of the thing upon which they should lay the greatest stress: and we are having to renew with each generation a work which once done should be done for ever. If we are in earnest about the importance of Freethought, let us make a start in the one place in which we can all work—the home. I earnestly beg all liberal thinkers to give the matter their consideration.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

It is just as difficult to find fault with yourself as to find others are right.—*Lemesle*.

The Quick and the Dead.

"We may be so much in the habit of bowing to authority as at last to be unable to stand upright."

Landor.

"The current theology is falsely founded on a misinterpretation of mythology by unconsciously inheriting the leavings of primitive man and ignorantly mistaking these for divine revelations."—Gerald Massey.

THE decline in the number and size of the monthly reviews must be a matter for regret to all those who are interested in intellectual matters. A generation ago the leading monthly and quarterly reviews were given over largely to the discussion of intellectual subjects, and some of the ablest men were engaged in stating the case for and against orthodoxy. Even the great newspapers threw their columns open to disputants on such subjects as "Is Christianity a Failure?" All this is changed for the worse, and it is a rare thing to find an article in any of these publications worth more than passing attention.

One such article appears in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, for July, and is entitled: "Religion in the Modern World." It is a title that whets the appetite, but the writer, Canon O. C. Quick, hardly does justice to his subject. However, he has something to say which is worth noting. This is quite unusual in a priest, for the clergy are past masters at choking the intellectual life with rubbish.

Canon Quick hampers his inquiry at the outset by regarding religion and a purely Sectarian body such as Anglicanism as interchangeable terms, which, as old Euclid says, is absurd. Even in Voltaire's time there was truth in the jest that this country possessed a hundred religions and one sauce. To-day, when the great Free Churches rival the Government Religion in numbers and influence, and fashionable superstitions may be found in every street, the thing is grotesque in its inaccuracy. And, Canon Quick has not even Nelson's excuse for clapping his telescope to his blind eye, for he champions a lost cause.

The truth or falsity of religion in this country is unaffected by three hundred Anglican bishops holiday-making at Lambeth Palace, although newspaper-editors, who are old enough to know better, give disproportionate space to their humdrum meetings. Canon Quick may realize this, but, in print, he is a zealous champion of the State Church. Accordingly, he throws flowers at his ecclesiastic superiors, but he throws other things at the unfortunate laymen, as may be seen by the following passage:—

The religious public is but little concerned with the reinterpretation of faith to meet the changing conditions of modern life. . . . It wants not to be disturbed.

This so-called "reinterpretation of faith" is more apparent than real. The bishops have never attempted to square their faith with the new knowledge about the physical universe which has completely revolutionized the whole character of human culture and civilization. All they have done is to delete the barbarous and unseemly passages from the Christian Bible, and to bring the Government Prayer Book into line with pre-Reformation usage. It was foredoomed to failure, for this was no reinterpretation of faith, but just the same twenty-second-hand stuff that the laity were already accustomed to, only in this case the situation was complicated by the intrusion of Romanism, which the majority of Englishmen do not want at any price.

The English people are almost as conservative in religious matters as the Chinese. A similar attempt to foist a revised edition of the Christian Scriptures was made by the Church of England bishops in the early

"eighties" of the last century. To-day this episcopal masterpiece, which took nearly a generation to manipulate, is as forgotten as the snows of yesteryear. Then as now, the religious public did not want to be disturbed. They had swallowed enough of the priests' opium to be drowsy.

The blunt fact is that the Christian priests are trying to push the sale of a medieval commodity, unsuitable to the times in which we live. They delight in seeing kneeling multitudes; they dislike men who do not uncover their heads at their holy buffooneries. It is no wonder that they are failing. All over the country there are hundreds of thousands of mature, sensible men and women who will not go to places of worship because the performances bore and irritate them. The fact that stupidity has become stale to the hearers does not seem to prevent its being eternally fresh to the clergy.

If there is one thing that priests boast of, it is the permanent quality of their faith. "Esto Perpetua" is the watchword of the greatest of the Christian Churches. Now, listen to Canon Quick's description of orthodoxy in the Ages of Faith:—

Broadly speaking, it is true to say that medieval orthodoxy regarded God as the great sovereign of the universe, enthroned above the skies. . . . Religion was the almost undisputed mistress of secular activities, and religion itself was under the control of an ecclesiastical hierarchy representing the sovereign God.

But where, except in Italy or Spain, are such ideas acceptable to-day? Even in Ireland, where men are told how to vote from the church-pulpit, the pill would have to be sugar-coated. It is not a matter of a few highbrows, the dozen superior people scattered throughout the universe, but of a vast, responsible democracy to whom such doctrines are a weariness and an offence. "You may," said a magistrate to a howling dervish in the dock, "be as religious as you like; you may try to make other people religious also, but you must not make yourself a public nuisance." The quick cannot restore the dead; and Canon Quick cannot make out a reasonable case for the resurrection of the mummeries of medievalism. For the man, whatever his religious convictions, who seeks to reimpose the darkness of the days of ignorance is something worse than a public nuisance.

MIMNERMUS.

More Catholic "Truth."

(Concluded from page 484.)

At Point de Galle he had his first actual experience of diabolism. He was watching some native jugglers—one of them spotted him as a high grade Mason, tipped him the wink—and arranged for a visit. They went through a frightful desert, plunged into a forest and came to a hut. An ape on the threshold, a vampire bat hung from a beam, a cobra below, and a black cat with arched back were somewhere about. The hut covered a well or shaft, down which the doctor was taken, and into a chamber where was a woman who had been a Pythoness by profession, but was now dead—in the doctor's opinion, and being a doctor he knew. Besides, she was 152 years old and ought to have been dead. But she suddenly revived and crawled to the end of the chamber, where was an altar and a figure of Baphomet. The ape, the bat, the snake and the cat came round, the fakirs piled branches round the woman, and amidst invocations, chants and yells the woman allowed herself to be burned to death, her body blackening, her face turn-

ing scarlet, her eyes starting from her head. And so she went, presumably, to the Devil.

Generally in tales of going to the Devil, the first part of the path is lined with primroses. It is surely a sign of mental ill-health in Latin Catholics, that such macabrous stuff as Dr. Bataille's is purveyed to them, obviously for them to gloat over. Who else but morbid Roman Catholic's would wish to wallow in tales like the following:—

At Pondicherry the doctor met a native called Ram-assamiponnotanly-polé-dobachi—quite a short name for a native, he says.

"Whence do you come?" said Ram, etc.

"From the eternal flame."

"Whither do you go?"

"To the flame eternal."

The doctor produced a winged lingam, whereupon Ram, etc., fell down (in the street) and adored him, and then took him to a great dismantled temple, there was a sanctuary with a figure of Baphomet, and the place reeked with horrible putrescence due to the presence of various fakirs, who though still alive were in advanced stages of putrefaction. Some were suspended from the ceiling, some embedded in plaster, some in the shape of a letter S, some head downwards. They had postured like this for years.

The doctor's friend tried hard to get an evocation of Baal Zeboub with the help of the fakirs, but unsuccessfully. However, the holiest fakir was in reserve. He was produced from a cupboard more putrid than the temple, and was in the following condition: (a) face eaten by rats; (b) one bleeding eye hanging down by his mouth; (c) legs covered with gangrene, ulcers and rotteness; (d) expression peaceful and happy. Entreated to call on Baal Zeboub each time he opened his mouth his eye fell into it. No Baal Zeboub. A tripod of burning coals was brought and a woman plunged her arm into the flames and inhaled with great delight the odour of her burning flesh. Result, nil. Then a white goat was produced, placed on the altar of Baphomet, set alight, hideously tortured, cut open and its entrails torn out by the native Grand Master and spread on the steps. Still failure. Then great stones were raised from the floor. First a stench ascended, then a consignment of living fakirs eaten to the bone by worms, and falling to pieces in all directions, were dragged out from among a number of skeletons, while serpents, great spiders and toads swarmed from all parts. The Grand Master seized a fakir, cut his throat on the altar, chanting a Satanic liturgy. The blood spurted on to those around, and the Grand Master sprinkled the Baphomet. As Baal Zeboub still did not come they decided he must have business elsewhere. The Doctor went home to bed and stayed there forty-eight hours.

Calcutta, the doctor found to be reeking with diabolism. At a place near by called Dappa (there is such a place) he says there is a hill on which are seven temples (but in these details he says the things which are not). In the first temple he received the complete initiation of the Palladium. The ordeal included his exposure (naked) to a thousand cobras, which were only kept off him by the music of flute playing fakirs. That they were poisonous cobras was proved by allowing them to kill a native, who was brought back to life by Lucifer, the venom spurting of itself out of the wounds. The second temple was ablaze with precious stones, garlands of diamonds, festoons of rubies, images in silver, and a gigantic Phoenix in gold—all wrested by the diabolic English from the natives. Before an altar a male and female ape were composed, and after a black mass, performed by the Grand Master, the apes were married; following which was a sacrifice of a lamb

brought in alive with nails driven through its feet and bleating piteously. The third temple was consecrated to the Mother of fallen women, *i.e.*, Eve, who it will be remembered had an adventure with Lucifer and an apple, and therefore has a place in Lucifer's calendar. The fourth temple was Rosicrucian, and here a fakir was transformed into a living mummy and buried for three years. The fifth temple was consecrated to the Pelican, and here an English officer gave a discourse of Masonic morality, which the doctor thought was suggestive of easy virtue. The sixth temple was that of the Future, and was devoted to divinations, the oracles being given by a Vestal in a hypnotic condition, seated over a burning brazier. The seventh temple was sacred to Fire. Here the doctor saw a cat passed through the fire to Baal . . . In Singapore, in a Presbyterian Church, he saw the initiation of a Temple Mistress, after which there was a divine solemnity which had something of the character of what a spiritualistic seance might be if held in a mad house. When the lights were turned up every article of furniture, including the organ, was discovered hanging from the ceiling. The M.C. detached his shadow from his substance, arranged it against the wall in the form of a demon, and it answered questions by signs.

China, the doctor informs us, is the gate of Hell. All its inhabitants are born damned, and have tastes wholly diabolical. Chinese occultism is centralized in the San-ho-hei, an association "parallel to high grade Masonry." Its chief occupation is to murder Catholic missionaries. A sample of its lesser activities, which the doctor saw, was the crucifixion of a living pig.

The colossal ignorance which is catered for by these Roman Catholic anti-Masonry writers is most strikingly shown in our two last items, which are a scurrilous appeal to the racial anti-Englishism of the French Catholics.

All this cult of diabolism, practised by millions of English, needs a tremendous lot of Baphomets and other idols, along with other furniture of black magic. Where are they made? Dr. Bataille knows. With his bought degrees and passwords he has been there and come back safe. These people who are trebly vile—being Masons, Protestants and English—send malefactors to—where do you think?—Gibraltar, which contains galleries known to nobody but Dr. Bataille. In these secret places they work. There is a Toxological Department where poisons and their antidotes are made, possessed of which the diabolic Mason can eat and drink with his Catholic victim. The factory belongs to the English Government! The virulence and scurrility of some of this foreign Roman Catholic "truth" is scarcely believable. Bear in mind some of the "soft soap and sawder" (as Sam Slick would say), to which we are treated in England, and then note that representatives of the same firm (head office, Vatican, Rome, Italy) can deal out such filth as the following (from Dr. Bataille). The date goes back to Queen Victoria's reign. "Wherever religious influence can make itself felt, there, the wife and maid are the prest, the most ingenuous expression of the creation and the divinely touching idea synthetized by the immaculate Mother of Christ, the Virgin Mary; but on the contrary, in England, and still more especially in the English colonies, under the pernicious influence of the Protestant heresy, the wife and maid are in some sort the opprobrium of humanity. The example moreover comes from an exalted place, as is known. The whole world is acquainted with that which John Bull does not himself confess, namely the private history of her whom Indians term the old lady of London, given over to vice and drunkenness from her youth—Her Majesty Whisky the 1st."

Mr. Waite's remarks on this passage are: "I have made this quotation because it gives the opportunity to dispense with the civility of discussion exercised by one gentleman to another, but out of place on the part of a gentleman giving a deserved castigation to a disgusting and foul-mouthed rascal. Down, unclean dog, back, scavenger, to your offal."

But this "offal" is Catholic "truth"! Dr. Bataille is only one amongst a crowd of Roman Catholic authors, who, during the last 150 years have bespattered Masonry. At the time Mr. Waite wrote his book, two monthly journals were almost kept going on the question. We have not quoted stuff more beastly, in some respects, than Dr. Bataille's macabrous lunacy—accusations of bi-sexual and mono-sexual orgies, rituals, etc. What we have quoted serves two main purposes. The first is to show that in controversial matters Roman Catholics are quite unscrupulous and have neither honesty nor honour. They are prepared to go to almost any lengths of exaggeration and lying, and the great mass of Roman Catholic chattels is credulous enough to believe almost anything that is catered to them by Roman Catholic spokesmen. Catholic "truth" is mostly lies.

The other point that comes clearly out of this Roman Catholic anti-Masonry stunt is the *seemingly* unconscious admission of the futility of the Cake God. Its occasional profanation is not merely admitted. Frequent and systematic robbery of it, followed by the most scurrilous treatment is taken for granted as being too notorious to make possible any denial. More significant still, there is no record that the "God" ever shows the slightest objection. The accounts, which come to us almost entirely from Roman Catholic sources, show that the Cake God's enemies, having got hold of it, do just what they please with it. Considering the credulity for which they cater, and their own capacity for lying, one would expect tales of how the "God" blasted sacriligious scoffers who attempted to run off with it. But we here see how they dare not risk it. They have got to their limit of lying. Once let them suggest that their ridiculous "god" can act as a "god," and French Atheists would force it to trial more and more. They dare not risk it. Instead, they expend a cart load of red herrings to draw the hunt away from the danger zone. Such, at any rate, is our hypothesis to explain this "Diabolism" stunt. Their "god" is just bits of cake or biscuit—nothing more. And the priests know it.

C. R. BOYD FREEMAN.

Brighter Pulpits?

It looks as if the Black Army is likely to be replaced by a polychromatic army of amazons. The association of attractive femininity with religion is no new thing. Everybody knows that Edna May, as a Salvation Army lass, in the "Belle of New York" captured the popular fancy. And the Salvation Army yet depends very largely upon the draw of smiling tambourine rattlers. It does not seem that Aimée Macpherson will be able to stay the course as sinister rumours have got abroad about the quality or application of her doctrine. But the world-wide influence of Mrs. Eddy and her sisterhood is unquestioned. There has now emerged in Scotland, under the auspices of the Congregational Church, a lady parson—the Rev. Vera Findlay. When she preached lately in St. Andrews, the church was filled to its utmost capacity a few minutes after the doors were opened, many obtaining standing room only. An outside crowd hammered on the portals, and hundreds had to

remain outside. "Attired," says the newspaper report, "in her ministerial robes, Miss Findlay, who is the possessor of a beautiful mass of bobbed fair hair, presented a charming and dignified appearance in the pulpit. Her delivery was perfect and each word she uttered was clearly heard in every part of the church."

It is enough to make the Apostle Paul turn in his grave! And this phenomenon must arouse grave apprehensions in the breasts of Scottish Presbyterians. They were prepared to see women doctors, women lawyers, women aeronauts, women journalists—even women missionaries for the heathen! But to allow a woman to tread where woman never trod before—up those steps and into that pulpit of the Home Church, sacred to the feet of *men* of God only in all generations, is to insult the memory of Paul and pour contempt upon the ministerial and pastoral offices which Paul declared were by divine ordinance man's alone.

To Freethinkers, the appearance of woman in the pulpit is evidence of the decadence of the Faith. Paul was no fool. He realized the power of woman; and in his organization of the early Church he took all the means he could take to prevent her from exerting it by making her place subordinate to man's. Down to the very end of the Victorian Era, Paul's view of woman was implicitly accepted and believed in by all Christians—lay and ecclesiastic. Woman is no unchanging dogmatist—nor is she keen on maintaining one line of reasoning if another should appeal to her fancy. No matter what her environment or training may be, this holds good almost with exception. A brilliant example of the woman pastor is to be found in Miss Maude Royden. But everyone knows the freedom of Miss Royden's views, and the catholicity of her tastes in literature. She runs a Guild, not a Church, in the commonly accepted sense. The old verities are scrutinized, and where found unsatisfactory to collective human reason thrown overboard. This is what the replacing of male by female clerics is going to do for the Churches in the future. The old orthodoxies are now even only a matter of words, words, words, in the majority of instances. And do not let us suppose that in the Church as elsewhere capable woman will not take her revenge on her male oppressors, and make up for the prolonged tyranny under which she has had to suffer.

Meanwhile, she, to get a secure footing in the Church, will pay a certain lip homage to the pre-existing conventions as she has a reluctance—and even a horror—of causing pain of wounding individual susceptibilities. It is this, indeed, which furnishes most of her charm, and evoked from a great writer the title of "Ministering Angel"—a rôle which she now seems destined to fill publicly and officially. But let not the male clergymen—those who hold fast to the faith once delivered to the Saints, who tread the Calvinistic path, and who proclaim the untainted orthodoxy of the Bible, be under any delusion as to the ultimate result—as indeed it appears they are not likely to be. It is this: once woman has seized the majority of your pulpits she will prove to be like a two-edged sword, or the rod with which Moses smote the rock in the desert. Woman is a born iconoclast; and what in the day of her power, she says—goes. In that day, do not let her forget that for years before her emancipation, Freethought bore upon its banner the Cause of Woman.

The Calvinistic path will be forsaken for the Primrose Path. And why not? If people *will* go to Church isn't it better to listen to a charming young specimen of the fair sex—suitably robed and nicely bobbed—than to a snarling boanérge in broad cloth, whose scowl is as heavy as his jowl, and who votes against flowers on the communion table?

But, of course, the men clerics have dug themselves in pretty well, and they wont be so very easy to dig out. Still, here is the proof of what can be done by a pretty blonde in ecclesiastic robes in a St. Andrews Church! It is enough to make the leaders of the Kirk of Scotland gnash their teeth. For Presbyterianism cannot remain behind Congregationalism. And you may be sure that St. Giles or the Tron will be besieged on the Sunday a bonny Scotch lassie preaches in either of them!

IGNORUS.

God and Logic.

THE general conception of God to-day is that he is a personal being—omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent.

But as soon as we begin to examine this conception carefully, its contradictions and inconsistencies become more and more apparent.

In the first place, *personality* necessarily implies limitations. We can only conceive of a personality as existing in contradistinction to something outside, and independent of, itself. Personality implies not only a separate consciousness, but also a continually changing series of conscious states. An omniscient being could have no changing states of consciousness, no perception of anything new, since all knowledge—past, present and future—would be eternally present.

The idea of an *omnipresent personality* is equally incomprehensible. Consciousness, so far as our experience goes, is never found apart from some material substratum. Try as we may, all efforts to conceive of consciousness apart from this lead to a pure abstraction which is indistinguishable from nothingness. At the best, we are forced to a conception which is utterly alien to our whole experience or even imagination, and irreconcilable with the idea of a Heavenly Father who made us in his own image. The old idea, prevalent in the days of geocentric thought, of a God who was a magnified man, and who spoke to men and came down to earth, had at least the advantage of offering an intelligible Deity, which is more than modern Theists are able to do.

We are sometimes told that just as an amoeba could not form any idea of our own intelligence, so the human mind is unable to conceive God. But the comparison is weak: between the consciousness of the amoeba and the consciousness of man there is admittedly a prodigious difference, but it is a difference of degree, not of kind. Both are connected with a material substratum, whereas God is alleged to be pure spirit—that is, logically, pure nothingness, since conscious activity of any kind without some organs of expression is unthinkable. The definition of God as "without body, parts or passions," is mere verbiage with no intelligible significance.

One of the most important of the alleged qualities of God is *perfection*, which raises other insuperable difficulties to belief in his existence.

From perfection can come only perfection. A perfect being can produce only a perfect work; if the work is other than perfect, the being that produced it cannot be perfect, for if he was unable to produce a perfect work, he was not omnipotent and, lacking this quality, was imperfect. If, on the other hand, he could have produced a perfect result but did not, then again he was not perfect, for he was lacking in the quality of goodness.

The whole essence of religion is the imperfection of this world—"the vale of sin and tears." If we accept that outlook, we are forced to the conclusion that the being who created the world was imperfect.

If we accept the dogma that Man was created perfect and then fell our difficulties increase. The very quality of perfection excludes the possibility of falling from that state. The dogma is, therefore, absurd *in se*.

There is, however, one interesting consideration. If *man*, who was perfect, became decidedly imperfect, there is no logical reason why *God* should not do likewise at any moment. The one is as likely as the other.

The dogma that God created the world is generally held, but this is equally absurd and in direct contradiction to the idea of a perfect being. The unanswerable question is: *Why did God create the universe?* We are asked to suppose that the perfect being existed throughout eternity and then decided to create a universe. But the very act of creation implies a lack of perfection. A perfect being would be complete in itself and absolutely self-sufficient; the creation of anything new inevitably implies a previous lack of completeness and therefore of perfection.

The "first cause" argument—that the existence of the universe implies a cause (*i.e.*, creator) has very little force. We *know* the universe exists, and we have no reason to assert that there was ever a time when as a whole it was non-existent in one form or another. The invocation of God as an explanation merely puts the difficulty back one step (without giving any explanation of the process by which "pure spirit" created material substance). The next question is: *Who, or what, made God?* If we can think of God as self-sustaining or self-sufficient, we can much more easily imagine the universe as such and the God-hypothesis becomes totally unnecessary.

If, on the other hand, we abandon the idea of creation and think of God as the creative spirit or urge behind an eternal universe, we come up against the difficulty that God cannot be both omnipotent and infinitely good, for it is an undeniable fact that no human being possessing the average amount of moral sense, and given omnipotent power would create a world so full of cruelty, misery and suffering, the bulk of which falls on the innocent.

If God is omnipotent and omniscient and deliberately created the world, knowing the outcome of his action in suffering and pain, one can only marvel at the audacity of those who calmly talk to us of "Infinite Love."

But the idea of Deity implies perfection, and if God is not perfect he is not God. From that circle there is no escape.

ERIC BIDDLE.

The Efficacy of Prayer.

HAVE you noted the story of the poor bricklayer? No? Well, do so now and learn from his sad experience that you may not fall into the trap which Christians set for each other.

This man knew that he was sinful and was desirous of atoning to some extent for his wickedness, so he set himself a penance. He prayed wherever he happened to be, and at whatever time "the maggot bit him."

Some of these fits came upon him when he was on the public highway, so down he went upon his knees and recited "Our Father, etc.," in the best and most approved style. Unfortunately his actions caused other Christians to stop and look at him, thereby causing a crowd which impeded Christian traffic and so held up the flow of money to Christian pockets by causing the loss of Christian time.

Such a thing as a Christian prayer in such a Christian city as London, at 8.30 on a Friday night, was quite unthinkable, so a Christian policeman, under the direct authority of a Christian Home Secretary, haled the poor

Christian bricklayer before a Christian magistrate.

So far, so good. But how did the Cadi act? Why, he put his fellow-sectarian back for medical examination in the belief that a man who practised his religion openly must be mad. Can you beat it?

Yet, we have divines who *assure* us that prayer is answered as soon as it is said, that our only hope lies in prayer, and that freedom from *all* ills can be attained by prayer alone. But—if prayer means forty shilling or seven days, it is "Nix for me," as Eve said when she was asked to do without clothes.

Surely a prayer in the street carries as much weight as one by the bedside. It is as well said on the kerb by a bricklayer as in the gutter by a Salvationist. The prayer in the open must stand as good a chance of reaching the deity as the one barred by the roof of St. Paul's and recited by Dean Inge.

What, then, is the position? It seems to me to boil down to one of two alternatives. Either one does not pray and thereby goes to Hell or else one does pray and finishes in the madhouse. What a choice! But even so, give me Hell.

And above all, what is the great Jahveh doing that those who pray to him can be treated in such a fashion? Has he gone to join Mrs. Lot and got fitted into a Cerebos tin or is he still continuing his seventh day's rest.

A PLAIN MAN.

Multum in Parvo.

As one writes and prints time and events recorded or unrecorded pass into history or oblivion; time is inexorable, and even "space" is limited, yet one would not hurry. One reflects in paraphrase:—

Without haste, and without rest,
But slow and sure may find the best.

The great Glasgow Fair exodus has come and gone, not Protestant or Catholic, but pagan. Satisfactions are sought, some sure and good, some doubtful or deplorable. The Shows also have come to our seaboard; many of the showfolk, under the motley of their trade and necessity, superior people—worn so in their river of life. Per contra, one would notice in passing, "Wandering Willie" of the showground, that shining, resplendent locomotive, so aptly named, of whirring belt and wheels, its huge rubber-tired traction wheels at rest awhile, driving the roundabouts; what precision of marvellous mechanism, of science and engineering skill! Man made it, yet man lags behind his own creation in reason and utility. Here must end the First Lesson.

Turn we now to the road over the Carrick Hills: what sylvan lovely crests, what vales and green hills not far away! On a steep brow is a martyr's or a scholar's monument; religious or secular the fate or fame, it is a shrine of courage and conviction, and is well set up on the everlasting hills, and should be lasting as they. The Doon and Alloway are behind us, and the cot of Burns—whose name alone should redeem this brevity. The valley of the Girvan is before us, more sylvan still, still more superb; the poets' stream, also, but, so far as we know, unsung by him—what strange omission! The day was doubtful and the storm broke gently, but the old bike carried along a very happy man who paraphrased once more:—

When shall I know such joy again,
In thunder, lightning and in rain,
Upon th' untiring iron steed,
Of sure and swift and silent speed!

Ah! and then Girvan's hill-bound, rocky shore—the grandest shore in the world—the Camp, and the boys, and the Byne Hill (steep rocks and green) Ailsa Craig in the offing, and the road to Ballantrae; in the landward strath is the hill called Knockdolian (the False Craig) which, and Colmonell, and the Stinshar, the boys must see . . . Just as the wheelman was nearing home again, the windows of heaven were opened—nay, "the whole side of the house was out" in rivers of rain. But even that was refreshing. Finally; a change, and food, and an armchair, and the "Londonderry Air" on the wireless—Sweet and grateful as the Valley of the Girvan.

COILA

Acid Drops.

Bexley Heath boasts a "Full Gospel Church," and a number of residents have protested, because the services are too many, too long, and too loud. Apparently those protesting are anything up to Half Full Gospelers, but seeing they will have to spend the whole of eternity with the Full Up brothers, a little while longer should be quite endurable.

The level of unemployment is steadily rising, and there seems no limit to the figure it may ultimately reach. But there is at least one industry in which there is a shortage of labour. A leaflet issued by the Anglo-Catholic Congress Committee points out that there is a shortage of 3,500 parsons. We suggest that the task of filling these posts should be handed over to the Labour Bureaus. Very little skill is needed to fill the posts vacant, in any case prepared sermons could be given to every candidate, and there would be an end to what the circular describes as a very grave position.

The *Scout Bulletin* says: "When you get to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on." In this age of decaying faith a cheery message of this kind ought to come as an inspiration to the Christian Church. The only drawback is that it rather shudderingly suggests the noose which Freethought has knotted around the Church's neck and is slowly strangling it.

Of all the Ocracies, says Mr. Wickham Steed, Pressocracy is the worst. Possibly, we suggest, this result may be due to the Press imitating and improving on the worst features of a Christian theocracy?

A scientist is said to be trying to work out a scheme for abolishing sleep. The scheme will no doubt arouse keen interest among parsons with drowsy congregations. Meanwhile, Freethought has been found to be an excellent preventive of the mental somnolence induced by belief in Jesus. For that reason it deserves all the encouragement it can get.

A wireless listener reminds the world that it is Anno Domini, 1930. This bright thought couldn't possibly have been inspired by anything other than the broadcast sermon.

Sir Nigel Playfair does not believe that Childhood is the happiest period of one's life. We won't argue the point, but merely remind the reader that in these irreligious times the childhood period is vastly more happy than it was formerly. For it is considerably less burdened by Christian taboos and "thou shalt not's," and no longer scared by threats of hell-fire. There can be no doubt that this would not be the case but for Freethought criticism and ridicule. The modern child, and particularly the Christian child, has good cause to be grateful that there is such a thing as Freethought.

"The chemist," declares Lord Melchett, "will solve the industrial and economic problems of the world." It seems a pity to have to rely on our scientists to solve our problems. Surely prayer, and the divinely inspired thinking of the parsons cannot have failed the nations?

Apropos of King George's speech to the Bishops at Lambeth, *John Bull* says:—

A re-united Christendom would be the best of Leagues of Nations. But the fierce fight over the Prayer-Book shows how large the rent [in the fabric of the Church] is, even in the Church of England. And between that Church and Rome there is a gap without a bridge.

We find it hard to picture any useful sort of a League of Nations being formed out of religious material, the units

of which have an unlovely record of squabbling among themselves for many centuries. Perhaps we might fittingly say, thank the Lord it is quite unlikely.

The Rev. Luke Beaumont is puzzled. Having been reading an autobiography by Miss Marion Cleeve, an ex-headmistress of a secondary school, he has garnered the following perplexity:—

How comes it that so many graduates and college-trained teachers fail to bring their gifts into the treasury of the Church, and are not to be found teaching in the Sunday school?

Yes, how is it? asks Mr. Beaumont. We should say that lack of belief in Christian dogmas has something to do with the case. Acquaintance with more knowledge and a wider range of ideas is never very helpful to religion, for it breeds doubts. Judging by Miss Cleeve's statement, we should say that there is small hope of a revival of religion starting among educated people. The Church's only hope lies with the ignorant masses, and the half-educated of other classes. But even that hope is less rosy since an attempt is to be made at improving State education.

The readers of a religious weekly are informed that:—

The mighty Roman Empire did not fall with a crash. Its decline was a long-drawn-out affair, and it would be almost true to say it simply faded out because of inward degeneracy.

It would be true, not almost true, to say that the dissemination of Christian anti-social doctrines greatly helped the fading out of the Roman Empire. Gibbon had no doubt about that. But we appreciate that a religious paper exists by telling its readers the "almost true," and suppressing the quite true as far as possible. Anything is permissible for Jesus's sake.

Before the Licensing Commission, Mr. J. Woodford Causer deplored the fact that licensed premises were open on Sunday in England. According to him, compulsory Sunday closing of such premises in Scotland, Ireland and Wales had proved to be immensely beneficial, and he urged that compulsory closing for England should be included in any Government Bill for licensing reform. Mr. Causer is General Secretary of the Alliance for the Defence of Sunday and the Central Closing Association—organizations strongly supported by parsons. And so one can understand that Mr. Causer's pathetic eagerness for State interference with Sunday opening of public houses is entirely altruistic. His sole concern is with the spiritual and more welfare of the masses, and not the safeguarding of the parsons' Sunday trade. We hope he managed to convince the Licensing Commission of this; otherwise, the Commission might suspect he was General Secretary for the Preservation of Christian Cant.

The Rev. Dr. Wm. C. Poole told a pious Convention that:—

Spiritual illiteracy is the forerunner of moral bankruptcy and national decay. . . . The modern menace is not that the mass of English people knowing what Christianity is will abjure it, but that not knowing what it is will ignore it.

We haste to assure our reverend brother, that the *Freethinker* is doing its best to let the English people know exactly what the Christian religion is really. This will, we hope, prevent many people from ignoring the Churches and Christianity. Once they realize the evil influence exerted by these things, they will, we believe, take a part in the fight against them.

The *New Chronicle* (a Sunday school weekly) reminds us that the other week was one of tragedies—terrible and devastating tragedies. "From many parts of the world came stories of earthquakes, typhoons, and cloud burst, disasters which threatened to bring in their wake the twin horrors of pestilence and famine." Surveying these disasters, our contemporary philosophizes on the comparative impotence of man and the indomitable spirit of man in the face of such catastrophes. It doesn't occur to our friend to wonder how the Christian belief in

a benevolent Heavenly Father can be squared with such horrors. Instead, our contemporary turns to a "more pleasant and profitable exercise," namely, that of looking for parallels between the physical and the spiritual worlds, and wondering whether the kind of disaster that will overtake the Church of to-day will be the earthquake kind or disintegration from within. Our friend is sure it will be the latter. The grounds for this conclusion appear to be that earnest believers squabble over the proper interpretation of Holy Writ, and the luke-warm ones are too apathetic to work for the Church. We may add that Freethought has made its influence felt in both these directions. On the one hand, it has induced many believers to be dissatisfied with the traditional interpretation of Holy Writ; and on the other hand, it has undermined the faith of other believers.

Wesleyan local preachers receive a "call of God" for their job, but the "call," it would seem, doesn't make the locals any less ignorant. At the Wesleyan Conference, Mr. George Knight wanted to make these preachers pass an examination. They, we gather, sadly discredit the Bible through ignorance. Another reason is that the educational standard of the nation has been raised, and is being raised higher, and its effect "will be reflected in the mental life of the nation." And so Mr. Knight thinks that:—

Our local preachers must keep pace with the intellectual life of their hearers, especially with the young people . . .

Reading between the lines, one suspects that many of these local preachers are teaching the same old stuff as the Twelve Apostles and the Early Christian Fathers taught. This, however, is repulsive to the younger generation. And so the better educated Wesleyans want the local preachers to be made acquainted with the latest efforts of the whitewashing school of theology.

The old dope which for hundreds of Christian years induced men to submit to things as they are, and not to seek for causes and remedies, is still being served out. Thus the Rev. A. B. Belden, of Whitefield's Tabernacle, was broadcasting, the other Sunday, such ancient opium as this:—

Let those to whom fate seems hard remember that their sufferings are not in vain; they are in God's hands, and if he seems to allow evil to have sway for a time, it is only because he sees through it to the greater good beyond.

These be comforting thoughts. For disseminating them among the masses, the Christian Church earned or received the grateful thanks of the despot, the slave-owner, and other bosses of mankind throughout the Christian era. It was such solace as this which also hindered the search for means of preventing disease and diminishing pain. How possibly could any progress be made in this direction while men were doped with the notions of "It's all for the best," and "God wills it"?

The Dean of Windsor has the typical Christian view of education. He told some country-school girls that:—

It used to be the idea that the teacher should cram as much knowledge as possible into the pupil. Now it is recognised that the whole point of school education is to teach you how to learn.

The Dean's idea of what education now is seems no great advance on the former idea of "cramming." For both are committed to the fallacy that education consists only in acquiring slabs of "knowledge." Whereas, we suggest, education is something more than that. It should impart some facility for knowing how to deal with facts—that is, for thinking about them, and not for merely soaking them up as a sponge soaks up water. We appreciate, we haste to add, that such facility is of no advantage to the Church and the priest. To it and him the kind of education of most value is that which encourages pupils merely to believe what they read or are told. It has proved to be especially helpful when the priest can control what sort of knowledge shall be available to the pupil.

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.

W. H. SISSON.—Your Lecture Notices received too late for publication.

T. DERRETT.—Thanks for reference. We will look out for the articles, and comment on them if they afford occasion to do so.

R. BROWN.—It really is time that some improvement was made in the government of the B.B.C., but in this country, where religion is concerned it is not very easy to get fair play.

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.

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.

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

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

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Cohen is taking a few day's holiday away from London, and must ask the indulgence of correspondents in consequence. This will also account for any shortage in the paragraph department of the paper.

Mr. Cohen's new book on *War, Civilization and the*

Churches, is now almost through the press, and should be on sale in the course of the next two or three weeks. It will be published at 2s. in paper, and 3s. cloth, postage extra. As it extends to 160 pages readers are not being financially taxed in the matter. Postage will be about twopence halfpenny extra.

The text of the Government's Land Valuation Bill has been issued, and it definitely excludes Church—which includes chapel-sites from valuation. It will be a scandal if in the present House of Commons no one is found who will move that these sites be included. The value of Church and Chapel sites in the country must total an enormous figure, and the relief from taxation, which is in substance an annual subsidy must run into millions. The general public would, if the proposition were carried, at least know how much it was being taxed every year for the upkeep of the churches.

Mr. R. H. Rosetti, General Secretary of the N.S.S., will be on vacation from August 8 until 22, and only important matter which cannot await his return will be dealt with during that period.

The Manchester Branch, N.S.S. is preparing a full programme to cover the whole winter, and, as usual finance must play an important part. This item of Manchester news is also intended as a direct reminder to those whose subscriptions are still unpaid. The Secretary is Miss W. Black, 33 Southbank Road, Kingsway, Didsbury, Manchester.

The Nelson Branch N.S.S. will have the services of Mr. Whitehead from August 9th until the 15th. Will local Freethinkers please note, their support is expected, also there is room in the Nelson Branch for all local enthusiasts.

When you have read this copy of the *Freethinker*, do not forget to leave it in the train, or better still, hand it to an intelligent friend to read.

Generosity

IN A LONDON SQUARE.

(To R and Others.)

WHEN you and I have left this noisy stage,
And children play with this ball called the earth—
Farewell! for us to all the pain and rage
Of futile strife that overweighed the mirth—
Of noble thoughts—of hopes that died at birth.
Farewell! to these, yet let old Time enshrine
These flickering moments, if he thinks them worth
His precious care—if not, no need to whine
If he should scythe, and lay low every feeble line.

Empires have come and gone, kings fought with kings,
And squint-eyed truth, with steel and bomb has turned
Man's bowels inside out—the poet sings
Of these high themes for many a guinea earned;
But let him sing, and let him be not spurned,
I sing of smaller deeds, nor understand
Why for a woman's smile a city's burned.
I sing of pigeons, who at love's command
Fluttered to feed out of a woman's hand.

Now song be dumb, and take thy silent flight,
Return to thy free home among the trees,
That whisper peace to those who hear aright
The things that are above all earthly fees;
Giving shall conquer, and it shall appease
The restless soul that seeks perfection here,
Trust, and the love, that loves all living things
Shall give a meaning to a plaguy sphere—
One woman's hand, to me, gave it this meaning clear.

C-DE-B.

Sociology.

II.

SAVAGERY AND BARBARISM.

(Continued from page 492.)

THE process of man's social evolution is revealed in what may be considered as his outward habits and accomplishments. And, according as those habits and accomplishments make possible the welfare and happiness of the members of society is human progress to be estimated.

Human social evolution is a natural process; it is not the product of the workings of a divine intellect; nor is it the expression of a supernatural power working, as it were, from the centre of the universe.

One mode of life and one form of society has evolved out of another, as age after age has rolled away; and, taking the chief broad divisions, we may say that without savagery there could have been no barbarism, without the latter no civilization.

A most important fact to be kept in mind is, that social evolution does not always mean a direct line of development from a lower to a higher form of society. As one form of society evolves from a previous form, it may be better or worse according to the circumstances of its evolution.

There may be increased complexity of life, especially with regard to external arrangements; that is, the methods of procuring the means of subsistence, and preparing them, for human use, may be more complex; and the various social institutions may be more detailed and intricate, without the total comfort and welfare of the members of society being distributed with more equality and justice than before.

The very complexity of social formality and activity—in industry, commerce, personal relationships, habits of pursuing pleasure, etc.—may easily act as a mask to prevent us from seeing that our moral and intellectual improvement under civilization is not more remarkable than the improvements made under the various stages of savagery and barbarism.

With great skill we have multiplied the means of social betterment, in the form of various inventions and scientific discoveries; but, with a great lack of skill, we have succeeded in failing to accomplish their complete social application.

If man in civilized society is the moral and intellectual superior of the savage or barbarian, we must remember that the instruments of social improvement, such as discoveries in science, inventions, and the finding of sources of wealth, have multiplied by the exercise of human labour because circumstances have forced man to exert himself. Civilized man has not produced these things as the result of being endowed with some phantastic superiority over the races of men who have preceded him. He is as much the product of natural elements and processes as any savage or barbarian.

One invention has suggested another; the opening of one source of wealth has made possible the opening of a second, and man has been forced to lead his restless life of striving after social reconstruction and improvement, only to fail, age after age, as far as the majority of human beings are concerned.

Great literatures and sciences have been produced and fostered by men and women of outstanding intellect. Yet, not only the average members of society but even the most prominent in intellectual matters are, generally speaking, deplorably incapable of constructing a plan for the destruction and reconstruction of society on lines which will ultimately eliminate all the anomalies of civilization.

While any attempt to overthrow the existing social machinery as a whole, by way of preface to the rebuilding of society on new lines, on the part of men who realize most keenly the injustice of present-day society, is met by the average politician with foolish prophecy concerning the uprooting of law and order, and by the parsons with great lamentations over the destruction of God's handiwork.

On the other hand large sections of the community either remain indifferent to what is going on about them, or indulge in patchwork reforms in the hope that they will thus be able to avoid having to build up a new society in compliance with the changing geographical, biological, and economic conditions which have been forcing upon us the need of a new psychology in sociological matters. That is a new mental activity that will enable us to consciously adapt ourselves to a new form of social life.

When the savage discovered fire, he made progress by learning to adapt himself to its uses. His progress was in ratio to the social benefit derived from that adaptation.

Civilized man invented machinery, and his subsequent progress is to be measured in proportion to the benefits which machinery has conferred upon the whole of society. As yet the possibilities of social benefit to be derived from the use of machinery have not been fully realized. The same may be said of many other inventions.

Civilized man still very largely retains a psychological attitude toward all the inventions which have become factors in economic life, which permits him to regard their use as being mainly for the benefit of the few, and only incidentally, if perchance at all, for the many.

The metaphysic of our inherited supernaturalism distorts our view of life, and prevents us from using the vast material conditions of civilized life for the building up of a society which shall abolish class antagonism and make possible the use of social wealth for social well-being.

The following outline of Savagery and Barbarism, in which is seen the evolution of man's means of subsistence and general comfort, is based very largely upon the first chapter of Lewis Morgan's *Ancient Society*. (C. H. Kerr & Co., Chicago.)

(1) *Lower Savagery*.—This period began during the infancy of the human race. The introduction of a fish subsistence and a knowledge of the use of fire brought the period to a close.

The lower savage lived chiefly on fruits and nuts; and the habitat of mankind was very restricted. Articulate speech began during this period.

(2) *Middle Savagery*.—During this period mankind, living very largely on fish, and making use of fire for cooking purposes, spread over a large portion of the earth.

Many Australian and Polynesian tribes were in this status when discovered.

(3) *Upper Savagery*.—The above period was terminated and this period was introduced by the invention of the bow and arrow. While the making of pottery saw the whole period of savagery to a close.

Representatives have been found in the Athabaskan tribes of Hudson Bay territory; various tribes of the valley of Columbia; and certain tribes of North and South America.

(4) *Lower Status of Barbarism*.—It is difficult to determine the boundary line between savagery and barbarism, as the one merges into the other without making any strict line of demarkation; but, as Morgan says, "The invention or practice of the art of pottery, all things considered, is probably the most effective and conclusive test that can be selected to

fix a boundary line, necessarily arbitrary; between savagery and barbarism." (*Ancient Society*, p. 10.)

Tribes which failed to attain the art of pottery are classed as savages, while those tribes which practiced this art, but were without a phonetic alphabet, are classed as barbarians.

E. EGERTON STAFFORD.

(To be concluded.)

A Woman Pioneer.

IN 1810 few places seemed further apart than the province of Pyeterkow in Russian Poland and London or New York. The railway, the telegraph and the transatlantic steamer were yet to come while the wireless and the earth-girdling airplane were not even dreamt of. And great as was the physical distance between Pyeterkow and London, the psychological distance was still greater, yet such are the ways of history that, if the woman of this country (and of the U.S.) enjoy the rights that are due to them as human beings, they owe it in no small measure to a girl born 120 years ago to an orthodox rabbi in Pyeterkow.

This Polish rabbi's daughter advocated equal rights for women at a time when the appearance of a woman on the public platform created a seven days' wonder, and was an eloquent and fearless champion of Free-thought decades before Robert Ingersoll, or Bradlaugh.

This brave soldier in the war of human liberation and enlightenment deserves her medals not only on account of her achievements, which are weighty, but on account of her dauntless pioneership.

Ernestine L. Rose (née Süsmund Pototski) was born at Pyeterkow on January 13, 1810. Her father was a very pious and learned Talmudist, and so conscientious that he refused to accept remuneration for his services, in accordance with the Rabbinical injunction that one should not make of his learning "a spade to dig with," *e.g.*, a source of revenue and gain.

Little Ernestine early manifested a reflective turn of mind, and preferred the company of her father to that of playmates, though, otherwise, a perfectly normal child, healthy, active and cheerful.

Contrary to the custom of those days, which permitted girls to grow up almost in utter ignorance, she early commenced the study of the Pentateuch in Hebrew. She soon became involved in serious difficulties regarding the creation of the world, the origin of evil and other obscure points suggested by the Bible. At first she was not bold enough to dare expressing her doubts, but as time went on, she began to ask embarrassing questions, and all that her teachers could do by way of reply was to scold her for irreverence and to say: "Little girls must not ask such questions." This made her at that early age an advocate of religious freedom, for she could not see why any subject of vital interest should be held too sacred for investigation.

Despite these juvenile ventures into Bible criticism, she was noted for her strict observance of all the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish faith, even those which one of her tender age was exempt from.

Nevertheless she could not wholly suppress the promptings of her inquiring mind which bade her question the usefulness of these innumerable observances. One day, for instance, she asked her father, whom she loved dearly, why he fasted so much more than other Jews, seeing it was seriously impairing his health and spirits. Her father answered that it was in order to please God, to which she retorted with all the fire of her young and passionate being, "If God

is pleased in making you sick and unhappy, I hate God." This idea of God's cruelty towards her father had a profound and lasting effect upon her, and already at fourteen she was a full-fledged heretic, a fact which brought down upon her the wrath of the community, and made her the butt of persecution at the hands of both Jews and Christians.

She left home at the age of eighteen and travelled in Poland, Russia, Germany, Holland, France, England and the United States, and in all these countries she witnessed and took part in important events.

In Holland, for instance, she became acquainted with a very distressing case, that of a poor sailor, the father of four children, whose wife had been imprisoned for a crime of which he insisted she was guiltless. Having inquired into the case and convinced herself of the woman's innocence, Ernestine drew up a petition, which she personally presented to the King of Holland, and had the satisfaction of seeing the mother restored to her children.

In Berlin she had an interview with the King of Prussia concerning the rights of Polish Jews to remain in that city. They were not permitted to stay in Germany unless some Prussian subject who owned real estate stood security for them, and even then they might remain only as visitors, not to transact business for themselves. Ernestine, as a Jewess, was subject to this disability.

Now she could easily have obtained the requisite security, but she refused to do so, preferring to stand upon her rights as a human being. Accordingly she secured an audience with the King, remonstrated against the injustice of laws, and forthwith obtained the right to remain as long as she wished.

She was in Paris in 1830, during the revolution, when the last Bourbon King of France, Charles X was deposed and Louis Philippe enthroned. On seeing the latter presented by General Lafayette to the people of Paris from the balcony of the Tuilleries, she remarked to a friend: He too, will share the lot of Charles X. He did so.

In England she became acquainted with Lord Grosvenor, with Frances Farrar, sister of Oliver Farrar, M.P., and with others of the nobility; also with prominent members of the Society of Friends, among them J. Gurney, and his sister Elizabeth Fry, the eminent philanthropist, in whose company she visited Newgate Prison. In 1832 she made the acquaintance of Rob. Owen, and warmly espoused his teachings. Two years later she presided at the formation of a society called "The Association of all Classes of all Nations without distinction of sect, sex, party, condition or colour." Some time later she married a wealthy, cultured, and very sympathetic man named William E. Rose.

In the Spring of 1836, she went to the U.S., which was to be the scene of her greatest triumphs, she remained there for thirty-three years, residing in New York. Robert Owen, who at the time was engaged in the establishment of his colony, New Harmony, in Indiana, probably was the magnet. Shortly after her arrival she embarked upon her career as public speaker. Ernestine attracted large audiences with her lecture on "The Science of Government." She lectured also on the evils of the existing social system, on slavery, the formation of human character, religious liberty, and, above all, women's rights. Thanks to her charming personality, rich musical voice and great oratorical powers, she soon became the Queen of the Public platform. A slight trace of a foreign accent served by its piquancy to enhance the charm of her oratory. Ernestine had come to the U.S. in the belief that it was the land of freedom and equality. She was therefore, amazed to find

that one half of the American people—the women possessed hardly any rights. They could not vote or hold office, property, even the wages they had earned by the labour of their own hands, and the children they had agonized to give birth to, belonged not to them, but to their husband.

X.

(To be concluded.)

Few That Find It.

CHRISTIANITY has always taught an exclusive salvation. Its divines have very rarely doubted that all non-Christians would be damned. The wisest and best of the "heathen" were all doomed to everlasting perdition. Not even in Purgatory, but in Hell, the great Christian poet, Dante, saw (or placed) Brutus, Saladin, and the mighty Aristotle, "the master of those who know." "Firmly believe, and doubt not all," said Augustine, "that not only all pagans, but also all Jews, heretics, and schismatics, that end this present life without the Catholic Church, shall go into eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels." The Church of England articles declare that "they are to be held accursed that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to pass his life according to that law and the light of nature." The Book of Homilies admits that "Jews, heretics, and pagans do good works," that "they clothe the naked, feed the poor, and do other good works of mercy," yet because their good works are "not done in the true faith" the doers of them are "lost." Bishop Beveridge sums up the whole doctrine vigorously and logically in his treatise on the Thirty-Nine Articles. "Let a man," he says, "be never so strict a Jew, never so strict a Mahometan, in any religion whatsoever, unless he be a Christian he can never be saved. So that, though many Christians may go to hell, yet none but Christians can ever go to heaven."

Every missionary society is founded upon this doctrine. Nothing else could excuse the diversion of such vast sums of money from Christian countries, where so many people suffer destitution and misery. You might leave a hungry man for a while in order to save a man who was in immediate peril of being burnt to death; in the same way, you might leave a suffering white man, who had at least a chance of heaven, in order to save a happy black man who was going straight to hell without knowing it.

There is another consideration. If you admit that anybody but a Christian may go to heaven, you destroy the necessity of Christianity altogether. If every honest man is entitled to a seat in paradise, what is the use of all those myriads of churches and chapels, all those armies of priests, and all those multitudes of sermons? Salvation by good works subverts the very foundations of priestcraft by making churches and preachers superfluous. This is clearly understood by every denomination. The Catholic Church allows a certain efficacy in good works, but does not admit their sufficiency. The Protestant Church denies the efficacy of good works altogether, and derives salvation entirely from the free grace of God. Both Churches, therefore, assert the necessity of faith; in other words, they affirm, by implication if not explicitly, that it is impossible to go to heaven without being a Christian.

Now if only Christians go to heaven, and many Christians go to hell, what is the real number of the saved? It cannot be a great one. Many are called,

few are chosen. The way to heaven is narrow, and few there be that find it. Jeremy Taylor says in the plainest terms that the future will be "bad to the greatest part of mankind." "The greatest part of men and women," he declares, "shall dwell in the portion of devils to eternal ages." Thomas Watson, a puritan preacher much studied by Spurgeon, puts the matter most pointedly. "The Devil hath the harvest," he exclaims, "and God only a few gleanings."

What a pitiable God! One commiserates the poor Deity who is doomed to such unprofitable labour in the field of his own creation.

What reason is assigned for this extraordinary state of things? Nothing but the old story of the Fall of Man in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve sinned by eating forbidden fruit, and thus entailed "original sin" on all their posterity. Every educated person knows that the story is fabulous. The clergy know it as well as the laymen. And if the story be fabulous the doctrine must be false. It is not even true that man is fallen. According to evolution he has risen. His faults of sensuality and temper do not spring from the temptations of a devil. They spring from his strong passions, weak judgment, and lack of self-control. They are not an intrusion upon his primitive innocence; they are a legacy from his far-off animal origin, and they gradually disappear in the upward cause of his development.

If there be a God, it is inconceivable that he is eternally baffled by one of his own creatures called the Devil. It is incredible that he should desire the happiness of all his children, and yet allow this Devil to lead off the vast majority of them to everlasting misery. Those who argue that this arrangement is part of an infinitely wise and good plan, and even that God has a right to do as he likes with his own, are guilty of intellectual absurdity and grovelling immorality. That cannot be wise and good in God which is foolish and wicked in man. And the real blasphemers are not those who denounce the puerilities of theology, but those who represent their God as possessing the intelligence of an idiot and the character of a criminal.

It was inevitable that the doctrine of exclusive salvation should perish, however gradually, in the presence of modern civilization. Men's religion is perceived to be, for the most part, a result of the geographical accident of their birth. Christians, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Brahmans, belong to their various religions because they were brought up in them. Their own personal initiative counts for next to nothing in the matter. Their parents and teachers made them what they are. Salvation which depends on this or that faith is, therefore, purely arbitrary. It has no relation to sense or justice. And it is still worse, if possible, from the point of view of humanity. People have become more tender and sympathetic. Consequently we seldom hear of hell nowadays; and exclusive salvation is at variance with the growing solidarity of mankind.

G. W. FOOTE.

Virtue has many preachers but few martyrs.

Helvetius.

There are centuries where public opinion is the worst of all opinions.—*Chamfort.*

I have found you an argument, but I am not obliged to find you an understanding.—*Samuel Johnson.*

To have intelligence is not quite sufficient—you should have it with intelligence.—*Louis Dumur.*

Churches and Taxation.

JAMES MARTIN MILLER writes: "Vancouver, British Columbia, is said to be the only municipality in the world requiring religious and welfare institutions to pay taxes. For more than twenty years the cities and towns of that Province were empowered to levy taxes on Church property by virtue of an act of the British Columbia Parliament. Since 1920 some of the churches have paid their taxes under protest. In an action brought in the courts of British Columbia attacking the validity of the law, with Roman Catholics and Protestants making common cause, the Government won. When the churches appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada at Ottawa, the decisions of the courts of British Columbia were sustained. The churches next appealed to the Privy Council in London, and this court of last resort of the British Dominions reversed the decisions of the Canadian courts, declaring the law taxing churches invalid. The British Columbia Parliament thereupon repealed the law. The Vancouver Incorporation Act of 1921, however, was not included in the decision of the Privy Council. This gave the city power to tax churches, but before doing so the city administration decided to hold a plebiscite on the question of certain exemptions. On October 17, 1928, the people voted two to one in favour of retaining certain features of the law, but exempted churches devoted exclusively to divine worship. Obeying the will of the people as expressed in their votes, the City Council, on February 28, 1929, passed 'by-law No. 1961 to provide for the exemptions of certain lands and buildings set apart and used exclusively for divine worship.'

Under this ordinance each and every church is assessed annually. This includes such institutions as the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Salvation Army, and parochial schools. A church is allowed exemptions on the actual ground occupied by the church buildings, plus 50 per cent more for approaches and walks. Any additional land is taxed. The improvements are exempt provided the buildings have been used only for divine worship. The rectories or residences of the ministers are taxed in the same way as any other residential property. In the case of church schools and colleges, the improvements and land on which the buildings stand, plus 100 per cent for playgrounds, etc., are exempt. Schools with large athletic fields pay taxes on land held beyond the surplus named. There are 284 churches and missions in Vancouver, with a population of 350,000. After each one of these is assessed and the church authorities have received notice of the assessment, each church must file an affidavit with the City Council, in which an authority of each church must make oath that the church has not been used in any way for any other purpose than that of a house of divine worship. Accompanying this affidavit must be a plan or blue print of the church, showing the amount of land covered by the church building. This affidavit is an application for exemption. The City Council sits as a court, the Mayor presiding, to consider each one on its merits. These affidavits must be filed with the Council on or before December 15 each year. Any church failing to make this formal application for exemption must pay taxes. No case can be reopened after December 15. The affidavit sets forth that the church has not been used for any purpose whatsoever except as a house of divine worship. The preacher may enjoy wide latitude in expressing his own opinion of the city or government officials from his pulpit. But the church cannot permit the building or its pulpit to be used by professional reformers for political propaganda or for raising funds for any purpose except what legitimately belongs to a house of divine worship. A church cannot engage in political activities or commerce and escape taxation. Vancouver says, in effect, to its churches: 'Go into politics and into commerce if you like, but when you do you pay taxes on all your property!'

From "Current History," June, 1930.

I'll niver go down again to see sojers off to th' war.
But ye'll see me at th' depot with a brass band whin
th' men that causes wars starts f'r th' scene iv carnage.
Mr. Dooley.

He That Hath an Ear.

OH Laodicea, may I hope
Thy sad, sad song
To change; or art thou, like the Pope,
Ne'er in the wrong.

It is not that we really know:
We only think!
Crude thought, like liquor, cogs the pow
Wi' glummer-kink!

To Nature, all we have we owe:
And all that is!
But what I'd really like to know
Is simply this:

Why fret our lives away about
The great unknown?
Since all that live must peter out:
As roses blown!

And whether we shall rise again,
Or whether not;
Why worry, friend, or why complain
About our lot?

Why tremble at the thought, or speir
With anxious eye,
Beyond the grave in deadly fear?
My friend, oh why?

Why not be satisfied with life:
Glad to employ
Our energies, that care and strife
Shall change to joy!

Life's brimming cup of friendship quaff!
Thus hand in hand,
We at the pessimist will laugh
To beat the band.

Play to try fervent heart's desire
The game of chess!
Or listen-in, by wireless wire
To 2I.S.

But even with a four-valve set,
We may not know
The voice of gods or angels yet
From 2I.O!

B. L. BOWERS.

"A Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity."

A Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity, by F. Upasaka (The Pioneer Press, 1s.), is entitled to considerably more attention than it will receive. In the first place, it is published at the nominal price of one shilling, which is fatal, as most of the newspapers will dismiss it in a few words, providing they do not ignore it entirely. In the second place, it deals with a subject that few of us have the patience to read and examine without indulging in fatuous outbursts of rage. I do urge those of my readers who, having minds of their own, are not afraid to use them, to purchase this extremely interesting little book. You may find Mr. Upasaka a trifle shrill, but you cannot deny that many of his statements are startlingly accurate. He gives us reasonable grounds for his assertions, and I read his conclusions with very real attention. Mr. Upasaka does not write from the dreary point of view of mere Atheism, if you can call Atheism, which is a negation, a point of view. He writes as a Buddhist. Therefore, he is not irreligious; on the contrary, when one considers that the Buddha exhorted his followers to abjure slavery 500 years before Christ. He has given immense thought to the Christian religion as he has seen it, and he finds it wanting. What he says expresses no more than the thoughts of the majority of educated "heathen" in the East and elsewhere. If we do not like

it, it is not his fault it will do us nothing but good to see how we appear through alien and critical eyes. I agree with Mr. Upasaka when he says that many professing Christians know nothing of the origin and meaning of their own religion, while the religions of other countries are sealed books to them. Those who read this book with tolerance will find it a mental tonic; but I suppose it is rather too much to hope that it will fall into many hands; we are too lazy to care.

From the "Harrogate Herald."

Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."
PRIESTCRAFT IN MALTA.

SIR,—A nice discrimination is perhaps hardly to be expected from one to whom Hilaire Belloc is just a "half-breed," an Italian priest a "dago," the Vatican a "gang," and the Maltese generally members of a "pestiferous sect," who, as "dupes" and/or "traitors," "do not deserve citizen rights and ought not to have them" (except, of course, when they are supporters of Lord Strickland).

Apart, however, from the advertisement of his book, Mr. Boyd Freeman shows other signs of a certain form of low cunning by omitting all reference to the Vatican White Book (perhaps he felt his vocabulary was inadequate), and the incident which caused all the trouble. When the upshot of the enquiry which Lord Strickland invited was a sentence of banishment for Father Micallef, self-respect alone should have urged him to swallow his disappointment instead of encouraging his Franciscan supporter to break his religious vows.

It is held, in some quarters, that only the political power should be allowed to pass such a sentence, but it is obvious that Lord Strickland has only himself to thank for the opposition which his intolerable interference has brought upon him. There is no excuse for Mr. Boyd Freeman's attempt to reverse the rôles of accused and accuser. Such methods smack of "Jesuitical double-dealing."

ROBERT H. CORRICK.

Society News.

ALL our work has been confined to Burnley this week. Rain prevented our visiting Trawden on Friday. The Sunday meetings on the local market were most successful. We had a bombardment of questions and opposition at the evening meeting from orthodox Churchmen and Spiritualists.—J.C.

THE meetings addressed by Mr. George Whitehead at Wigan were a pleasing contrast to those of his first visit three years ago, when a mild pandemonium prevailed. On the present occasion the lectures were received with appreciation and a complete absence of the rowdy spirit; indeed, requests were numerous for future meetings. The six meetings held in Bolton also were characterized by the closest attention from the large crowds which assembled. The increased respect from the religious section of the audiences testifies to the progress of Free-thought in the district. We have to thank Messrs. Partington and Sisson for help at every meeting, and also the dozen sympathizers who accompanied the speaker from Bolton to the Wigan meetings.—G.W.

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LONDON.

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mr. F. C. Saphin.—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.

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

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

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Arlington Road, Park Street, Camden Town): Every Thursday evening at 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.—Sunday, 12.0, Wren Road, Camberwell Green, Mr. L. Ebury; 7.30, Stonehouse Street, Clapham Road, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Wednesdays, at 8.0, at Rushcroft Road, Brixton, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Fridays, at 8.0, Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (outside Municipal College, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7.0, Mr. F. P. Corrigan—A Lecture.

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

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Mr. B. A. Le Maine; 3.15, Messrs. A. D. McLaren and C. E. Wood; 6.30, Messrs. C. Tuson, E. C. Saphin, A. H. Hyatt and B. A. Le Maine. Every Wednesday, at 7.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and W. P. Campbell-Everden; every Thursday, at 7.30, Messrs. C. Tuson and E. C. Saphin; every Friday, at 7.30, Messrs. A. D. McLaren and B. A. Le Maine. The *Freethinker* can be obtained outside the Park in Bayswater Road.

INDOOR.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree, Euston Road, N.W.1): Thursday, August 14, at 101 Tottenham Court Road, Social and Dance, 7.30 to 11.30. Admission 1s. 3d.

COUNTRY.

OUTDOOR.

BARNES SQUARE, ENFIELD—Friday, August 8, at 8 p.m.—Mr. J. Clayton.

CLITHEROE.—Sunday, August 10, at 6.30—Mr. J. Clayton.

COLNE.—Monday, August 11, at 8.0—Mr. J. Clayton.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S. (Co-op Street, Chester-le-Street): Saturday, August 9, at 8 p.m., Mr. J. T. Brighton—A Lecture.

NELSON BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. George Whitehead will lecture in the Nelson District from August 9 until August 15.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Moor, near North Road entrance): 7.0, Mr. J. C. Keast—A Lecture. Literature will be on sale.

WADDINGTON.—Sunday, August 10, at 3.30.—Mr. J. Clayton.

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A Great Scheme for a Great Purpose

THE *Freethinker* Endowment Trust was registered on the 25th of August, 1925, its object being to raise a sum of not less than £8,000, which, by investment, would yield sufficient to cover the estimated annual loss incurred in the maintenance of the *Freethinker*. The Trust is controlled and administered by five Trustees, of which number the Editor of the *Freethinker* is one in virtue of his office. By the terms of the Trust Deed the Trustees are prohibited from deriving anything from the Trust in the shape of profit, emoluments, or payment, and in the event of the *Freethinker* at any time, in the opinion of the Trustees, rendering the Fund unnecessary, it may be brought to an end, and the capital sum handed over to the National Secular Society.

The Trustees set themselves the task of raising a minimum sum of £8,000. This was accomplished by the end of December, 1927. At the suggestion of some of the largest subscribers, it has since been resolved to increase the Trust to a round £10,000, and there is every hope of this being done within a reasonably short time.

The Trust may be benefited by donations of cash, or shares already held, or by bequests. All contributions will be acknowledged in the columns of this journal, and may be sent to either the Editor, or to the Secretary of the Trust, Mr. H. Jessop, Hollyshaw, Whitkirk, Nr. Leeds. Any further information concerning the Trust will be supplied on application.

There is no need to say more about the *Freethinker* itself, than that its invaluable service to the Freethought Cause is recognized and acknowledged by all. It is the mouthpiece of militant Freethought in this country, and places its columns, without charge, at the service of the Movement.

The address of the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust is 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.