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

Views and Opinions.

Flat-Catching.

It is a truth of psychology that men see things in terms of their existing knowledge and inclinations. A Roman Catholic watching a priest performing the mass sees a solemn mystery-which brings him into the presence of God. An Anthropologist sees in the same ceremony a savage medicine-man who has acquired a civilized tongue and an elaborate dress in place of paint or feathers, swallowing an imitation human being since civilization will no longer permit him to eat a real one. An ordinary man walks through a London fog and catches nothing but a cold. Whistler follows behind him and catches an inspiration. One man attends a Spiritualistic gathering and sees only vulgar cheating or a study in mental pathology, another sees himself surrounded by clouds of "spirit friends," whose continued existence has been paid for by perpetual idiocy. Everywhere a man gets out of the world what he puts into it. His conclusions are an amalgam of what he sees and what he believes.

Here in a recent issue of the *Church Times*, one comes across this golden sentence—"Anyone who deliberately sets out to exploit human credulity has unlimited opportunities." It is a saying that might well be taken as a motto for the *Freethinker*, and be emblazoned over religious conferences as a method of raising the spirits of those parsons who lament the decline of religious belief. Every theological training college is a school for turning out practitioners in the art of exploiting credulity, every church and chapel in the kingdom is a theatre in which professionals give an exposition of their skill. There is a fresh fool born every five minutes and a possible parson every day.

The Field of Religion.

Of course religion is not the only field in which credulity grows or the quack flourishes. But it certainly represents the one that is most easily cultivated; it is the parent of much of the credulity that is manifested in other directions. And to-day it offers the safest and, on the whole the most profitable field for exploitation. There are some risks attached to the exploitation of other forms of credulity, and a considerable uncertainty of tenure. The medical fakir may find himself deposed by a change in fashion, the political operator by the growth of a new doctrine. And in both directions there is always the chance of exposure. One remembers the elaborate exposure of quack remedies published by the British Medical Association, and also the way in which certain papers dog the steps of exploiters in special forms of credulity. But where religion is concerned the papers remain conveniently silent. If they do not approve they find it to their interest not openly to disapprove. When the notorious Dr. Torrey was in England, hawking his vile slanders about Colonel Ingersoll, G. W. Foote made it his business to expose the unscrupulous evangelist. W. T. Stead was so shocked that a man of the character of Torrey should receive the support of leading clergymen, he wrote to ministers of religion all over the country asking them to disown Torrey. Not one could be found who would lend a hand. Had Torrey been exploiting credulity in any other direction than in that of religion, these men would have been the first to protest. But in this case their expressed fear was that it would bring discredit on religion. Besides if people are encouraged to be critical with one aspect of religion they might be critical with other aspects, and what then is likely to happen? So things are made beautifully easy for the one who lives on the religious folly of others. Where else could women like Aimee Macpherson, or Billy Sunday, or the average travelling evangelist reap so rich a harvest as in the field of religious credulity? Verily, the field is white unto the harvest, and the reaper has not far to seek.

\* \* \*

Mental Contagion.

The statement that the mind of man works in watertight compartments is neither a wise nor a helpful one. It has led thousands into believing that men can be consistently and persistently credulous in religion, while remaining wholly reasonable in non-religious affairs. And that is not the case. Few will be so foolish apart from religion as they are with it, but that is because outside the religious field there are numerous checks to unlimited folly. But the brain functions as a whole, and characteristics that develop and are expressed in relation to religion will be expressed to some degree in connexion with other subjects. What is the difference between the

Roman Catholic burning candles before his favourite saint to secure a rise in wages, and a man carrying round a mascot to secure good fortune? What is the meaning of the enormous trade done in fortunetelling, and the trade in charms, but that it is a product due to the prevalence of the frame of mind developed in relation to established religious beliefs? The vogue of such pseudo-philosophical vagaries as Theosophy would have been impossible to a generation that was not saddled with the credulous mind born of so many generations of religious culture. Men may disown the original form of superstition in which they were matured, but the mental tendencies are still there and are only slowly eradicated.

\* \* \*

#### Fighting Folly.

People are often surprised that the Freethought fight against religious credulity does not produce more dramatic results than it does. But why? All the dice are loaded in favour of established ideas. The very words we are compelled to use carry with them old-fashioned connotations that are sometimes in direct opposition to the ideas we are trying to instil. Consider how much of the Freewill controversy is due to the use of that one word "free." To explain what it ought to mean is to attempt to carry one's hearers or readers over quite new ground. They associate one meaning with the word, and that is the wrong one. The meaning we wish them to give to it is one that involves an understanding of connected subjects which means new realms of thinking, and the effort is too much. Or, again, when a Freethinker is faced with the fact of what is called religious experience, whether in its pathological or in its normal forms, the same difficulties exist, but in an intensified form. With the religious advocate the task is easy. He has but to repeat the familiar words to secure the customary reactions. The Freethinker has to educate the majority of his hearers all the time he is attempting to convert them. He is for the larger part of the time talking a foreign language which needs the education of both the intelligence and the ear. He is, like the fabled Israelites of old, set to make bricks without straw.

Again, take the epidemic of Spiritualism, which every now and again spreads over a country. The ascription to "spiritual" influence of something that is new and unexplainable touches one of the oldest chords in human nature. It goes right back to the animism of primitive man, a phase that comparatively few have completely outgrown, and which is with many still in all its strength. To put down occurrences that are puzzling or unexplainable to the action of spirits requires little intelligence, and no great degree of knowledge. It has thousands of generations of superstition behind it, and is embodied in hundreds of institutions. But the man who sets out to explain what actually does occur is inviting believers to follow him into what is at least the little known department of mental and physiological reactions, and for that vast majority have neither the inclination nor the necessary mental equipment. The spirit-fakir thus finds the field ready prepared for his reaping. He reaps the reward the past has stored up for him. The man who fights credulity has to teach people to think along new lines, to speak with a new tongue, and the task is not an easy one.

I am greatly intrigued, to use a slang phrase, at the *Church Times* calling attention to the ease with which credulity may be exploited. It reminds one very much of the shopkeeper who exhibited the notice, "Why go elsewhere to be swindled?"

CHAPMAN COHEN.

## America's Apostle.

"Emerson is the sweetest memory of his land and century."—G. W. Foote.

"The books which help you most are those which make you think the most."—Theodore Parker.

No less a critic than Matthew Arnold has told us that Emerson's works are the most valuable prose contribution to English literature of the nineteenth century. If this be true, Emerson's well of inspiration will run for many a day. Of all his contemporaries he is now the strongest, the most influential, the most read. Later voices in philosophy, like Nietzsche, simply repeat in varied language the golden message of Emerson, and send us back with renewed interest to the master's own writings.

It is natural to feel curious concerning the evolution of a great literary force that is really original. To watch Shelley as he grows from the audacious "Queen Mab" to the profound *Prometheus Unbound*, or to trace Shakespeare's extraordinary genius as he progresses from the flowery "Venus and Adonis" to the masterpieces, which are the delight and the despair of the world's literature, form the best introduction to a re-reading of the works of these authors. Nor is such curiosity wasteful in the case of Emerson himself.

This great rebel had Nonconformity in his blood. His father and his grandfather were Unitarian clergymen, and he was himself ordained in this most latitudinarian faith. Even in those early days his preaching was ethical and not devotional. Emerson did not care for the threshing of old straw. He chafed under the harness, and the bent is towards Secularism. The prime duty, he thought, was to be truthful and honest, and he revolted at the "official goodness" of the ministerial position.

Then his intellect rebelled. There was a question of the rite of the communion, and his mind was brought to a pause. His elder brother, William, was even more rationalistic, and declined altogether to take "holy orders." Emerson's ethics took a practical form. He opened his church to anti-slavery agitators, and was friends with Thoreau and Thomas Carlyle. Such friendships were a liberal education. When Thoreau went to prison for resisting Authority, he was visited by Emerson. "Why are you here?" he asked the prisoner. "Why are you not here, Ralph," replied Thoreau. As for Carlyle, their correspondence is notable in the history of literature.

Emerson's first book was, characteristically, a volume on *Nature*, and it revealed the fact that he found the Unitarian fetters none the less real for being simple and few. From the publication of his first work Emerson became a power, and it was he, more than any other, who encouraged Walt Whitman. Full justice has never been done to the courage and foresight of the Concord philosopher, who sought to introduce real culture into the sluggishness of the American conscience. "I give you joy of your free and brave thought," Emerson wrote to the author of *Leaves of Grass*. "I find incomparable things said incomparably well." The gesture was magnificent, and the more admirable because it was for many years the only recognition that Americans gave to Whitman's genius.

What distinguishes Emerson from so many philosophers, ancient and modern, is that he had a shrewd Yankee head on his shoulders. Those who have read his stimulating pages with attention know that his real and essential religion was the religion of humanity. He tells us quite plainly that the day will come when Churches built on supernaturalism will be

superseded and left behind by the conscience of the race :—

There will be a new church founded on moral science, at first cold and naked, a babe in a manger again, the algebra and mathematics of ethical law, the church of men to come; without shams, or psaltery, or sackbut; but it will have heaven and earth for its beams and rafters; science for symbol and illustration; it will fast enough gather beauty, music, picture, poetry.

A church founded on ethics! Is it not the trumpet of a prophecy? The priests may smile, but they laugh best who laugh last, for daily they are discarding their dogmas and heading their churches towards the Emersonian ideal. Years before attention was paid to ethics as a serious factor in religion, Emerson wrote: "I look for the new teacher that shall see the identity of the law of gravitation with purity of heart, and shall show that Duty is one thing with Science." Long before Ruskin declared: "There is no wealth but life," Emerson said: "The best political economy is care and culture of men."

This great American thinker dreamt of vaster accomplishments and nobler victories than man has yet witnessed. "We think our civilization near its meridian," he exclaims, "but we are yet only at the cock-crowing and the morning star." It is difficult to formulate the Emersonian philosophy. It is unquestionably individual. "Be yourself" is the keynote: "Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind." Indeed, Emerson's counsel of perfection is very like that which Shakespeare puts in the mouth of old Polonius:—

"To thine old self be true:  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

In Emerson we have a notable contradiction of the adage which excepts a prophet from honour in his own country. He became a classic during his lifetime. His detractors are few and feeble. The jest that, when Emerson interviewed the Sphinx she said to him, "You're another," explains their outlook very well. Certainly, no writer stimulates thought like Emerson. His maxims are a perpetual antidote to the insidiousness of custom and tradition.

Despite his Transcendentalism, Emerson was a Freethinker in the highest and noblest sense of that word. Golden thoughts confront us on every page of his writings:—

"A world in the hand is worth two in the bush."  
"Who shall forbid a wise scepticism?"  
"Let us have to deal with real men and women, and not with skipping ghosts."  
"So far as a man thinks, he is free."  
"Knowing is the knowing that we cannot know."  
"Whoso would be a man must be a Nonconformist."

Emerson's triumph is the more remarkable because at that time Americans were highly civilized but were not cultured. Even the Bostonians were humane and puritanical, but not intellectual. The one native poet at that time of consequence, Bryant, was inspired by the eighteenth century and not the nineteenth. Poe might have composed his exotic works in a Parisian garret. The genius of Hawthorne, and Whitman was recognized very slowly. Longfellow's trick of polished sentimentality was derived from Scandinavia and not the United States.

Yet Russell Lowell has told us that:—

Those who heard him (Emerson) while their natures were yet plastic, and their mental nerves trembled under the slightest breath of divine air, will never cease to say:—

"Was never eye did see that face,  
Was never ear did hear that tongue,  
Was never mind did mind his grace

That ever thought the travail long,  
But eyes and ears, and every thought  
Were with his sweet perfections caught."

Since that eulogy was written, time has only more assured Emerson's position among the seminal writers, the authors who really are of importance. Slowly, with lapses into its "loved Egyptian night," mankind is shaking itself free of the last desperate clutches of superstition. Bewildered by the new light, missing at first the guiding hand of the priests, it stands amazed on the threshold of the future. It is writers such as Emerson who points mankind to a happier, more consummate condition of life, and to loftier ideals.

The fragment of granite which marks Emerson's grave is a fitting symbol of his nobility of character and singleness of purpose. That grave reminds us that there were giants in those far-off days of storm and stress. Emerson's splendid literary legacy is the best of philosophy at the worst of times.

MIMNERMUS.

### The Magnificence and Destruction of the Alexandrian Museum.

WITH the passing of Aristotle and his immediate successors, the scientific centre of the classic world was established in Alexandria, the great Egyptian metropolis erected and named after the Macedonian conqueror. The proud pre-eminence of Athens had departed, and the cultivated Ptolemaic monarchs who now reigned in Egypt became the generous and enlightened patrons of the sciences and arts.

Alexander's gifted general Ptolemy I, was the first ruler of an illustrious line of Greek princes who governed the Egyptian State. Alexandria was in reality a Greek capital in an alien land. Its situation gave it various advantages. It easily entered into close commercial relations with the countries of the Mediterranean region, and soon became the great connecting link with the opulence and civilization of the East.

The first Ptolemy, who reigned till 285 B.C., was a zealous collector of literature, and the author of several works. His son Ptolemy Philadelphus, is justly celebrated as the founder of the world-famous Alexandrian Museum, so named in remembrance of the Greek Muses of wisdom and song. Philadelphus purchased the entire library of Aristotle, and the collection of books preserved in the Museum ultimately became the largest in the ancient world.

The Alexandrian Institution appears to have assumed the status of a modern university. In addition to the study of letters and art, the Museum afforded every facility for the pursuit of science. Students were welcomed from every cultured land. Their wants were provided for, and they were thus made free to search into the many profound problems presented by Nature. On its administrative side the Museum was conducted like an academy, with the head librarian as president or chairman, although the supreme authority was vested in the priestly representative of the sacred Muses to whom the College was dedicated. Every department of ancient knowledge was drawn into requisition, and the science of life itself was eagerly studied along anatomical, physiological, and hygienic lines.

As an early, and possibly the earliest community who studied anatomy on scientific principles, it seems fitting that the land of Egypt should become the home of medical research. Under the auspices of the princes whose grants and gifts were conferred on a

bountiful scale, the greatest and the most efficient medical college of antiquity arose in Alexandria and with Herophilus and Erasistratus this school attained a far-flung celebrity.

That Mephistophelean personality, Pyrrho of Elis lived at this time, and his scornful scepticism concerning human ability to comprehend either the immediate, or the ultimate nature of existence tended to curb the metaphysical propensities of his contemporaries. Still, even this utter Agnosticism served the cause of science. For, while it helped to stifle legitimate speculation on the causes of things, it also stimulated the prosecution of practical researches which led to a substantial increase in man's knowledge of biological phenomena.

Of the life of Herophilus, apart from his researches in the Museum, little is known, and his works have perished with the exception of a few fragments. But that Herophilus was generally regarded as one of the leading anatomists in antiquity is incontestable. His permanent fame rests on his solid additions to science. He made a minute examination, so far as the absence of modern scientific instruments permitted, of all the anatomical features of the human organism; Herophilus was not content with the investigation of the anatomy of the lower animals, but utilized the human corpse in his researches. Then, as later, a superstitious dread of human dissection prevailed, but Herophilus and his pupils ignored this prejudice, and the Ptolemies readily provided material for their use.

The brain was studied in detail, and the term *torticular Herophili* commemorates the fame of the Greek anatomist. Other organs specially studied were the eye, the liver, the circulatory system and the alimentary canal. To the upper section of the intestinal organs he gave the name *duodenum*, which remains in use. He seems to have been the earliest inquirer to determine the differences of nerves and tendons. He also made plain the true anatomy of the sexual organs. Naturally, the physiology of Herophilus was less exact, and his hygienic theories made no advance upon those of Hippocrates.

The great contemporary and competitor of Herophilus, Erasistratus, whose writings have also been lost, founded a college of medicine in Alexandria. He made a special study of the blood and its circulation, and carefully examined the structure of the heart. The valves of the heart still bear the names he gave them. Erasistratus also made clear the connexion that exists between arteries and veins.

His other contributions to science were equally important, as he distinguished the motor from the sensory nerves, and is said to have been the earliest anatomist to "describe in detail the convolutions of the brain." As a medical practitioner Erasistratus was more successful than Herophilus, and his theories were more in accord with modern views.

Pronounced differences of opinion, leading, as these frequently do, to distinct courses of conduct, prove the occasion, even in our tolerant times, of great bitterness of feeling. So in Alexandria, while the two eminent physicians were independently advancing biological studies and discoveries, they and their disciples were arrayed in opposite camps when the treatment of disease was in question. This antagonism probably stimulated further research, but the animosity that arose between the rival practitioners soon became a sorry spectacle to all dispassionate adherents of science. Medical authority lost much of its influence. Moreover, culture now entered into a period of marked decline in Alexandria. Corrupt and degraded rulers disgraced the crowns of the earlier enlightened kings. Much of its former magnificence vanished, and Egypt sank at last into a relatively unimportant province of the risen Roman State. Alexandria per-

force yielded its supremacy as a world metropolis, and the City of the Seven Hills reigned as the leading capital of Pagan times.

Alexandria made many other outstanding contributions to the intellectual life. Its splendid mathematical school was instituted in the reign of Ptolemy I, by the renowned geometer Euclid. Among its brilliant mathematicians Eratosthenes stood high. A philosopher of many parts, he wrote with ability on nearly every subject known at his time. His writings on chronology are still important, and he made the first attempt to measure the earth. Apollonius of Perga was another immortal geometer who composed a work on conic sections. The astronomical school was a powerful one, and the members distinguished themselves by their then novel method of casting all unverified traditions aside, and confining their researches to strict observation. Probably, the most gifted of the astronomers was Hipparchus, the true father of the science. To him, Claudius Ptolemy, to whom is usually attributed the Ptolemaic System, was indebted for the substance of his work, the famous *Almagest*.

Despite the eclipse of Alexandria as the world's supreme intellectual centre by Rome, where men of letters tended more and more to congregate, the study of science and to a growing extent, theology, was prosecuted in the Egyptian city. Indeed, Alexandria was destined to prove the generator and preserver of metaphysical speculations which coloured the beliefs of heretic and orthodox alike, for many centuries to come, throughout the Christian world.

From its inception in the times of Ptolemy to the day of its destruction, the famous Alexandrian Library appears to have grown from more to more. This wonderful collection of literary matter was the largest in the antique world. The story of its destruction when Cæsar besieged Alexandria has long been recorded as sober history, but doubt is now thrown upon its truth. Some books may have been burnt, but the great library most certainly was not.

The chief collection of books was stored in the Serapeum, the great fame of Jupiter Serapis, and there it reposed unharmed until the reign of the Emperor Theodosius. When this bigoted and intolerant Christian Emperor decreed the destruction of all the temples in the Roman State, the superb temple of Jupiter Serapis was doomed. A fanatical and pious rabble led by Archbishop Theophilus stormed and plundered the stately edifice. No mercy was shown. All the treasures, including the literary masterpieces of the world were ruthlessly made over to destruction. This, perhaps the greatest injury ever inflicted on civilization and culture by the Catholic Church, occurred in the year of grace 391.

At a far later day, when Christian apologists had become ashamed of their predecessors' conduct, a tale was invented to prove that the celebrated Library existed so late as A.D. 638, when during the Moslem invasion of Egypt, the collection of some 700,000 volumes was destroyed under the instructions of the Caliph Omar. Apart from the fact that the historian Orosius, when he visited the temple after the Christians had destroyed it, was appalled at the spectacle of the empty shelves, there exists no evidence whatever that the Library survived from the days of Theophilus to those of Omar. As a matter of historical truth, the story of the Moslem destruction was completely disposed of by Gibbon, a century and more since. The great historian proved for all time the guilt of Theophilus and his fanatical following. And to quote Gibbon, "nearly twenty years afterwards the appearance of the empty shelves excited the regret and indignation of every spectator."

T. F. PALMER.

## Metascience. (1)

THERE appears to be a tendency in modern scientific thought to break down the barrier between physics and metaphysic—*i.e.*, between what we *observe* about phenomena, and what we *think* about it. Bacon drew the distinction as follows:—

The one part, which is physic, inquireth and handleth the material and efficient causes; and the other, which is metaphysic, handleth the formal and final causes.

This phase of thought, in so far as it is new, partly springs from the discovery that the constitution of matter is, so to speak, more ethereal than material. Sir Oliver Lodge, in his article, "Have I Found the Key to a Great Mystery?" (*Daily Express*, March 11), writes:—

The ether of space has not been a medium, much attended to in philosophy; and if the ether contains the key to the connection between mind and matter, that key has been effectively hidden.

The following passage from Sir Oliver Lodge's book, *Phantom Walls*, throws light on his position:—

This, which we call empty space or ether, is what interpenetrates all matter . . . and it is now suspected of being the raw material out of which matter has been made.

He goes on to say:—

That this etheric medium may constitute the physical vehicle for life and mind when they are dissociated from matter.

Though quite unqualified to touch on the technical side of physics, I can give some reasons for distrust of what may, I think, be called, metascience.

Science, as commonly understood, stands for accurate observation, such observation being essentially not final, but progressive. When any "working hypothesis" fails to harmonize with new discoveries, it is superseded by another which fits in better with them.

But science, as such is no better equipped for and no more capable of deciding whether the universe is the work of mind or matter, or what-not, than religion or philosophy, or even than the plain man because these problems are outside its true province. There will always be as much difference of opinion on these ultimate questions among scientists as there is among non-scientists. Those who set out to solve them by the help of science will probably find when they come to grips with them, that they are falling into the same pit as the dogmatic theologian, and that scientific philosophy is no more likely to command general acceptance than any other kind.

Sir Oliver Lodge, though fully admitting this distinction, apparently applies it only to what he terms "orthodox science." In *Phantom Walls* we read:—

Final causes may be the business of philosophy and religion, but not of science; there we are seeking, as far as we can, the physical, the chemical, the mechanical explanation.

And later:—

. . . it is true that in orthodox science spiritual causes have no footing.

But Sir Oliver adds:—

The term "science" (here apparently it stands for unorthodox science) can be used in more than one sense. It may be used to include a careful study of all existence, a sort of general ontology; so that theology, for instance, as well as psychology are sciences . . .

The double and at the same time extensive sense in which "science" is taken here leads to some con-

(1)—This article as it first stood was completed before the appearance of Sir Oliver Lodge's most recent book, *Beyond Physics*.

fusion of thought as to where it actually stands; but the passage—especially if read in its entirety—has great interest as the view of a distinguished scientist.

Such questions as the following are essentially controversial:—

Knowledge, it may be argued, is gained solely by sense impressions. It was "by the evidence of our senses," to use Galileo's own words as quoted by Sir James Jeans, that he established the truth of a system of astronomy, which before that time had been no more than a disputed theory, because it lacked the only kind of evidence that was indisputable. Some philosophers contend that it is the mind itself which shapes the universe for us as we know it and are capable of perceiving it. Therefore, the only sort of reality we can reach is supplied by the constitution of the mind, and may be no more than "the baseless fabric of this vision."

"It seems to be generally agreed," writes Sir Oliver Lodge, "that our physical perception of existence is but a shadowy phantom of reality."

Sir James Jeans regards all perception as drawn from, not drawing, the universe. "Before he can understand himself, man must first understand the universe from which all his sense perceptions are drawn."

(Einstein's theory of the curvature of space affords an instance of how the mind can shape the universe. Sir James Jeans illustrates this theory by comparing it with the earth's surfaces around which we can travel without ever reaching an end, though we may return to the same starting point. This explanation is plain enough to be understood, by the plain man, but the question remains, What is outside the curvature? Here we are held up by the constitution of the mind, which makes it impossible for us to conceive of nothingness).

This region of thought leads on to pure metaphysics, where "orthodox science" can have no footing because there are no observable phenomena. Mechanical aids, and pre-eminently the telescope, extend sense perception on a scale which responds to our sense of the infinite, but does not thereby alter its nature. Even the claim that divine revelation is manifested supernaturally can only be established by sense perception. A miracle is not a spiritual but a physical event, attested by physical senses. Inorganic forces, and many organs also, perform their functions without "thought" as motive power. The tides ebb and flow, electricity causes the storm, the plant flourishes, the embryo grows in the egg, without a spark of conscious volition. Such considerations rule out the necessity, though not, of course, the option, of postulating thought as the starting force of the universe. The term "blind force" is constantly on our lips. And on the other hand it is maintained that even if nature's laws act mechanically, such mechanism presupposes thought as their mainspring.\* How is science to decide whether force is ultimately blind or not? Human minds can form their own conceptions, and can accept or reject the faith that is offered them,

\* Bergson endeavours to found the philosophy which he expounds in *Creative Evolution* (*Evolution Créatrice*) on a scientific basis. He regards "the formation of the eye in molluscs and vertebrates" as offering proof that evolutionary processes cannot be accounted for by Darwinism or the other "forms of evolutionism" which he reviews in detail, but that they involve "an original impetus of life." (*Élan vital*). But Bergson adds that: "the reality of which each of these theories takes a partial view must transcend them all. And this reality is the special object of philosophy, which is not constrained to scientific precision, because it contemplates no practical application." A passage which probably loses something in translation.

but it takes much more than the human mind, however scientific, to deal with ultimates in such a way as to ensure unity of belief. Institutional religion falls back upon super-human revelation and infallibility. Scientific philosophy dispenses with these supports, but what can it put in their place?

Sir James Jeans, discussing in his great work, *The Universe Around us*, a view of the Creation of Matter "consonant . . . with the modern theory of relativity," says:—

This brings us very near to those philosophical systems which regard the universe as a thought in the mind of its Creator, thereby reducing all discussion of material creation to futility.

The attitude indicated here—not that it is necessarily that of the writer—also brings us near to the religious position. It postulates a creative mind, and places the priority of mind to matter, on a footing which reduces all discussion of the opposite view "to futility." But we cannot get away from the fact that the brain, our only organ of thought, is the result of many million years of evolution. It can, therefore, be argued that in the case of humanity, matter has preceded and produced the power of thought.

The present purpose is not, however, to raise the outstanding problems which always confront us when we come to the question of ultimate causes and the like. It merely aims at pointing out the improbability of such problems ever being settled once for all by science.

Leading scientists are themselves widely apart when it comes to the question of philosophy founded on science. Sir James Jeans describes "the ether" as having

dropped out of science, not because scientists as a whole have formed a reasoned judgment that no such thing exists, but because they find they can describe all the phenomena of nature quite perfectly without it.

And when Broadcasting his "Point of View," he alludes to "the claims of spiritualism or physical research to provide proof for the survival of the dead," and said:—

"Speaking as a scientist I find the alleged proofs totally unconvincing; speaking as a human being I find most of them ridiculous as well."

Whereas Sir Oliver Lodge's point of view as a scientist, leads him, as we know, in just the opposite direction.

And Sir Arthur Keith, who speaks—so we read in *Phantom Walls*—as one "concerned chiefly with concrete things . . . that appeal to the senses," holds the opinion that "We know of mind only as a manifestation of a material organ called the brain."

But a note on which there can be general agreement is sounded by Sir James Jeans in the concluding chapter of *The Universe Around Us*, where he says:—

The formulæ of modern science are judged mainly, if not entirely, by their capacity for describing the phenomena of nature with simplicity, accuracy, and completeness . . . This does not (he adds later on) imply any lowering of the standards or ideals of science; it implies merely a growing conviction that the ultimate realities of the universe are at present quite beyond the reach of science, and may be—and probably are—for ever beyond the comprehension of the human mind.

E. MAUD SIMON.

The tree of liberty only grows when watered by the blood of tyrants.—*Barère*.

## The Puritan Descent on America.

INGERSOLL said that instead of the Pilgrim Fathers landing on Plymouth Rock, it would have been better if Plymouth Rock had landed on them. It is therefore interesting to refer to some of the methods adopted by the Puritans for the purpose of organizing their social life after arriving in America.

The Spanish Conquistadores were perhaps freebooters and pirates; they were also devout observers of the festivals of their church; but if we can believe the available records, they did not possess one half of the persecuting zeal which was such a marked attribute of the Puritans.

It is interesting to observe the nomenclature adopted by the Spaniards for their early settlements. Columbus called the island he first reached "San Salvador," where he erected the symbol of the Christian Faith. Other colonies were named Santa Cruz, Vera Cruz, San Sebastian. On his third voyage Columbus discerned three mountain peaks rising from the waters, and at first supposed three new islands had been discovered. On a nearer approach, it was seen that the three summits formed one united land—which Columbus recognized as a mysterious emblem of the Holy Trinity; and therefore bestowed on the island the name of I.a Trinidad. So also the huge mountain of St. Kitts, bearing on its shoulder a smaller pyramid of black lava, took in the imagination of Columbus the form of the giant St. Christopher bearing on his shoulder the infant Christ. Florida, by its name, records the fact that it was discovered on Easter Sunday—a festival which the Spaniards called Pascus Florida from the flowers with which the Churches were then decked.

Many other places received their names from those of Saints—in each case the Roman calendar being the guide.

In all this place-naming by the Spaniards, there is apparent an element of poetical mysticism. The mysticism of the Puritans contained no poetry. They named their chief centre Salem, which was to be the earthly realization of the New Jerusalem, where a "New Reformation" of the sternest Calvinistic type was to inaugurate a fresh era in the history of the world, and a strict discipline was to eradicate every frailty of our human nature from this City of the Saints. And their policy eventuated in the following legislation for the conduct of this Puritan Utopia. It enacted under severe penalties:—

That no one shall be a freeman unless he be converted.

That no one shall run on the Sabbath or walk in his garden.

That no one shall make beds, cut hair or shave, and no woman shall kiss her children on the Sabbath.

That no one shall make mince pies or play any instrument except the trumpet, drum and jews harp.

That no food or lodging shall be given to any Quaker or other heretic.

The laws of Massachusetts assigned the penalty of death to all Quakers as well as to stubborn and rebellious sons, and to all children above sixteen, who curse or smite their natural father or mother, and to persons guilty of idolatry witchcraft or blasphemy.

No lengthy or involved humbug with a hundred sections and hundreds of subsections about these Puritanical enactments! Everybody could understand them—though they might be found difficult to reconcile with such humanistically sounding names as "Concord" and "Philadelphia"!

But the poor Quakers had jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire! Their lot at home in all conscience had not been all beer and skittles, for 60,000 of them had been thrown into foetid jails in England, and they had fled to America in the hope of sharing in the inauguration of this grand Utopian era of peace and harmony!

But there was one courageous man, Roger Williams, who, curiously enough, had been chosen to be minister at Salem, and who dared to affirm the heresy that "the doctrine of persecution for cause of conscience is most evidently and lamentably contrary to the doctrine of Christ Jesus," and that "no man should be bound to worship against his own consent." For maintaining these heterodox opinions, which struck at the root of the

New England system of polity, Williams had sentence of exile pronounced against him. He wandered forth into the snows of a New England winter. "For fourteen weeks," he says, "he often in the stormy night had neither fire nor food, and had no house but a hollow tree."

The savages showed Williams the mercy which his fellow Christians had refused him; an Indian chief gave him food and shelter; but that wigwam in the far forest was pronounced to be within the jurisdiction of the Puritan colony and the apostle of toleration, hunted even from the wilderness, embarked with five companions in a canoe and landed at Rhode Island. He called the spot where the canoe first touched the land by the name of "Providence."

It is a far cry from Roger Williams to Robert Ingersoll, with whose name this article began; but it is to men like these, whose courage is born of an intense love of freedom, that humanity in general and America in particular are indebted. No Freethinker denies the right of everyone to believe what he chooses to believe—may he resist to the last anyone who would deny that right. But he resists with all the might he can command, the claim of the believer to exercise tyrannical compulsion upon anyone else.

Having begun with Ingersoll, let us close with him. An orthodox American lady was conversing with him; and, horrified by his frank criticisms of the Christian God, she exclaimed: "Why to hear you talk one would think you could run the Universe better than God himself!" "I certainly could, Madam," retorted Ingersoll calmly; "and if I were God, I would make good health and not disease catching."

IGNOTUS.

## Acid Drops.

Something ought to be done with the ghost of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Directly he was dead he turned up in Australia, in France, and, of course, in America. But these were declared unauthorized visits, and the only genuine one was when he turned up at the Albert Hall, in a dress suit, although in that case he was visible to one person only. The rest saw him with the eye of faith. Now he has been in communication with one of the regular writers of the *Liverpool Weekly Post*, and instructed the medium to send his message to the press. But the newspaper returned it because Lady Doyle had asked that no communications from outsiders should be printed. But has a wife any copyright in the ghost of her husband? She has the absolute ownership of his corpse, but not, we think, of his ghost. Lady Doyle says he is resting now and learning how to "get through." So the poor uneasy ghost is wandering about from medium to medium, and when he does get through finds the road blocked by his wife. Why not let the poor ghost really rest?

A big daily newspaper praises some Society women for clearing away litter left by pic-nic parties at a well-known rendezvous. Well, there is a worse kind of litter badly needing to be disposed of; namely, the mental litter which the theologians have bestrewed the world of thought for nineteen centuries. This litter obstructs clear thinking on such subjects as crime and punishment, marriage and divorce, and also moral education, and impedes civilized progress in almost every direction. So far as we can see, Freethinkers are the only persons to be always engaged in removing this obstructive litter. Other people help occasionally, after Freethinkers have shown them that the litter is there and needs removing. Nevertheless, we shall have to wait a long time before getting any praise or even acknowledgement from big daily newspapers.

Judge J. F. McKinley, of Ottawa, declares that 90 per cent of juvenile delinquency is due to disease, ignorance, or neglect of parents. And the other 10 per cent is due to the misdirection of the surplus energy which every healthy child possesses. The judge is, of course, basing

his statement on observation and experience. That is why he is unable to attribute any percentage of delinquency to the theologians' pet causes "original sin," acquired sin, or temptation by a "devil." There is one thing we may add. When the theologians' antique theories are shelved, there is always a possibility of discovering rational remedies for delinquency.

Apropos of credulity and of advertisements for quack remedies, Sir Lennard Hill declared that "a constant stream of morbid suggestion in these advertisements makes people regard the remedy as a dope they cannot do without." This would be equally true of many religious advertisements, all tracts, and nearly all sermons. And when one remembers that childhood in the most credulous and suggestible stage of all, there is no difficulty in understanding why priests and parsons work so hard to keep religion in the school. One thing is certain, priests and parsons have nothing to learn from the advertiser of patent remedies in the way of the gentle art of morbid suggestion. They have nineteen hundred years of experience in the art to draw inspiration from.

Every sucking curate hopes that he has, so to speak, a bishop's gaiters in his knapsack. But after hearing the sigh of the Bishop of Chelmsford, he probably will hope he hasn't. For the dear superman of God exclaims that the bishop's lot is not a happy one. Still, there appear to be compensations for high ecclesiastical unhappiness. For we have yet to hear a bishop regret receiving a large salary or possessing power and prestige. And bishops seldom, if ever, throw up their job in exchange for the work and wage of an ordinary mechanic. But one must, of course, allow for the fact that a material thing such as socially productive labour could hardly be expected to appeal to super-spiritual mentalities.

Nonconformist journals often adversely comment on what they call the Sunday night "street parade" of young persons in the larger cities. And some parsons organize semi-pious entertainments with the avowed object of keeping the young people off the streets; but with the real object of catching a few clients from among the young who are bored with an English Sabbath. But we gather that these altruistic manoeuvres of the parsons are not really essential. In Coventry, for instance, a pious reporter noticed recently the absence of the "street parade," and on enquiry, he discovered that the kinemas were open. He seemed somewhat flabbergasted at this. For he remarks that they are closed at Leicester and Nottingham, and "isn't it strange how authorities differ in this matter?" What he should have said was that, seeing how useful is the provision of facilities for rational amusement on Sunday, why don't authorities in other towns do the same as Coventry?

The Rev. H. E. Fosdick says, "Of course, prayer does not affect the weather," and the *Christian World* appears to agree with him. One would like to know, in that case, what is the meaning of all the prayers for fine weather, or for rain offered in all the Churches. Is it all a game of make-belief? Does Mr. Fosdick, in his own Church, decline to join in prayers for desired weather, and other things?

We emphasize the last clause because we would like to know what is the substantial difference between praying for rain and praying for other things. Mr. Fosdick would we have not the slightest doubt, pray for better health, a better understanding, for peace, or for contentment of mind, etc. If he is not praying to some one to help him in these things, what is he praying for, and to whom is he praying? If he is praying to someone to do these things, what difference is there between praying for them and praying for rain? If the benefits which come from the praying is merely due to auto-suggestion, will Mr. Fosdick tell his congregation quite plainly and honestly that there is no person who will alter things as a consequence of prayer, but if we can persuade ourselves that things will be better it will give us greater

courage to fight on? But prayer is an elaborate, if helpful way for weak people to help themselves. Now if he will do this he will be quite honest to those who look to him for guidance. But we imagine that he is like the rest of these dare-devil parsons. He is sufficiently developed to see how very silly these religious beliefs and practices are, but without sufficient courage to tell the whole truth about them. And but for Freethinkers who have made it impossible for him to say what he is saying he would still be handing out the ridiculous stuff of centuries ago.

The radical dishonesty of the Christian Science Movement is well illustrated in a notice that has just reached us. This is an announcement of an edition of *A Plea for Christian Science*, by Mr. C. H. Lea. Accompanying is a printed notice with a facsimile reprint of the heading of the *Times*, and at the bottom the *Times* imprint. In the centre is an advertisement of Christian Science reprinted from the advertising columns of the *Times*. The plain reason for setting it out in this way is to identify the advertisement with the *Times*, and so lead casual or foolish readers to assume that in some way there is a connexion between the *Times* and Christian Science. All forms of Christianity seem to sap the sense of intellectual honesty, but Christian Science bids fair to leave even the Catholic Church far behind it in this matter. We suggest to Mr. Lea that before he puts in a plea for Christian Science with "A challenge to its critics," he should dissociate himself from the methods adopted by his organization for the terrorization of news-agents and booksellers who display or sell books exposing the humbug of this latest development of Christianity.

From the *World's Press* we learn that there are seven religious periodicals published in Russia against five exclusively devoted to Atheistic propaganda. The latter are allowed to publish larger editions than are the religious organs. We hope our readers have not forgotten the colossal lying of the *Morning Post* and its clerical supporters of a few months ago, when the British public were solemnly informed that priests were being butchered by the thousand for attending church, and people were being killed and tortured for worshipping God. Among the promulgators of these stories we must bear specially in mind men like Joynson-Hicks, our late Home Secretary, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. We are not sanguine enough to believe that the exposure of these lies will stop similar lies being told in the future. They will be told again, and we shall see them received in just the same manner. The timid who know better will be afraid to denounce them, and the credulous will swallow anything sensational that is set before them.

The B.B.C. has just issued a prayer book of its own, thanks to the influence of that prize bigot, Sir John Reith. This is too much for even the *Evening Standard*, and in its issue for September 24 there occurs the following:—

Confusion will only result if the B.B.C. acquire an exaggerated impression of their own "mission" or "message." Sir John Reith has many of the qualities of the ideal civil servant: his integrity and lack of political bias are unquestioned; his administrative capacity is of a high order.

It is unfortunate, therefore, that he should permit the B.B.C. to take upon itself so strong a religious flavour. I am all for the broadcasting of prayers and services, and to that extent the B.B.C. should be the servant of every denomination.

But when it issues its own prayer-book and invents its own prayers the moment has come to warn the B.B.C. not to trespass upon the province of the churches.

We do not want revivalism by microphone.

We do not expect this will have the slightest influence on Sir John Reith, nor will it stir up those who are presumably at the head of the management of the B.B.C. Many of the subordinate officials are not slow in expressing their opinion concerning the religious rule of the B.B.C., and we were told by one official that Sir John, while permitting music of a non-religious character to be broadcast on Sunday, when it was done from some place

of entertainment, the broadcasting of applause was strictly forbidden. Religious humbug could hardly go further than this. As to the licence-holders they do not count. All they can do—and nearly all who can avail themselves of this degree of religious liberty which is left them—is to leave England alone and switch on to one of the Continental stations, where the upholding of the Churches is not considered one of the first things to be done.

But what we like about the *Evening Standard* is that it is all for the broadcasting of prayers and services. In that case, why object to their being published? Surely the ninety per cent of the British public who cannot be got to Church by hook or by crook, but who are always begging Sir John Reith to broadcast a religious service so that they may have it at home will be delighted to have these prayers in print. And the B.B.C. should be the servant of all denominations! On what compulsion? Of course all denominations means all Christian bodies, it does not mean non-Christian or anti-Christian bodies. They must be grateful if a Christian public permits them to live, and allows them to pay towards the broadcasting of the unspeakable rubbish that comes over the wireless in the shape of a religious service.

A Cabinet Minister hopes to see all railings around parks thrown down. Aiming a bit under, we hope for the time when all the priest-erected railings around the human mind will disappear for ever. When these go, there will be little trouble to remove other kinds of fetters on human liberty.

An American woman has bequeathed two million pounds to fifty religious and educational causes. Jesus, it will be remembered, declared that the rich could enter Heaven as easily as a camel could get through the eye of a needle. She was rich when she died; and so, if Jesus really meant what he said, she won't be able to sneak into Paradise by the mere trick of giving away her wealth to religion after she had done with enjoying it. But perhaps she was gambling on the possibility that Jesus always meant something other than what he said, as the white-washing school of theologians are so fond of explaining.

In lesson-books for Sunday school teachers, each lesson is provided with a "golden text" to sum up the spiritual message. Apropos of this, a Sunday school expert remarks:—

Our ideas as to the suitability of golden texts have changed during the past ten years. We want neither to frighten children into spiritual truth nor threaten them. Therefore we do not now include such texts as, "For we must all needs die," or "Prepare to meet thy God!" or "Thou, God, seest me."

How very squeamish these moral instructors of youth are getting nowadays! The children have much to be thankful for to Freethought criticism. It has made Christian teachers ashamed of the more glaring barbarities of that unrefined religion which was "delivered to the saints." And so the pill the children now get is a very small one with a very large sugar coating. The drawback to it is that it is unlikely to produce the older type of spiritual nightmare. And without that, how can there be any real appreciation of the blessing of Salvation?

In *Radio Times*, someone requests the editor to commission "a trustworthy poet" to compose a hymn for aviators, and set the words to "a catchy tune." We don't quite see the necessity. Surely aviators have enough troubles—both mechanical and God-made—without there being any need to add to them. But why should the tune have to be "catchy"? Has a messenger from on high announced that God responds more generously and more quickly to "catchy" hymns?

The Chemical Warfare Department of America claims, according to a report, to be able to wipe out a million men in a few hours. If this is a fact, the next war will soon be finished—and civilization just as quickly.

## 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. FISHER.—A great many of the clergy are to-day saying what "Tom Paine" said a hundred and forty years ago. He was hounded down and slandered for saying it. They rank as advanced thinkers for repeating it. One of these days the world may learn that the teachings of the *Freethinker* are all in the New Testament.

S. GREGORY.—We are glad to know that you were so delighted with Mr. Cohen's lecture in the Picton Hall, particularly as it was the first visit to a Freethought meeting. If you attend any of the other lectures please introduce yourself.

G. A. FIELD (Montreal).—We wrote asking for official particulars of the Gaudy case, saying that if it was as represented we were quite willing to do what we could to redress an injustice. But we have not received the particulars asked for, and until they come to hand we are powerless.

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.

The first of the course of lectures being given by Mr. Cohen at Liverpool was a pronounced success. There were very few empty seats in the large Picton Hall, and the lecture on "The Coming of the Gods" was followed

with close attention and evident appreciation. Mr. Egerton Stafford occupied the chair, and made a very earnest appeal for help from local sympathizers. We hope his appeal bore fruit. The Liverpool Branch is at present one of the most active in the country and is doing some very useful work. It has an excellent Secretary in the person of Mr. Ready, and a good Secretary is everything to a Branch doing the work the Liverpool Branch is doing.

The second of these lectures will be delivered by Mr. Cohen to-day (October 5) in the new Meeting place of the Branch, the Transport Hall, 41 Islington. The chair will be taken at 7.0, and if judging from last Sunday's meeting the capacity of the hall will be strained to its utmost. Each lecture of the series will be quite distinct, although following a general plan, so that those who were not able to be present at the first of the meetings need not hesitate to come to the others.

We shall have but few opportunities of reminding London readers of the debate which takes place between Mr. Cohen and Mr. Barbanell on October 12. Mr. Barbanell has the reputation of being a good speaker, a keen debater, and able to make out a good case for himself. We hope that report has underestimated rather than over-estimated his ability. There is nothing like having a good case for a discussion. Full particulars of the debate will be found on the last page of this issue.

Messrs. Watts & Co., have added two more volumes to their excellent Forum series of shilling books. One is a general history of the earth by a number of writers, all of whom are authorities on their particular subject. It supplies the reader with a brief outline of what geologists have to say on this important and interesting subject. Professor Gregory is the editor and writes the introductory essay.

The second of the volumes is *Religion as a Bar to Progress*, by Mr. C. T. Gorham, with the general title of *From Melchiorite to Man*. Religion emerges from the treatment of Mr. Gorham very sadly mangled, and the excellence of the little volume makes one regret the more the closing and rather unnecessary warning:—

I am not preaching Atheism, not because I fear Christian disapproval, but because I think Atheism fails to offer any attraction to people who must have explanations of some sort . . . I prefer the term Agnosticism.

It is difficult to find in what has gone before this disclaimer any logical reason for its existence. If Mr. Gorham is not preaching Atheism, he is leaving God out of everything, and between that and Atheism there does not seem any discernible difference. As to the preference for Agnosticism because there are some people who must have an explanation of some sort, we have always been under the impression that the position of the Agnostic was just that he had no explanation to offer of certain things and that no explanation was possible. So we are afraid these people will find Mr. Gorham's Agnosticism hardly more satisfactory than other people's Atheism. But the rest of the book is good, and the closing words may be taken as just a slip.

The West London Branch opens its winter season to-day (October 5), at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. The lecturer this evening is Mr. Joseph McCabe. The entrance to the hall is in the Theobald's Road, and the lecture commences at 7.30. Doors open at 7.0. London Freethinkers will please note that these lectures will be continued on every Sunday evening during the winter, with the exception of October 12.

Mr. R. H. Rosetti visits Failsforth this week-end and will speak twice on Sunday at the Autumn Festival of the Secular School, Pole Lane. The subject for the afternoon, at 2.45, "Where are the Gods?" Evening, at 6.30, "What is the use of Science?" Mr. Rosetti has pleasant recollections of previous visits to Failsforth, and we hope that Manchester friends will make the meetings as widely known as possible.

## Francis Place and the Population Question.

BIRTH CONTROL has come to stay. No amount of discussion on Malthus or on the Malthusian Law of Population, whether from Roman Catholics, Socialists, or Freethinkers, can get away from the fact that the pioneers of the movement have at last seen their efforts so successful that there is hardly an intelligent person in the civilized world who can say he has never heard of contraception. Women everywhere are making up their minds that they will not be considered as mere breeding machines, and that they intend to be mistresses of their own bodies; while men everywhere, especially those to whom parenthood is not merely a joy but a solemn duty, are determined to bring into the world only those children whom they can successfully prepare for the whirlpool of a competitive world, where only those endowed with brains, intelligence and education can hope to win high rewards. For most of these people the question as to whether population tends to grow faster than the means of subsistence has only an academic interest. They will not and do not worry about population in general. Only as far as it effects their own economic position are they interested in Birth Control, and that means that, except among the lowest strata of society, families are getting smaller and smaller, and social observers, economists and historians have no doubt whatever as to the cause. Artificial methods of preventing births are used everywhere, and only the dreadful type of religious puritan can say morality has decreased thereby.

The work of Malthus and his successors, in bringing about this state of things, is almost unknown to a generation that prefers the excitement of a detective novel rather than the close reasoning of a social and economic philosopher. I do not, in my heart, blame these people, but for those who will not willingly let the work of the pioneers of any movement die, such a book as that just edited by Professor Norman Himes\* is one not merely of paramount worth as a marvellous chapter in our history, but is of absorbing interest from a purely literary point of view. While to "Parson" Malthus, the credit must always be given of definitely putting the population question on such a firm foundation, that so far it has never been shaken—and dozens of writers have had a try—it must never be forgotten that he had only two remedies for the evils resulting from a too rapid increase of births in a nation, namely, late marriage or "moral restraint." For him, there was no difficulty in remaining genuinely "single," whether man or woman or even in the marriage state. Malthus put forward his law, confirmed his thesis with a strict mathematical enquiry as to the various populations in every country which supplied him with some statistics, gave his remedy, and there for him the matter ended. He soon found himself assailed, though, by every writer who thought that because he found a contradiction here, a wrongly quoted figure there, a loosely worded expression here and there, he had refuted one of the world's masterpieces in close reasoning. One of the most notable writers who attacked Malthus was William Godwin, and I was glad to see Professor Himes give such a just and temperate account of a remarkable man. It is (or was) the fashion to sneer at Godwin as being, more or less, a "Sponger" on other people, but it must have been very difficult to earn a living by the pen in his day, and Godwin was a many-sided writer. His two

novels, in their way, are masterpieces, and no one who has ever read them can forget *Caleb Williams* and *St. Leon*.

Godwin's great work was *Political Justice*, and in this he tried to show that most of the evils from which man suffered were due to bad government. Given a perfect body of legislators, and just laws, and mankind would soon live in a sort of Paradise-Utopia. *Political Justice* was the work Malthus answered in the first edition of the *Essay on Population*, and he had no difficulty in proving that no matter what political laws were (they had, of course, some bearing on the problem) the pressure of population on food was the great determining factor. Godwin then set to work to reply to Malthus, and it is his *Enquiry Concerning the power of increase in the number of mankind* that made Francis Place write his book *Illustrations and Proofs of the Principle of Population* in 1822.

Place was a wonderful man—and only within this generation has his work and influence been acknowledged, and that rather grudgingly. He was born in 1771 of a disreputable drunken father, and was apprenticed to a drunken breeches maker before he was fourteen. Only five years later he married a girl of seventeen, and the two had a terribly rough time before Place worked himself into the position of a master tailor with plenty of work. An inveterate reader, he collected a great library, and as Prof. Himes points out "here, to consult his books and him, came many notable politicians and men of letters of the day." At fifty he retired from business and devoted himself to the amelioration of the lot of the poor, in particular through birth control.

Place was in full agreement with Malthus on the Law of Population, but soon discovered the remedy—late marriage or moral restraint—was quite impossible for most people. He therefore advised artificial measures to prevent conception, and one can understand what such advice meant to his pious contemporaries, when but a few years ago the words "birth control" could only be uttered in a whisper, and the whisperer looked upon as almost a genuine denizen of (or for) the infernal regions. The *Illustrations* of Place did not have an enormous circulation; it was not a best seller. In fact, I have never come across a copy in my life, and I have never met anybody who has.

This edition then, supplies a real want because one can now see how far-sighted and acute was the writer. Of him, Prof. Himes says:—

He made no pretences to infallibility; he gathered his facts as impartially as he was able; reasoned about them as objectively as lay within his powers; and then set about being as socially useful as possible. As Wallas (Prof. Graham Wallas) long ago soundly observed, Place will be remembered more for what he did than for what he wrote. That he held some untenable views seems to me of little or no consequence. Of whom is this not true? . . . I know of none who, rising from obscurity and squalor into the light of prominence and public usefulness, embodied more social wisdom, greater breadth of sympathetic human understanding, or more perspicacious penetration into the unresolvable as they relate to the practical side of social policy.

That is Francis Place, the man, and I wish particularly to point out that he, like so many of his followers, was an Atheist. After Malthus, he was the first great Malthusian, but in recommending contraceptive knowledge to all people, and particularly to the working man, he was, as Prof. Himes calls him, the "arch-pioneer." It was he who inspired Richard Carlile to write *Every Woman's Book*, the first (I think) practical treatise on contraception, and

\* *Place on Population*, edited by Norman F. Himes, 1930. 72s. 6d. net. George Allen & Unwin.

after him came Robert Dale Owen, Charles Knowlton, Dr. George Drysdale, and from then, a host of others.

To understand the beginnings of the practical movement so ably initiated by Francis Place, one must read the splendid, painstaking and accurate introduction and notes written by Prof. Himes, in which a remarkable clear and concise account of the controversy between Godwin, Malthus and Place is given, fully annotated with dates and authorities, and in fact, very nearly complete bibliographical details. The editor has mastered those early beginnings, and so meticulous is he that he notes even the misplacement of a comma in his authority. Moreover, to the booklover and all interested in bibliography, this edition of Place will prove extraordinarily fascinating—this is no dry social account, but a live and lively description of the movement as far as it went in Place's time.

The *Illustrations and Proofs*, etc, is a facsimile of the original edition, and is a splendid example of the art of controversy.

Prof. Himes says, "there is not in the controversial literature of political economy a more complete refutation of the doctrines of a man by the simple and innocuous process of quoting him."

It also shows wide reading and a mastery of Malthus and his law not equalled by many Malthusians. Personally I found it wonderfully interesting. In addition to the valuable introduction and exposition of the views of Malthus, Place and Godwin, Prof. Himes has added a long note on Malthus' attitude towards Birth Control, and many letters by Place on Population and Birth Control. Altogether, a more complete edition could not be imagined. Professor Himes is at work on an exhaustive history of the English Birth Control Movement, and if this edition of Place is an example of his energy, enthusiasm and learning, the history will easily rank as the standard authority for all time.

H. CUTNER.

## The Dialogues of Dimple and Dad

(2)—HEAVEN.

Scene: *The Rev. Veriwyse (Dad) is seated in an armchair, reading what looks like a Bible. He has a simple, kindly face, which is cleanshaven, and his blunt nose is bridged, somewhat precariously, by a pair of pince-nez. His age is about forty-five years. On the floor, playing with a Noah's Ark, is his Benjamin (Dimple). To judge from the child's questions and answers, his age is anything between five and 500 years.*

Dimple: Dad—I want to go to Heaven.

Rev. V.: Then you must try and be a good little boy all your life, Dimple.

D.: I can't be that, Dad.

V.: Oh; why not?

D.: Because when I'm grown up I won't be a little boy any longer.

V.: Ha-ha! Ha-ha! (*To himself*: What a smart child!) Well, then you must be a good boy and a good man too.

D.: Like you, Dad?

V.: Er—well—no, not exactly. But like I try to be.

D.: Haven't you been a good boy and man all your life, Dad?

V.: I'm afraid not. That is to say, not as good as I should like to have been.

D.: Then you won't go to Heaven.

V.: Well, I trust I shall, Dimple. You see, God

will forgive my sins if I am genuinely repentant—as He will yours.

D.: That's all right, then.

V.: What do you mean?

D.: Well—I mean—I don't need to be good as long as I'm jelly—jellywingly dependant.

V.: Ha-ha! Ha-ha! (*To himself*: Tut, tut—I really mustn't laugh at the dear child.) No, no, Dimple! It's no use pretending you are repentant—that is, sorry—for having done something naughty if you aren't really sorry in your heart. God reads all hearts, you know.

D.: But of course I shall be really sorry. I always am.

V.: Oh no, you're not, Dimple. I have known occasions when it took you a long time to say "I'm sorry."

D.: That's because it took me a long time to see I was naughty. You wouldn't be sorry if you thought you hadn't been naughty, would you, Dad?

V.: Er—no—I suppose not.

D.: That's all right, then.

V.: How do you mean, Dimple?

D.: Well, I mean, nobody's really sorry unless they really know that they've really been really naughty. So everybody must be really sorry when they really know that they've been—well, I mean—you see what I mean, don't you?

V.: Ahem—perhaps—yes—probably you're right.

D.: Then everyone will go to Heaven.

V.: I hope so, Dimple. I sincerely hope so.

D.: But, Dad; what I really meant was that I want to go to Heaven to-day, now, at once, as soon as possible.

*The Rev. Veriwyse peers over his pince-nez with astonishment. Dimple is blooming with health and looks good for another seventy or eighty years more of life. His father is puzzled.*

V.: But what on earth for, Dimple?

D.: For nothing on earth, Dad. I want to see something in Heaven.

V.: Oh, but you can't see Heaven till you die, Dimple. And that won't be for a long time yet, I hope.

D.: Well, I want to die now, please—and then come back again.

V.: You can't do that. Once you're dead, you're dead. I told you that before, if you remember.

D.: But you told me that my soul will fly to Heaven when I'm dead. Why can't it fly back again—like any old nairyplane?

V.: Because God doesn't let it. He keeps all souls with Him in Heaven for ever and ever, once they get there.

D.: But s'posing I get tired of Heaven, Dad; will I never be able to go away to the seaside for a change?

V.: I'm afraid not—er, hrrmph! I mean—no you won't, Dimple. Besides, you're not likely to get tired of Heaven, because it's the most wonderful place on earth—er, ahem, I mean—it's the happiest place you could ever be in. You'll be happy as happy can be, all day long.

D.: And all night?

V.: There is no night in Heaven, Dimple. It's one long, glorious day.

D.: Gee! I'll get *frightfully* sleepy, Dad.

V.: No—not even that. You'll never get tired or sick or unhappy.

D.: Then please, my soul wants to go there right *now*.

V.: It's not for you to say that, Dimple. God determines the time when He wishes to call us to Him, and we must wait patiently till that time comes and make the best of our life here in the meanwhile.

D. : But if Heaven is all those things you said just now, what's the good of hanging about in this miserable hole?

V. : Hush, Dimple! You shouldn't speak like that of God's beautiful earth. Why, you're not unhappy, are you?

D. : N—no; but it isn't all beer and skittles here, is it, Dad?

V. : (*To himself*: Dear, dear! Where does the boy get these dreadfully vulgar phrases from.) You shouldn't say "beer and skittles," Dimple. It is not a very nice thing to say, you know.

D. : Well—it isn't all wine, women and song, then.

V. : Ha-ha, ahem, hrrmph—atishoo! (*To himself*: Tut, tut! I must control myself. This gets worse and worse.) Anyhow, Dimple, as long as it is God's will that we should go through our spiritual training here on earth, we should not be in a hurry to reach heaven before our time.

D. : Oh! So we're training for Heaven, Dad?

V. : Yes, Dimple.

D. : And does God make us pass an exam before we get in?

V. : No; of course not, Dimple.

D. : Then what's the use of training?

V. : Well, you see Dimple, it's this way. We're none of us perfect, are we?

D. : No—rather not! God made us.

V. : Wha—wha—*what* did you say?

D. : I said: "God made us." He did, didn't He?

V. : Er—hrrmph! Yes—er, yes—yes, of course. But He did not make our imperfections. They were made—er—they are due to—er—well, anyway, Dimple, my point is that God puts us in this world to prepare us for eternity, just as you will go to school to prepare you for your future career. Without some such opportunity for developing our spiritual personalities in accordance with God's cosmic plan, we should none of us be worthy of the inestimable glories of everlasting bliss, which is the preordained inheritance of all such as truly believe in Him . . .

D. : Go it, Dad! That's fine!

V. : Anyway, Dimple, you'll understand all about it when you're older.

*As we have seen from a previous dialogue, this is not the first time that Dimple has heard this remark. Alas, he never seems able to take it seriously. The smile, which spreads over his face on these occasions, invariably develops into a sly grin. When this grin gives place to a look of innocence, something is sure to happen.*

D. : Dad!

V. : Yes, Dimple.

D. : Are you going to say your prayers to-night?

V. : Of course, Dimple.

D. : Well, I want you to ask God something for me.

V. : Why don't you ask Him yourself, then?

D. : 'Cause I can't get a word out of Him edgeways ever, and I thought that you being a sort of processional priest—you know—

V. : Professional, you mean, Dimple.

D. : That's right. Well, I thought God might answer you more—you know—more quicker—like a nordin'ry person would.

V. : Perhaps I can answer the question myself.

D. : Oh! I never thought of that. Praps you can. Well, why is a piece of cheese better than Heaven?

*At this critical juncture the dinner-bell is heard to ring. The Rev. Verityse jumps up with alacrity. He holds a hand out to his son.*

V. : Now then, Dimple—there's the dinner-bell. Come along and wash your hands like a good boy.

D. : All right, Dad.

*He picks up two little donkeys from the floor and scowls at them. "You're a couple of asses," he*

*whispers, putting them into the Ark. He rises from the floor and takes his father's hand.*

D. : Do you know the answer, Dad?

V. : The answer to what? Oh, your childish question. No, I don't. It's a very foolish question anyhow, Dimple. Now, come along.

D. : Well, listen. Nothing can be better than Heaven, can it, Dad?

V. : No, I suppose not.

D. : And a piece of cheese is better than nothing, isn't it?

V. : I suppose so.

D. : Then obviously a piece of cheese must be better than Heaven—musn't it?

C. S. FRASER.

## The Book Shop.

IN 1920 Dr. Sigmund Freud was interviewed by a writer for the *Daily Herald*, and the subject matter of conversation was the effect of war on human progress. "Progress," said Freud, "consists in the growing rarity with which man returns to his primeval state." This is a very clear picture of the question, and it is outlined so definitely that it will easily be remembered. The Doctor continued, "When the Government points its finger at a certain group and declares, 'Here is an enemy!' then we may heave a sigh of relief and begin to lie, murder, rape, and plunder." He concluded: "The war proves that we absurdly overestimate mankind. Humanity has not fallen. It couldn't fall. It has never started to ascend the heights." This is a severe judgment, but the angle of vision is different from that of the theologian. It implies hope in humanity, and humanity will learn to trust in itself rather than listen to professional other-world fakirs. A reading of *War, Civilization and the Churches*, by Chapman Cohen, revived memories of those squalid times when Christian influences assisted humanity in returning to the primeval state. One of the few papers that sounded a warning note was the *Freethinker*; the consequences were seen at the time. We are now dealing with the effects. In August, 1914, the author wrote, "Even to win is to lose. The truth is that nations do not go to war because it (commercially) pays them, but because of misdirected ambitions and mistaken ideals, in other words, because of lack of intelligence and defective civilization." The book contains a selection of articles which appeared in the *Freethinker* during 1914-1918 and afterwards. They make good reading in the present, and I hope the book will have the good sale that it deserves. Mr. Edmund Blunden, in the *Nation and Athenæum*, provides the one bright spot in one of the dullest of weeklies, with an article under the title of "The World of Books." There is a lot of heart-searching taking place about the war at present; there are diverse reasons for war books, but, with few exceptions, the viewpoint of Mr. Chapman Cohen is ignored. Mr. Blunden, for whose poetry, I have the greatest admiration, writes: "High explosive smelt just as Victorian as sal volatile. The grandfather invested in armaments and died in bed; the grandson received, as it seemed, further dividends in No Man's Land, and in shell-shock hospitals, and in a life of acute miseries." It may be that the writer of these lines, at some time in his career, will be in a position to examine the Church's claim of being the repository of spiritual truths for the guidance of mankind. He is, I believe, a Protestant. Adhesion to Protestantism or Catholicism is a sort of indirect subsidy to any writer; it gives a jumping off ground with a new book, but I have no doubt that Mr. Blunden, whose position is established, can now dispense with such an advantage. And dispensing with it would put him in a position to say very clearly what he thinks about the contemptible history of all churches in the war that proved nothing but the futility of it.

An attachment to the foregoing paragraph, although not entirely in the world of books, is an Irish Stew of

muddy mindedness that will be hard to beat. In the *Daily Telegraph*, September 17, Stephen H. Foot, D.S.O., M.A., contributes one of a series of articles on "The Schoolboy of To-day." This contribution is the most damning of indictments of war that has come to light; it is so apparent that it will be missed by many. Mr. Foot states that the public school system must be adapted to new types for "What has happened? The answer is simple enough. We are now receiving into public schools the boys born in 1916, 1917, and 1918, years of the blackest anxiety which England has ever known, years of under-nourishment of mother and child, years of mental anguish, and sometimes of despair, in the homes where these boys were born." As though to underline the above, he states further on: "But what are the public schools going to do about it? Are they to take the line that many of these boys are unfitted for public school life, and refuse to admit them? . . . There could be nothing worse than to label these boys as queer, different from the rest, and unable to take their places in the schools to which their fathers went before them." Is the question then so serious? Undoubtedly it is, for it is given full publicity in a respectable daily that would not dare to do anything but say boo to anything unorthodox or savouring of English commonsense. It was well known during air-raids in the country that there were premature births and many miscarriages. It was also well known that money would be the least important item to be paid for the period of madness where reason showed its face at its peril. The *Daily Telegraph*, with a fitting frame for the picture—even in the next column to Mr. Foot's article, gives a leaderette on the information that our own Royal Air Force lacks up-to-date equipment. This paragraph is concluded by asking what kind of boys will be presented to Public Schools in 1946, and in the name of reason, asking also if there is not sufficient mule sense in the intellectual life of the nation to enable it to add two and two together.

Mr. Thornton Wilder, the author of *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*, has again given the literary world a perfect example of beautiful prose in his latest novel, *The Woman of Andros*. Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd. 6s. net. This time he has gone to Terence for a part of his material, in which a courtesan Chrysis is the central character. There is a calm nobility and elevation of spirit in the style of Mr. Wilder that one wishes it were more in evidence in the general reading matter that operates ultimately on life and ideas. Ideas govern life, and when the ruck of modern authors do not insult the readers, they treat them as Gadarene swine. And for that reason, the scrupulous reader, who refuses to eat anything and everything that is put before him, goes again to the classics or the authors that time cannot kill. In a few chapters, Mr. Wilder succeeds in bringing the reader right up to that door, for which Omar could find no key. When Chrysis is dying Pamphilus, her admirer, is alone with her. This scene is a masterpiece of art; each one utters the most commonplace thoughts, but at the same time, we are given their inmost meditations on the parting that is soon to be made. Mr. Wilder scatters beautiful thoughts through his book, and the eye and hand of the artist create for them a beautiful setting. He is, in my opinion, the forerunner of that Utopian day, when the brotherhood of man will be a reality, and not what it is now—a mere empty mumbling of words. Faith towards this end has had free rein for two thousand years, and failed, and although the author looks towards the Holy Land for a solution to make the obscure clear, I would prefer the strength and clarity of his own writings to bring men home to themselves. Life is an inn, so Dryden wrote; brawling and clamour while we abide in it, or even fasting and praying, will not alter our destination. It would be better to try and understand our fleeting habitation. And writers with the purity and serenity of Mr. Wilder, will at least pose the question in a manner that would justify the existence of a civilization. Time will be well spent by my readers in a careful examination of this novel, which has also the depth of good essays, and it will stand the best test of all—reading again.

C-DE-B.

## Ruminations.

THERE is truth as well as beauty in the lines:—

Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage;  
Minds innocent and quiet take  
That for an hermitage—

While for another mind with full material freedom 'mid Summer scenes and skies, it may be there is no freedom and that "Himself is his own dungeon; that he has even builded his own prison walls and feels his delivery impossible, yet, as the limed soul, still struggles to be free." One is moralizing, preaching it may be, but one is writing to the *Freethinker*, not to our Great Free Press, which so evades the direct question and things that matter most; our Christian Press, under the shadow of the Christian Conscience, so notoriously of little faith! A Press, with all due respect to its better qualities, which is, as Morley said—"A conspiracy for the discussion of great questions on a low level." So one writes to the *Freethinker* to breathe a purer air, to emancipate the mind, even selfishly, as a moral and intellectual exercise, not in fetish fear and devotion, for fame, if you like—that phantom of the mind that allures the living and leaves the dead indifferent! Even so it seems a duty owing to one's living self—that lonely captive struggling to be wise and good and free as far as may be under the penalty of Adam which Leopardi so well named—Calamities.

One could go further and dig deeper; but not too far, not too deep; nor need one soar too high; for while one writes and ponders time is on the wing, and "space" is filling up. Suffice it now and then the shorter ramble and rumination on foot or wheel, the simpler muse and stocktaking, the wholesome, helpful introspection suggested by a Summer Scene, with memories and hopes of Summers past and future, and more heroic adventures till the final Autumn and the Fall.

COILA.

## National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 26, 1930.  
THE President, Mr. Chapman Cohen, in the chair.

Also present, Messrs. Quinton, Gorniot, Moss, Clifton, Silvester, LeMaine, A. C. Rosetti, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., Mrs. Venton, Miss Kough, and the Secretary

Several apologies for absence were read.

Minutes of previous meeting read and accepted. Financial Statement presented.

New members were admitted to North London, South London, West London, Bethnal Green, West Ham, Bradford, Birmingham Branches and the Parent Society.

Reports and details concerning lectures received from Burnley, Darlington, Liverpool, Birmingham and West Ham.

Correspondence from Glasgow, Paisley, West London, Bradford, Newcastle, North London, and Manchester dealt with and the Secretary instructed.

Report of meeting of London and Provincial secretaries, was read.

Mr. L. Ebury was elected to the Executive as representing the North London area.

Mr. A. C. Rosetti was elected to the Benevolent Fund Committee.

A number of minor items were dealt with and the meeting closed.

R. H. ROSETTI,  
General Secretary.

## WAR AND HUMAN NATURE.

One of the mistakes the friends of peace sometimes make is to assume that, not only is war itself evil, but that all the motives which lead to it are evil.

But plainly motives for which men give their lives cannot be wholly evil. Nothing visibly and plainly wrong is likely to threaten mankind, because men would turn from it.

It is when wrong comes to be mixed with right, or to masquerade as right, that we are in the greatest danger of going astray.—Norman Angell.

## Society News.

DURING the week a return visit was made to Cliviyer, where there was such a storm when last we lectured there. The younger element of the population came round as though expecting a repetition of the rowdiness, but in spite of the threat previously made to kick us out of the village if we ventured there again, we had a really good hearing. The rather hysterical ladies who made the trouble last time were absent, which perhaps accounts for the change for the better in the conduct of our meeting. At Preston, on Sunday, we were able to clear up a few misconceptions which were broadcast in a local newspaper after our last visit. In the evening we had a big audience, which followed the address with the closest attention. Questions were answered at the close. The remainder of the week's meetings passed off well.

J.C.

WITH the exception of one meeting held in Glasgow, Mr. G. Whitehead's concluding week in Scotland was spent at Paisley, where a very enthusiastic branch of young men, led by Mr. Robert White, the Secretary, made propaganda pleasant. The meeting at Glasgow finishing the series there, was the best of the lot. We led off at Paisley with a very fine meeting on Gaol Square, the questions being quite sympathetic. For the rest of the week, after being removed by the police from a pitch at the Abbey Close, we held forth about 100 yards away, and succeeded in attracting good audiences every evening. We finished on the Friday with quite an enthusiastic gathering in spite of the rather cold weather. Judging by these meetings Paisley is ready for Secularism, for there was no sting in the opposition on any occasion.—G.W.

## Obituary.

ROSINA LOUISA ANGELL.

ON Wednesday, September 24 the remains of Rosina Louisa Angell, wife of Mr. W. R. Angell, of Hunstanton, was cremated at Golders Green Crematorium. Cerebral hemorrhage was the immediate cause of death after a period of suffering. Her intelligence responded to the Freethought views of her husband, and gradually her early spiritual beliefs gave way to the dictates of her reason. She became a Freethinker, and remained such until her death at sixty-five years of age. To the relatives we offer sincere sympathy. A Secular service was read by Mr. R. H. Rosetti.

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## SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

## LONDON.

## OUTDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road, opposite Walham Green Church): Every Saturday at 7.30.—Various speakers.

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.—Friday, October 3, at Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, at 8.0, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Wednesday, October 8, at Ruschcroft Road, Brixton, at 8.0, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Friday, October 10, at Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, at 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S.—Blackberry Ramble. Book to Upminster, train 9.45 a.m. from Fenchurch Street, Plaistow 10.5, thence all stations to Upminster. Lunch to be carried. Tea arranged at the Headley Arms, Great Warley at 4.30. All Freethinkers and friends welcomed.

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

## INDOOR.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 59 Finchley Road, N.W.8, near Marlborough Road, Station): 11.15, Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker, "The Cultural Chaos of To-day."

HIGHGATE DEBATING SOCIETY (The Winchester Hotel, Archway Road, Highgate, N.): Wednesday, October 8, at 7.45. Debate—"Is Materialism Sound?" Affir.: Mr. T. F. Palmer; Neg.: Mr. T. Newton.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Public Hall, Clapham Road): 7.15, Mr. F. P. Corrigan, President South London Branch—"Such Stuff as Dreams are made of."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, C. E. M. Joad, B.A., "The Freedom of the Mind."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree, Euston Road, N.W.1): Thursday, October 9, at 101 Tottenham Court Road, Social and Dance, 7.30 to 11.30. Admission 1s. 3d.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square): 7.30, Mr. Joseph McCabe—"The Twilight of the Gods."

## COUNTRY.

## INDOOR.

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley): 2.30, "Ghosts." Speaker, Mr. Jack Clayton.

FAILSWORTH SECULAR SCHOOL, Pole Lane, Failsworth—Autumn Festival, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, 2.45, "Where are the Gods?" 6.30, "What is the use of Science?"

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, 41 Islington, Liverpool): 7.0, Mr. Chapman Cohen—"The Reign of the Gods." (The second lecture in the course on "Man and God.") Doors open at 6.30. Reserved seats 1s. Current Freethinkers will be on sale.

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