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

Views and Opinions.

What is Religion ?

WHEN the great Professor T. H. Huxley discovered that his Atheism might escape detection if he called it by another name he, rather incautiously explained that as every other fox in the theological run had a tail he did not like to appear minus a caudal appendage, so he invented the name "Agnostic." This was an interesting piece of self-revelation, and indicated that for the moment the Freudian censor was off-guard. Nearly fifty years later, his grandson, Professor Julian Huxley with, if possible, less justification, as an apology for not having a real religion offers the world a new religion, and a God who whatever he, or it, is, certainly is not a God. The device will not entrap anyone who is really religious, although it may diminish their hostility. Superstition is always keen to detect even an implied compliment paid it by sense. But those who adopt it will probably be left as mentally confused as those who followed the first Huxley into the twilight world of half-terms and unmeaning phrases.

In some respects Professor Julian Huxley's lecture* bears the mark of one who plunges into subjects with which he has but a very slight acquaintance. I do not know, for example, what a psychologist, or even a philosophical scientist would make of such an expression as the following:—

For, man in virtue of his fundamental and unique biological property of possessing general ideas . . .

It is quite probable that Professor Huxley means only that man is a biological unit from which develop general ideas, but that is not quite the same thing as making ideas a biological property. Ideas clearly belong to a category quite distinct from that of biology,

* Science, Religion and Human Nature.

and are therefore no more a biological property than they are a chemical property or a physical property. This is, of course, saying no more than is indicated by elementary scientific method, nor do I think Professor Huxley would have made such an unscientific statement had his mind not been filled with the desire to create a new religion.

How, again, are we to understand the following:—

Gods are more various than men; and many other ingredients beyond those taken from human nature enter into their composition.

What are the other ingredients? What other ingredients can there be? The only indication we have is this:—

It will be found that in the manufacture of a divinity the concrete object or person and its qualities have almost always been blended with a further ingredient—the idea of influences, some straightforward and obvious, others mysterious and incalculable, affecting human destiny and welfare.

But this is only saying that the way in which the God may act is not precisely calculable by man. Neither does the individual member of a tribe know exactly how the leader of a tribe will act on every occasion. Suppose one were to say, "There is more in Mr. Lloyd George than ordinary human nature, because what he will do is not always calculable." (I leave out the word "mysterious" because that is only another word for incalculable). The reply would be that this does not prove *more* than human nature, but only that our knowledge of human nature is not precise enough for minute prediction, and shows that Lloyd George is in line with the rest of us. The attitude of primitive man towards his God is exactly his attitude towards a powerful ruler. How otherwise could he act? Where else could he get the qualities of his God save from the human, or animal, nature around him? One can only explain Professor Huxley's statements on the hypothesis of a realization that if one is to establish anything in the name of a religion there be something that is either nonsensical or meaningless or both. The final touch to the absurdity of the statement is given towards the end of his lecture, when he says, "God, in any but a purely philosophical, and one is almost tempted to say a Pickwickian, sense turns out to be a product of a human mind." I suppose it is more difficult to be consistent in nonsense than it is in sense, because sense carries its own inherent coherence and nonsense is naturally incoherent. But after having proved to his own satisfaction that the idea of God contains more than is in human nature—a confession that should send away rejoicing every Fundamentalist in the country, we are told that it is entirely a product of the human mind. If he had said that at the opening of his lecture, and followed it, it would have made many things clear to him that at present are not. But that would have led him to give a com-

pletely Atheistic account of things, and in the land of ancient taboos that is not done.

I will give only one other example of this popular method of taking care that whenever an established superstition is attacked, another quite as stupid is put in its place. Professor Huxley says:—

The mysticism of some modern philosophers is due to a reaction against the aridity of a world without values, against the complacent over-simplification of science or of materialistic philosophy.

This is veritably of the cant of the new "mysticism." What is a world without values? Surely Professor Huxley is not back to the belief that ethical and intellectual values belong to the non-human, or at most non-animal world. If he is, then he is right back in the world of primitive superstition, out of which he thinks he has raised himself. But if he does not mean that, if he agrees that human values—goodness, truth, beauty—belong to the world of human values, then the belief in God simply has nothing whatever to do with "value." That remains exactly where it was. I should dearly like to hear Professor Huxley explain just what he does mean. I am quite sure that any explanation would involve either a simple supernaturalism, a pure nihilism, or—terrible word—materialism. For that reason I do not think we shall get a detailed explanation. Having said something that may mean nothing or anything, it is probable that Professor Huxley thinks his contribution to a new religion is quite in order.

* * *

Men and Religion.

There are other things on the same line with which I might deal, but I prefer now to turn to Professor Huxley's treatment of religion. Quite rightly we are told that there is no religious instinct, "any more than there is a legal instinct or a bridge building instinct." At last we feel that we are on sound ground, but we are disillusioned with a reminder that:—

What does exist, apparently in all or the great majority of our species, is a capacity for feeling religious emotion in a variety of circumstances, but when the emotion is aroused the religious impulse thus generated does not express itself in a fixed or limited repertory of action, as is the case with the genuine instinct such as the comb-building instinct of a bee-hive, or the mating instinct of a peacock, but can clothe itself in a protean multiplicity of rite and belief.

On what ground do we assert a religious impulse and a religious emotion while denying a religious instinct? There are no such things any more, to paraphrase Professor Huxley's own language, than there is a legal emotion or a bridge-building impulse. Human emotions may be expressed in a religious or in other forms. Human impulses may be expended in the service of religion or of Atheism, and that is all. What remains is a study of the determination of the direction of impulse or in the form of emotion in terms of the sociological environment. It is astonishing that such gross contradictions can be found within the limits of the same paragraph.

A similar confusion meets us with regard to the origin of magic and religion. The principle of magic is that of getting things done by a method of coercing the forces around man, whether pictured as animate or inanimate, by formulæ or incantation. Religion is held to consist in man attempting to induce definitely personal and intelligent beings controlling nature by petition or worship. Very much has been written to show that magic preceded religion, and belief in its efficacy broke down when man realized how powerless he was,

and so fell back on the religious plan, or whether religion came first and magic began when a growing scientific knowledge taught man that natural forces and even governing spiritual beings could be constrained to act in this or that manner. The order of development does not concern us here. My opinion, however, is that the two things are never so distinct as some anthropologists would have us believe. But it is curious to find Professor Huxley having definitely separated magic from religion, and placed magic first, to find him on the next page saying, "The other necessary condition for existence of belief in magic is the confused intuitive animism characteristic of many young children and most primitive tribes." "Intuitive" is a damnably question-begging word, but animism is clearly religious, and if this is a necessary ingredient in magic, then magic does not precede religion, it is contemporary with it. I am quite sure that Professor Huxley would not reason in his biological work as he does when he is pleading for a new religion. But then in his biological work he is content to take the facts as they are and make the best of them. At present he appears to have started with the notion that one must have some religion, or at least one must not appear in public without one, and so misreads the facts to get a predetermined conclusion.

* * *

A Plea for Frankness.

I leave, till next week, the examination of what Professor Huxley takes to be the essence of religion, and the manner in which he imagines it will apply to the Society of the future. I have written as I have because the older I grow the more convinced I am that what the world needs to-day is not so much liberal thinking as sound thinking. Everyone I meet who is not avowedly and unmistakably religious tells me they are convinced that Freethought has grown enormously. So, in the sense of disbelief in religion it has. In other respects the present position in the world of Freethought is what it was in the days of Richard Carlile or Bradlaugh or Foote. There is a minority of unbelievers who know just where they are, and see to it that the rest of the world know where they stand, and there is a large majority of disbelievers who take care that the rest of the world does not know where they are, but spend their time in discovering some good in religion, or in inventing names that will disguise from the world just how much they disbelieve. And the world of believers, finding this homage paid to their beliefs by those who say they do not share them, feel their superstitions strengthened by the conduct of unbelievers. In politics, in letters, in science, in philosophy one can put one's hands on scores of men whom we know to be Freethinkers. In private they will say they are Atheists. But get them on the platform or in the press and they are—what? You may choose any half a dozen names to describe them then, it will certainly not be Atheist or even the less objectionable term Freethinker.

Is it any wonder that when the actual tussle comes, as with such a question as the repeal of the blasphemy laws or the abolition of religious teaching in the schools, Christians are not to be moved from their position and are inclined to treat Freethinkers with contempt. Candidly, many of them deserve the contempt they get. It was well said that the Christian Church never ceased to burn heretics because it felt it was the wrong thing to do. It gave up that policy when heretics made it plain that they were strong enough to resist the roasting. If Freethinkers want justice in this Christian country, they must show them they are strong enough to demand it. But they will not get it while they spend their time in

providing Christians with assumed proofs for the necessity of some sort of a religion. Quite naturally the Christian concludes that if some religion is necessary and inevitable, he might as well stick to the one he has already as burden himself with a new one.

At one of my lectures a speaker, who said he quite agreed with all I had said, remarked that he was looking forward to a time when Christians and Free-thinkers would live together on terms of brotherhood. I replied that I did not share his ambition. I was working towards a time when there would not be any Christians to live with on any terms whatsoever.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Heine the Arch-Heretic.

"The spirit of the world
Beholding the absurdity of men—
Their vaunts, their feats—let a sardonic smile
For one short moment wander o'er his lips.
That smile was Heine."—*Matthew Arnold.*

HEINE'S genius almost defies analysis. He is, and must remain, a problem. Multifarious, luminous, brilliant, he is like a diamond giving light from a hundred facets. To many he appears as a plumed knight in shining armour tilting against the enemies of humanity; but it seems well-nigh impossible to reach the roots of the man's nature. He is a bundle of contradictions. A Jew, whose sympathies were both French and German; a convert without zeal; a model of resignation yet irreligious, a poet living amid the sternest conditions of prose; a comedian whose life was a tragedy.

In one vivid personality, Heine gathers all those influences of his time which are the live forces of today. So brilliant is he that he disputes the centre of the stage with the great Goethe, who was a classic in his own lifetime, and a prophet honoured in his own country. Such a nature was bound to be misunderstood. Carlyle called him a "blackguard," Kingsley thought him "a wicked man." Thackeray, on the other hand, realized his "great genius," and Matthew Arnold hailed him as the mouthpiece of his stormy generation.

These varying estimates are typical of the general attitude. He kindled enthusiasm or roused repulsion wherever he was read. If we would seek a comparison wherever he was read. If we would seek a comparison, we may find it in Voltaire. Both men championed Liberty, and produced the deepest effects on their contemporaries, and left immortal legacies to posterity. The writings of both ring with a defiant note against "the lie at the lips of the priest."

Heine was born at a great crisis in European history. The long and terrible period during which the vampires of Church and State had sucked away the life-blood of the world was ending rapidly, and before his tenth year little Heine had lived through and seen, great events. It was the day of Napoleon, and, as Heine puts it, "all boundaries were dislocated." As a boy, he found it hard to learn Latin declensions, which he was sure the Romans never did, "for if they had first to learn Latin, they never would have had time to conquer the world." Young Heine was so troubled that he broke into heterodox prayer, "O thou poor, once-persecuted God, do help me, if possible, to keep the irregular verbs in my head."

One memorable day the impressionable boy saw Napoleon ride through Dusseldorf on his famous white horse, and he never lost the glamour cast over him by the great soldier. Republican as he afterwards became, Heine always admired Napoleon.

Nor is this to be wondered at, for the Code Napoleon, to the Jewish race in particular, was a charter of freedom from the ghastly ghettos of the Middle Ages to the rights of free-born citizens, and the Jews hailed the Emperor as their deliverer and protector.

A precocious child, Heine loved reading. His favourite authors were brave old Cervantes and witty Jonathan Swift, and he revelled in *Don Quixote* and *Gulliver's Travels*. At the age of seventeen, a rich uncle at Hamburg tried in vain to induce him to choose a business career. It was useless, for the young idealist regarded money-grubbing as beneath contempt. Later he studied law, but forsook legal matters for the study of Hegel. Years afterwards he referred, caustically, to this period as that in which he "herded swine with the Hegelians."

He broke out into verse, and with the publication of his first volume of poems began to take his true place. He still talked of becoming a lawyer, but his thought were far from "wise saws and modern instances." For instance, he wrote:—

Red life boils in my veins. Every woman is to me the gift of a world. I hear a thousand nightingales. I could eat all the elephants of Hindustan, and pick my teeth with the spire of Strasburg Cathedral. Life is the greatest of blessings."

His energies were devoted to writing, and not to pleading. Instead of cultivating his clients he wrote his *Travel Pictures*, a book so full of word-magic, that it showed Heine as great an artist in prose as in verse. Its irony was so mordant, so disrespectful, that it was at once placed on the Index Expurgatorius. In *The Romantic School* he dipped his pen in vitriol and attacked some of his fellow-poets. His name was on every tongue, in praise or blame.

It was not to be roses all the way. His health failed, and there came an inevitable stage in which the poet could no longer:—

"Sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neera's hair."

But when the sad, bad days arrived, he never complained. For seven long years prior to his death, he lay bent and solitary on a "mattress-grave," his back bent, his legs paralysed, his hands powerless, his sight failing. His ungrudging nature found excuses for his friends' desertion of his sick-room in the reflection that he was "unconsciously long a-dying." As Matthew Arnold sings in his fine dirge on his brother-poet:—

"Oh! not little, when pain
Is most quelling, and man
Easily quelled, and the fine
Temper of genius so soon
Thrills at each smart, is the praise
Not to have yielded to pain."

"God's satire weighs heavily upon me," whispers Heine himself:—

The Great Author of the Universe, the Aristophanes of Heaven, was bent on demonstrating with crushing force to me, the little earthly so-called German Aristophanes, how my weightiest sarcasms are only pitiful attempts at jesting in comparison with His, and how miserably I am beneath Him in humour, in colossal mockery.

This untameable humorist kept his most wonderful jest for the last. "God will forgive me," he murmured, "it is his trade."

Heine, after all, was a real poet. He was at his best in verse, and his melodies survive translation into an alien tongue. Witness Charles Leland's delightful renderings in English. The cadences are still caressingly tender, still provoking, still a wonder, showing the poet's moods brightly robed in a great procession.

Although he sometimes "sighed for Lebanon,"

Heine was, intellectually, a Freethinker, and a sturdy one. He hated priestcraft with every drop of his blood. He never wearied of venting scorn on the "molly-coddle homœopathic soul-doctors, who pour the thousandth part of a pint of reason into a gallon of morals, and send people to sleep with it on Sundays." He loathed that "abortion called State religion, that monster born of the intrigue between temporal and spiritual power." Nor was he "over-partial to anthropomorphism." The bolts of his unerring irony are often directed towards the most sacred characters in the Christian mythology. In an oft-quoted passage he says that the Christian God is dying, and, in a daring figure of speech, suggests the administration to him of the last sacraments of that church. On another occasion he suggests that the parvenu God of the Christians is angry with Israel for reminding him of his former obscure national relations. In the lambent flames of his sardonic humour he searched everything that the Christian counts dearest. Writing of the famous "Critique of Pure Reason," he says: "Immanuel Kant has pursued the path of inexorable philosophy; he has stormed heaven, and put the whole garrison to the edge of the sword."

Even the idea of immortality did not escape his sharp satire. He suggests, mockingly, that the notion of living for ever must have first occurred to some young lover in the arms of his mistress, or to some worthy citizen sipping his beer in the cool of a perfect summer evening. Heine's arrows were brightly plumed but they reached their mark. "Unless wit is based on seriousness," he tells us, "it is but a sneeze of the reason."

As a poet Heine's fame has attained to that height in which praise has become superfluous; but in the character of iconoclast he has a yet higher and more lasting claim on the attention of Freethinkers. Heine himself said he knew not if he were worthy of a laurel-wreath, but, he added proudly, "lay on my coffin a sword, for I was a brave soldier in the war of the Liberation of Humanity." No one will deny the laurel-wreath to so great a poet, and assuredly to Heinrich Heine belongs the sword of a valiant soldier of Liberty.

MIMNERMUS.

Christ!

I've often thought it very odd
The English words that rhyme with God.
A C comes first, it stands for cod
A fishy thing—but isn't God?
And then there's N. Man's weekly nod
While parsons sermonize on God.
And Q, of course with U, is quod
For those who don't believe in God.
R is a weapon called a rod
Used often in the Book of God.
And so to S, the last, a sod.
A goodly ending—thank you, God.

Perhaps that's why priests call on Gard?
The rhymes to that are rather hard.
While others calling on the Lord
Prefer to call to "Oh my Gawd!"
But really it is very odd
An English alphabet of God.

D.M.

We know God easily, provided we do not constrain ourselves to define him.—Joubert.

Sinner, Theologian, Saint.

"THE greatest of the Latin Fathers" has figured prominently in our religious press during the past two months. But the long and eulogistic accounts of him that have appeared in both Roman Catholic and Protestant publications, like nearly everything that apologists of Christianity say in regard to their early saints and Fathers, need to be considerably supplemented if they are to convey a complete picture.

Naturally, St. Augustine's *Confessions*, which should certainly be read by anyone, Christian or Freethinker, interested in the psychology of what is called "conversion," have furnished the details by which the journalists to whom I have just referred prove the power of the "everlasting Gospel," to make a great saint out of a great sinner. They are details that belong to a particular class of "religious experiences," and have a strange attraction for certain types of personality. Even in our own day we have seen a good deal of revival meetings, testimonies, and men and women haunted by a sense of sin. The experiences are as old as the oldest rites of initiation and purification. There are many stories of conversions in Christian literature, and some of them bring the morality of a system based on redemption and future salvation into rather unpleasant clearness. But there is about St. Augustine's *Confessions* an intensity of purpose that makes them a thing apart in religious biography. Though he calls himself "the vilest slave of evil passions," probably he was not much worse at any period of his life than the average youth of his time. But self-reproach, morbid meditation, and haunting memories of the past are all necessary elements in enhancing the efficacy of the faith. In this way some exaggeration of the weaknesses of men like Augustine makes them real assets for the professional soul-saver, whereas the least defect, or supposed defect, in a Pagan thinker places him on a comparatively low level at once. If anyone doubts this statement let him read Brace's *Gesta Christi*, Gulick's *Growth of the Kingdom of God*, and other books of the kind. Their name is legion. Plato, in his ideal state, advocates a community of wives, and this puts him quite out of court as a moral guide. Augustine cast off his first faithful companion, the mother of his son, but as he afterwards repented, his conduct only proved how truly Christianity is "the religion of all times and places." By the way, it is interesting to note how frequently Newman, whose *Apologia* is a classic in the modern literature of religious self-revelation, is called a *pervert* by those who disapprove his change over to Rome.

Augustine's theology and his views on ecclesiastical policy played an important part in the interpretation of the faith, and in the development of orthodox authority. This part certainly tended to check the spirit of free inquiry, and to direct intellectual activities into the barren ruts of the Donatist and Pelagian controversies. It did something more. It strengthened the hands of the men who claimed the authority of Christ for the most truculent policy of intolerance and persecution that ever cast a shadow over Europe. Professor Alexander Allen says:—

The Augustinian theology made possible the rise of the papacy. Leo the Great, in the generation after Augustine, put forth the claim for the authority of the Roman see which was never afterward relaxed, and which saw its realization in the imperial authority over Christendom of Hildebrand and Innocent III (*The Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 4.)

In several of his letters Augustine supports, on

principle, the forcible suppression of heretical views. In particular, in Epistle 93, he urges upon officials and men of influence, not only the lawfulness but the duty of increasing their zeal in the enforcement of the penal laws against heresy. Such facts as these are, of course, not mentioned in the present anniversary eulogies.

Other aspects of Augustine's theology, showing how it reflected some of the crassest superstitious beliefs of his time, it is impossible for me to deal with here. Suffice it to say that his theory of the atonement was that the devil, who had a just claim against the human race on account of sin, over-reached himself by slaying the sinless Christ. This revolting theory of a ransom to the devil appears also in Irenæus and Origen, and at one time made a powerful appeal to the popular imagination. Tacitus thought that almost anything "foul and shameful" in the way of a new religion would assuredly drift to the Rome of his day. Suetonius, writing in the second century of our era, described Christianity as "a new and baneful superstition," and Christians are rather fond of reading all statements of the kind solely in the light of the subsequent growth of the power and influence of the Church. It is well that they should survey their inheritance closely, especially in an age when they find that the evolution theory only strengthens their faith. They may yet find that, besides the atonement, many other conceptions and ceremonies associated with their religion really "wear the mark of the beast."

What has been the practical effect, on the life of Europe and the world, of the total work and activities of the Church's multitude of saints? After all, some renunciations are not so hard to make. Neither Augustine's early deviations from rectitude, nor his later visions matter much to-day. But there are other things that do matter. I have mentioned the saint's belief in the right of his Church to coerce the intractable. I will only add that some of the most austere monastic orders were named after him, and that their rule of life was based upon sermons attributed to him. We know that in his time the monastic life was recognized as an integral part of the Church's system. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, even in England, the idea that men "could best fulfil God's purpose by leaving the unmanageable and uncontrollable world to follow its own way," had a strong hold on the religious life. The results are too well known to need any special reference here. Men and women all over Europe to-day, striving to find themselves at home in a world which, for religious reasons, they were once asked to abandon, are still hampered by the remnants of the ancient creeds, and the ecclesiastical organization which has traditionally maintained and propagated them. In the meantime, however, we are assured that there is in England a revival of the Latinized Christianity whose authority Saint Augustine did so much to consolidate.

A. D. McLAREN.

In natural philosophy I am a decided Materialist . . . but I do not profess to know what matter is in itself . . . I wait for the men of science to tell me . . . But whatever matter may be, I call it matter boldly as I call my acquaintances, Smith and Jones, without knowing their secrets.—George Santayana.

The severest critics are always those who have either never attempted or who have failed in original composition.—Hazlitt.

The Worship of The Virgin Mary

THERE is nothing like knowing a religion for enabling one to dispense with its ministrations and consolations. In fact, the more one knows a religion the more one desires to have as little as possible to do with it, especially on the practical side of life.

Unfortunately, most Roman Catholics do not try to understand their religion, and it is not in the interests of those in high places within the Church to enlighten the lay members. This has to be done by outsiders if it is done at all. That enlightenment concerning the various doctrines of Roman Catholicism is sadly needed cannot be doubted by any outsider who takes the teachings concerning the Virgin Mary as a specimen.

There can be little doubt that the majority of Roman Catholics believe that the doctrines taught about the Virgin Mary are entirely Christian, and that the worship of the Mother of God or mother of the saviour of mankind would have been quite unknown if it had not been introduced by Christianity. Yet it is admitted by approved Catholic writers that Jesus was not the only saviour to be born of a virgin.

In the early pages of *The History of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God*, by the Abbe Orsini, it is admitted that the idea of a virgin-born saviour of mankind or leader of men, was common in ancient times. It was to be found in Thibet, in Japan, in China, in Egypt and in Babylon.

The Lamas claimed Buddha to have been born of a virgin; while Lao-Tseu became "incarnate in the womb of a virgin, black, marvellous, and beautiful as jasper."

The Abbe Orsini is so impressed by the latter miracle that he has the words "marvellous and beautiful as jasper" printed in italics.

In his eagerness to show how widespread was the belief in a virgin birth, the good priest remarks, "let all the scattered fragments of these mutilated creeds be collected together, and we shall reconstruct, in almost all its details, the history of the Blessed Virgin and of Christ. The Blessed Virgin notwithstanding the royal blood which circulates in her veins, is of an obscure condition, like the mother of Zoroaster; like her also, she receives the visit of an angel bearing a message from heaven." p. 5.

It is not, of course, admitted to the Roman Catholic reader, by the Abbe Orsini, that the story of the Blessed Virgin is the same as the other stories of the virgin mothers of gods and great teachers, in the sense of being a product of the early mind of man. He has no desire to let his Catholic brethren see that the so-called History of the Blessed Virgin is entirely mythical, like the rest of the virgin stories. His object is to prepare the mind of the average Catholic in case he should meet with a non-Catholic work on mythology, and therein find the virgin mother idea treated as belonging to man's thought in an early age.

Hence the Catholic reader is led to believe that all the old "scattered fragments of these mutilated creeds" form a kind of divine fore-glimpse of the wonderful Roman Catholic doctrine which a kind and loving god was to send for the salvation of mankind, after a few millions had already been damned. Why the real revelation could not be given in time to save everyone is, as usual, not explained.

The Abbe Orsini is so bland in making comparisons between Catholic teaching and ancient mythology that he even compares the birth, life-work, and ascension of Jesus with the myth told by the savage hordes of Paraguay, about the son of a virgin who, after his life of "working extraordinary miracles, raised him-

self in the air one day, in the presence of his disciples, and transformed himself into a sun." p. 5.

The Abbe Orsini says in fact, "our divine Saviour lives in the midst of the poor classes, like the son of the Chinese goddess; angels and shepherds come to pay him homage, as was done to Cirishna on the very night of his birth; then after stilling the tempests, walking on the waters, casting out devils, and raising the dead to life, he achieves his triumphant ascension in presence of 500 disciples, whose eyes, all dazzled, lose sight of him in a cloud, precisely as related by the savage hordes of Paraguay." p. 5-6.

This is an admission that the ideas of a virgin mother and of a saviour-god are of human, and not of divine origin. Yet the Catholic reader fails to see the fact, owing to his habit of accepting any assertion made by the Church. Consequently the Abbe Orsini can "give the game away" in one sentence and, in another, proceed to assure the reader that there is something unique, something wonderful, something entirely necessary to the salvation of the believer in the Catholic doctrine of the Virgin Mary.

While claiming that veneration for the Virgin Mary has existed from early times, Roman Catholic divines are forced to admit that the teaching of the Church, on this subject, has not always been consistent and decided.

This is especially so with regard to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.

The devout Abbe Orsini says, "The doctrine of the immaculate conception had been banished from the pulpit and schools for a long space of time, when certain divines, who had been convinced that this belief came down from the highest sources of Christianity, undertook to revive it." p. 36.

Resulting from this revival of the claims of the Virgin's mother, there was a great deal of theological controversy with the usual exhibition of religious ill-feeling on the part of fellow Christians. The Church was for a long time incapable of making up her mind on the question, in spite of its importance to mankind as a means to salvation, and God failed to send a revelation to settle the matter, and put an end to the disputes.

Doubtless it was important that the Holy Church should wait until there was no uncertainty that it would be profitable to say that the Virgin really was born without sin.

At the end of the chapter dealing with the discussions, bulls, and decrees concerning the question of the Immaculate Conception, the translator of Abbe Orsini's *History of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of God*, adds the following note:—

"The foregoing chapter was written by the author, before the ever memorable 8th of December, 1854, when it was solemnly defined by the infallibility of the Catholic Church, that 'it is a Dogma of Faith that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace of God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved, exempt from all stain of original sin.'" p. 44.

No explanation as to why the infallible Church was unable to make up her mind as to what she should teach, on this point, for hundreds of years, is given, by either author or translator. It is taken for granted that the mental training to which the Roman Catholic is subjected will have made it impossible for him to see the farce of the infallibility of the Catholic Church, or the fact of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception being as futile as any other religious doctrine; and that it is only of importance to the Catholic Church as an emotional power which en-

ables her the more effectually to subjugate her people, and keep them in mental bondage.

One Catholic writer says that the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary "although only solemnly defined and proclaimed an article of Faith by Pius 9th, on the 8th December, 1854, has ever been the belief of the Church." p. 109, *Students' Catholic Doctrine*, Charles Hart, B.A.

Yet this writer goes on to say that this doctrine was only implicitly contained in the Church's teaching of the absolute purity and sinlessness of Mary, and that certain theologians and doctors of divinity held contrary opinions before the Church made an explicit declaration on the subject.

Just as the Protestant theologian indulges in mental twisting with regard to the Bible as the complete "Word of God," given once and for all, so does the Roman Catholic theologian fool the faithful by means of argumentative trickery. The doctrine of the immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary is represented as of the utmost importance to those who would save their souls, and we are told that those who disbelieve it have shipwrecked their Faith; but no attempt at honestly facing the fact of the failure of the Church, on this matter, is made. Hundreds of years passed by, and millions of Roman Catholic Christians died before the Church dared to say, once and for all, that belief in the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary is essential to salvation.

Theologians actually disputed over the question, and yet we are asked to believe in the all-wise Church of Rome and the Infallibility of the Pope.

Instead of it being admitted that these doctrines are of purely human origin, and that the history of the Church is entirely natural, we are treated to one of the worst forms of theological untruth, whether consciously or not, in the theory of God unfolding his plan and teaching in accordance with the development and requirements of the human mind.

That infallibility of Pope or Church, or of Bible, cannot reasonably go hand in hand with belief in a progressive and ever-unfolding revelation of God's will, is glossed over by the Roman Catholic theologian and priest, and the modern Catholic is taught doctrines concerning the Virgin Mary, under the plea that if they have not always been taught *explicitly*, well, they have been taught *implicitly*. Which really means that the Catholic of old had to make up his mind for himself, or swallow the teaching of the particular priest who made up his mind for him, while the Mother Church awaited the time when she could conveniently say what she had to say.

To such a pass is the divine guidance of the Holy Church reduced by her faithful theologians.

It is much the same with regard to another doctrine concerning the Virgin Mary; but in this case the Church has not even made up her mind.

The Rev. Charles Hart, B.A., says, "another prerogative of Mary is her assumption into heaven. It is a general belief in the Church that the Blessed Virgin, immediately after her death, was raised to life again and taken body and soul into heaven, there to remain in everlasting bliss. So far, however, the Assumption of our Blessed Lady has not been defined as an article of Faith, yet is a truth that no Catholic would call to question." *Students' Catholic Doctrine*, p. 110.

That the average Catholic never asks the question why any religious truth is not embodied in the official doctrines of the Church, until it is convenient, is evidence of the degrading influence of the teaching which she instills into the minds of her sons and daughters.

On the subject of the Virgin Mary it would not be difficult to show, from non-Catholic Comparative Mythology, that the belief in Mary as the Virgin is but a variant in the world's myth-making, but in this article I have preferred to draw from Roman Catholic sources only.

E. EGERTON STAFFORD.

A Depressing Outlook.

A MEDICAL gentleman sent me a sheet of a recent issue of the *Sunday Express* containing an article by Sir Oliver Lodge, on religion and science. A perusal of it made me more convinced than ever that Civilization is not only a "disease" as Browning hinted, but an incurable one. During short periods the clouds open and the sun of sanity pours forth its illuminating and revivifying rays, with the result that the human mind lengths its stem and puts forth new branches. But alas! all of a sudden, and from the most unsuspected quarters, comes the withering blast of the reactionist, and the ground gained through years of unremitting toil is in a trice lost again—an event comparable in its tragic sadness to the fate which befalls a bewitching landscape during a volcanic eruption—hills and valleys clothed in verdure, bedecked with floral colours, enlivened with melodious avian songs, and with an apparent permanence that promised it a perpetuity, all of a sudden transfigured into a scene of cinders and lava incinerating all—a spectacle of desolation and death.

Mrs. Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, and Sir Oliver Lodge, will between them put back the clock at least a century. The two propagandists have much in common. Mrs. Mary Baker Glover Eddy was impelled by an egregious self-confidence which found vent in perpetual streams of ineffable blether. And in the case of Sir Oliver, there seems, in his championship of Spiritualism, no limit to his self-confidence, and which finds expression in exactly the same manner as did the notorious Mr. Eddy—blether, blether, and again blether.

Should Sir Oliver also adopt the famous Lady's astute method of making her cult immortal, *i.e.*, by getting all book-sellers to refuse stocking all publications which should expose or ridicule Spiritualism, the setting back of the clock would be not a mere century but a millennium.

Impossible theory, you say! So would it have been said in 1866, if anyone had the foolhardiness to hazard a forecast in respect to Mrs. Eddy's propaganda. Should anyone then predict that her insensate cult would have overspread the world by 1930, he would have been put down as one devoid of normal mentality.

It should be borne in mind that any movement in the nature of a cult spreads in direct proportion to its *folly* or *inversely* to its sanity. To this law there is in history no exception.

KERIDON.

Rondeau.

My heart stood still in vast suspense;
 Mine ears to catch each word were tense;
 For I had said, "I love you true;"
 "I love none else on earth but you,"
 "So let us share our love and pence."
 I wondered whether you would fence,
 Or put me off, or drive me hence;
 And, wondering what you would do,
 My heart stood still.
 The rules to go on may be few,
 Yet was my situation new—
 You must have thought your lover dense.
 I fear he was, but no pretence
 Made he that day; I simply knew
 My heart stood still.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

Acid Drops.

As times are bad and finances are low, three congregational churches at Abertillery have decided to try the experiment of having only one minister for the three churches. The congregations should benefit by the innovation. There is less risk of having their brains addled by one parson than by three. If we are religious we should discern the hand of God in this present state of things.

The last war, says a writer, was not merely wicked but crazily absurd. And he suggests that peace propaganda will have a better chance of success when it attacks war, not on its emotional side, but on the side of its absurdity. Quite so. But writers or speakers who think of adopting this suggestion may as well be reminded that they will be following the lead of the *Freethinker*. For the manœuvre of attacking the war idea by ridicule was employed by this journal long ago.

The Eastern Orthodox Church, says a Wesleyan editor, has not saved Russia from ignorance, superstition, or tyranny. That is true. But why single out the Orthodox Church for condemnation? No Christian Church has ever saved a country from ignorance, superstition, or tyranny. All the older Churches are tarred with the same brush. They not only tyrannized but supported tyranny. And their periods of greatest influence are periods notorious for superstition and ignorance.

The evening, says a pious writer, is perhaps as good a time as any to offer up prayer. We would prefer to say that the evening is as silly a time to pray as any other. A man cringing on his knees before a Bogey of his imagination is a contemptible sight at any time of the day.

Kent, we learn, is far ahead of any other country with its playing fields. So far so good. A further advance might well be that of making Kentish playing fields available all day on Sunday, on the principle of making the most of a good thing. Undoubtedly, the parsons in the interests of their profession would protest. Nevertheless, their howls should be ignored, because the health of the nation is of greater importance than the profits of the parsons.

The Rev. Dr. T. Shields, of Toronto, declares that true Christians are born and not made. We are willing to accept this as an apology, and to proffer our Christian friends our best commiserations for the misfortune. That it is a misfortune no one can doubt. For their maker has condemned them to suffer an eternity of "bliss," which, as outlined in the Bible, is an eternity of boredom. How thankful our readers should be that they were not born true Christians!

A writer in a religious journal says that in the Alpine Valleys goitre is so common, that people who are without the deformity are called "goose necked." Instead of the growth being regarded as a blemish begotten of disease, it has come to be thought of as a beauty, and those persons, who are without it as abnormal. By this we are reminded of the way in which Christians regard the *Freethinker* as abnormal, because he is without the religious defect of the Christian.

Dagenham Sunday Schools have room only for one in fifteen of the children on the Estate. This is a piece of good fortune for some of the children. They will escape from having their intelligence distorted by Christian "education."

The Church of Christ holds the key of the future, declares the Rev. Colin Roberts of Muswell Hill. We fancy he's mistaken. The key of the Church only opens the doors of superstition and ignorance. It is reason and knowledge which hold the key of the future.

A jazz composer says he writes songs without thinking. After reading a few reports of sermons, we have often suspected that the inspired authors achieved their nonsense by the same easy method.

Dean Inge, in the *Evening Standard*, has a shot at answering "Why are Such Things Allowed to Happen?" In two columns, he writes very interestingly about accidents and narrow escapes, but he never once comes to grips with his subject. He concludes by stating that the working of Providence is a mystery—which to many, signifies that he gives the problem up. Incidentally he mentions that the War took many of the best, bravest, and most promising among the young men of Europe. This war was blessed by professional religionists of all countries, and if half the money and time spent on the perpetuation of religion had been used for the encouragement of reason instead of faith, a race might have been produced that could dispense with soothsayers and their eloquent testimony to the truths of anthropology.

Pastor Jeffreys is not making great progress according to a newspaper report. Stoke-on-Trent Corporation will allow him to deal with adults, but he may not interfere with children for which the Corporation is responsible. As the pastor's aim is spiritual healing, he will apparently pass muster with the crowd; physical ailments are very stubborn to the treatment of prayers, and it speaks well for the thoroughness with which Christianity has done its work when we find so many people entangled in the meshes of primitive thinking.

Mr. Robert Lynd, a popular writer of the *News-Chronicle* had better be careful. He makes a very good point about the humour of Sir Harry Lauder in one of his songs. He plays the part of the married man who was overjoyed because his wife had broken her leg, and he was therefore able to enjoy a holiday by himself for the first time since marriage. Mr. Lynd states that even the Russian realists have never imagined a grimmer situation than this. This is almost a good word for the Russians, and therefore Mr. Lynd will be well advised not to forget himself again; the *Daily Mail*, the *Morning Post* and Lord Brentford can see no good in any of the millions of inhabitants of a continent like Russia—and they know—they know.

Rear-Admiral T. P. H. Bearmish, M.P., speaking at a dinner at Lewes, stated that nothing was more certain than that youth would be called upon again—as he put it, to preserve our heritage at home and abroad. This is a bit rough on the lads who were dieted on standard bread and margarine; we suggest that the next war be fought by exempted parsons of the last. Also, not to be in too much of a hurry, it should not take place until all hospitals are clear of their patients from 1914-1918.

"Ezra," of the *Methodist Recorder* says:—

At our Rotary Club last week the speaker was criticising one of our slogans, which runs: "He profits best who serves the most." It is true, of course, he said, but is pernicious, because it encourages men to serve, because it is profitable, and the man who does good for the rewards of goodness is not really a good man, just as no man is truly honest who is so merely because he believes it is the best policy.

Some other speaker might well have pointed out that the principle condemned as pernicious is quite soundly Christian. The Christian religion exhorts men to avoid evil and to do good in order to "please God," and

teaches that they who please God will be rewarded either here or hereafter. Men therefore become Christians because they believe the venture to be profitable. We need hardly add that a system of morality erected on the principle of personal profit cannot help but be pernicious.

A Methodist journal remarks that statesmen are busy with Leagues of Nations, but they must ultimately fail without "the help of a prophetic voice which can speak with authority to the conscience of mankind"—namely, the Christian Church. Apparently anticipating criticism, our contemporary adds: "The Church that would unify the world must itself be one." Quite so. Seeing that the Christian Church comprises a large number of sects all at loggerheads, the statesmen of the nations will be pardoned for doubting whether they can get any useful advice on the art of achieving unity from such a source. That alleged "prophetic voice" must seem to them a rather discordant squeak!

A contributor to a religious weekly, who seems to have pondered deeply with a wet towel round his head, has made a wonderful discovery. The Church, says he, must go out to the people rather than wait for them to come to her. The profundity of this thought almost takes the breath away. Only a man who has drunk deeply in the philosophy of the obvious could have achieved it. Still, another profound saying is that you can take a horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink. The converse is also true. So, too, the Church may carry her stale news to the people, but there's no guarantee that the people will scramble after it.

Mr. Filson Young, in *Radio Times*, says there is not really enough broadcasting of silence. He adds:—

We broadcast sounds and effects, arguments, music, talk, and speech of every kind; we broadcast time; but we do not broadcast silence.

As regards Sunday, how untrue that is! By command of the parsons, silence is most efficiently broadcast during the parsons' trading hours. The only people who are pleased with it are a pious minority. And the pleasure these get from it is knowing that the un-religious are being deprived of some amusement. This aside, there's no sound reason for hours of silence. The listener pays the B.B.C. for entertainment, and he should insist on getting full value on Sunday as on any other day. The individual who wants any silence can always switch off his set.

The "Saturday Pulpit" of the *News-Chronicle* is occupied by the Rev. H. Elvet Lewis, M.A. The sermon is called "The Soul's Birthday." On such nebulous matters do so many dealers in words thrive; on such east wind of speculation have multitudes been fed.

A herd of 3,000 reindeer bought from an American Corporation in Alaska by the Canadian Government is being moved to the northern area of Canada for the purpose of providing food and clothing for the Eskimos. This, in a small way, seems to be an advance on the divine pastime of sparrow counting.

There are angels of grace, angels of heaven, and now there comes along a new variety, "Hell's Angels." The latter is the title of a film which cost thousands of pounds and several human lives to produce—we give the order of value as reported in the *Daily Mail*—and we really think that a Christian protest ought to be made against the use of such a lurid name for aeroplanes and Zeppelins used by Christian nations at a time when it was easier to be mad with the multitude than sane by yourself. Perhaps the Bishop of London will defend the copyright of heaven.

National Secular Society.

THE Funds of the National Secular Society are 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.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY of the National Secular Society desires to acknowledge £5 to the General Fund of the Society from S. C. Challis.

S. THOMPSON.—We are not personally interested in whatever views Professor Huxley holds on religion or anything else. But we are concerned in seeing that the public have access to sound views on religion as well as other things. And we are also concerned in that a spurious article is not presented to the public as Freethought. If people are really in earnest when they speak of ending the reign of superstition it is idle to attack it while paying it the compliment of pretending to some feeling for "religion," or assuming that the term "God" honestly used can ever stand for anything other than the magnified man of the savage. When Christians see men in the position of Professor Huxley paying them the "violent compliment" of finding that their religion contains valuable truths, they are the more inclined to hang on to it as long as possible. In the Freethought world, as elsewhere, it is courage and mental straightforwardness that is of ultimate avail.

A. STEWART.—Next week. Crowded out of this issue.

J. LATHAM.—Hope things will be more favourable soon. Pleased to hear from you at any time.

G. IVES.—Much obliged for cutting.

M. DESHUMBERT.—We agree with you that *A Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity* is a very useful piece of work. Although the author is dead the quotation you send might well go in a future edition as a note.

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.

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

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

Sugar Plums.

Mr. Cohen's audience at the morning meeting at Glasgow, on Sunday last, was not quite so large as usual, but in the evening the hall was quite filled. Both the speaker and the audience appeared to be in excellent humour, and there was a good sale of literature. Mr. McKeown officiated as chairman in the morning and Mr. Hale in the evening.

On Sunday next (November 16) Mr. Cohen will lecture twice in the Chorlton Town Hall, Manchester, at 3.0 and 6.30.

On the Monday, Mr. Cohen will proceed to Bolton, for the debate with Canon Elliot, on "Will Secularism Benefit Humanity?" We understand that all the tickets for this debate are nearly sold, so that those who wish to attend from a distance should write at once for tickets. These are 1s. and 6d. Letters should be addressed to Mr. W. Sissons, 197 Eskrick Street, Bolton.

Mr. Cohen has had an unusually large number of invitations this season to lecture to outside bodies, nearly all of which he has declined. There is too much to do in the Freethought world, and too few to do it, for him to be able to spend his time outside the movement. And, as he has said before, he is not a professional lecturer. But one of the invitations he has accepted is to speak at a meeting of the Leytonstone District Council for the Prevention of War, at the Town Hall, Leyton, on Tuesday evening, November 11. The meeting will commence at 8 p.m.

The Bethnal Green Branch will hold a course of fortnightly meetings in the Workers Circle, Great Alie Street, Aldgate, London, E. Commencing to-day, Sunday, November 9, Mr. R. H. Rosetti will be the speaker this evening at 8.0, subject, "Is Christianity in Harmony with Science?"

Will Fulham and District Freethinkers please note that the Fulham and Chelsea Branch N.S.S. has arranged a list of Sunday evening lectures up till December 21, at the London Co-operative Society's Hall, 249 Dawes Road, Fulham. The speaker for this evening (Sunday) is Mr. B. A. Le Maine, subject "Christianity and Mythraism," at 7.30. Syllabus from the Hon. Sec., Mr. A. J. Mathie, 32 Micklethwaite Road, Fulham, S.W.6.

The Society for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws has had drafted another Bill, to take the place of the one that the trickery of the Government caused to be withdrawn. Mr. Thurtle will probably again introduce the Bill, if and when it has the good fortune to be brought forward. Then we shall see to what degree the last experience has taught the House of Commons a lesson. For our part we have only one piece of advice to offer Freethinkers. Go on making Freethinkers, and Freethinkers who are not afraid to let Christians know exactly where they are. That is the surest way of putting an end to all such relics of medieval bigotry.

We presume that now the circulation of lies by Lord Brentford, the Archbishop of Canterbury and others about the wholesale murder of priests and laymen following their religion is worn out—although none of these eminent Christians have worn the white sheet—many of the newspapers feel it wise to state something like the facts. At any rate the following from an article by Mr. Harold Butcher, a recent visitor to Russia, in the Liverpool Echo, of October 17, is interesting. Mr. Butcher says that he wandered about on his own. His journey was not "a conducted tour of protected buildings. He says:—

It is true that many churches have been closed; it is true that many have been destroyed; but it is not true that nobody can go to church any more in Russia.

THE TRUE AND THE UNTRUE.

It is true that "religion"—meaning the old State Church represented by the Greek Orthodox Church—is frowned upon or laughed at by trident upholders of the new social order in Russia.

It is true that Communists have no time for religion in this sense of the word.

But it is not true that religion if practiced without intent to embarrass the Government is persecuted.

If a man's religion is interpreted by the secret police as a blind to cover his counter-revolutionary activity, he may suffer execution or imprisonment.

If a man likes to go to church and say his prayers the authorities smile at his credulity and tolerate his devotion.

But if he uses his religion to stir up people against the Government he may be shot.

The maintenance of the State is the important thing in the Soviet Union; individuals who hinder the well-being or plot the undoing of the State will suffer. But they suffer as political offenders not as followers of religion.

If their religion demands their entry into politics they become martyrs in the eyes of the Church, but they die as counter-revolutionaries in the eyes of the State. This has been true ever since the early Christians refused to burn incense to Cæsar; it is not peculiar to modern Russia.

On Red Square the Cathedral of St. Basil, built by Ivan the Terrible in the sixteenth century to commemorate the conquest of Kazan, has been turned into a museum; the same is true of I do not know how many other churches and cathedrals.

If it is a sin to close any church or to divert it to other than sacred use, then the Soviet Government is guilty of many sins—as many as King Henry VIII. when he closed monasteries and churches, seized money and jewels for his own use and for the founding of schools, and gave away church property to his courtiers.

But Moscow is simply cluttered with churches, many of them in a deplorable condition; and from the point of view of numbers alone it is possible to close many and still leave enough for people who wish to go to church. It is surprising that anyone but a rabid Christian of the "Jix" type should ever be taken in by Christian stories told for a Christian purpose. We have just been glancing through a book, which we hope to notice at greater length later, which well illustrates the capacity of the Christian Church for lying. It is a work of an American Judge of standing, Joseph Wheelless, and covers just over 400 large pages. The whole is taken up with a record of the established forgeries and deliberate lies put forward by the Christian Churches in defence of their claims, and even at that the list is very incomplete. In this direction the Christian Church stands head and shoulders above anything else history has produced.

John Dewey: Modern Materialist

MORE than one professor of philosophy is filling in with greater detail and personal colourings the position of modern Materialism as outlined in *Materialism Re-stated* (1927).

We are here concerned with Prof. John Dewey, of America, who has recently given us his conclusions in *Experience and Nature* (revised, 1929) and *The Quest for Certainty* (1930). Quotations used hereafter are taken from these works.

Dewey completely rejects Christianity and Supernaturalism in any shape; Theism, Immortality, Idealism and so on. He has written on Popular Free-thought in the *Forum*, and, as an admirer of Pragmatism, has done something to rescue it from the chaos in which its alleged founder, Wm. James, left it.

To the term "Materialism," Dewey does not find himself greatly endeared, although he acknowledges the materialistic principles as true (*i.e.* workable). But his reluctance to accept the term comes in this manner. "We live," he says, "in a state of divided allegiance. In outward activities and current enjoyments we are frenetically absorbed in mundane affairs which, if they were formulated for our intellectual acceptance, would be repudiated as low and unworthy. We give our emotional and theoretical as-

sent to principles and creeds which are no longer actively operative in life. We have retained enough of the older tradition to recognize that a philosophy which formulated what, on the whole and in the mass, we are concerned with, would be intolerably materialistic in character."

In other words, Materialism is the working philosophy of practical life, but we must have something more polished for our theory of the same. Which, we think, comes very near to the position of Lange and Vaihinger.

Why should Materialism be so repugnant in theory? Dewey answers: "The obnoxious quality of Materialism is due to its depression of thought, which is treated as an illusion, or at most an accidental by-product," and the worst that can be said of him is that he here fails to appreciate the materialist position. Yet he tells us that his own view, which avoids the absurdity of treating thought as an illusion, "may be deemed Materialism."

No Materialist would be fool enough to deny that there are such things as will and purpose in nature. What he does deny is that purpose characterizes the whole of nature (and Dewey enthusiastically agrees with him). Purpose relates to some human and animal behaviour, and this sphere of intelligent action is in nature, but not in all of it. There are some regions where purpose does not apply, otherwise there would be no need to engage a special term to describe certain behaviour—which, moreover, pertains to only a small class of existences.

Dewey agrees with this all the way. The purposeful is, for him, evolved from, and rooted in, the non-purposeful (as was shown by Haeckel in particular). His quarrel is evidently with Materialists rather than Materialism. In their eagerness to show the simpler conditions from which the complexities life and mind spring, he thinks they have underrated the importance of the complexities themselves. Minds are of tremendous significance to Dewey, and, while never losing sight of the fact that they are dependent on physical events, their grandeur demands an emphasis which "Materialism" fails to suggest. Nature is so rich in thoughts, wills and feelings, so resplendent in minds, purposes and values, that another philosophical term is required. He chooses Empirical Naturalism, and, as its alternative, Natural Empiricism.

As for his assertion that Materialists have depreciated the importance of mind, Holbach and La Mettrie, for instance, might certainly have emphasized, with profit, that mental facts as such have special characteristics which are destroyed by analysis. However, this was a leading point in *Materialism Re-stated*.

Dewey writes vehemently against philosophers who have, according to the Idealist and Dualist tradition, hypostatized mind, so that it prescribes its own laws to the external world, in the Kantian fashion for example. This is a fallacy which "converts consequences of the interaction of events [giving mind] into causes of the occurrence of these consequences, a reduplication which is significant as to the importance of the functions, but which hopelessly confuses understanding of them." Such methods have led to the philosophical systems which are now deposited with appropriate labels in metaphysical museums.

Against these philosophers, and with Materialism, Dewey stands solidly for the unity of nature. Man, for him, is not an outside spectator of the universe, but a product evolved within the universe. There is no real line of demarcation between mind and its objects, but only an artificial one between blind movement in nature and that which is directed and significant.

There are different "levels" in nature. Here is a stone, there a plant, here an amœba, there a mind. How comes this, if nature is a unity? Dewey's answer is a wholehearted use of Emergence, and an explicit rejection of the teleological conception; here again Materialism [by which I understand, Emergent Materialism] is in essential agreement.

Nature is not merely a unity, but a *changing* unity, and in our search for the law of the change we find only one sane clue; Emergence.

For Dewey these distinctions within nature are "of levels of increasing complexity and intimacy of interaction among natural events."

Natural events? Yes, for Dewey has followed the modern fashion of resolving matter into events, in deference to Einstein and also Russell. So that, roughly speaking, instead of mind merely emerging from matter, matter has first to emerge from events. No orthodox Materialist need be alarmed. These events hold no brief for a psychic universe, and are becoming very popular in modern Realism. They merely reach lower in the scale of complexity than matter; that is all. In fact, if we wish to strike the bedrock of metaphysics, we can think of them as the noumena of existence. They are, of course, purely hypothetical, and quite removed from human observation. And as long as they remain so they may well be taken for the substance of metaphysics.

They perform very effectively for Dewey. They are omnipresent. Everything is explained as a consequence of their interaction. In themselves they are inaccessible to human observation; they are only known in those arrangements which condition material objects—"events with meanings." "The business of reflexion is to take events which brutally occur and brutally affect us, and to convert them into objects by means of inference as to their probable consequences."

Mind is similarly conditioned, and is reached, he tells us, via matter. Here and there in the flux of natural events a mind appears "focally at a particular moment." Each individual subject is thus a centre of experience. "Mind is seen to be a function of social interactions, and to be a genuine character of natural events when these attain the stage of widest and most complex interaction with one another." "Personality, selfhood, subjectivity are eventual functions that emerge with completely organized interactions; organic and social. Personal individuality has its basis and conditions in simpler events." "If life and mind had no mechanism," he concludes, "education—and constructive control would be impossible." Materialists have been saying the same for years.

Like matter, life and mind, values have their foundation in events; the climax is art, on which Dewey has much to say that is irrelevant to our present theme. We are content to indicate how he is at one with Materialism in his steadfast refusal to give to mind, or to life, an utterly false rôle in natural affairs.

G. H. TAYLOR.

Outrage!

THERE was a young man of Belgravia
Who didn't believe in the Saviour—
He turned up at Kirk
Wearing naught but a smirk;
And got six months for Indecent Behaviour!

J. M. STUART-YOUNG,

Onitsha, Nigeria.

The Obstacle to Freethought.

THE twin dangers feared most by those who are attempting to bolster up Christianity with a little pseudo-science are *Pantheism*, and *Magical Sacramentalism*. The Roman Catholic Church, together with those of the Anglican Church who style themselves High Churchmen, represent the latter. Pantheism is however more difficult to identify, and for the reason that it is difficult to define. I shall come to that directly. What I want to emphasize to Freethinkers, is that for them, there are two obstacles to be fought, viz., *A Pseudo-Scientific Christianity*, and *the Church of Rome*.

Now the difficulty which confronts both the Anglican Church and Freethinkers, lies in the fact that we are born into the world with a legacy from the past. It is latent instincts which play into the hands of the opponents of Freethought. Speaking generally, we, as belonging to the Celtic Teutonic Anglo Saxon races, inherit from the past a tendency which shows itself in a mental bias towards Pantheism as distinguished from Western and Southern Europe. It is now known that some twenty thousand years ago a number of races small in stature—swarthy and oval faced, were spread over Western Europe and the Mediterranean Shores. *Their religion was polytheism and sacramental magic*.

They were invaded by the Aryans from Asia. These were they who founded Greece and Rome, and from them we have descended. Thus it happens that Western and Southern Europe—England and N. America are largely a mixture of these Iberian and Aryan races. In Southern Ireland, Brittany, Spain and Southern Italy, Iberian instincts leading to sacramental magic are strong. *Where the Aryan races predominate, we find agnosticism and a tendency towards Pantheism and Freethought*.

One other fact before I proceed—the Early Christians had always to struggle against these two opposing forces.

There is a trite saying that "what is bred in the bone comes out in the flesh," and if one also bears in mind that it is during childhood that racial instincts are modified and directed by education, then it is apparent why the Churches try to retain their hold over the Schools, and—why Roman Catholicism flourishes in some areas more than in others.

And now I come to the subject of Pantheism, which, as I have stated, is feared most by the Anglo-Catholic Church in its new attempt to bolster up Christianity with a few snippets of science. Pantheism properly understood is a belief that *mind and matter is a manifestation of Cosmic Life—that man and the universe is a unified whole—that there is no God apart from Nature, and man's powers come from WITHIN and not from a personal deity outside*. It is incorrectly attributed to Hinduism and Buddhism. *Pantheism regards man as possessing within himself divine attributes*. In the words of the Bible, "I have said ye are gods," *man possesses the power to develop the deity within*.

From this it is easy to see why the Churches rave against Pantheism, and why the clergy strive to retain their hold over the schools *in order to uproot the racial tendency of the child to think Pantheism*. The strange thing is they forget the Pantheism in the words of Jesus, "I and my Father are one"—"Who-soever hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Jesus never claimed to be more than a man having the same divine attributes common to all men. If he came on earth to-day he would be the first to denounce the Churches. Christianity is neither taught nor practised by the Churches.

Dr. Barnes deplors the fact that 80 per cent of the adult population are indifferent to religion, but thinks there will sooner or later be another uprush of religious enthusiasm, and asks, "Who will guide it." Here is his answer: "To an extent not generally recognised, the religious future of the English people lies with the teachers. The teachers are the servants of the State through whom the nation must develop the religious instincts of the masses." He goes on to say, "It is not true that for the most part religious education has practically escaped from the control of the various Churches, and that the Churches are accepting the fact. The old struggle between Churchmen and Nonconformists for control of the Elementary Schools is effectively coming to an end." (Now note this) "Moreover it has been tardily recognized that trained teachers must impart religious instruction—Bishops and dignitaries sit on Governing Bodies—private and social sympathies can be brought into action. Mere Bible reading has failed. The elements of a creed must be taught."

Dr. Barnes then proceeds to define four rules for religious instruction in the Schools, and the kind of books to be used by the teachers. "Before long," he states, "We shall get a series of Manuals on Christianity like those of the Home University Library written by experts without Sectarian bias."

I think I have written enough to point out to Freethinkers where the cloven hoof lies hidden. The danger lies in the power still held by the clergy over our Schools, but little attempt is made to frustrate it, except by Freethinkers, and they are not largely represented on Governing Bodies. Those Freethinkers who take an active part in politics should make this subject their principal aim—"The freeing of the Schools from all clerical influence."

At election times M.P.'s should be publicly questioned regarding their view on Education. Local organizations should aim to secure Freethinkers being elected Managers. The National Union of Teachers should be approached with a view to securing in the ranks of the profession a united opposition to religious instruction. Until the matter is forced to the front there is little hope for the Scholar. Of course, when grown up he exercises freedom, but much mischief accrues during the years he is under the influence of the System which still prevails.

If the Nation is to have a State Church and State Schools, citizens have a right to take their part in deciding what powers these shall wield—failing which—The System is a farce and an insult to Democracy. There is no matter requiring greater consideration at the moment, and yet—it takes a back seat.

I am not advocating a system which would stifle the divine aspirations of the individual, but I advocate a Scientific Pantheism which regards the Universe a Cosmos, and man a noble creature who, given a fair chance to live and think, will make a Heaven on Earth, and by the very latent powers within him rise to a full appreciation of the deity within.

I am optimistic enough to believe he will do this in time, in spite of all hindrance, but that is no reason why he should be indifferent to an unnecessary prolongation of his striving owing to obstacles he can remove if he sets about it. And I make bold to state that I believe the Faith of the Future will be a new Pantheism supported by scientific proof of the Cosmic Unity of Man and the Universe. Dean Inge advocates Force, to prevent crime. I say No! Uproot that which produces crime—and that includes a false state of Society based on the assumption that might is right, and that most of us are born criminals. The Churches are always ready to sanctify Force where it pays them to do so.

The following quotation from *How and Whys of*

Human Behaviour, by G. A. Dorsey, Ph.D., is to the point—"All preceding civilizations have created or inherited a Saviour and worshipped him as God—and failed. Our civilization, to endure, must save itself. But it cannot do so with mere words. It must square its ideals with deeds. Work. Free men and women, working for attainable human ends and for humanity's sake, and because of love for and understanding of humanity . . ."

There are those who would set a limit on what men and women and love can do; and we know how they get their limited ways and why. Let us be more daring. Especially let us put blinders on no human being, nor set any limit to human achievement!"

CULLWICK FERRINS.

The Book Shop.

WHEN taking up *The Village Book*, by Henry Williamson (Jonathan Cape, 7s. 6d. net) a series of thoughtful essays on country life, I said, here is a man's book! When I put it down after a careful reading, the opinion was confirmed with an addition. Mr. Williamson, in the clear prose of Richard Jefferies and W. H. Hudson, has brought an intensity of feeling that breaks out unexpectedly in its manly appeal to that rare virtue, the possession of common sense. The author is not concerned with pleasing everybody—he is too much in earnest for that, nor is he a fine stylist because he has nothing to say, a failing common in many authors of acres of print providing work for opticians. The book contains some twenty-two sketches on rural life—human life, bird and animal life, in and round about a hamlet in Devonshire. The author states that he is a Freethinker. One of his characters in *First Day of Spring* evidently in that frame of mind of not being able to recognize the obvious, says of the author: "Doesn't he say peculiar things? Some say he isn't all there—a little mazed." . . . So much then as a penalty for those who can see things clearly and have not sacrificed free thought and speech on the ghastly altar of respectability. Under the chapter "Scriddicks," Mr. Williamson has gathered together under the heading of "Religious and Supernatural Beliefs," records of charms and incantations. Various complaints and diseases may be cured by reciting certain formulas. One example of sublime reasoning will be found in the following gem named Mechanical Belief:—

"There is a man in the village who puts a bucket of water under the front axle of his car in cold weather, to stop the frost 'getting at his radiator.'"

A beautiful essay, short, yet very sweet, is the one on "Swallows on Cliffs." A study of bird life is never time lost; Remy de Gourmont states in *Decadence*, that bird life may be the highest form of life, and the thesis could be maintained. Birds have no poverty question; they can move their bodies in a flash, in comparison with which, movement by aeroplane is clumsy and grotesque. They only fight during the mating season, and the defeated rival has nothing worse to bemoan than a few feathers missing out of its tail. They do not intermarry, they have no caste system, and they can teach man the folly of not making the best of the present. Mr. Williamson concludes his essay with a quotation from Jefferies:—

"The beautiful swallows, be tender to them, for they symbol all that is best in nature, and all that is best in our hearts." . . . In the study of village life, a commentary on a quarrel between two brothers, the wife of one says:—

"Aw, stop rattling, why can't you? It's time you was both in bed. To expect sense from either of you 'tes like trying to take a cherry out of a pig's mouth." Freethinkers will thank me for recommending the book. The author has many other books to his name, but in this particular one under review there will be found eternal truths in beautiful dress, homely wisdom, direct

pictures from the pageant of the seasons, and the whole put together by the hand of a craftsman. Mr. Williamson is a writer who reminds us of our kinship with animals and the earth; we cannot have too many like him at a time when seventy-five per cent of mankind is muddled and befuddled with mechanical contrivances, and when every other popular writer is so damnably afraid of writing the truth for fear of a libel action, or, worst of all, is fearful of offending religious susceptibilities.

Some day, in the Utopian future, newspapers will be known as distorting mirrors. Not a few of our modern caricaturists use for their work a concave or convex mirror, hold the original in front of it, and there is the picture of the celebrity for sketching. In the same way, newspapers which profess to lead public opinion, operate on simple truths. It would not be unjust to say that newspapers are an impediment to progress, to the development of real thinking, and a futherance of sweet sanity which is as necessary as the air we breathe. Watch their squirmings when a new thought appears, see their vulture-like swoop on a murder, or note their babbling with a war in prospect. Every other man's opinion is the one churned out by newspapers, and these cuttle-fish, when cornered, reply by saying that they give the public what it wants. The depravity of the public has not yet reached the zero mark of newspapers, and mergers in that world of ink and lies prove, in one sense, that one or two will not be missed. Knopf publishes *The Collected Poems of Stephen Crane*, 7s. 6d. net, and an extract caught our eye that is worthy of record. The reviewer calls it exasperated prose, but no man is in two minds about the best method of killing cockroaches if he is wearing boots:—

A newspaper is a collection of half-injustices
Which, bawled by boys from mile to mile,
Spreads its curious opinion
To a million merciful and sneering men,
While families cuddle the joys of the fireside
When spurred by tale of dire lone agony.
A newspaper is a court
Where everyone is kindly and unfairly tried,
By a squalor of honest men.

In the present-day world, where a good portion of society does not know what to do with its time or money, and a greater portion of society does not know what to do having neither, a whimsical straw is blown into print by that popular and clever music-hall artiste, Miss Gracie Fields. It is called a "suggestion," and it justifies the music-hall as a free critic of the fuzzi that cannot be taken seriously by the public drunk or sober. The *Morning Post* publishes it, and a little more of the same quality in that daily would be an excellent corrective to the various forms of rabies from which it frequently suffers. To the orchestra then, "till ready": "Sir,—I notice that somebody is quite gravely suggesting that motor-tyres should be coloured to match the colour of the car body. Why not match them with the Chauffeur's eyes and have done with it?" And these are the questions in the twentieth century agitating the minds of a society that is not fit to pass an opinion on bread and cheese, much less set a standard of values for what are contemptuously called the "lower orders."

When interests required fecundity of the poor, all the machinery of opposition was set going against such individuals as Bradlaugh and Annie Besant. Numbers were useful in wars. Now, when numbers will not count the same interests will approve the intonations of Archbishops and Bishops on the hedgehog question of birth-control. The same interests have less use for ecclesiastical backing as control now comes from the big banks; gas and gaiters can run away and play, and gain medals in a field where there is nobody to fight.

C-DE-B.

In all science error precedes the truth, and it is better that it should go first than last.—*Horace Walpole*.

A wise scepticism is the first attribute of a good critic.—*Lowell*.

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD OCTOBER 31, 1930.

The President, Mr. Chapman Cohen, in the chair.

Also present: Messrs. Quinton, Gorniot, Moss, Corrigan, Hornibrook, Easterbrook, LeMaine, Ebury, Mrs. Quinton, Junr., Mrs. Venton, and the Secretary.

A number of apologies for unavoidable absence were read.

Minutes of the previous meeting read and accepted. The monthly financial statement presented.

New members were admitted for Liverpool and Bradford Branches, and the Parent Society. Correspondence from Liverpool, Chester-le-Street, Bradford, Burnley, West Ham, Hamburg and Belgium was dealt with.

Various items of a minor nature were discussed and the meeting closed.

R. H. ROSETTI,
General Secretary.

Society News.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.

MRS. JANET CHANCE lectured on Sunday last to a full house, on "Freedom of Thought and Sex Education." The lecturer was fully convinced that there can be no complete freedom as long as the schools and other Educational institutions are dominated by the Church and Religion.

The usual number of questions and discussion created a great deal of interest, the meeting concluded by a hearty vote of thanks, moved by Mrs. Hornibrook, and seconded by Councillor Savory. There was a good sale of literature. On Sunday next, Mr. A. H. Hyatt will give some of his Freethought and other Recitations.

B.A.I.E.M.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH.

THE first of a series of eight lectures to be given weekly under the auspices of the Fulham and Chelsea Branch was very ably delivered by Mr. A. D. McLaren last Sunday, November 2, at the London Co-operative Hall, Fulham. The subject: "The Roman Catholic Revival in England," was attentively listened to by an audience of fifty, after which many questions were asked, and a most interesting discussion ensued. The Committee of the Branch request all Freethinkers to support them in this much needed experiment in this part of London, and make these lectures a success by the attendance of themselves and friends. Next Sunday (November 9) Mr. B. A. Le Maine will be the speaker, and the subject will be "Christianity and Mithraism." The syllabus of the whole eight lectures will be sent on application to Mr. A. J. Mathie, 32 Micklethwaite Road, Fulham, S.W.6.

Obituary.

MR. ROBERT CRUM.

THE Glasgow Secular Society has to record the death of one of its oldest members, Mr. Robert Crum. Mr. Crum joined the Society about thirty-five years ago, and in the earlier years of his membership served several terms on the Executive of the Society. But he had no desire for the limelight, and higher offices were refused. Mr. Crum was not always a Freethinker, but having once reasoned himself out of the myths and fancies that make up historic Christianity, there was no wavering or going back. A Freethinker he remained. Death came with startling suddenness while he was walking in Kelvingrove Park. To the widow and family the Society offer their sincere sympathy. Mr. Crum, who was sixty-one years of age, was interred in Sighthill Cemetery. A Secular Burial service was read by the undersigned at the house.—E.H.

Counsel to a Dejected Lover.

DREAMS fade; but other dreams their place will take:
Love dies; 'tis but a dream which fades and dies;
But other loves our busy hearts can make,
And those that wait will see new love arise.

From out our deeps new love and dreams will come,
Like hidden springs that seek the outer air,
Or gift of tongues descended on the dumb:
Cease, then, rejected lover, thy despair.

Time, which heals all, will yet assuage thy pain;
Dispel the heart-ache; fill the seeming void;
Thy dream of love shall come to thee again,
For love's own self can never be destroyed.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

Miscellaneous Advertisements.

EDUCATED Irish Freethinker, single, 56, returning from India early next year, would like to hear from a "Saint," preferably in or near London or suburbs, who would befriend him on arrival. Is a non-smoker and teetotaler. Is not fussy; has no fads. Active and cheerful. Small appetite; easy to cater for. Interested in poultry, garden and orchard. Prepared to assist in any congenial or clerical work. Has life pension of £70 per annum.—O'CONNELL, c/o Freethinker, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

ARMISTICE MEETING.

Leyton, Leytonstone and District Council for the
Prevention of War, and L.N.U. Leyton and
Leytonstone Branches.

Mr. CHAPMAN COHEN

will speak at the

TOWN HALL, HIGH ROAD, LEYTON, E.10.,

on

Tuesday, November 11th,

at 8 p.m.

OTHER SPEAKERS—

Rev. REGINALD SORENSEN

(M.P. for West Leyton),

HAROLD WATSON,

(League of Nations Union).

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Rationalist Press Association (Glasgow District)

Grand Hall, Central Halls, 25 Bath Street,
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OUTDOOR.

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

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Rushcroft Road, Brixton): Wednesday, October 29, at 8.0, Mr. F. P. Corrigan; Friday, October 31, at Liverpool Street, Camberwell Gate, at 8.0, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12.0, Mr. B. A. Le Maine; 3.30, Messrs. A. D. McLaren and B. A. Le Maine; Every Wednesday at 7.30, Messrs. C. E. Wood and C. Tuson; every Friday at 7.30, Messrs. A. D. McLaren and B. A. Le Maine. Current *Freethinkers* can be obtained opposite the Park Gates, on the corner of Edgware Road, during and after the meetings.

INDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Workers Circle, Great Alie Street, Aldgate, E.): 8.0, Mr. R. H. Rosetti—"Is Christianity in Harmony with Science?"

ETHICS BASED ON THE LAWS OF NATURE.—Emerson Club, 1 Little George Street, Westminster. Sunday, November 9, at 3.30 p.m., Lecture in French, by Mlle. Delbende on: "Le Problème de la Volonté." All are invited.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (London Co-operative Society's Hall, 249 Dawes Road, Fulham): 7.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine—"Christianity and Mithraism."

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 59 Finchley Road, N.W.8, near Marlborough Road Station): 11.15, Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker, "Robert Bridges 'Testament of Beauty.'" Reading by Miss Marjorie Gullan.

HIGHGATE DEBATING SOCIETY (The Winchester Hotel, Archway Road, Highgate, N.): Wednesday, November 12, Mr. C. E. Ratcliffe—"The Purpose of Life?"

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, C. Delisle Burnis, M.A., D.I.,—"Uses of Modern Art."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Public Hall, Clapham Road): 7.15, Mr. A. D. McLaren—"Mythology of the New Testament."

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square): 7.30, Mr. Arthur H. Hyatt—"Freethought and Other Recitations."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road): 7.0, Mrs. Hodson—"The Sterilization of the Unfit in America." Questions invited.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Bristol Street Council Schools): 7.0, Mr. E. C. Saphin—"The B.V.M."

EAST LANCASHIRE RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION (28 Bridge Street, Burnley): 2.30, Mr. W. Neild—"What is *Ruggerics*?"—All welcome.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY.—City (Albion Street) Hall, 6.30, Mr. Oliver Brown, M.A., subject—"Nationalism." Ramble from Hillfoot, meet at 11.0 a.m.

LIVERPOOL (Merseyside) BRANCH N.S.S. (Transport Hall, 41 Islington, Liverpool—entrance Christian Street): Sunday, November 9, at 7, Mr. Jack Clayton (Burnley), "Man and His Soul." Doors open at 6.30. Current *Freethinkers* will be on sale.

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Mr. Harry B. Lowerison—"Roman Leicester." Lantern illustrations.

MANCHESTER BRANCH (Chorlton Town Hall): Mr. Chapman Cohen, 3.0, "The Origin of the Gods." 6.30, "How Man Discovered Himself."

PAISLEY BRANCH N.S.S. (Baker's Hall, Forbes Place): 7.0, Mr. E. Hale—"How Worlds are Made."

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

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

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

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

The address of the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust is 61 FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

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