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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

	Page
<i>The Churches and the War—The Editor</i>	241
<i>The Zola Centenary—Mimmermus</i>	243
<i>Sexual Adversity to Social Success—T. F. Palmer</i>	244
<i>Gastrology and Theology—George Wallace</i>	245
<i>Religion and Art—John Ruskin</i>	246
<i>N.S.S. Annual Conference Agenda</i>	250
<i>Highways and Byways in English History—</i> <i>Archibald Robertson</i>	251
<i>The German Contribution to Psychology—G. H. Taylor</i>	252
<i>Confucius Say—T. H. Elstob</i>	253
<i>Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums, Letters to the Editor, etc.</i>	

Views and Opinions

The Churches and the War

I do not often find myself in agreement with the bishops of the Established Church. But when I do the agreement is very close indeed. I have, for example, written many times that war, no matter how inevitable or how far it is completely justifiable, is always a step backward in the scale of civilization. And I am glad to find no less a person than Dr. Garbett, Bishop of Winchester, writing in the course of an article in the *Evening News*, for April 9, "War-time is a fertile field for every sort of foolish superstition." I am almost ashamed to think how many times I have said this. I have illustrated it by appeals to personal history—which should become written history, if history were written as it should be. But I am glad to have the backing of a real live Bishop. I must see that Dr. Garbett gets a copy of this week's issue of the *Freethinker*.

Yet, on looking more closely at what the bishop has written, I have an uneasy feeling that we may be talking different languages, and that makes certainty of understanding doubtful. For example, he speaks of "religion" and "superstition," and I am quite unable to perceive a distinction between them—except the one drawn by Hobbes, that religion is superstition allowed, and superstition is religion not allowed. If it is superstition to believe in the God called Mumbo-Jumbo, why is it not superstition to believe in the Christian God? Is there here anything more than a difference of name? Gods are gods, so far as I can tell. If it is superstition when a native tribe before going to war prays to their god for victory, why is it religion when the British medicine men offer a day of prayer to ask their god for help? Wherein lies the difference between the Red Indians (now dying out under Christian rule) hanging the scalps of their enemies round a sacred totem pole and the Christian placing the captured flags of his enemies in a Church?

Finally, I find the Bishop when he talks of religion means only his own superstition. He does not hope

for the increase of other religions. He would not be filled with hope for the future if he felt the war would make the Jewish religion much stronger, or the Mohammedan religion, or any of the religions of the inhabitants of India. I rather fancy he would regard growth in the directions mentioned as a very questionable benefit. Finally, I have a suspicion that even when he calls his own superstition "religion" he does not mean any variety of the Christian religion. He would not take an increase in power and numbers of the Methodists, Quakers, Shakers, Adventists, Presbyterians, British Israelites, Baptists—whether of the particular variety, or those who are not particular—as evidence of the growth of "true religion." It is his own branch of the business with which he is concerned. Having cornered the State trade in religion, he is anxious only to maintain the monopoly that has been secured.

* * *

What is Christian Civilization?

I find this speaking in different tongues rather confusing in other directions. What, for example, does the Bishop mean by saying that the nation is "ready to sacrifice its all for the defence of Christian civilization"? When a man joins the army there is no such avowal made. A great many of the men have actually in private life been trying to end Christianity altogether. When we invite Mohammedans and Hindoos and Parsees and Jews and Freethinkers to join the Army we do not appeal to them to save Christian civilization. We simply ask them to save *our* common civilization, and let it go at that. We do not say to the Mohammedan, and we have many millions of them in the Empire, we do not say, we dare not say to them that they are fighting to save Christianity. If we did they would revolt at once. Can it be that the British Government is playing double, and while inviting men to fight for one thing they are made to fight for something quite different? Can it be that it is the Bishop of Winchester that is playing double? That he is, to use a colloquialism, selling our soldiers a pup?

The other day ex-Dean Inge very neatly pricked the bubble of an English "race" by pointing out that taking the line of our monarchs from the time of the Norman Conquest, they have been French, Welsh, Scotch, Dutch, and German, but not a native English beginner among the lot. So we might ask the Bishop of Winchester, what does he mean when he speaks of ours as a Christian civilization? It is a very common phrase; it is in the mouths of parsons and there it is just a professional cry. Politicians use it and with them it means—nothing. Writers of various kinds use it and they are lazily following a custom. What does it mean? We get the foundations of our law from Rome. We get the beginnings of our philosophy from ancient Greece; we get the beginnings of our science from Greek and Mohammedan sources, and from

modern thought and discoveries working against opposition from the Christian Churches.

There was a time, of course, when the influence of the Christian Church was paramount and it was during that period that the civilization of antiquity crumbled. Christianity was not like Mohammedanism, which, commencing with a people a little better than nomads, built up a culture that furnished the impetus that gave Europe the power to revive civilization. It was under Christian domination that slavery was revived, that the belief in magic and witchcraft flourished, that heresy was made the deadliest of crimes. Religious intolerance of the kind that Christian Europe was noted for was certainly a product of Christianity. There was nothing approaching it in either Rome or Greece. What is it then we possess that is peculiarly Christian? It is not our art, our science, our law, our liberties, our literature, our freedom of movement, of belief, or our general view of life. Will the bishop be good enough to tell us what we have obtained worth holding since the Christian Church was established that we should not have had if Christianity had never been heard of?

* * *

What are Christian Ideals?

I think the Bishop must have realized that he was overstepping the mark because he suddenly bethinks himself of the need for a qualification. So we get this:—

This war is a life and death struggle between a civilization *which has Christian ideals* and a civilization which hates and rejects all that Christianity values. It would be sheer nonsense to claim that our civilization is or ever has been consistently Christian, but its noblest ideals are definitely Christian.

The italics are mine. In this passage the bishop's language is understandable, but that serves only to make its artful character the more apparent. No one questions that our civilization embraces Christian ideals. There are the ideals of the Bishop as chief of the Church. There is the ideal of the Sabbatarian, the ideal of the religious bigot, the ideal of the Roman Catholic Church to control the State, and to place non-Christians in a state of permanent inferiority. There is the ideal of Dr. Garbett and his fellows to place the Church in supreme control of the schools. We have in this country many Christian ideals, and it is the crime of Germany that it has brought some of them to their logical development. The people chosen by God (the German God in this case) to dominate "inferior" people is essentially a Christian conception. Pre-Christian civilization knew nothing of this half-maniacal idea. What one would really like to know, definitely and in plain language, is what are the ideals that can truthfully be called Christian for which we are fighting? That is a very simple question to ask. Will the bishop answer it? I expect not. These "Joe Bagstocks" of the Church may be "devilish sly," but they are easily seen through by anyone capable of analysing them.

* * *

The Capture of the Innocents

As is the case with Mussolini, who is obviously waiting to see on which side the military cat will jump, and hopes to be given another Abyssinia, after the war, the bishop hopes to collect some spoil for the Church. He does not think the war will result "either in an immediate increase in Church membership or in the size of congregations." He has evidently given up hopes of winning over adults, which is

a striking change from the hopes inspired by the last war. Then the Bishop of London (Ingram) hailed the war as "A day of God," and Campbell, of the City Temple, swore that religion had never in his time been given such a chance. But Dr. Garbett does not cherish any hope of being able to capture adults, he feels we must concentrate on children, and unless we keep a shrewd eye on this Government of ours the Church may not be quite out in its calculation. Having, as he thinks, guarded himself (from those who are not able to see beyond the end of their noses) by saying that this civilization of ours "has Christian ideals," which as the song says "nobody will deny," the bishop switches back to the wholly untruthful statement that we are fighting for "the defence of Christian civilization," and discovers that people will realize how foolish it is to carry on the war without making serious attempts to educate children—as the Church would have them educated. He says:—

It is possible that if sufficient agreement is reached between Christians, the State may see that more thorough religious teaching is given to *all* children under its care.

It is, I agree, quite possible that the different bodies of Christians and the Government may manoeuvre a religious Munich, and hand over the children of the country to the churches without calling representatives of non-Christians to join in the discussion. These will be fortunate if they are not treated as the Czech delegates to Munich were treated—kept under restraint until the business is settled. For if the words of Dr. Garbett mean anything at all it means the repeal of both the "conscience clause,"—which gives parents and guardians the right to withdraw children from religious instruction—and also the Cowper-Temple clause which prohibits religious teaching that is distinctive of any of the numerous Christian sects. Most hopeful of all, to Dr. Garbett, is that as large numbers of children who have been "evacuated" have been "brought into contact with the Parish Church" the habit of church-going may continue when they return to their homes. All is fish that comes to the Christian net and if the children can be captured for the church, in the absence of their parents, so much the better. Have not the leaders of the Roman Church declared that children had better be bombed than risk contamination under Protestant control? Christian love is very real. I have no space to deal with the rest of Dr. Garbett's article. My chief aim was to provide further proof that the Goebbels of the Church are busy, and that commencing with the notorious article in the *Times* there is a nationwide campaign to give the churches back the power they had in the schools when they controlled education. I think Freethinkers all over the country should be on the alert and should do what they can to wreck the plan. If the aim of the Churches is kept well before the public the game may be blocked. In that, I think, we can all take a hand. The attack on the schools should be kept before the public. Teachers should be incited to make a stand against the growing power of the clergy, and the readiness of the Government to lend a hand to the plot. Parents—not merely those who are Freethinkers, but also those who do not believe in the State teaching religion—should at once withdraw their children from religious instruction. That would give an object lesson to all. And, in addition, all our friends might lend a hand in getting the *Freethinker* into as many homes as possible. Every new reader is a potential helper in the fight against clericalism and superstition.

The Zola Centenary

Spirits are not finely touched,
But to fine issues.—*Shakespeare.*

To what damned deeds religion urges men.—*Lucretius.*

THE celebration of the centenary of the birth of Emile Zola is an event that should interest, not only Frenchmen, but "Intellectuals" the world over. For, by an act of splendid heroism, Zola inscribed his name among the immortals "who rule us from their urns." There are hundreds of names in the French Pantheon, but none nobler than the name of this teller of tales, this exemplar of the oldest of the arts.

Emile Zola was a very famous writer, who, with Balzac, Victor Hugo, and Alexander Dumas, captured the imagination of his countrymen. Late in life, when most men think of slipped case, he forsook, willingly, the comfortable position of a popular and successful novelist to face unpopularity, unbelievable abuse, imprisonment for libel, and even risk to his own life, to champion the cause of an innocent man unjustly convicted. The man was a Jewish officer, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, who, in 1894, was falsely accused of selling military information to the Germans, convicted of treason by a secret military court, publicly degraded on the barrack-square, and sent to serve a life's sentence on Devil's Island, off the coast of French Guiana. It was Zola, aided by Clemenceau and other Intellectuals—but primarily Zola, for he was the spear-point of the attack—who demanded the revision of this terrible sentence. The struggle for justice was a long and bitter one. France was in an uproar. For twelve long years this issue divided every town, every village, and even every family in France into irreconcilable groups of Catholics, militarists, and Anti-Semites on the one hand, and convinced champions of liberty and justice on the other. The battle ended in 1906 with the proclamation of Dreyfus's innocence, followed, six years later, by his restoration to the rank which he would have held in the Artillery if his career had proceeded along its normal course. The brave Zola was then dead.

Justice was indeed done. But what of that white-haired, sad-eyed, quiet Dreyfus, who walked the streets of Paris unrecognized by the crowds who had used his name as an auriflamme of battle? Who could repair those tortured, wasted years, in which he wrote to his wife that if it had not been for her he would have killed himself? Who could give back his manhood to this pale shadow, once a man? Captain Dreyfus was rehabilitated, but the real man was sacrificed as surely as the victims of the St. Bartholomew massacre. As for Zola, people thought of him as a remote, comfortable Olympian person, living in his study, and incapable of condescending to the common people and the problems of the day. But Zola was a Freethinker as well as a writer, and a destiny far beyond that of a mere teller of tales was reserved for him. In the fine words of Anatole France, spoken at Zola's funeral: "In him at one moment was set the conscience of mankind." It was well that this was so, for this tends to consolidate the trust of humble people in the democratic system, the essence of which is that champions of the people may emerge to fight their battles, and to right their wrongs. Under dictatorships men like Clemenceau and Zola would be murdered, judicially, or otherwise, and their supporters forced into concentration camps.

Dreyfus was the victim of a "frame-up" chiefly because he was a Jew. In the last analysis the prejudice of caste was consummated by religious bigotry. Just over a century earlier Voltaire was defending Calas

and the Sirvens against the machinations of the Romish Church. A hundred years of progress, and the advent of the French Revolution, had failed to eradicate this persecuting mania. Anti-Semitism seems so utterly out of place in modern France, which had delighted in the music of Offenbach, and admired the oratory of Gambetta. Whether the name of Dreyfus means anything to the younger generation or not, it certainly cannot be pronounced before any Frenchman of over sixty without arousing memories not only of the incredibly violent political and religious antagonisms, but also of remarkable examples of social courage. There was, for example, Colonel Picquart, who sacrificed his career in the army, and faced the hatred of his Catholic fellow-officers for the sake of what he believed to be the truth, and was only reinstated after the conviction was finally quashed. There was also Maitre Labori, one of the counsel for the defence, who was wounded by the pistol shot of a fanatical partisan. But, after Zola, Georges Clemenceau deserves the most credit. His address to the jury in the Dreyfus Case deserves to be written in gold letters on the walls of the Pantheon:—

Gentlemen, make it known in the name of the French people that France has justice for the Jews! Nip in the bud this beginning of a religious war. Say to this religious war: "This shall not be!" We appear before you, gentlemen of the jury. You appear before history.

In this famous case the pen and the tongue proved mightier than the sword. Zola's opening article in *L'Aurore* eight columns in length, every paragraph of which started with the words "I Accuse" set France alight from end to end in a single day. No such piece of writing had appeared since Thomas Paine roused the American people, and made history, by a pamphlet. Both Paine and Zola were Freethinkers, animated by the highest and noblest motives. Such honest men are needed in the troubled world to-day. Where in all present-day passion and horror, of a world without a conscience and an aim, do we find the sincere recognition that man has rights as well as faculties, a moral law as well as the law of the jungle?

It is terrible to reflect that such a case of Anti-Semitism should have happened, in France, above all places. It is still more terrible to think that it may do so again, and the circulation of such papers as the *Action Francaise*, and the diehard principles of the Roman Catholic Church, are not bright auguries for the future. It is significant that in 1931, where a play by Maurice Rostand concerning the Dreyfus Case was produced in Paris the performances had to be stopped on account of the angry demonstrations which they provoked. The Dreyfus Case stirred up hatred and religious intolerance, but justice was done in the end. This is characteristic of the French people. The French can go violently and unjustly wrong, but they can generously repair their error without false shame. It is this quality which has made France the very vanguard of Liberty in Europe for a hundred and fifty years, and gives us hope for the future.

MIMNERMUS

MY GOD!

A rather extreme vegetarian
Looked down from his summit Bavarian;
He said: "It's not odd
I'm superior to God,
For the latter's not even an Aryan."

Sexual Adversity to Social Success

WITH his long and elaborate investigation *Sex and Culture* (Oxford University Press, 1934, 36s.), Dr. J. D. Unwin has published a highly controversial volume. The author states that when he commenced his inquiry he had no preconceived theory in view, and that he little suspected that the conclusions he now considers inescapable would necessitate the rejection of the doctrine of the inevitability of human progress he had previously regarded as a permanently established truth. Casting aside all prepossessions when embarking on his task, Dr. Unwin assures us that "he decided to test by reference to human records, a somewhat startling conjecture that had been made by the analytical psychologists." This suggestion was: "that if the social regulations forbid direct satisfaction of the sexual impulses the emotional conflict is expressed in another way, and that what we call 'civilization' has always been built up by compulsory sacrifices in the gratification of innate desires."

Dr. Unwin surveys eighty savage societies in his study, while peoples of superior culture include the ancient Sumerians, Babylonians, Greeks and Romans, as well as the more modern Anglo-Saxons and English. In all these various cultures, evidence is submitted to prove that when restrictions of a practical character are placed on sexual intercourse, the physical and mental energies devoted to Venus in communities where sexual indulgence is unrestrained are converted into a beneficent energy which promotes and sustains human progress. Or, as Dr. Unwin expresses it, when communities "began to display great social energy their societies had reduced their sexual opportunity by the adoption of absolute monogamy."

It is also claimed that in every instance under review, each social structure was administered by a continent group, which in consequence possessed the greater relative capacity. Also, that whenever in the history of these societies sexual liberty increased, their constructive power began to lessen, until finally it was extinguished. Furthermore, whatever the racial character of the community or however diverse their geographical surroundings, their departure from rigid monogamy led to the same disaster.

Various uncivilized stocks in Asia, Africa, America, Polynesia and elsewhere are cited, and where the testimony is fairly authenticated it apparently points to the following conclusions:—That native peoples who erected temples served by priests and who worshipped the once powerful or eminent dead may be classified as deistic, while those who do not construct temples but pay some respect to the dead are ranked as manistic. Still more lowly tribes who neither possess temples nor pay any special attention to the departed after burial of the corpse, Dr. Unwin describes as zoistic.

Summing up the evidence concerning these three phases of lowly life, Dr. Unwin contends that pre-marital sexual intercourse distinguishes "the zoistic societies that permitted pre-nuptial sexual freedom." At a relatively higher level, the manistic societies insisted on "an irregular or occasional continence, while pre-nuptial chastity was accompanied by the deistic cultural condition," which is theoretically a higher cultural stage still. Certainly, this may seem an attempt to unlock too many doors with one key, although long since, in that now strangely neglected masterpiece, Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Biology*, that profound philosopher pointed out that individuation is opposed to genesis; that the higher types of

life are the slowest breeders and that with the increase of mental efficiency the population problem will tend to solve itself.

Be that as it may, when Dr. Unwin's case is considered it seems reasonable to conclude that, bearing in mind the fact that the potential powers of the animal organism are limited, it follows by logical necessity that the costly expenditure of nervous energy in unrestrained sexual activity tends to weaken if not inhibit mental and physical power. Truly, this is a very involved problem, yet the ascertainable facts seem to warrant this conclusion.

At the apex of its power, ancient Babylon appears to have been strictly monogamous. After the Sumerian splendour had faded away Babylon, writes our author, "hitherto an insignificant village developed into a powerful city. Commerce was developed; temples were built, restored and enriched; the villagers extended their sway from Islam to the Syrian coast, from the Persian Gulf to Anatolia. They were deistic, monarchical and absolutely monogamous. Three centuries after they first displayed expansive energy, they weakened. Local kingdoms arose and ultimately the land was dominated by the uncultured Kassites whose crude rule was suffered without demur."

Women possessed no legal rights under the old Babylonian dispensation. A wife who refused her husband's embraces was drowned not merely for her contumacy, but as an enemy to the State. Children were completely at the mercy of their parents' will and an unsubmitive son might be branded and sold. These severe customs were later modified, and ultimately paternal authority could be completely removed by the terms of the marriage contract which had to be reduced to writing to secure validity. Other legal amendments were made, and instead of disowning his spouse at his own sweet will the husband was compelled to appeal to the court. With the introduction of other humane laws under the rule of Hammurabi, daughters were no longer chattels and became legal entities. Towards the close of Hammurabi's reign divorce was permitted by mutual consent. Then Unwin indicates what he conceives the inevitable consequence: "After Hammurabi's death the Babylonians weakened. . . . His son and successor lost control of the southern provinces. The Hittites raided the country, robbed the rich temples and returned to their own country with the booty." Evidently, serious sacrifices must be made for sexual freedom.

Ancient Greece is said to repeat the sad story. Homer's picture of the lofty position of women applied to the Achæans, but not to the marvellous Athenians whose marital code was rigorous in early centuries. "Marriage," contends Unwin, "was a lifelong union contracted for the supply of legitimate offspring of the male blood. It was only by the procreation of legitimate children that the tradition and ritual of the domestic hearth could be perpetuated." Some authorities think that purchase succeeded the capture of wives. A woman who went astray was treated as an outcast, while her offspring were considered personal property without legal rights.

Owing to the ravages of time and the wanton destruction of priceless manuscripts by Christian fanaticism, our knowledge of social life in ancient Hellas is scanty. But the fragments that survive suggest that, as time passed, the austere customs of earlier days were relaxed. In the Sixth Century, B.C., aristocratic ladies were allowed liberties previously withheld. With the increase of wealth female display and extravagance coincided with nocturnal improprieties that shocked the more conventional and severe. Solon was appointed to check the ruinous expenditure of the upper classes which threatened the stability of the

State. Plutarch asserts that Solon prohibited the spending of more than a stated sum on amusements, raiment and domestic utilities. These and other events suggest a relaxation of the marital bond, at least among the opulent classes. As the sixth century ended it is urged that "the aristocracy began to lose their supremacy; by the middle of the fifth century the sovereign power had been transferred to those whom the more energetic aristocrats had dominated for at least two, possibly for three, centuries."

Unwin infers that this period of aristocratic incontinence coincided with the preservation of strict monogamy in the lower classes. When patrician women had been released from traditional bonds, ordinary Athenian damsels were subjected to the severest seclusion. Domestic life was encumbered with tiresome restrictions and it is stated that even if the housewife was detected in gazing through a window her reputation was ruined. In fact, the average Athenian woman's public appearances were restricted to her participation in sacred celebrations. Therefore, Dr. Unwin contends that: "It was the sons of these women to whom the sovereign power was transferred; it was their sons who defeated the Persians at Marathon and Salamis; they were the mothers of the men who displayed such tremendous mental and productive energy that their influence on human thought, religion, architecture and aspiration is still felt by the Western European, two thousand and four hundred years later."

Subsequently to this, men sported their mistresses in addition to wedded wives. Divorce was easily obtainable and Grecian women revelled in wine and consorted with Lotharios gay. Then followed nemesis and peerless Athens fell.

Rome's record is much the same. Austere morals and success went together and then laxity led to ruin when "The Romans satisfied their sexual desires in a direct manner. Consequently, they had no energy for anything else."

The post-nuptial customs of the Anglo-Saxons and their descendants are surveyed. In England there was no relaxation in woman's legal status for 300 years. The authority of the lord of creation was supreme. In the nineteenth century a transformation occurred. Now, pre-marital intercourse, free unions, contraceptives, greater scope for divorce with prospects of its complete rationalization should, in terms of Dr. Unwin's conclusions, herald the speedy downfall of the English people. France should have been driven headlong to the devil many generations ago. Yet that fair city, Paris, despite its gaiety and sexual latitude has long continued one of the most brilliant literary, artistic, and intellectual capitals of the civilized world. Still, Dr. Unwin's *Sex and Culture* merits the study of all who value a scholarly and discriminating inquiry into social phenomena.

T. F. PALMER

PRAYER OF THE OVERWORKED BUS CONDUCTOR

OUR Farnham, which art in Hendon,
Harrow be thy name, thy Kingston
come, thy Wimbledon in Erith, as
it is in Kenton; give us this
day our Leatherhead, and forgive
us our by-passes as we forgive
those that by-pass us; and lead
us not into Thames Ditton, but
deliver us from Ewell, for thine
is the Kingston, the Purley and
the Crawley, for Esher and Esher,

CROUCH, END

Gastrology and Theology

All the labour of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled. (Ecc. vi. 7.)

BEFORE attempting to deal, briefly, with the alimentary view of theology, I will venture to merely refer to the alimentary view of life. How on meeting with each other, or at parting; either on buying or selling; hot weather or cold; at birth, baptism, coming of age; marriage; and so on throughout life, culminating in a funeral feast; we eat and drink to celebrate these events, and, if we fail to eat, we drink the more to show our goodwill! But the funeral feast is only the earthly end. To the ancients it was followed by a banquet in Hades. We learn from the *Republic* (Plato), that the just, with garlands on their heads, will enjoy an eternity of wine-bibbing. A survival of this ancient idea finds modern expression in:—

Thy creatures bless, and grant that we
May feast in Paradise with thee.

Man made God in his own image. God, angels, etc., like man, all have appetites. Jehovah God, as Pastor Russell designates him, seems to have been a God of an unbounded stomach. For choice pieces, sweet smelling savours, burnt offerings, and bloody sacrifices, he is peerless—his gastronomic equal unknown!

Small wonder is it, that, under such a Rabelaisian God, the Israelites did not rise above an alimentary view of theology:—

"At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God." (Exod. xvi. 12.)

"And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God." (Gen. xxviii. 20-21.)

To eat, drink and be merry was a great Israelitish ideal. That Jehovah God should lose interest in their sweet-smelling savours was unthinkable. The denial of his sense of smell was viewed as a curse. "I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours." (Lev. xxxvi. 31.)

"Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry." (I Kings iv. 20.) To enable them to do this, and to provide sacrifices for the temple, an incredible number of beasts had to be slaughtered.

Solomon's feast for one day is illuminating:—
"And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and three score measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, besides harts, and roebucks, and fallow deer, and fatted fowl." (I Kings iv. 22-23.)

The sheep and oxen killed sometimes could not be told nor numbered for multitude (I Kings viii. 5.) And at the dedication of the Temple we read that Solomon offered a sacrifice of:—

220,000 oxen,
120,000 sheep (I Kings viii. 63.)

That the Israelites became God's chosen people, can we wonder? Like God, like People!

With the coming of Christ one would expect to find a new order of things. But do we? He brought Life and Immortality to light by his glorious gospel! Did the lives of Christians ever afford much evidence of it? Is not this the promise—"He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." (John vi. 35)—that has appealed to

Christians (literally)? Where to-day do we find any appreciation of spiritual things? Any demand for them? Said an old minister to me recently—"In my young days 'Church and Guts' was a common expression. But now the trail of the serpent is over us all. Were it not for bazaars, whist drives, hot-pot and potato-pie suppers, and the like, most of us would find our occupation gone. But we are at fault, not the gospel of Christ, which we lack the courage to preach."

After the seventy elders of Israel climbed the Mountain with Moses, and had seen God, they instantly celebrated the event by eating and drinking. (Exod. xxiv. 11). It certainly was an extraordinary event. The climbing of the mountain had heightened the appetite of the elders for food and drink, and this may have overshadowed a greater response to it. But maybe Aaron, or Nadab, or Abihu (who also accompanied them) made an after-dinner speech in which he thanked God for letting them see so much of him. This example set by the seventy elders has been copied annually ever since, from the local Football Team's tripe-supper down to the Lord Mayor's banquet!

In a Church Calendar given for the good of my soul! I count not less than thirty-five feasts from Christmas Day to Whitsuntide.

Christmas Day is a saturnalia of which no one can be proud. Eating, drinking, and carousing in a senseless way, which would have disgusted Rabelais, in memory of a man of sorrows and one acquainted with grief.

New Year's day is also of a very pronounced Bacchanalian character.

We celebrate Christmas by eating geese, turkeys, ducks, and other birds, and beef, mutton, pork, veal and heaven knows how many other animals; and drinking wines, whisky, beer and endless kinds of drinks, kissing under the mistletoe, and playing games of all sorts. At New Year we centre on roast pork! And watch-night service in church provides an easy way of bridging the time from the closing of the pubs till midnight. Whisky passing from pew to pew like wine on Communion Sunday!

A month or two elapses until our next feast (Theological!) Collop Monday—the Monday before Shrove Tuesday, devoted to cutting all fresh meat into collops, or steaks, for salting, and preserving till Lent is over. Eggs and collops of bacon are the popular dinner to-day.

Shrove Tuesday pancakes usher in Lent with its "ancient and fish-like smell." During Lent fish may be eaten, but Christian neighbours who observed Lent have often disturbed my sleep, holding high carnival with strong mulled ale and carlings, or sinnels, hot-cross buns, eggs, or other absurdities.

Once, after an uproarious "Care Sunday" when the strong mulled ale had been indulged in, and sleep rendered impossible till 2.30 a.m., I protested. My neighbour laughingly remarked, "Why didn't you come and join us, man? Lent wants some helping to get it over you know!" Then he added: "I'm sorry to have disturbed your sleep. But come to church with me and forget it. You'll get a nice drop of wine this morning! I don't know how you get Sunday mornings over! The church is a perfect God-send to me and a lot of my pals. We get up late on Sunday morning, have breakfast! then hurry off to church, and before we can say 'Jack Robinson' its opening time. But for the blasted Socialists and Communionists the church would still have been brewing our beer!" he concluded.

Had Easter Sermons still been popular I might have accepted his invitation. In the sixteenth century these sermons were replete with ridiculous stories and jests to provoke "Easter Laughter."

So far, I think, eating and drinking has it—theology being, at best, only a sort of makeshift.

That the Resurrection, the greatest event in the Christian Calendar, should receive trivial notice, requires explanation! On the seventeenth day of the Jewish month, the Asiatic Christians are said to have commemorated the Resurrection, but little attention has been paid to it ever since.

To conclude with the Last Supper. But, why supper? "Hope," says Bacon, "is a good breakfast, but it is a bad supper." He is right! Supper is the last meal of the day. Bed and sleep follow. Breakfast in the early morning, when we are full of joy! The beginning of a new day thrilling us with its call upon our awakened energies, when, full of hope, we eagerly enter into the never-ending romance of life!

GEORGE WALLACE

Religion and Art

[John Ruskin, in his *Lectures on Art*, just mentioned the question of how far art has been inspired or ennobled by religion. He left the subject with the implied promise that he would deal with it at length on some future occasion. The following was found amongst his papers after his death and was published by the Editors, Cook and Wedderburn, in the standard edition of his works as a note to the *Lectures*.—C.C.]

How far has art been strengthened by her employment in religious service? Many careful thinkers on the subject, and I myself, very strenuously in past years, have contended that the occupation of artists in the representation of divine histories or persons, has stimulated and purified the powers of the art so employed. It is not, of course, possible for me to-day to enter with you even on the first steps of so vast an enquiry; but it will be part of my subsequent duty to lay before you the grounds of my now fixed conviction that few of the greatest men ever painted religious subjects by choice, but only because they were either compelled by ecclesiastical authority, supported by its patronage, or invited by popular applause; that by all three influences their powers were at once wasted and restrained; that their invention was dulled by the monotony of motive and perverted by its incredibility; that the exertion of noble human skill in making bodily pain an object of morbid worship, compelled a correlative reaction in making bodily pleasure an object of morbid pursuit; and that the successes, of whatever positive value they may be, reached under the orders of Christianity, have been dearly bought by the destruction of the best treasures of heathen art, by the loss of the records of what was most interesting in passing history, by the aversion of all eyes from what was lovely in present nature, and by the birth, in the chasm left by the contracted energies of healthful art, of a sensual art fed by infernal fire.

Thus the best achievements of so-called religious art have been dearly bought, even supposing their excellence had been otherwise unattainable. But you will see further reason to regret the sacrifice, when you perceive, as I shall be able to show you by strict analysis, that the merits of sacred art itself were never owing to religion. Observe: I say, "of sacred art itself." I do not speak of the consummate art power, but of its reserved and regulated beginnings. As to its highest attainments, there has never been any question but that they were founded entirely on the beauty and love of the present world. I told you many years ago that there was no religion in any of the works of Titian, and that the mind of Tintoretto only sometimes forgot itself into devotion. But I then thought

that all the nascent and dawning strength of art had been founded on pious faith; whereas I now with humiliation, but I dare not say with sorrow, recognize that they were founded, indeed, upon the scorn of death, but not on the hope of immortality—founded, indeed, upon the purity of love, but the love of wife and child, and not of angel or deity; and that the sweet skill which gave to such feelings their highest expression came not by precept of religion, but by the secular and scientific training which Christianity was compelled unwillingly to permit, and by the noble instruction received from the remnants of that very heathen art which Christianity had done her utmost to destroy.

The reserve and the rapture of monastic piety were only powerful in creation when they involuntarily opened themselves to the sight, and stooped to the sympathies, of common human life; and the skill which enforced with vividest imagery the doctrines of the Catholic faith was taught by spirits that had incurred its condemnation. If ever you are able in some degree to measure the skill that has been spent by Luini, La Robbia, or Ghiberti on the vision of the Virgin, you will also know it to have been received at the feet of Athena and Artemis; and from them, not as Queens of Heaven, but as Queens of Earth, permitting no idleness to virtue and promising no pardon to sin. The grace of the redeemed souls who enter, *celestamente ballando*, the gate of Angelico's Paradise had been first seen in the terrestrial, but pure, mirth of Florentine maids. The dignity of the Disputa del Sacramento was learned from the laured patience of the Roman and gentle bearing of the Greek.

If thus the influence of Religion upon Painting and Sculpture is determined, virtually its effect on Architecture is decided also. But as doubtless the subject is here more questionable than in any other of its branches, I will endeavour to set it before you in the form in which it may be dealt with clearly. Here, under the shadow of St. Mary's Spire, or in the front of any English or French Cathedral, it ought to be difficult for you so much as to put the question to yourselves. You would say that architecture was consummated in these. It was so. But we are not enquiring about its consummation, but its development. And to examine into that rightly, you must first separate whatever modes of architecture were learned in useful works, as aqueducts and sea-walls; then whatever was learned in war, and the forms of tower, of battlement, and window, and gateway required for defence; next, the forms dependent on humble domestic requirements, as the gables of roofs built steep, or dormer windows enriching their slope, or turrets for winding stairs, or projecting niches of windows for looking up and down streets, or lifting of merchandise and the like; after that, whatever forms resulted from social and civic requirements; the spans required for halls and those of my own Christ Church, or of Westminster, or of the room of the greater council at Venice; the dignity of town halls and brolettos with their towers of pride or warning and arcades of state. Lastly, you must separate whatever exquisiteness was reached by completed art in palatial decoration, in loggias, ceilings, sculptured and painted saloons and galleries from Vicenza to Versailles; and then examine carefully what speciality is thus left as the result of ecclesiastical influences.

The best you will say, still; the ecstasy and perfectness of all this poured out in devotion. You will find, when you look into it, as I will endeavour partly to show you, that this power was used not so much to express devotion as to recommend and to direct it. But the point before us is, with what effects on the architecture? Mainly with these three—the introduction of spectral effects of light and shade, rendering architecture sensational instead of intellectual; the excite-

ment of quite frantic efforts to obtain height and richness of ornament, ending in the corruption of style; and lastly, the taking away the funds and strength which would have made wholesome the houses of the poor, cleansed the streets, and cultivated the fields.

(Reprinted) JOHN RUSKIN

Ethics and Mother Nature

Free thought does not belittle ethical ideals which may be associated with religious belief, but it claims to set them on a firmer basis than is supplied by superhuman enlightenment. It does not burke the fact that supernatural sanctions exercise no ethical control over the operation of natural law.

The earthquake, the flood, the tornado, cause indiscriminate destruction of civilians on a scale compared with which the human air raid dwindles almost into insignificance. There is no "save the women and children" clause in nature's laws, and no reasonable being could credit such disasters to the deliberate ruling of a Divine Providence (imaged by the Gospel-Jesus of Luke as a God before whom not one sparrow "is forgotten") though legal phraseology labels them as Acts of God.

At this point the religious apologist steps in with the reminder that nature's beneficence far exceeds her baneful activities. "Granted," and were this not so, existence would be as impossible on the earth as it is presumably on the moon. The Freethinker, however, maintains that whether Mother-Nature is kind or unkind either to human nature or to animal life; whether her methods are constructive or destructive, from no point of view can she be understood except as non-ethical force working through our material environment.

MAUD SIMON

Acid Drops

The Sunday question is still to the front. April 8 was "Religious Education Sunday" throughout the diocese of Coventry. We have never heard of that festive outburst, but there is no telling what some people will call enjoyable. But occasion was taken by Canon W. Daniels to protest against a proposal that the Leamington Council should open the public parks for children's games on Sunday. The Canon said that it offered children the choice between Sunday games and Sunday school. The Canon evidently knows which the children would choose. He also said that "we must not let soldiers return and find that their children had not been taught to pray for 'daddy.'" Now that last bit is not funny, it is simply contemptible. Canon Daniels is worthy of his creed.

At Manchester the City Council, by 94 votes to 17, voted against the proposal that cinemas should be opened on Sunday. All the Labour members voted against the proposal. The avowed reason for the vote was that conditions of wages, etc., in the industry were not "adequate." We do not see the connexion between the vote and the proposal. Probably the Sabbatarian vote outside the Council had something to do with it.

Our compliments to the City of York. It has decided by 31 votes to 10 to open cinemas on Sunday. There was, of course, opposition from the clergy. Canon A. R. Lee said the decision would be against the tradition of 1,200 years. More than that, Canon Lee! The traditions of "sacred" days, sacred poles, sacred stones, and other similarly intelligent beliefs, go back many thousands of generations. But beliefs that have been in force for so lengthy a period, even for 1,200 years, usually require overhauling. So, to paraphrase Gilbert, the reason for keeping the Sunday taboo going is the reason for calling a stop. But that reason has force with only the minority. It has no power whatever with the clergy. For their

beginnings date from the same period as taboos. And once we start turning out dusty old cupboards, no one can be quite sure what will happen. It might even affect the modern medicine-man.

A writer in *Light*, the spiritualistic paper, says he seldom sees the *Freethinker*, but when he does

It is always the same, always aggressive, insolent, cloaking abysmal ignorance in counterfeit science. To argue with its contributors were idle.

We call that honourable mention. And all because we do not believe in spooks and astrological foolery! But the information that the thrower of this bouquet gives is quite unnecessary. That is obvious by his comment. But probably this essayist knows his public and finds it necessary to write as he does.

Another bouquet—of a sort. The *Essex County Telegraph* evidently does not like our handling of their position as stated in a recent article. It says we do not desire "there shall be any thinking with which it does not agree." We plead not guilty. We did not suggest that the *Telegraph* thought differently from us—only that its thought was borrowed, and that it was not worth the stealing. That is a real distinction. We would like to see our newspapers, big and little, when they set out to champion religion say something that is either original in itself, or that when borrowed is something worth the borrowing.

From our contemporary, *Reason* (Bombay):—

"The following is, to use a very expressive phrase, 'right from the horse's mouth.' It appeared in the September 1939, issue of *Prediction* in an article entitled 'The Prophets still say there will be no war' by the Editor of that journal (page 317)":—

There Will Be No War

"I am certain Britain will not be engaged in war during the next decade," forecasts the clairvoyant, Frank T. Blake.

"No war involving Britain in 1938-40," predicts the astrologer, R. H. Naylor.

"No world war during the next few years," fore-shadows the automatist, Geraldine Cummins.

"War will be averted—the future is for peace," foretells the blind seer, Cyril Holmes.

"The dictators will shout, but there will be no war," prophesies the numerologist, James Leigh.

Spirit Forecasts

There remain the "spirit" forecasts given through famous mediums.

"No war—the two Dictators will pass away . . . like wisps of straw in the wind," foresees the guide of Sir Dudley Myers.

"You will not be engaged in war—the armaments race will cease," predicts W. T. Stead.

"Not only will there be peace in Europe throughout 1939 and 1940, but for some time to come," foretells Abdul Latiff.

The editor of *Reason* says he has plenty more of the same sort, but considers he has printed enough. So do we.

Just for the fun of the thing. Whenever any of our papers, London or provincial, feel prompted to say something on religion, if they will send it along to us we guarantee to write a better defence—on the same lines, and will make no charge. But there is one condition. They must issue our reply to the improved version of their own defence. What takers?

The other evening we were just on the point of shutting off the radio, when the broadcast was interrupted to give some special news just to hand from the Admiralty. This proved to be the news of the British attack on Narvik, the destruction of a number of German destroyers and the drowning of about a thousand Germans. We left the room for a few moments, and when we returned we were just in time to hear a portion of the religious service being droned out and a parsonic voice reciting "and forgive us our trespasses as

we forgive those who trespass against us." That was the requiem to the news from the Admiralty. And we venture to wager that not a Christian who listened even smiled.

Lord Milne has, it seems, discovered what he considers an even greater asset of the Allies than the Navy or Army. He thanks God that we have so many Nelsons in the Navy. But why divide the honours in this way? At least God did nothing to prevent the brutalities and assaults on unoffending people made by Germany. It seems rather late for God to interfere when the Navy had its stranglehold on Hitler and Co.

We learn from the *Portsmouth Evening News* that Miss Evelyn H. Healey, of Waterlooville, has received from Field Marshal Baron Mannerheim a telegram expressing his "sincerest thanks for the beautiful poem" she wrote and asked permission to dedicate to him. The poem was written just before Finland capitulated and never dreaming of such a calamity, Miss Healey sent it to the Finnish Commander-in-Chief.

FINLANDIA

(A form of prayer to Almighty God)

O! Lord of lords and King of kings, we pray
Watch over Finland, keep her safe to-day.
Grant her the gift You gave to Your dear Son
Who, through cruel pain eternal victory won.

It is quite clear that "the poem was written just before Finland capitulated and never dreaming of such a calamity." Mannerheim's sincerest thanks are not, it will be noted, given to the "Lord of Lords."

A correspondent tells us that at a well-known church in Cambridge there is every Sunday evening a "Religious Service" announced, with the following "Attraction": A Good Orchestra; A Popular Cinema Film; Community Songs; and, last and evidently least, A Very Short Address. If only churches will provide beer and a "strip-tease" show we think there would be a more genuine "religious revival" than anything at present visible. While brevity is a commendable quality in sermons, we remember *Punch's* advice about Homeopathy:

"If it be good in all complaints to take a dose so small,
It surely must be better still to take no dose at all."

We have often referred to the statistics which show beyond all cavil the steady decline of Church and Sunday School attendances. The General Secretary of the National Sunday School Union writes in the *Christian World*, underlining the indisputable facts. He says:—

The world war accentuated this decline—though it did not start it.

The steady retreat from organized religion during the same period has helped to break down family religion and family worship. Fewer parents now co-operate with our teachers and officers.

This fully confirms what has been said in these pages—the decline is a revolution, affecting alike church, Sunday school AND HOME. These facts are liable to be lost sight of because the vast wealth of organized religion, its social and business connexions, and the great battalions of chaplains paid by the State in most cases—in army, navy, air force, prisons, hospitals, and elsewhere—together with old customs like the prayers in Parliament—all these things tend to hide the fact that religion is in retreat as far as any genuine belief is concerned. Freethinkers should press home these truths everywhere.

From an item in the *News-Chronicle* we see Tiverton is proud and fond of its heroes. One of its sons was in the River Plate action, and his modesty has been strained to breaking point by being publicly presented, in the name of the town, with 50 cigarettes and a Bible. The cost of the cigarettes one may easily calculate, but who can properly fix a value upon the Bible? It seems that A.B. Seaman Frost was too overcome to express his feelings. A public meeting has been called to consider the matter.

To get a New Subscriber is to make a New Friend

THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTÉ

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No. : CENTRAL 2412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- J. ROBERTS AND H. SEFTON.—Received and shall appear.
 S. WARD.—In substance it is a joke, but we expect the writer takes himself very seriously.
 E. SYERS AND S. GOLDSTEIN.—Next week.
 J. T. BRIGHTON.—Pleased to hear of your very successful meetings, but not surprised. They are well deserved.

The offices of the National Secular Society and the Secular Society Limited, are now at 68 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Telephone: Central 1367.

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.

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

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

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

The Agenda of the N.S.S. Annual Conference to be held on Whit-Sunday at Manchester appears in this issue. Branch secretaries are reminded to forward names and addresses of delegates and details of hotel accommodation required to the General Secretary as soon as possible. Any member of the N.S.S. may attend the Conference and may speak and vote on the resolutions. An outline of the Conference arrangements is given at the end of the Agenda. There will be a coach trip to Buxton on Whit-Monday, and those wishing to be included are asked to notify either the General Secretary or Mr. W. A. Atkinson, 40, Montford Street, Howard Street, Salford, 5, Lanes.

We are pleased to be able to inform those interested that Mr. Cohen's new book, "Almost an Autobiography" is now finished, so far as the writing is concerned, and is now in the hands of the printer. The book should have been there weeks ago, but Mr. Cohen has had an unusual quantity of extra work connected with the movement since last November, and it had to be put aside. The book will extend to about 270 pages, and will have five plates.

All our friends will be pleased to learn that whatever else the war may have affected for the worse the circulation of the *Freethinker* has not been injured by the conflict. On the contrary, we have obtained a number of new subscribers, and are hoping for more. These will arrive, particularly if those interested remember that there is always a new reader "round the corner." What has also arrived has been another stiff rise in the price of paper, with more of the same sort of thing later. The latest information is that the ration of paper is to be cut down to 30 per cent. of the normal supply. We are pleased to advise our readers that we shall remain as usual—at least for some time. But look out for that new reader. That is the best way of showing one's interest in this journal.

The Secretary of the West London Branch N.S.S. sends us the following:—

When the W.L. Branch held its Annual General Meeting last week, I was requested to write to you by one of our oldest members, and with the full agreement of the other members to congratulate you on your fifty years of service to the Society, and to add the hope that we would yet be applauding you on the event of your "Jubilee." The member who first thought of this happy request told us of some of your "exploits" and difficulties faced in Victoria Park in the early days of your "ministry," and I must say that it made very encouraging hearing to those of us who are still "babes" at the work of speaking.

Very best wishes from all members old and new of the West London Branch.

We appreciate the good wishes expressed. By the way we should be pleased to hear from some of our friends who were with us in our early London fights, and get their recollections—particularly concerning the Victoria Park struggles and the weekly fight at Wood Green, when a number of hooligans were brought up from Shoreditch to teach us what was meant by Christian conviction. Perhaps the last two words are misplaced—according to the police they were "convicted Christians." Those were jolly times. Things are very tame now to what they were.

Will Freethinkers in the Cambridge area willing to co-operate in the formation of a Branch of the N.S.S. please write to Mr. G. Bedborough, 101, Glebe Road, Cambridge. Several new branches of the N.S.S. have been formed recently and there seems no reason why Cambridge should not be added to the list.

We are asked to announce that the West London Branch is holding another Social and Dance at the Lamb and Flag, James Street, Oxford Street (opposite Bond Street Station), on Saturday, April 27, at 7.0. Buffet will be arranged and tickets at 6d. each can be had from Mrs. Buxton, 18, Cambridge Gardens, N.W.6.

A Merry Levite in His Cups

WHEN Bacchus once the Priest subdued,
 With his prevailing Liquor,
 The Man in spite of Art breaks Loose,
 Abstracted from the Vicar.

Sober he kept the Formal Path,
 In's Cups he's not the same Man,
 But Reel'd and Stagger'd in his Faith,
 And Hickup'd like a Layman.

A many pretty things he spoke,
 Deserving our Attention;
 Not Scripture fit to Feed a Flock,
 But of his own Invention.

Yet whether Truths said o'er his Glass,
 Of which I took great Notice,
 Were, or in Vino Veritas,
 Or 'n Verbo Sacerdotis.

We could not tell; yet Praise was due,
 Tho' unto which to give it,
 I Vow I know not of the two,
 The Liquor or the Levite.

His Scarlet Cheeks inflam'd with Drink,
 Together with his White-Head,
 Made him appear just like a Link,
 When at one end 'tis Lighted.

He Drank in Earnest, broke his Jest,
 No Scripture Phrases utter'd;
 The Man he Play'd, and not the Priest;
 But put the best side outward.

Till Drown'd at last in Bacchus streams,
 The Prophet's Weak Condition,
 Lull'd him to Sleep to Dream strange Dreams,
 Or see some wond'rous Vision.

NED WARD (1698)

The National Secular Society

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MAY 12, 1940

AGENDA

1. Minutes of last Conference.
2. Executive's Annual Report.
3. Financial Report.
4. Election of President.
Motion by South London, West London, Manchester, West Ham and Chester-le-Street Branches :—
"That Mr. Chapman Cohen be re-elected President of the N.S.S."
5. Election of Secretary.
Motion by the Executive :—
"That Mr. R. H. Rosetti be appointed Secretary."
6. Election of Treasurer.
Motion by West London and North London Branches :—
"That Mr. H. R. Clifton be re-elected Treasurer."
7. Election of Auditor.
Mr. H. L. Theobald is eligible and offers himself for re-election.
8. Nominations for Executive.
SCOTLAND.—Mr. F. A. Hornibrook and Mrs. H. B. Grant, nominated by Glasgow Branch.
WALES.—Mr. T. Gorniot and Mr. A. C. Rosetti, nominated by Swansea Branch.
N.E. GROUP.—Miss K. B. Kough, nominated by Sunderland, North Shields, Newcastle and Chester-le-Street Branches.
N.W. GROUP.—Mr. E. Bryant and Mr. G. Thompson, nominated by Liverpool, Blackburn, Bolton, Chester and Burnley Branches.
S.W. GROUP.—Mr. G. H. Wood, nominated by Plymouth Branch.
MIDLAND GROUP.—Mrs. C. G. Quinton (Junn.) nominated by Birmingham Branch.
SOUTH LONDON.—Mr. H. Preece, nominated by South London and Kingston Branches.
NORTH LONDON.—Mr. L. Ebury, nominated by North London Branch.
EAST LONDON.—Mr. H. Silvester, nominated by Bethnal Green and West Ham Branches.
WEST LONDON.—Mr. J. Horowitz, nominated by West London Branch.
9. Motion by Executive :—
"That this Conference, in view of the nation-wide clerical agitation to repeal the Cowper Temple clause, to gain more direct control of the State schools for the introduction of dogmatic religious teaching, and to introduce a religious test for teachers, reaffirms its conviction that the only method of ending this seventy-year-old quarrel is by the adoption of a clear policy of Secular Education, and calls on all who do not believe in the State teaching of religion to withdraw their children from religious instruction in schools receiving a Government grant."
10. Motion by North London Branch :—
"That this Conference condemns the tendency, now finding expression in the House of Commons and elsewhere, to suppress the activities of political and other organizations during the course of a war that is avowedly being fought to secure freedom in Europe. This Conference also urges Freethinkers to question all proposed restrictions, under plea of war-time necessities, of that freedom of speech and publication which has been so dearly won by our predecessors."
11. Motion by West Ham Branch :—
"That a distinctive inscription be designed and placed on the badge of the National Secular Society."
12. Motion by Kingston Branch :—
"That this Conference, bearing in mind that the British armed forces comprise men belonging to all shades of religious opinion, and those who are opposed to all forms of religion, bearing in mind that one of the avowed purposes of the war is to secure complete religious equality, demands :
(a) the abolition of the religious oath on joining the forces;
(b) the abolition of compulsory Church parade;
(c) the abolition of the appointment of Army chaplains with the rank and pay of officers."
13. Motion by Mr. Seibert :—
"This Conference strongly protests against the dishonest attempt of leaders of the Christian Churches and others to identify the cause of the war with the growth of Freethought, and condemns the gross dishonesty of such an assumption in a world that has been dominated by the Christian religion for nearly two thousand years."
14. Motion by Mr. Norman Charlton :—
(a) "That this Conference regards the growing influence of the Roman Catholic Church in the Press, Parliament, and local government as a direct menace to civil liberty and freedom of speech."
(b) "That, bearing in mind the use being made by the B.B.C. for the propaganda of religious ideas, this Conference urges Freethinkers to agitate by all the means at their disposal for a representation of Freethought teaching through what is substantially a government organization."
15. Motion by Mr. G. H. Taylor :—
"That it be an instruction to the Executive to consider the circulation of the case for Secular Education among students leaving training colleges to become school teachers."
16. Motion by North London Branch :—
"That in view of the increase of 'Race' hatred and its inevitable accompaniments, injustice, brutality and intolerance, this Conference reaffirms the principle of the Brotherhood of Man and advises that stress be laid on it in our propaganda."
17. Motion by South London Branch :—
"That this Conference, having regard to the increasing amount of business at the Annual Conference considers it advisable that an extra session be held on the evening before the Conference, or that the Sunday public meeting be abandoned and a business session be held in its stead."
18. Motion by Kingston Branch :—
"This Conference regrets the many instances in which Freethinkers and others who are in favour of the Secularization of life, fail to take advantage with regard to making affirmation in all cases where an oath is necessary, of their legal right to withdraw their children from religious instruction, and the neglect of the facilities for conducting a secular service at funerals."
19. On the Aims and Purposes of the National Secular Society; a general discussion to be opened by the President.

The Conference will sit in the Victoria Hotel, Deansgate, Manchester, Morning Session, 10.30 to 12.30; Afternoon Session, 2.30 to 4.30. Delegates will be required to produce their credentials at the door; Members of the Society are entitled to be present. A Luncheon for delegates and visitors at 1 p.m., price 3s. 6d., will be provided in the Victoria Hotel. There will be a reception of Members and Delegates at 7 o'clock, on Saturday evening, May 11 in the Victoria Hotel; and a Public Demonstration on Sunday evening at 7, in the Chorlton Town Hall, All Saints, Manchester.

By order of the Executive,

CHAPMAN COHEN, *President.*

R. H. ROSETTI, *Secretary.*

Highways and Byways in English History

V.—SCIENCE, DEISM AND TOLERATION

The transition from heresy, the forerunner of Free-thought, to Freethought itself was made possible by the scientific discoveries of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The opening of the ocean highways by Columbus, Cabot, and later navigators led to momentous strides in the organization of knowledge. The telescope, first made for navigational purposes, became in the hands of Galileo a revolutionary instrument in the development of astronomy. Galileo and the telescope were followed by Torricelli and the barometer, and by Descartes and analytical geometry. Descartes tells us that his motive in writing was to discover a means by which

knowing the force and action of fire, water, air, the stars, the heavens, and all the other bodies that surround us, as distinctly as we know the various crafts of our artisans, we might also apply them in the same way to all the uses to which they are adapted, and thus render ourselves the lords and possessors of nature.

During the Commonwealth a small group of men took in hand the promotion of experimental science in England. Prominent among them were Robert Boyle, John Evelyn, William Petty, and Christopher Wren. Their interests were practical as well as theoretical. Evelyn and Petty interested themselves in the improvement of agriculture and industry. Petty was a pioneer of political economy and statistics. After the Restoration the group attracted the notice of Charles II., and was incorporated as the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge. But Charles's interest in the venture was very superficial. Pepys records that the King laughed at the members "for spending time only in weighing of ayre, and doing nothing else since they sat." The experiments which excited the royal mirth had already led to Boyle's discovery of the law of pressure in gases, and paved the way for the application of steam-power to industry.

These developments fostered that way of thinking about the world which we now call Materialism. When man, instead of being at the mercy of nature, begins to control nature, he ceases to believe in occult forces and miraculous interventions. Deism, or the belief in a God who, like a constitutional monarch, reigns but does not govern, is historically a mere stepping-stone to Materialism. In the later part of the seventeenth century Deism was in the air. The proliferation of sects under the Commonwealth, the reaction of the wealthier classes against Puritanism, and the work of the Royal Society all combined to promote the disintegration of dogma. The first Earl of Shaftesbury—an able scoundrel who fought on both sides in the Civil War, supported Cromwell, ratted in time to sit in judgment on the regicides, became Lord Chancellor under Charles II., then ratted again to head the Whig opposition, and finally made England too hot for him and died in Holland—is said by Burnet to have remarked that all sensible men were of the same religion, and being asked what that was, to have replied: "No sensible man tells." Shaftesbury's confidential secretary was the philosopher John Locke, who, professing Christian though he was, prepared the way for Voltaire and Hume. So long as Deism was confined to the upper ranks of society and did not threaten to unsettle the masses, it was safe from the interference of the law.

Meanwhile the last act of the drama of the English

Revolution was played out. The moneyed classes, who restored the monarchy in 1660, did not intend to restore absolutism. The King was to be the honoured servant of capital, not its master; and failure to see that necessity soon involved the Stuart dynasty in final shipwreck. The enthusiasm of the middle classes for the Restoration was soon cooled by the profligate extravagance of the court, the new taxation thereby entailed, the disastrous Dutch war, the repudiation of the King's debts in 1672, and his pro-French and pro-Catholic foreign policy. All those interests—the City of London at their head—which a generation before had rallied to Parliament against Charles I. were now mobilized against his sons. Charles II. was able to hold his own against them, thanks to the support of the squires and parsons and to secret subsidies from Louis XIV. of France. But under James II. even the squires and parsons found that their loyalty had limits. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV. and the consequent sufferings of the French Huguenots, between four and five hundred thousand of whom were driven into exile, fired the anti-Catholic and anti-French gentlemen of England with just that spark of righteous indignation which so often converts material interest into moral conviction. France was at that time the most formidable commercial, colonial, and naval competitor of England. The interests of English merchants, and English landowners with trading connexions, coincided with those of William of Orange, who wished to bring England into his alliance of continental powers against Louis. William was invited to England; James was deserted by his officers and troops; and the "glorious" Revolution was accomplished practically without bloodshed.

The effect of the English Revolution was to transfer the Government from the King and a favoured circle of courtiers and monopolists to a Parliament roughly representing landlords and merchants, to the exclusion of the lower, middle and working classes. The position of the great monopolies, no longer protected by the royal prerogative, was thenceforth increasingly precarious, though their fall was delayed by the vast funds at their command for corrupting Parliament. Even so the monopolies of the Merchant Adventurers and the Eastland Company were abolished in 1689, the year of the Revolution. The same year witnessed the end of the Anglican monopoly in religion. The Toleration Act granted freedom of worship to Protestant Nonconformists. It maintained the penal laws against Catholics and deniers of the Trinity, and was followed a few years later by a Blasphemy Act against denial of the Christian religion or the divine authority of Scripture. But that Act was no innovation, and indicates rather the spread of the opinions against which it was directed than any actual retrogression. Behind the façade of orthodoxy, at the clubs of the wits and the tea-tables of the polite, Freethought was the prevailing fashion.

ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON

(To be continued)

WHEN HE FELT PIOUS

Rev. H. Fosdick, of Riverside Church, New York, was awakened one 3 a.m. by a violent ringing of his front door bell. . . . He found an inebriated collegiate at the steps.

"Dr. Fosdick," hiccupped the youth, "why do you believe in the eternal life of the soul?"

"Come around in the morning when you are sober and I'll tell you," replied the understanding minister.

"Oh, no," was the retort, "when I'm sober I don't give a damn!"

The German Contribution to Psychology

[GESTALT]

(Concluded from p. 229)

A CONVENIENT summary of the kind of physiological mechanism envisaged by Gestalt is given by Dr. F. Aveling.¹ "The figure-ground phenomenon is said to be due to differences of electrical potential set up in the sensory surface (e.g. the retina) that propagate themselves to the brain. Thought is explained as being due to a disturbance of equilibrium of potential set up in the nervous system. It is initiated by an event, the mental parallel of which is a question asked or a problem set. And the subsequent restoration of equilibrium through a transitional phase that is marked by a temporal 'closure,' comes to an end when the answer is found or the problem solved. Both instinctive and volitional activities are dealt with in the same fashion. Thus animal behaviour and human conduct are brought under the heading of configured or shaped wholes, and within the scope of the regulative principles derived from a study of perception. Just as a functional whole in the nervous system corresponds to the seeing of an object, or pattern, on a background, so behaviour is the reaction of the organism as a whole to the entire stimulus-situation. In this view the organism is regarded as being a field of nervous energy which reacts to stimulation by changing its nervous potentials, and in regaining its balance it both perceives and behaves. The aspect of perceiving is linked up with that of behaving, as two sides of one and the same neuro-muscular response to disturbance of potentials.

"Consider as an example the behaviour that leads to the fulfilment of any conscious wish we ourselves may experience, such as the desire for food when we are hungry. Already in such a situation a goal is set up—the satisfying of the hunger, or the restoration of equilibrium in a neuro-muscular system that has been disturbed by internal stimulation arising from the stomach wall. The organism is under tension or stress towards that goal; and the movements ending in restoration are those of seeking food. They are the phases, through which we must successively pass, of a process that begins in desire and ends in satiety, or, stated physiologically, that begins in a disturbance of nervous potential and ends in equilibrium. It is a case of 'closure' in a temporal rather than a spatial system. The hungry animal is, as Koffka says, forwardly directed; and its restlessness ceases only when the goal is objectively attained."

All the properties and reactions of the conscious organisms thus "follow what are in principle physical laws. Indeed, Köhler begins his psychology "from the starting point of physics," showing that there are systems of distribution of physical energy, such as those of heat or electricity, the nature and behaviour of the parts of which do not belong to them as parts, but are derived from the whole system. Thus, an electric charge derives its potential from an electrical system or field in which there are necessarily other potentials. This is fundamentally a Gestalt view. And it obtains no less clearly in general biology, especially in the phenomena of growth, where the multiplication and differentiation of individual cells, tissues and organs come about in virtue of the physiological gradients that in no way belong to the parts but only to the organism as a whole. . . . The organism, which is regarded as a distributed system of energy existing within wider fields of force of various kinds,

regulates its own activities of itself in virtue of being a whole, the whole fatally responding to the whole environment of which it is at the same time a part" (*ibid.*).

The process learning is easily brought within the gestalt theory. "Whether in bodily skills or in mental attainments, learning is the perfecting of response on the part of the organism to stimulation coming from the environment" (*ibid.*). It is a matter of forming configurations, not the piling up of elementary items taken piecemeal. This is not to say, of course, that the total clauses of the Act of Settlement or the words down one page of a dictionary can be assimilated in this way, since they are not immediately presented as a gestalt, and are therefore not perceived as a configuration. Perception does not create configurations; it finds them.

In the case of a poem which has been forgotten, it would, according to Gestalt, be erroneous to say we have "not retained it in memory." In this sense there is no retention; nothing happens between the experience and the recall. But upon some stimulation, a pattern of nervous potentials, similar to that produced by the original stimulus, is set up, and what follows is not recall, but re-cognition, or the re-knowing of the experience, possibly more vague or faulty because of the incomplete nature of the present stimulus.

The physiological ability to perceive a gestalt will doubtless depend on the quality of the animal. If it is true that all animals perceive by gestalt, then it would not be surprising to find that the more complex the animal the more power will it have of seeing wider wholes. The poet who deplored the fate of those who had

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows,

picked two of the most stupid of the larger creatures. Every farmer will grant that the ewe generally knows her own lambs. To attribute this to "mother-love" is utterly fantastic. The sheep has not even been able to form a very wide gestalt. It is found that touch and taste are the simple essentials, and the ewe will mother the lambs it licks first, regardless as to their parentage.

As for the cow, her gestalt in connexion with the calf may very soon be upset. She will look for the young one taken away. If it is killed and returned to her stuffed with straw she will resume the licking operations as though it were alive. Having licked the seam away she comes to the straw, which she then complacently begins to eat.

In each success or valid advancement in Gestalt the losers are those who cling to the associationism of Herbert Spencer, James Mill, J. S. Mill and Bain, two of whom could be counted among the greatest minds of their century. We can honour these truthseekers without any semi-religious adulation, and if it should prove something of a wrench to own that they were wrong on several important matters, the Freethinker will not shirk the implications of modern progress. Only those who make of Spencer a figure of veneration will approach with prejudice those subsequent well-tested data which have shown some of his psychological conclusions to rest on insufficient material. Spencer had a great mind, but he could not foresee the future, and his more pompous and pedantic passages now appear as big bubbles punctured by the teeth of experiment.

Gestalt seeks to provide a working alternative to associationism, starting with parts and wholes rather than with aggregates mysteriously dealt with by a transcendent faculty. It thus falls into line with the modern tendency to dispense with the "central knower," at one time an awkward joker in the pack.

¹ *Psychology: the Changing Outlook.*

Introspection is rejected as "lacking the chief methodological virtue of psychical research, a position of observation external to the system under observation."² Koffka also criticises introspection as failing to give an independent criterion that the observations are correct as well as suffering distortion in being concerned with what is happening at the moment. But, he asks, just as the external world affects us, why should not also our inner physiological states? Along with experienced external order there is a corresponding order in "the underlying dynamic context of physiological processes, the correspondence being between two orders, experiential and functional.

Gestalt has brought holism into psychology, but its holism is materialistic in that it does not leave us with a "holistic factor" high and dry. Behaviour, for the gestaltist, is made up of patterns in which the parts "belong together," and is determined by the background on which it is performed. In this there is analogy with material objects and patterns, as gestaltists are at some pains to show.

No less a critic than McDougall puts Gestalt as a "support for mechanistic biology" in his survey³ of psychological theories, and Dr. Gardner Murphy⁴ who favours Gestalt, shows what progress has been made by interpreting mental behaviour on physiological lines. McCabe⁵ also regards Gestaltism as materialistic, but his treatment is rather scrappy, as he appears to run breathlessly through so many theories without getting below their surface. This may be due to the ambitious scope of the book in question, but in the case of Gestalt this criticism is perhaps rather telling, since a more detailed study would conceivably have found him in considerable difficulties in an attempt to reconcile Gestalt with his own particular brand of non-emergent materialism.

Another favourable consideration to Gestalt is given by the psychoanalyst Professor J. C. Flügel,⁶ and again, by Professor Levy, whose conception of isolates it fits like hand to glove. Gestalt has also been adopted in an avowedly materialistic philosophy (*The Philosophy of Physical Realism*) by the American Critical Realist, R. W. Sellars, the soundest philosophy I have encountered.

A rather heavy Source Book of Gestalt has recently been published, but the psychology may adequately be consulted in Köhler's *Gestalt Psychology*; his *Mentality of Apes*, and Koffka's *Principles of Gestalt Psychology*.

G. H. TAYLOR

² *Gestalt Psychology* (Köhler, 1930).

³ *The Riddle of Life*.

⁴ *General Psychology*.

⁵ *Riddle of the Universe To-day*.

⁶ *A Hundred Years of Psychology*.

Confucius Say

A "CONFUCIUS SAY" craze is at the present time entertaining America. This means that a certain number of people who are living in America (or, it may be, the U.S.A.) are responding to a new diversion. The enthusiasm for "Crosswords" and the like is on the wane and it is imperative at the moment that some innocent amusement must be devised in order to make people believe that their lives are worth living. Every person who is capable, or thinks he is capable, of perpetrating a "wisecrack" prefaces it either in speech or in print by "Confucius Say." Advertisers are making free use of the expression in order to peddle their wares, and the device, it will have been observed, is even spreading to this sedate country. Confucius several hundred years before the Son of God trod the earth for our benefit, was indeed responsible for many sage utterances; his system of

ethics was secular and utilitarian. Of course he made the un-Christian error of not attaching to human conduct a scale of rewards and punishments—that was reserved for a later date by way of divine revelation. All the same, divinely unassisted, this yellow man did very well according to his lights. The type of wisecrack fathered by the Marx Brothers was not however (this much should certainly be said) typical of his genius.

The following are a trio out of a multitude of aphorisms now amusing the American public, and are considered so good that they are thought worthy of being attributed to Confucius:—

Man who slings mud loses ground.

He who sits on electric chair gets amps in pants.

He who knocks his head on stone wall has hard time.

These, we anticipate, will be quite sufficient.

In night clubs and on the radio a song is plugged called "Confucius Say" and over half a million of the song have been already sold. A "Confucius Say" gown was recently exhibited at a Chicago fashion show. Cigarettes, toffees, corsets, pamphlets, soaps, cheeses and tonics are all being boomed under this caption. This is not surprising. The number of people that "would skin a rat for its hide and fat" is a large one. The device evidently pays and it will continue to be used until it ceases to pay. There is a portion of the population, however, that is not amused, and that is the Chinese portion. This geyser of wit rouses in them other emotions. For not having had the advantage of a Christian education they have a feeling towards Confucius which take a surprising form—the form of *respect*. Not having imbibed Christian civilization they see incongruity in this form of mirth. They don't think it decorous to have Confucius depicted as a humourist and a tenth-rate humourist at that. But this matters little. For what the Christian—and it is the Christian who matters—derives from *Confucius Say* is a pleasant little feeling of superiority; it is so soothing to believe that these Heathen Chinese fellows have still far to go (they haven't arrived even at an elementary point of English grammar) before they catch up to Christian America in this year of all the years so clearly illustrative of the value of The One and Only Religion. Shades of Bret Harte!

One Chinese gentleman, for instance, a naturalized Chinese citizen, is far from being disposed to lean back and lend his guffaws. This is how he has expressed himself:—

Although the sad is quite innocent, and by no means conducive to the destruction of the friendship that exists between the United States and China, it may be described, however, as a symptom of loss of esteem for China.

And one may surely add (as Mr. Meeus is too courteous) as a symptom of loss of Chinese esteem for America. But then Confucianism is not Christianity. Confucianism to many Americans (we give no names) is just a form of Infidelity and the war going on is (or should be) pre-eminently a Christian War. Let us be thankful that in America, the land of Lincoln and Ingersoll, the inhabitants are not all so fossilized. Still, the fact that there are many in the States who can only work up enthusiasm for war if it be waged under an Anti-Infidel Banner should convince Mr. Meeus that China stands very much in the cold against such a Holy Alignment. For to such specimens of the fruits of Christian civilization the Chinese are but yellow devils and when the Cross of Jesus leads them into battle it will not matter much what Confucius Say or Says. For Jesus then will reign. Luckily this cannot disturb Mr. Meeus a great deal, for the Cross

of Jesus as a talisman has not been very conspicuous in the past for delivering the goods. A modern Confucius would have much to say about this phenomenon, but it would not be in the form of a wisecrack. It would just be wise.

Mr. Meeus explains that the people of China would not think of advertising their commodities over the heading of Jesus Say (or, as a variant, *Jesus opened his mouth and said*). He makes no suggestions of how this device could be exploited should business exigencies call for it. He is under the control of a secular ethic which owes nothing to Jesus and yet he has become mysteriously possessed of an admirable code of propriety worthy of attention. But the present writer has no such restraint. He is one born and bred in a Christian country and who is officially numbered as a Christian when heads are counted to show how strong Christianity is numerically compared with other devil-inspired religions such as Confucianism. He, therefore, can step in where a Confucian is not disposed to tread. To those who believe that Christianity is first and foremost allied to Big Business and are engaged in applying it by laying up for themselves treasures on this earth, a few examples are presented which may, if utilised in China, help to bring grist to the mill:—

JESUS SAY:

Behold the Lamb of God!
Australian Mutton.

I saw the spirit descending from Heaven.
Webster's Gin.

Solomon in all his Glory was not arrayed as one of these.
Mulberry's Macintoshes.

I will liken him unto a wise man who built his house upon a rock.
Rock Building Society.

Arise and walk.
But first procure Shuffle's Shoes.

Thou canst not make one hair white or black.
Can't you? What about Halcyon Hair Dyes?
See that no man know it.

Whited sepulchres!
Ha! He thought they were WHITE!

So that when Mr. Meeus tells us that "it would be just as bad to ascribe allegedly funny sayings to Christ" it becomes necessary to inform him (once again, as a Christian) that "there is a time for everything." Circumstances alter cases. A Christian is a Christian and a Confucian is a Confucian and never the twain will meet. What is the good of being of the Blood Royal if no privileges are to accrue therefrom? It is plainly absurd that the Christian revelation can in any way conflict with the interests of big business. Confucianism is of the earth, earthy. It is unspiritual.

Mr. Meeus can also rely that already his remarks will have been taken as a practical business suggestion by alert Christian gentlemen and that its value will be already receiving intelligent consideration. One thing is certain and that is that the *infidel* will be exploited if there be money in it. "As far away as China is" it will be safe enough, and after this unfortunate war between China and Japan which all Christian Business Men deplore to some extent for the best of reasons, then will the Heathen Chinese learn what *Jesus Say*. For if it should promise a good return there is little doubt that "they're going to introduce it into China."

T. H. ELSTON

Correspondence

SWEDENBORG

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER"

SIR,—In an article entitled "Souls" in your issue of March 31, Swedenborg is quoted as a believer in the transmigration of souls. We have been publishing the writings of Swedenborg for 130 years and have yet to learn that this is the case.

Perhaps the writer of the article will refer us to the particular passage in the "True Christian Religion" on which he founds his statement.

FRED. CHADWICK

(We regret that such a statement should have escaped our notice. It was an obvious slip on the part of the writer.—Ed.)

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

LONDON

INDOOR

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1): 11.0, Professor G. W. Keeton, M.A., LL.D.—"Federalism in our Time."

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Lamb and Flag, James Street, Oxford Street, opposite Bond Street Station): 7.0, Social evening and Dance. Saturday, April 27. Tickets sixpence each from Secretary, 18, Cambridge Gardens, N.W.6.

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KINGSTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Place): 6.30, A Lecture.
NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Mr. L. Ebury. Parliament Hill Fields, 3.30, Mr. L. Ebury.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12 noon until 6 p.m. Various Speakers.

COUNTRY

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ACCRINGTON MARKET: 7.30, Wednesday, Mr. J. Clayton.
BLYTH (The Fountain): 7.0, Monday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.
BRIERFIELD: 7.30, Friday, Mr. J. Clayton.
BURNLEY MARKET: 7.0, Sunday, Mr. J. Clayton.
CHESTER-LE-STREET: 11.0, Sunday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.
HIGHAM: 7.30, Monday, Mr. J. Clayton.
MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Blackburn Market): 7.15, Thursday. Bury Market, 7.30, Saturday. Stevenson Square, 3.30, Sunday. Ashton Market, 7.0, Sunday. Mr. W. A. Atkinson will speak at these meetings.
NEWCASTLE (Bigg Market): 7.0, Friday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.
NORTH SHIELDS (Harbour View): 6.30, Tuesday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.
SOUTHEND BRANCH N.S.S. (Marine Parade): Sunday afternoon, Mr. G. Taylor will speak.
STOCKTON (The Cross): 6.30, Sunday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.
TEES-SIDE BRANCH N.S.S. (Market Steps, Darlington): 6.30, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"What is the Use of the Clergy?"

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