

THE FREETHINKER

• EDITED *by* CHAPMAN COHEN •
— Founded 1881 —

VOL. LX.—No. 34

SUNDAY, AUGUST 25, 1940

PRICE THREEPENCE

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Views and Opinions

Exploiting the War

GERMANY has discovered by this time that we are a dogged people; not merely in religious matters but in secular ones also. During the past two years we have had several official days devoted to national prayers. There was a very prolonged one before the war, and the response was Munich. Then we tried another, and that introduced the surrender of the King of Belgium. Undaunted we tried again, and the answer was the collapse of our French allies. Now, to prove that our assault of heaven is as dogged as our defence of Britain, the King, or his spiritual advisers, has fixed September 8 as a day on which "English-speaking people all over the world" will carry on a mass attack on heaven. On September 8 a spiritual raid alarm will be started in all the Churches, and the all clear will not be sounded until the evening.

There is something peculiar in the way the notice of this massed attack on God Almighty appeared. The papers announced that the "King's command will be carried out in British Churches throughout the Empire." We are not charging the King with the responsibility for this magnificent piece of bluff, he, we suspect, is a quite unconscious party to it. We are not sure but that the King as head of the State Church possesses the power to order prayers in the Church of England, but we are quite certain of two things. The first is that he has no right to order what any other church shall do, and certainly no power to order anyone to attend church. Anyone may if he pleases play snooker on September 8. And if an international snooker competition were arranged for that day we are certain that something would happen afterwards, just as something happened after each "day of prayer" we have had. But the King, although his own religion was selected for him by Act of Parliament, cannot command the religious opinions or the religious performances of any one of "his people." Strictly speaking, the King is the chief

State official with powers and privileges that are circumscribed and duties that are elastic. Mussolini and Hitler may "command" their followers when to cheer, when to demonstrate, and so forth, but not George the Sixth. If and when that control of opinion should happen Hitler will have conquered Britain, even though he never lands here.

We are not blaming the King for this flamboyant announcement that on September 8 we are to behave as though we were still in the Stone Age. It probably is the work of the heads of the English Church, in consultation with a certain number of leading politicians, and both must have confidence in the ineradicable gullibility of a large section of the public to venture on yet another day of prayer. We agree that if these days of prayer are held frequently enough something that is pleasing will happen, and the hope of the parsonry will be gratified. In this way the praying of the people will justify the preying on the people. The Church has always called its members its sheep, and it is the predestined lot of sheep to be sheared.

* * *

Dishonest Propaganda

There is no question that there is afoot an organised movement on the part of the churches—established and nonconformist—to utilise the war in their own interests. We have had created the slogan that this war is being fought for the preservation of Christianity. That was a sheer abuse of language, and was passed only because people have got into the habit of using religious phrases without any regard to their nonsensicality. They mean no more than "Great Scot" or "Holy Moses." I recall, by the way, an American friend of mine who found much satisfaction in moments of stress in ejaculating "Jesus Christ and General Jackson" the two biggest men in America. I never could understand the association of the two names, but they gave my friend evident spiritual consolation.

But in the mouths of such men as the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Halifax, and those members of the House of Commons who cannot divest themselves of the illusion that Parliament is a mere extension of the evangelistic platform, there is a decided difference. With these the intention of making religious capital out of the war is aggressively plain. Morally there is no distinction between their conduct and the worst forms of financial profiteering. These men know quite well that no British Prime Minister dare declare war for the purpose of safeguarding the Christian religion. To protect the rights of men to hold and teach whatever religion they please is a reasonable proposition, for that comes under the heading of freedom in general. But the days of avowedly religious war are passed, although while they lasted they lacked nothing in the shape of brutality and intolerance. An avowedly religious war is impossible to-day, but religious feelings, under other forms, may prevent our getting the

kind of peace we might otherwise have. There is a remote possibility that this war may last long enough gradually to reduce civilisation to the level that would make possible a return to real religion. Religion begins in the darkness of savagery, it declines with the growth of civilisation and science. And retrogression is as much a part of evolution as progress. Nature in the raw knows neither up nor down. It knows only movement, and that will be in whatever direction circumstances decide.

We called attention last week to a religious circular that was being distributed to the tenants of one of the L.C.C. estates, and which was issued from the L.C.C. estate office. It is to be hoped that this religious propaganda, which probably owes its existence to the impertinence of some local official, will be taken notice of by a member of the Council and a protest made. There are enough Freethinkers on the Council to act. The same circular has been issued by some Mayors of different towns. We do not quite know whether any members of a local council can be induced to follow the advice just given, and it is not much use appealing to the sense of fair-play of these Mayors. Mayors of towns are apt to be supporters of local churches or chapels—many votes depend upon this—but the matter might be raised in the local press. *Might*, for chapel-dorm exercises great influence on the editors of small town papers. Still, it must be remembered that all Christians are not dead to a sense of fair-play even where their own religious opinions are concerned, and in the past there have been many prominent Christians who have risen superior to their creed in such matters as those touched on.

Now we have received yet another circular. Goodness only knows how many of them are about, but their number and distribution argues a concerted movement to exploit the war in the interests of the Christian religion. This time the circular is being sent to the headmasters of schools, and it asks that every morning there should be a "few minutes' silence" to remind the pupils of the power of prayer. The circular we have before us comes to us from one of the "staff-board" of a school. We have no knowledge of how many headmasters have received this missive or how all have treated it. Some may have put it in the fire, some may have passed it by as impertinent, but it is quite certain that some headmasters, wanting in a sense of honesty and social obligation, will think it quite a "good thing." In such cases the influence exerted by the master on both his staff and on the pupils is not likely to be a very healthy one.

* * *

The Press and the Public

Last, for the moment, comes the "Daily Herald," that alleged organ of democracy. In its issue for August 10 there is published a special article asking for better religious leaders than we have, and it points to the great men we had in 1914. Considering that "Woodbine Willy" and "Dick" Sheppard are specially named, the "Herald" writer's idea of a great religious leader is very peculiar. He has probably confused good advertisers with great religionists. The article concludes that in "genuine religion (God and the writer alone knows what is meant by that) we have the only guarantee of progress and permanent peace." I will do the editor the credit of assuming that he read that sentence with his tongue in his cheek. Assuming that the editor has some knowledge of history, he must be aware that most European wars have been fought by Christians, and the more pronounced the Christianity the more vicious the quality of the war. It was to the Christian countries that the Japanese, the Chinese, and the Turks had to come for lessons to make war more destructive. The only influence on war exerted by

Christianity in the day of its greatest power was to moralise war, and to give the soldier a position of honour that he did not possess in either the Greek or the Roman civilisation. Christians have shown themselves mighty in organising war, but one-tenth of that ingenuity applied to peace would have made war a thing of the past.

The "Herald" writer complains that the clergy of to-day are not leading. But they are trying to lead. Their trouble is that the people will not be so easily led by the clergy as was once the case. They are certainly not leading the soldiers for want of trying to do so. The soldiers, for the most part, do not want them. It is not the soldiers who complain they have not enough chaplains, it is the chaplains who complain they have not enough soldiers. How many men in the Army, or Navy, or Air Force complain of a shortage of parsons? How many of them prefer a religious service to a "show"? How many of them would attend Church parade if it were left to their own voluntary appearance at one? The demand for more parsons, and better parsons in the armed forces, comes from the parsonage, not from the armed forces. All these things should be as plain to the "Herald" as it is to us; but papers must be sold and prejudices must be catered for. And people are so used to downright nonsense in the name of religion that no one is surprised when it appears.

* * *

To Freethinkers

This half-negligent, half-assentive attitude, particularly on the part of Freethinkers, will not do. It is a good example of the truth that a deal of the strength of religious bigots to-day is derived from the carelessness of those who disagree with them. Propaganda should be met with propaganda and the aggressive public advertising of religious conviction with public assertion on the other side. For example, several millions of men have been enlisted in the armed forces. Every one of these has the legal right to have his attitude towards religion set down—Atheist, Agnostic, or "none"—as he pleases. More than that, if he has entered the Army, Navy or Air Force as a Christian or as believing in some other form of religion, and his opinions undergo a change he has the right to have that change of belief registered.

How many avail themselves of that legal right on joining or after they have joined? Only a small percentage. The common attitude is, "What does it matter?" Well, it matters very considerably. We are fighting a world war because opinion matters. Institutions exist which ought to be destroyed, institutions that ought to be established are not established because opinion matters. The one thing that Germany dreads is opinion. It fights that as a condition of keeping its gangster government in being. We are at war largely because of opinion. The action of civilised men is largely directed by opinion, whether that opinion be right or wrong. All propaganda from Roman Catholicism to Freethought, from Communism to rabid Toryism, largely depends upon opinion. The more important is it that opinion shall be carefully formed and wisely circulated.

We are, therefore, asking Freethinkers in any of the armed forces, in town and city and village, to do what they can to meet the new crusade that is developing in favour of the Churches, to meet it in the only way it can be met—by the impact of counter-opinion. Every Freethinking voter in the London area, and as many others as are susceptible to the claim of fair-play, could write to the L.C.C. complaining of the use of its machinery for sectarian ends. Every Freethinking ratepayer, and even those who are not, could write protesting against officials using municipal positions to

religious ends. They could bombard the local press with letters of protest. Freethinkers all over the country could write to their Members of Parliament protesting against the Mumbo-Jumboism of a day of National Prayer. If we are not savages we should try and behave like civilised human beings.

And the schools? Here again we should meet propaganda with propaganda. We have often urged that small associations of those who do not believe in the State teaching of religion should form themselves into small local associations, avail themselves of their legal rights and withdraw their children from religious instruction. That would have a powerful effect in checking the parsonage—nonconformist and established—from further dominating the schools. One way and another the Church has in recent times captured too much of their lost ground. We ought to see that they do not capture more, and are divested of that which they now have. If parents wish their children to have religious instruction let them procure it outside the State-supported schools.

In this matter we may make a suggestion. In the *Freethinker* office there are at least three special pamphlets which could do good work in this direction. These are "Freethought and the Child," "The Church's Fight for the Child," and "What is Freethought?" Packets of twenty-four of these pamphlets will be sent, post free, for two shillings. Although we say it, they are clearly written and are very much to the point. They cannot but do good, and they will show that Freethinkers are alive and active. The war has assumed such a character that we may safely say that the mind of most people is alive and active. We should all utilise the occasion to the uttermost. If the war is to end in laying the foundations of a new world that is better than the existing one clarity of thought will be the surest way by which we may realise our ideal.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

The Great Saint Bernard

Only on paper has humanity yet achieved glory,
beauty, truth, knowledge, virtue, and abiding love.

Bernard Shaw

THAT unsubduable old veteran, Bernard Shaw, has written another play, and has been adding fresh scenes to a film of a former success. The play is as fresh as if it were the work of a young writer beginning his career, and is delighting present-day audiences as clearly as his earlier efforts charmed their parents nearly half a century ago. Over eighty years of age, he still dazzles with his genius, and he has even become a classic in his own life time. Such a career is remarkable, for the purely parochial success of an ordinary writer sinks into insignificance beside a wide reputation of this kind.

Shaw has challenged the world as critic, novelist and playwright, but his plays contain his best work. He has been at great pains to emphasize his technique and his philosophy, and to explain at length that his technique is old and his philosophy is new. Despite his bland assurances, neither is originally Shavian. The one is seen clearly in Henrik Ibsen, and the other plainly conveyed from Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. But Shaw's comedy is interesting and valuable. He has re-introduced high comedy on the English stage. So far as England is concerned, the comic spirit, as George Meredith so admirably calls it, has had few chances between Bernard Shaw and the Restoration dramatists. And, remember, the main secret of Congreve's and Wycherley's interplay of character is not

mere depravity. It is the absolute equality of equipment with which men and women pitch their battles of wits. If you want anything better you have to go to Shakespeare.

The glory of Shaw, however, is not his wit, but his underlying seriousness. For Shaw, despite his chameleon-like changes, always maintains stoutly the rottenness of our civilization. He criticizes prevailing conditions in his novels, his dramas, his musical, sociological, and theatrical reviews. Like a scientist in his laboratory, he sets up these ideals, strips them, and puts them to the test, and the ordeal is the cleansing fire of truth and the scalding water of satire. So thorough is the process that few impostures may walk and live. He is so much more than a merely brilliant author such as Wilde. Underlying all his wit and irony, you will find sanity and balances good sense which mere smartness lacks. Now and again, as an Irishman, he justifies his reputation as a Celtic Mephistopheles, and grins in his motley, as in his attacks on Shakespeare, and his flirtations on religion. But the total impression left by his life-work is of a man grappling earnestly and seriously with social and theological problems, not of a rustic grinning through a horse-collar. And that impression is welcome, for, as Heine says finely, "unless wit is based on seriousness it is only a sneeze of the reason."

Shaw has not Shakespeare's temperament which suffers fools gladly, and when he is annoyed he is merciless. He tries to see all round a subject. Is he writing to Benjamin Tucker, the apostle of individualism, he will tell him that Individualism can only be reached through Socialism. When addressing Socialists, he will warn them of the dangers of Bureaucracy to individual liberty. He will jibe at religious people for their barbarism and ignorance, and scoff at Freethinkers for their devotion to science. When he belonged to the very select Shelley Society, he told the members bluntly that he expected all the members were Atheists, Republicans, and Vegetarians, and nearly broke up the meeting on the spot. Sometimes the victims get angry, but the ready Irish wit comes to the rescue, and the jester is forgiven for his audacity. "Rot!" roared a voice when he came forward, amid applause, at the end of one of his plays. "Rot! I fully agree with you, sir," Shaw said, "but what are we two against so many."

Indeed, the impress of his unique personality is on his work. Even his newspaper articles retain their freshness and survive the test of republication triumphantly. They are the work of a brilliant, clever, and witty man. With a strong, haughty, careless nonchalance he has expressed himself very freely. "Sardoodledom" is not a compliment to the popular author of "La Tosca." "Bardolatry" is applied to the worship of Shakespeare. His famous retort in the last war, "Sir Edward Grey is himself a Junker," was sardonic. So was his advice to the Free Churches that, if they were wise, they would place busts of Voltaire in their tabernacles. Shaw is too much in earnest to be impartial. "I have never claimed for myself the divine attribute of justice," he says blandly. His emendation of the so-called "Golden Rule" is often quoted: "Do not do unto others as you would they should do unto you. Their tastes may not be the same." I like, too, that description of the aristocratic lady who "conceived the universe exactly as if it were a large house in Wilton Crescent."

Here are some comments taken at random:—

Greek scholars are privileged men. Few of them know Greek, and most of them know nothing else.

Leave it to the poor to pretend that poverty is a blessing; leave it to the coward to make a religion of his cowardice by preaching humility.

Alcohol makes life bearable to millions of people

who could not endure their existence if they were quite sober.

Money is the most important thing in the world. It represents health, strength, honour, generosity and beauty as conspicuously as the want of it represents illness, weakness, disgrace, meanness and ugliness.

The history of the English factories, the American trusts, the exploitation of African gold, diamonds, ivory, and rubber, outdoes in villainy the worst that has ever been imagined of the buccaners of the Spanish main.

It is cheap work converting starving men with a Bible in one hand and a slice of bread in the other. I will undertake to convert West Ham to Mahometanism on the same terms.

Bernard Shaw is the greatest living author using the English language. Like Byron, like Sterne, he is one of the select few who have an European reputation. His plays have crossed all frontiers, and been played in most of the chief cities of the civilized world. The nimble lightning of his wit rouses men everywhere. It is well, for his life-work is for sanity. He is like the east wind flashing through our civilization. He clears the atmosphere of fog. It is because he is a bracing tonic in a time of moral slackness that Bernard Shaw ranks so highly. The brave old veteran knows this, for he says:—

I am of opinion that my life belongs to the whole community, and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatsoever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a splendid torch which I have got hold of, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

MIMNERMUS

Wanderings in the Twilight World

WITH his recently published *Fifty Years of Psychological Research*,¹ the veteran investigator, Mr. Harry Price, has presented the public with a vivid review of his excursions into the occult domain. This praiseworthy work really constitutes a continuation of the late Frank Podmore's still standard work: *Modern Spiritualism* which appeared in 1902. Podmore was originally a convinced Spiritualist, but in the course of his protracted inquiries, he encountered so much knavery and imposture, that he came to regard with the gravest suspicion the pretensions of all physical mediums, and renounced his former faith in spiritual communion with the dead. Nevertheless, Podmore always admitted the value of psychical research, and concluded that there remains a residuum of mental phenomena for which our present imperfect knowledge of Nature's laws so far fails to account.

The volume before us is excellently illustrated and, in addition to its 304 pages of text, it contains four instructive appendices, including a detailed description of The National Laboratory of Psychological Research now installed in the University of London.

Psychical research is poorly endowed, but as Mr. Price points out, spiritualism proves remarkably profitable. The large societies flourish like the green bay tree, while the lesser societies manage to survive. "The major societies," we are assured, "can afford large and expensive premises, well furnished and well paid secretaries to look after their interests. Their incomes are derived from membership subscriptions, the 'rake-off' they obtain from the fees of mediums

whom they engage for their members, fees from those attending seances, lectures, and social events, . . . and the sale of books, ouija boards, crystals, etc. The revenue from services and lectures must be considerable. Some of the largest halls in London are booked for propaganda work and are usually well filled. Well known spiritualist lecturers are engaged, often together with a trance medium or clairvoyant who delivers messages to the audience from the spirits alleged to be seen or heard."

Price expresses a poor opinion of the Spiritualist Press. As a rule, he deems their publications wretchedly edited and their contents as commonly beneath contempt. Their advertisement columns are not always above suspicion. Indeed, he goes so far as to say that "certain of these psychic and occult sheets are the happy hunting-ground of the large army of charlatans who prey on credulity and make a fat living out of the bereaved, the diseased, the ignorant and the morbidly curious." Fraudulent mediums who have been unmasked and sentenced to imprisonment are restored to public confidence by means of the psychic Press. An instance of this character recently occurred, when a medium imprisoned for fraud had funds subscribed on his behalf to enable him to resume his nefarious proceedings after his release.

Our author opines that if survival is ever substantiated it will be demonstrated by mental phenomena. For the physical manifestations of the seance-room are so ridiculously trivial that they may be unceremoniously dismissed. Again, the trance messages of the mental mediums require an enormous amount of sifting before grains are detected in the superabundance of chaff. Apparently, most of the trance mediums of either sex are quite commonplace people. There is, of course, a select group of intellectual and cultured devotees of the art who do not make a living at the business. But the customary trance addresses are usually mere meaningless drivel. Price justly reminds us that, after nearly a century's interrogation, the spirits have revealed nothing previously unknown. Also, "the many recorded conversations with the dead, such as can be found in *Raymond*, are often so mundane that they are usually received with scepticism, if not ridicule. Some of these messages may be true, but if true why so silly? Are our dead relatives and friends incapable of giving us information, that so vitally concerns us, and of which we are so badly in need?"

Price thinks there is a possibility of genuine currency in trance mediumship, despite the stupendous mountain of fraud associated with it. He hails Mrs. Piper as the ablest mental medium so far known. Her reputation rests on the alleged accuracy of her trance utterances. So reliable were her revelations, it is said, regarding matters of a private and purely personal character when she was controlled by the spirits, that it seemed impossible that she could have gathered the information by normal means alone. Yet, some quite simple explanation may be forthcoming, although Price concludes that the perusal of the voluminous printed matter relating to Mrs. Piper's performances "is sufficient to convince the greatest sceptic of the paranormal origin of her trance utterances."

Not merely do mediums claim the power to hold communion with the dead, but the departed spirit is sometimes discovered to be still in the land of the living. A case of this kind was carefully investigated by Mr. S. G. Soal, who held many seances with the well-advertised medium, Mrs. Blanche Cooper. According to the report, one alleged communicant was Mr. Soal's brother, who was killed in the 1914-18 War, while the other was the spirit of a friend, Gordon Davis, who was also believed to have been a victim of that conflict. Many details concerning the

¹ Longmans, 1939, 10s. 6d.

lives of Soal and Davis were supplied by the "spirit." Some of these details were known, but others are said to have been entirely unknown to the sitter, but all, it appears, were substantially true. The seances are stated to have taken place in 1921-22, but in 1925 Soal discovered that not only was Gordon Davis alive, but completely unaware of any psychic inquiries or spirit messages. If we are able to credit this extraordinary story, "Nada," Mrs. Cooper's control, gave an accurate description of the residence "the real Gordon Davis occupied twelve months after the seance, but which was quite unknown to him or to Soal at the time of the sitting at which the spirit of 'Gordon Davis' manifested."

Whatever the explanation of this apparently well attested story may be, it certainly lends no support to the theory of the after life. So, while conceding that voice mediums and voice phenomena are usually suspect, Price concludes that "in the case of Gordon Davis it is quite certain that Mrs. Cooper transmitted real information acquired paranormally."

Price's book contains an interesting chapter on telepathy, or extra sensory perception, as it is now called. Many elaborate experiments have been conducted to test and, if possible, demonstrate the existence of this alleged faculty. The thought reading powers of the Creery children were tested by Barrett, Myers and Gurney, who were deeply impressed. Yet, these children with a confederate serving maid, evidently "fooled them by codes that could have been found in any shilling conjuring book." This and other experiences prove how easily even men of science such as Sir William Barrett and Professor Balfour Stewart can be humbugged. Two professionals, Douglas Blackburn and G. A. Smith easily duped Myers and Gurney with their telepathic performances, but when tested by Sir James Crichton Browne their failure was complete.

It appears that out of the countless experiments conducted by the Society for Psychical Research, there is not one single instance of alleged telepathy which could be duplicated when adequate control was exercised. Price very justly concludes that: "There is much food for thought in this fact when we consider that the S.P.R. has been functioning for more than fifty years."

In his chapter on *The Mechanism of Spiritualism*, our historian provides a graphic picture of the wiles and devices of the materializing mediums. Spirit photographers are notorious impostors as a class, and many have been exposed, while fraudulent mediums of the most barefaced character are constantly unmasked. One of the most audacious of these tricksters was Helen Duncan, who captivated Sir Oliver Lodge in 1931. Yet, in this very same year she performed her mediumistic art in the National Laboratory of Psychical Research, where she was medically examined and dressed in a one-piece garment. Even then, she succeeded in secreting cloth which enabled her to personate several spirits. The most likely explanation of her materializations is that this ingenious woman swallowed the cheese-cloth and other properties she employed and then regurgitated these accessories as required. It is significant that Helen Duncan's former maid swore to the truth of the regurgitation theory before a Commissioner of Oaths.

In any case, Mrs. Duncan was convicted at Edinburgh in 1933 when charged with fraudulent mediumship, when it was shown that she had utilized her undervest to represent the spirit. But, despite her exposure and conviction, the Spiritualists' National Union accorded her complete confidence and her credentials were renewed. "It may seem strange," remarks Price, "that a stomach should be put to such uses, but 'ectoplasm' (i.e., cotton wool, cheese cloth,

etc.) and small 'apports' have been found secreted in rectum, vagina and prepuce of various mediums."

A Psychic Practitioners (Regulation) Bill has been drafted to regulate, restrict and register practitioners of the occult arts and to protect a too confiding public from their machinations. Excellent as this proposed measure is, one instinctively recalls Herbert Spencer's aphorism that: To protect people from the consequences of their folly is to populate the world with fools.

T. F. PALMER

Prayeritis

(Concluded from page 523)

THE "Solemnization of Matrimony" has an ominous sound to the happy and light-hearted pair who would choose to be married in church. There are still many people, girls especially, who think a registry-office marriage incomplete, and prefer to hear a homily on sex, morals, procreation and so on from some bachelor priest totally ignorant of such matters—or, in not a few instances, far too familiar with them. Any decent young man and maid ought to revolt against being told by a parson that they are taking a step "to avoid fornication," and as persons who "have not the gift of continency." One of the prayers of this service asks God to bless the newly-wed *as he blessed "Abraham and Sarah!"* Finally the bride is "told off" in the words of St. Paul—to subject herself to and reverence her hubby.

After a service for "The Visitation of the Sick" ("visitation" is a dark saying for the parson's call) follows "The Burial of the Dead." The religion that makes the cult of death eclipse every interest in Life must have had unctuous satisfaction in making this ceremony the most depressing and gloomy of all ceremonies (if we can forget the B.B.C.'s religious broadcasts, the last coronation, and Guildhall banquets.) A quotation from Job xix. 25-27: "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" promises ill for a hygienic heaven from what we see of Christian bodies here. One can but hope the majority of the saints will have been disinfected for that hour. St. Paul's epistle to the Corinthians xv. 20 as part of the burial service renders no proof of life after death. The choice of cremation is gradually making this ugly service obsolete, and the poor drabs who usually find a visit to the cemetery a welcome change from the wash-tub and cooking-pot will all be gone by then. These pathetic creatures have hitherto been the churches' mainstay so far as numbers count.

Now is reached that foul rite called "The Churching of Women." Truly here is a "mystery": that women who fulfil what should be the most precious function of their sex, can degrade it and themselves by going before a parson—a bachelor at that, very like—to be "cleansed." The importance of this ceremony, as of practically all church ceremonies, may be gathered from a portion of the psalm recited by the priest: "What reward shall I give unto the Lord?"—to the Lord's representative, in other words.

"A Commination" service metes out "God's anger and judgments against sinners" in a string of curses to each of which the penitent must say "Amen." The priest *expresses some regret* that the service supersedes a drastic "godly discipline" once used in the "Primitive Church." As much as to say that it is a pity the rack, thumb-screw, fire and boiling oil are now dispensed with. Indeed, the logical purport of the whole savage rite appears in the quoted text: "every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Here is the very

essence of Christianity. Barbarous imprecations of a brutal "god" are interlarded with appeals to his "goodness" and "mercy" as a "loving saviour." O, gentle Jesus! Cannot "modern churchmen" rescue you from the depths of a wild jungle before claiming your "saving" grace? Assuredly, most Christians are unaware that the black record of "A Commination" forms part of their prayer-book, otherwise—let them be sunk in the deepest mire of superstition as still survives—the unclean thing would long ago have been removed.

The concatenation of words entitled "The Psalms" leaves but a memory of gabbling phrases in various measures, many of which require an accelerator in the larynx. The daily toll of lives and wreckage is the sole comment to be passed on "Prayer to be used at sea." Services following on can only interest those concerned with the pantomime of "making, ordaining and consecrating bishops, priests, and deacons." Facts not generally known, however, are that the minimum ages are: 23 for a deacon, 24 for a priest, and 30 for a bishop; that deacons must swear they "unfeignedly believe all the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testament," but priests and bishops simply agree that "the scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine necessary for eternal salvation." Moreover, priests and bishops, but not mere deacons, are asked to receive the "holy ghost." So it is useless to seek "inspiration" from a deacon, evidently.

Skipping a few more wearisome "forms," one comes to the "Articles" agreed upon "by the archbishops and bishops of both provinces," in 1562. The royal "Declaration" insists that they must be accepted with the "literal meaning" and no more to be said about the matter in view of the "curious and unhappy differences which have for so many hundred years exercised the Church of Christ." Interpretation of the Articles contrary to their wording will incur the king's displeasure and the Church's censure, and his majesty "will see there shall be due execution upon" offenders. Article XVIII. is particularly worth quoting: "They also are to be had accursed that presume to say: That every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of Nature. For holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the Name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved." And Shakespeare asked: "What's in a name?" Well, this much to Christians: that they may play the devil with their lives so long as they can utter at the crucial moment: "Jesus Christ." Without Christianity, there would be no moral law! (Sez they.)

To conclude: the subjects of these articles being the Church of England's ordinary hymn-book and prayer-book, might have induced some to think them a work of supererogation. But the writer, as an average member of the church till late in life (through no fault of his own) can testify to the truth of an assertion already made: that very few church people know their "holy books." He knows that most of the information summarized herein will be strange and new to the majority; and that Christians DARE NOT review their "beliefs" in the light of knowledge or criticism unless and until they are prepared to *do justice* to their *reason*. In love of fellowship he hopes they will come to that higher stage of growth which permits no superstition, no creed, no man—nor, indeed, any writings, to interfere with the true service of their minds and faculties.

So with a warning from the *one and only source of all morality* (as religion claims to be) that "a man may not marry his grandmother," we will leave the book of "Common Prayer: Hymns A. & M."

A. G. DUNN

The Missed Chance

THE exact proportion of God in the man Christ Jesus has been an entertaining theme for theologians. Miss Dorothy Sayers tells us that he was all God and all Man, which is intelligible only to a theologian. It has been a hard nut to crack: too hard, in fact, for the problem always remains where it was. Jesus, the human Exemplar, becomes an impossible card to play directly any proportion of divine admixture is admitted. It is no good saying to the mass of Mankind, "Do as Jesus did," if, at the same time, Jesus was compounded of human and divine elements. We would all like, when hungry, to multiply (and butter) our only remaining crust of bread. The example of Jesus in a matter of this kind is, alas, of no avail. It is just tantalizing.

If Jesus had, however, married, or even sported with Amaryllis, then something much more substantial would have been accomplished for the human race. Chunks of wise-crackery had appeared centuries before Jesus, with disappointing return as far as imitation and emulation went. Wisdom, or stark common-sense, in the shape of short and snappy paragraphs, are only there for those who have ears to hear. Every housewife knows that a stitch in time saves nine—and yet there are indeed many of them who give the utilitarian truth the go-by. It would have been of greater service to humanity if the note of infallibility—the godlike touch—had been put into the human race by bringing into existence a neat little nest of *mutants*, who would, in the course of time, bring a dose of all-knowingness and all-goodness into the human race. That would have been something practical. It can hardly be denied that humanity could have done with a little help. It cannot even be pleaded that it would have been the kind of interruption of natural processes which God did not favour. For Jesus was not only God as well as man, he was man as well as God. That part of him which didn't deserve a capital letter could have legitimately acted as an ordinary man, with the result that we could have had children ordinary in every physical respect, but in them a dash of the divine. We do not pretend to know the attributes of divinity; many manifestations chronicled are, we are sorry to say, only calculated to quench our enthusiasm. All the same, if we are willing to concede, for the sake of being amicable with a section of our fellow-men, that to be divine is a *good thing*, then it was indeed a pity that God did not seize the chance of hurrying on the painful, tragic process of human development, by allowing his only beloved Son to produce after his kind. Then we should have had, biologically, the Sport of Sports. But alas the Sport of the Gods did not take that useful shape. We have had, instead, a continuation of the type of sport of which Hardy wrote "The President of the Immortals had ended his sport with Tess"—bloody, heart-rending, agonizing tragedy. The type of sport that Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Gloster, that good and pathetic figure, the helpless victim of a surfeit of divine inflictions

As flies to wanton boys are we to the Gods;
They kill us for their sport!

It is, of course, impertinence to make suggestions to the Gods. If there is one thing that can be relied upon in a God it is that he knows how to go about things. "Shall not the Father of all the world do right?" If the history of man upon this earth appears to us a bloody tragedy and the result to-day unworthy of the price that man (not God), has paid, it is, we are told, because we have not God's vision. A day in the sight of God is a thousand years; at the same time a

thousand years with him is but as a day. Presumptuous creature, to judge God by human scales when God has a scale of his own! Fifty years of misery and sorrow may appear much to John Brokenback of Jarrow, but he must remember that in the sight of the Lord it is but a few seconds. On the other hand Ambrose Ambler walks by accident into a performance of the *Midsummer's Night's Dream* in the Open Air Theatre in Regents Park. He is uplifted; he is happy. His hour and a half of keen pleasure is then in the sight of the Lord a Hundred Years. Ambrose is asked to appreciate the good things the Lord has done for him: "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." When we have to give thanks to the Lord we have to measure God by Man's scales; God becomes mannish; of the earth, earthy. When God sends Plagues and Pestilences we must not judge harshly; we must take God's Long View. And God's Long View (now and again) is that Man must work out his own salvation. For this, æons of time are required—just five minutes with the Lord. Mistake after mistake man has to make; the sweat of his brow brings him some succour, but not much; God's microbes come and torment his frame—he prays and dies. God's ice-ages freeze him to death; God's tempests wreck his coracle; God's lightnings bring his hovel—his happy, happy hovel—to naught. Man must learn by experience—that is the process that omnipotence and omniscience have set into motion. It is for Man to go through his predestined path, and, eventually, countless æons of time away, man will have improved this earth a little more. Another quarter of an hour is registered on God's Timepiece.

When we are asked to appreciate God, it is to man's idea of goodness that the appeal is made. *Blessed be the name of the Lord* we are instructed to sing and it is to man's idea of kindness, mercy, and generosity that the appeal is made. And one speaks for the vast majority of mankind when one says that it would have been considered kindly in the little Cherub that sits up aloft if he had given his Precious Process something like a jerk forward when the chance arose. The Recording Angel writes down the sins of men and women struggling against the Furies. That gentleman could, in the opinion of men of good will, be better employed (if he must write) in chronicling man's advances, man's triumphs, man's achievements.

It was not kind of Gentle Jesus to neglect his great opportunity. As one has already said, mankind could have well done with a little assistance. Jesus could have married and propagated and left a big family; every one of them could have assisted to some extent human progress. He could have done something—by way of example—in strengthening the home as an institution, he could have uplifted woman and dignified child-birth. This was within his power. And even if he had dispensed with the wedding-ring, mankind would have forgiven him. A little more kindness, a little more wisdom, a little more physical, moral and mental health! "Oh Yes," they would have said, "if these be the attributes of the Gods, play on." He would have been more than forgiven. The children would, in the course of time have risen up and called him blessed, for example is better than precept.

T. H. ELSTON

London in 1805

(From Pennant's *London* 1805).

LEADENHALL STREET.—In the church of *St. Catherine Cree*, in this street, is supposed to have been interned the celebrated *Holbein*, who died of the plague in 1554, at the duke of *Norfolk's*, in the priory of *Christ-church*, near *Aldgate*. I must also mention it on another account, for its being the stage on which the imprudent, well-meaning *Laud* acted a most superstitious part in its consecration, on *January 16, 1630-31*. His whole conduct tended to add new force to the discontents and rage of the times: he attempted innovations in the ceremonies of the Church at a season he ought at least to have left them in the state he found them: instead of that, he pushed things to extremities, by that, and by his fierce persecutions of his opponents; from which he never desisted till he brought destruction on himself, and highly contributed to that of his royal master.

PRYNNE, whom every one must allow to have had sufficient cause of resentment against the archbishop, gives the relation with much acrimony, and much prophane humor:—

When the bishop approached near the communion table, he bowed with his nose very near the ground some six or seven times; then he came to one of the corners of the table and there bowed himself three times; then to the second, third, and fourth corners, bowing at each corner three times; but when he came to the side of the table where the bread and wine was, he bowed himself seven times: and then, after the reading many prayers by himselfe and his two fat chaplins, (which were with him, and all this while were upon their knees by him, in their sirplisses, hoods and tippits), he himselfe came near the bread, which was cut and laid in a fine napkin, and then he gently lifted up one of the corners of the said napkin and peeping into it till he saw the bread, (like a boy that peeped into a bird's nest in a bush), and presently clapped it down againe, and flew back a step or two, and then bowed very low three times towards it and the table. When he beheld the bread, then he came near and opened the napkin againe, and bowed as before; then laid his hand upon the gilt cup, which was full of wine, with a cover upon it; so soon as he had pulled the cup a little neerer to him, he lett the cupp goe, flew backe, and bowed againe three times towards it; then hee came neere againe, and lifted the cover of the cupp, peeped into it and seeing the wine, he let fall the cover on it againe, and flew nimble backe, and bowed as before. After these and many other apish anticke gestures, he himselfe received, and then gave the sacrament to some principal men only, they devoutly kneeling neere the table; after which, more prayers being said, this scene and interlude ended.

To the west of *St. Catherine Cree*, in the same street, stands the church of *St. Andrew Undershaft*, from the unfortunate shaft, or *maypole*, which on *May 1, 1517*, gave rise to the insurrection of the apprentices, and the plundering of the foreigners in the city, whence it got the name *Evil May-day*. From that time it was hung on a range of hooks over the doors of a long row of neighboring houses. In the third of *Edward VI.* when the plague of fanaticism began to scandalize the promoters of the Reformed religion, an ignorant wretch, called *Sir Stephen*, curate of *St. Catherine Cree*, began to preach against this *maypole* (notwithstanding it had hung in peace ever since the *Evil May-day*), as an idol, by naming the church of *St. Andrew*, with the addition of *Shaft*. This inflamed his audience so greatly, that, after eating a hearty dinner to strengthen themselves, every owner of such house over which the shaft hung, with assistance of others, sawed off as much of it as hung over his premises: each took his share, and committed to the flames the tremendous idol. This, *Sir Stephen*, scorning the use of the sober pulpit, sometimes mounted on a tomb, with his back to the altar, to pour out his nonsensical rhapsodies; at other times, he elimed into a lofty elm in the church yard, and, bestriding a bough delivered out his cant with double effect, merely by reason of the novelty of the situation.

No man is at all times wise.—*Pliny*.

Human knowledge is the parent of doubt.—*Greville*.

Truth fears nothing but concealment.—*Latin Proverb*

Acid Drops

"The unkindest cut of all" to the clergy has been given by our brilliant Minister of Information, Mr. Duff Cooper. He has been writing to the clergy offering to send them prepared sermons, or outlines of sermons to assist them in preparing their sermons. We have, from time to time said some very hard things of the clergy, and have commented liberally on the decay of clerical mentality. But never, never did we even suggest that they had come to a pass that Mr. Duff Cooper could help them. But a thought strikes us. It may be that Mr. Duff Cooper is discovering in which way his abilities lie. He is perhaps feeling a "call" to the pulpit.

The Roman Catholic *Universe* (August 16), accuses the Russian Government of having taken over many religious schools. We suspect that if the Roman Church were in power all schools, save Catholic ones would be closed; and it must not be forgotten that the Roman Catholic Church claims complete control over education. It submits, but it does not approve, other Churches or people having the liberty to open schools, and by all means honest and dishonest (mainly dishonest), Rome does its best to prevent their doing so.

The New Testament is quite clear. "If thine enemy hunger feed him." There is no qualification to the command. But says the *Church Times*, not if his name is Hitler and if we are at war with him, and it brings Mr. Hoover sharply to task for suggesting that Great Britain shall permit someone else to feed the countries under the control of Germany. We do not at all disagree with the counsel that England must, in the present situation, refuse any help to Hitler and his gang. But it does show the worth of New Testament teaching when it is brought sharply to the test of actuality.

Another comment of the *Church Times* is that Cardinal Newman was the first to convince Englishmen that "a Papist could be a gentleman and an honest man." We have a great deal of respect for the intellectual power of Newman. He was the last man of real intellectual power that the Christian churches in this country possessed. But as to his intellectual honesty, we have our doubts. We recall many passages in his writings where Newman was obviously afraid of the conclusions before him, and so fell back on sheer faith and trust in the Church.

It was sheer "faith" that, in the Christian sense of the term "saved" him—also in the Christian sense. Otherwise he might never have entered the Roman Church. To-day it is difficult to picture any believer in Christianity who can combine the qualities of first-rate intellectual ability, honesty and belief in genuine Christianity.

At either Weymouth or Portland (the two names are together in the report), one of the Sunday Schools was smashed and windows shattered. After the raid the minister, Rev. R. E. Allport, lashed a blackboard to the railings of the Church and chalked on it, "Give thanks to God, Thanksgiving Service to-night at 6.30." Now what in the name of all that is sensible was he thanking God for? Was it for not killing all the children? Was it for protecting them? If the former it means that God did better than the parson expected. If the latter, why did God not do the job properly and protect the building while bringing down the airman who attempted to wreck a "sacred" structure? One feels as though one would find an examination of Mr. Allport's cranial development interesting.

Cardinal Hinsley wishes that every "Christian Knight of the British cause would wear a cross under his tunic." No doubt. Those in the tobacco business would like every soldier to wear on his hat "Smoke our Excelsior cigarettes," and every brewer "Drink our Beer." Like a good tradesman Hinsley does not care to miss an advertisement. Meanwhile he is blessing fifty thousand crosses. Why not bless another 50,000 to protect houses in the case of an air-raid? War always means a setback in the scale of culture, and it is not surprising to find Cardinal Hinsley, a leading official in the magic business, making the most of the present situation. The Church that is not ashamed to publish accounts of men and women who have secured a rise in wages, better prices for property they had to sell, or important jobs because they burned a candle, or two candles, to this or that saint, must be expected to trade on the fact of our being at war.

Let us look at the position from another angle. Suppose that someone—not a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church or the representative of a religious sect—advertised that by wearing a medal or swallowing a powder, soldiers would be protected in some mysterious manner that would not operate in the absence of these things. What would happen? If he charged money for powder or medal he would be prosecuted. If he made no direct charge, but merely "left it to you sir," we fancy a charge would still be possible. In any case the general conclusion would be imposture. Nor would any amount of testimony that certain people had received help from the article alter the general opinion and even judgment of the nature of the transaction. The law is very strict on those who exploit the credulity of the public by certain devices. And of all the methods of exploiting public superstition and sheer ignorance, that adopted by the Roman Church is the most glaring.

The game is, of course, a very, very old one. It was there in the dawn of civilization, but then the belief in magic was perfectly honest. Everyone believed in it and there is no need to think of dishonesty, or to attempt a rationalizing of superstition to the extent of persuading practitioners that it helped people to face life in a better spirit. Dishonesty came in with the advance of civilization. Then men had to face the fact of a mental development that set the new knowledge against the old superstition. That inaugurated the age of the professional apologist, the era of the priest, who had to reconcile the larger knowledge with the ancient ignorance. How old this game is we may see in the following from Plato's *Republic* :—

Mendicant priests go to rich men's doors and persuade them that they have a power granted to them from the gods of making atonement for their sins or those of their fathers, by sacrifices and charms. . . . And they produce a host of books written by Musens and Orpheus, according to which they perform ritual, and persuade, not only individuals, but whole cities, that there are atonements and explanations for sin by means of sacrifice while they are alive and after they are dead, that what they call the Mysteries deliver us from suffering in the other world; but if we omit to sacrifice, awful things, they say, await us yonder.

One wonders what Plato would say could he awaken from his twenty-five hundred year's sleep and listen to the public utterances of a Lord Halifax or Cardinal Hinsley!

The Archbishop of Canterbury said that the Day of Prayer, fixed for September 8, was arranged at the "desire of his Majesty." If that be true it "makes one think." For the King has recently been visiting soldiers in camps, inspecting munition works and so on. If after doing this he decided we ought to ask God to help, it looks as though he took a rather serious view of the situation.

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THE FREETHINKER

FOUNDED BY G. W. FOOTE

61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4

Telephone No.: CENTRAL 2412.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

S. HERBERT.—You are quite mistaken. There was no bar in Rome against a slave to very high office in the State. You will find a very good account of this in "Freedmen in the early Roman Empire," by A. M. Duff, 1928. Pub. by the Clarendon Press, 12s. 6d. A general account of the whole subject will be found in Mr. Cohen's *Christianity Slavery and Labour*, 2s. 6d.

SYDNEY PORTER.—We have sent the paragraph dealing with the subject to the proper authorities, and that is as far as we can go for the moment. It is little less than a scandal that in a war avowedly in the interests of freedom the practice of compulsory Church parade should be maintained. It forces men to be hypocrites and merely makes for the profit of religious sects.

J. A. LODGE, B. GAMBIE.—Thanks for addresses of likely new readers; paper being sent for four weeks.

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.

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.

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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.

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

Sir Archibald Sinclair, Secretary for Air, in answering a question in the House of Commons, said that a man on joining the services was asked to state his religion, but men were not rejected if they said they were Atheists or Agnostics. We hope that Sir Archibald was more explicit than he is in the newspaper report. That Atheists "were not rejected" is almost an insult. A man joining the services has the legal right to be entered as Atheist or anything else. He is not asking for a favour, but asserting a right. Unfortunately some of the officials are so ignorant, or so bigoted, or both, that men are sometimes informed that they must put themselves down as belonging to some religion. Sir Archibald might well look into the matter and so prevent either the recruiting officer telling a lie, or insisting that the first step to take in joining the forces is to write oneself down a liar. Or perhaps Sir Archibald is so uninformed as to the war we are fighting that he joins with Lord Halifax in his lie that we are fighting for Christian civilization.

We regret that consideration of space prevent our publishing several letters from correspondents. They will appear in our next issue.

We were in Regents Park when the sirens gave warning of an air-raid at mid-day on August 16. Passing a large shelter we saw from fifty to sixty people of all ages and both sexes sitting about on the grass, laughing and talking, many of them eating their luncheon. They did not seem in the least disheartened by the threatened raid, and

SPECIAL

WITH a view to meeting circumstances that may arise with a prolongation of the war, we should be greatly helped if each subscriber to the *Freethinker* would be good enough to send us his, or her, name and address. We refer only to those who procure their copies through newsagents. Those who order direct from the office have their addresses already on our books.

The circumstances we have in view may never arise, but it is well to be prepared for all kinds of difficulties. We have, so well as we can, guarded the future of the paper in many directions, and this suggestion represents the last contingency of which we can think—at the moment.

All that is required is just a name and an address on a postcard or in a letter. We shall know to what it refers. Our readers have assisted us so willingly, and in so many directions, that we do not hesitate to ask this further help.

CHAPMAN COHEN

had quite made up their minds to stay in the glorious sunshine with the beauties of one of London's most beautiful parks until the very last moment. If they had to get into the shelter, well, they would go. But the mere possibility of a bomb dropping was not enough. One of the young girls said to us in reply to a remark, "I had my meal spoiled last night (the Croydon raid) and I am not going to lose my lunch as well." We would have given much to have had a camera handy that would have registered the scene, and headed it "London in a Panic."

We suppose they ought to have obeyed the official injunction and at the first warning gone to earth and waited for the "all clear." We would not say that the advice is bad, or ought not to be followed, but we do say that the spirit animating that free and easy crowd was more heartening than any number of people rushing for shelter at the first warning of danger. That spirit is unconquerable. It did something to compensate for the deliberate propaganda of fear that was set in motion before Munich, and which led to Munich. We all know what a raid means with its ruined houses, loss of life, and injuries to old and young. But that spirit of cheerfulness in the face of danger evidenced a spirit of resistance that nothing else could equal. What a pity it is that our Ministry of Information cannot get someone at its head who can pay a public and fitting tribute to it.

A fund is being raised in Northampton to buy Spitfires, and the following appeared in the local *Chronicle and Echo*:—

One interesting letter received to-day on Northampton's Spitfire Fund comes from an old-age pensioner, Mr. John Matthews, of 10 West Street, Earls Barton, who sends a donation on behalf of his wife and himself.

He writes: Sorry it is not more. Still it may help to buy a nut or bolt or whatever it needs be for this Spitfire and may it be the means of bringing to an end this aggression, and help restore liberty and freedom for all.

As a champion of freedom liberty in the past and uplifting of the oppressed was Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, and who represented the old Borough in the early eighties, would it not be appropriate to name the plane Northampton's Bradlaugh (irrespective of party).

Of course, this generation would not know much of this champion, but the older generation would, and I think the most ardent die-hard Tory would endorse all regarding this stalwart Bradlaugh.

Don't think I am making political propaganda of this, for I am perfectly aware of the truce of the parties at this time, and I feel sure were Bradlaugh alive, his voice would resound throughout the land denouncing these tyrants of Nazi aggression.

During religious instruction time:—

Teacher: Who is your neighbour?

Pupil: Those that live next door.

Teacher: What is your duty towards your neighbour?

Pupil: To keep an eye on 'em.

The Mind of the Chimpanzee

(Continued from page 518)

THE apes made some interesting attempts to improvise sticks. Tschego, the big one, after failing to mop in the objective with her blanket, hardened some straw by doubling it until strong enough to be used as a stick. "Sticks" were also made by breaking off the planks from box-lids, while the youngest ape, Koko, a newcomer, was seen to tear leaves from a stem to make it look like a stick. Sultan, the most intelligent, actually tried to use the keeper's arm as a stick. He also straightened a coil of wire to use as a stick. (Similarly Chica was seen to uncoil a rope for the purpose of swinging on it.)

The problems become harder with more than one mid-objective. Stones have to be removed from a box to make it light enough to drag. Sultan was satisfied at first to remove just so much weight as would enable him to move the box, but by the fourth attempt he had learned to remove *all* the stones, and, just to show that he perfectly understood the principle of the thing, he also successfully removed sand when that was substituted for stones. In this test the Chimpanzee has more than one mid-objective to keep in mind, thus: Remove weights; take box to suspended stick; take stick to objective. The reader may make his own estimation as to how many young children the problem would baffle, for comparisons with humans were disappointingly hard for Kohler to obtain.

We pass now to *tool-improvement*. What can be done when the stick is not long enough? Another stick is in view. Chica puts the two together *side by side*. This is wrong, but it is a "good error," for the ape has at least grasped the idea of addition. Similarly Tschego holds her blanket and a stick together, thus appreciating the fact that two implements may be better than one. The least intelligent ape, Rana, guided by the visual impression only, put two sticks end to end and held them together for a vaulting stick of greater length. Sultan, in order to reach food outside, pushed one stick towards the objective with the other stick. All these may be accounted good errors.

And now follows one of Sultan's best feats, featuring an important stage of advance. He makes a long stick out of two short ones by wedging two hollow bamboo sticks together. A repetition of this achievement was filmed. The ape himself appeared so pleased with his result that he afterwards used the double stick for play as well as for experiment. Whenever Sultan's double stick became awkward for manipulation he perceived that it had served its purpose and disconnected it, finishing the task with one stick.

The experiment was successfully repeated with hollow tubes, which were presented in crosswise fashion. This position embarrassed both Sultan and Chica: optical separation of the implements was a great help.

Sultan's next advance was suddenly to conceive the notion of a triple stick. That the idea was genuine was shown by the fact that he was guided by the thickness of the tubes, and always placed the smallest one in the middle so as to get it fitted into the larger holes. He again disconnected on hindrance. He would also pull out a wooden stopper from the tube when that obstacle was set for him. Later he chewed a piece of wood down to the right size to make it fit into the opening. (Grande was also known to chew off a splinter, to poke someone with it through the bars.)

The double stick was later used by the animals for reaching high objects, and by Chica, the expert gymnast, for a vaulting pole.

Now follows the putting of boxes one on top of the other, the incentive being an objective suspended too high to be reached with one box. Here Chica achieved a four-storey construction. She was not a patient builder, however, preferring dangerous jumps from inadequate and dangerous foundations. Her physical daring stood in contrast to her timid attitude towards the other inmates; she had many tumbles and was seen rubbing her back parts more than any other animal. Grande was the most patient architect, and would add another box in a situation where Chica would take a hazardous leap from an insecure structure or try to beat down the objective with a stick. Thus Grande became the best builder *by practice*, though behind some of the others in intelligence.

Once the conception of a mount or ladder was appreciated the apes looked about them for possible ladders. Sultan, for instance, tried to make the keeper adopt an erect position for use as a human ladder, and there is evidence that human beings and other apes came to be regarded as possible tools. Chica, who spent a lot of energy and was always thirsty, would try to pull the keeper towards the water jug.

From experiments with ladders and boxes it appears that the ape has a poor notion of statics. There was no attempt to place the boxes neatly so as to give security to the construction; the buildings were untidy affairs, precarious and unsteady. Nor will the ape shift stones to get a level foundation for the box. Chica would even hold a box on its edge for a little extra height, and try to jump from it—fortunately without success. Both Chica and Grande placed boxes up against the wall at a height off the ground, apparently hoping they would stick to the wall. Even Sultan placed his ladder almost vertical to the wall.

When the apes were set to build collectively they proceeded each one for himself, without any plan for co-operation. Thus they are photographed "building together but not in common." There is keen competition for the highest box, blows are exchanged, and each drags what he can lay hold of. Of a would-be team of four, Grande is left to continue the construction alone, being deserted by Chica, Rana and Sultan.

Some of Sultan's behaviour looks very much like co-operation. Prohibited from participating in a building test, he is allowed to look on. He shows interest in the proceedings, and in his enthusiasm will try to steady a box. Once he brought a box for Grande, put it near her and then, in deference to the prohibition, squatted again. He is also pictured moving a sympathetic hand, indicative of his ideas on the problem being tackled by a comrade. He also scraped sand together with a stick and poked it through to an unsuccessful experimenter, and once put his arms through the cage and tore off a loose board which he expected the other ape to use as a stick. In Kohler's opinion, however, there is no altruistic desire to help on the part of Sultan, whom he calls "a pronounced egotist." It is no feeling of goodwill, but sheer interest in the proceedings, that urges him to participate.

I should not be prepared to assert that co-operation in labour denotes a final separation of the human and ape intellects. How does mutual aid arise with primitive man? Probably by the same means as with Kohler's apes, namely, by accident. Three of the chimpanzees happened to time their efforts to shift a heavy box so as to synchronize. Rana, for her own ends, added her strength to that of Grande, without knowing she was helping. Equally selfish, Sultan also made his contribution, and their combined effort procured the desired result by moving the box to the objective; Sultan was first to get up and seize the re-

ward. May not man have learned to co-operate as the result of some similar lucky accidents?

Not all the apes possessed Sultan's respect for the experiment. Konsul and Tercera, watching an experiment, would creep up, knock the construction over, and flee. It is worthy of note that these were the two lazy in experiment. On one occasion Grande came up to use the construction started by another ape, but, to her rage, the architect tumbled from the architecture and upset everything.

The next stage is to test detours with intermediate objectives. Sultan has a stick too short to reach the object. He sees a longer stick outside the cage, gets it in with the short one, and then reaches the object with the long one. After a pause for scrutiny and head-scratching (a habit of his when thinking) his procedure formed a consecutive whole. Grande and Chica also succeeded in this test, but Tschego failed. Rana, clumsy and unintelligent (these two qualities seem correlated in apes) also failed; she reached for the long stick with her hand.

To get a suspended small stick via a box, and with it procure the long one, and then the objective, was only 30 seconds' work for Sultan. The gymnastic Chica, unfortunately for the experiment, leapt for the stick and got it. Later she did it by the box, but a distraction (a loud noise) apparently broke up the "gestalt" and she forgot what the small stick was for, and gazed at it helplessly. There are here four things to remember; the box, the small stick, the long stick and the banana, and by concentrating on one of the mid-objectives it is possible to lose sight of the final goal. Some apes lack the power to hold such a complicated gestalt. In this experiment it is noteworthy that Chica did not see the box as an implement until her friend Tercera got off it.

When the tiny newcomer, Koho, underwent this latter test he, too, was unable at first to hold the problem. When taking the box to the small stick his attention was diverted by the major-objective, some tasty fruit, and this so held him spellbound that he was unable to complete the movement. In the end he mastered it.

Sultan now goes one better. His banana is reached by a long stick, with this he angled for a short one, the latter to be reached by standing on a box, the weights of which were removed to facilitate transport.

G. H. TAYLOR

(To be concluded)

To the War Makers, 1940

GIVE me back my joyous youth,
The high ideals and shining truth
Of men. All I believed.
Not this hell you have conceived.
Give me back my Youth.

Give me back the hours spent
In solitudes. The sweet content
Of laughter untouched by sorrow,
Now my life has no to-morrow.
Give me back my Youth.

Give me back the careless rapture
Of swift happiness. Let me recapture
A fleeting hour of love's delight.
My day must end before the night.
Give me back my Youth.

E. B. DRISCOLL

Lack of Faith

To say that the peoples of the world are suffering, at present, from a lack of faith sounds like the climax to a fervid sermon, delivered from the pulpit by some ecclesiastical "big gun." One must hasten, therefore, to explain that faith in any Almighty is not here in question. In Europe just now the Axis God appears to be paying better dividends than the Deity of the Allies, beg pardon, now only the British God, France having changed over. We have had a Day of Prayer, recently, with full Anglican Broad-sides and, within a week, the defection of the French. Something must have gone wrong, somewhere. If Europe is in a mess, religion is in an even worse tangle. To expect that the Church will see the light is hopeless; there are "material" reasons against conversion; about thirteen millions of them per annum.

The lack of faith is really due to an inability to believe the word of kings, dictators, politicians and diplomats, however solemn their utterances may be; in fact, the greater the solemnity, the greater the disbelief. Here, in England, we regard Hitler as the Champion of Liars and History's greatest Promise Breaker, but he has really no patent rights in the technique. For centuries past, and in all "civilized" countries, the word "diplomacy" has been synonymous with anything from suppression of vital facts to out-and-out lying, and between the diplomat and the politician there is not much to choose; the former is only the jackal to the latter's lion. It needs a deal of blind faith to trust the word of an inveterate and incurable liar.

There is a book by Noel Baker, *The Private Manufacture of Armaments*, recently published by Victor Gollancz, which should be in the hands of every Briton, even if only borrowed from the local public library. The book contains documented evidences for the following:—

- (1) How the great arms combines make weapons and munitions of war for any country, irrespective of nationalities, racial hatreds, etc., the only necessary condition being the ability to pay.
- (2) How these combines help to make wars and to keep them alive, in the interests of their unholy trade. By the way, do we ever hear a word against the manufacture of Instruments of Death for Private profit from Pulpits?
- (3) How these combines, especially in France and Germany, bought up all the principal newspapers, with names, prices and dates of purchase, so as to throttle anything like genuine public opinion. (Public Opinion is a noun of multitude signifying many, but not much.)
- (4) How these combines interlock, the Schneider-Creusot in France holding shares in Krupps of Essen and the Skoda works at Prague. Having rather "boiled the pot over," they may find the collection of dividends rather difficult just at present. Perhaps the shareholders are having their Day of Prayer, just now.
- (5) How the chief of the Comité de Forges, the great combine which includes the Schneider-Creusot, M. Wendel, is also one of the principal directors of the Banque de France. A large order offered by Russia, a doubtful payer, was helped out by a French loan floated by the Banque and subscribed by the French people and paid direct to the Combine, to ensure that whoever "carried the baby" it would not be the Comité de Forges.
- (6) How, as late as 1938, 57 per cent of Japan's munitions of war were supplied by the United States, and 20.6 per cent by England. Germany and Belgium contributed their quotas, but Russia

supplied just nothing at all. If these supplies had been withheld, the Sino-Japanese War would not only have been over long ago; it would never have started, as Japan is almost entirely dependent on outside aid.

The great factor in starting and maintaining wars is the stoking-up of what is known as "national hatreds." Here is a recent and curious experience which would need the assistance of a cleric to explain. Within less than one week the Englishman was asked to execute a *volte face* worthy of the finest religious disputant; to turn his love for his French brother into hatred, just because French politicians are super-rotten even in an already putrid diplomatic world. Anyone knowing anything about French politics could have told the Briton this—had he been allowed to do so—long before the war started. We have heard so much of "missing the bus"; what about "backing the wrong horse" for a change.

Reverting to our "firstly"; the lack of faith in the word of the peoples of all countries—other than those which are "uncivilized." We never get the word of the people; only the "assurances" of dictators and politicians, and we know what they are worth. They discount at even a higher rate than the pulpit "promises of Heaven." The first preliminary to peace must be the disarmament of every country, and just as long as weapons and munitions are made for private profit by huge combines, they will see that this Utopia is never reached. Fancy the nations of the world all disarmed excepting Japan, the only weapon market left to the poor out-of-work combines. It requires no imagination to picture the result. Perhaps it would be elementary business policy to arm another nation, so that the munitions stood a chance of being used up.

Now I expect, as the result of the foregoing, a gigantic campaign against armaments being thundered from every pulpit in Christendom. Against guns, tanks, planes and battleships we have learned (or have we?) that Almighties are powerless. They have an awkward habit of siding with the countries which have a preponderance in these infernal machines. Christianity has had well over a thousand years; it is surely time it paid a dividend—other than in stipends of "incumbents."

HERBERT CESCINSKY

Changing Gods

IN the religious "Thought for To-day," which the B.B.C. cunningly broadcasts immediately before the eight o'clock News in the morning, a radio preacher recently made a statement which is very common among the clergy when they are discussing the present state of affairs and the possibilities for the future. He stated that the conflict in which we are at present engaged might be the beginning of a new era with great changes, but, whatever else might change God always remains the same.

It is the concluding part of the statement with which I am concerned because it is absolutely incorrect. In this world nothing remains the same; everything is changing and the gods are no exception. In fact, not only does man change his gods as he slowly rises from savagery towards civilization, but even if he worships the same god for a few thousand years we find that the god has changed during this period just like its worshipper. It could not be otherwise, because gods are essentially man-made, and are little more than reflections of their creators. Furthermore man has to adapt his gods to meet changing conditions and the challenge of new knowledge.

In order to illustrate how gods change it is advisable, first of all, to consider briefly the gods of savage tribes. Fear plays a predominating part in most religions and is very conspicuous among savages. The gods of uncivilized peoples are found to be mostly of a hostile nature. Edward Westermarck tells us in *The Goodness of Gods* that the Maori considered their gods to be the causes of pain, misery and death, and that the Tahitians and Fijians likewise regarded their deities as being mainly wicked. This is true of savage tribes generally. We note here the similarity between the savage and his gods, for the gods are considered to have the same likes and dislikes as the savage himself. Sacrifices that are made are therefore generally of food or some other commodity which is necessary to the well-being of the savage and which he considers necessary to his gods. It is very significant also, that coloured peoples have coloured gods as, for example, the Fuegians, who believe that a big black man inhabits the neighbouring mountains and forests who knows and sees everything and is very powerful.

It is quite probable that the excess of malevolent over benevolent deities among uncivilized tribes has been exaggerated somewhat, due to the fact that the malevolent gods are chiefly worshipped, since the others, being good, need to be paid little or no homage, although the aid of good spirits is appealed for when required. Nevertheless it is true to say that the gods of savage peoples are largely of a malevolent nature.

Among more civilized peoples we find that the gods are more civilized. Fear remains, however, and there are still many demons, but these are gradually being reduced in number and intensity. In ancient Egypt the good gods predominated, but the bad ones were still powerful. In the religions of the ancient Hindus there is a struggle between the good and bad gods, but the benevolent deities are now much superior to the demons who are only capable of causing slight misfortunes. The Greek and Roman gods, too, were largely of a benevolent nature who blessed those who did valiant deeds.

It can be seen from this short account that as man becomes more civilized his gods become more civilized with him. Now let us consider the evolution of the Christian god to which the radio preacher referred and see how this also has changed.

Up to this point we have been dealing with polytheism; we now come to the belief in a single god. The Jews, to whom the Christians went for their god, supply a sort of connecting link between polytheism and monotheism. Although there is much in the Bible in support of the view that the Jews were monotheistic, the constant warnings against other gods show that monotheism was not over strong. In the person of Jahveh, however, we find a jealous tribal deity, powerful and often cruel, again a reflection of the worshippers. This was the Christian demigod of the Old Testament who thundered "Thou shalt have none other gods before me" and killed for disobedience, who ordered and committed wholesale slaughter and many other atrocities. To slightly alter the words of Dean Farrar—this was a barbarous god, in barbarous times, for a barbarous people.

Even Christianity, however, was not able to entirely prevent the influx of new ideas from without—progress was at a standstill for centuries, but the influence of the Moorish civilization, particularly, eventually had a great effect upon Christian Europe.

The world entered on a new era with the rise of scientific investigation. Knowledge of the Universe increased and slowly but surely naturalism began to replace supernaturalism. Then came the doctrine of evolution! Nothing has ever aroused the wrath of

the religious world as evolution did! The clergy denounced it, but it rapidly became supported by tested evidence and now many churchmen have become modernists.

The mighty god Jehovah is no longer a god of fire but a god of love and mercy. Prominent clergymen—the radio preacher among them—to-day preach about their god what would have been considered heresy less than two hundred years ago. Very few intelligent Christians accept that their god made the world and everything therein in six days and rested on the seventh, in fact the Old Testament as a whole has been largely discarded by the modern Protestant Church.

We can now summarize what has been said. All gods are made by man and are fundamentally reflections of their creators. Huxley showed that the more ignorant a people were the more common were the reports of miracles among them, and we can go further than that and apply it to religion as a whole. Generally speaking the gods became less savage and reduced in number whilst religion plays less part in the lives of the people, as they become more civilized. What is true of gods collectively applies to them individually—they become less barbarous as their worshippers develop likewise. We have seen that the Christian God is no exception to this rule.

C. McCALL.

Notes upon Oldham's Fourth Satire on the Jesuits

IN the British Museum Library may be seen Alexander Pope's own copy of Oldham's Works. Therein is a manuscript note to the effect that the fourth satire on the Jesuits is one of Oldham's most remarkable productions. This handwriting was said by Mitford to be undoubtedly that of Pope. One might have imagined that Pope, as a Roman Catholic, would have taken great offence at this satire, had one been foolish enough to think that he was sufficiently stupid to swallow, in Oldham's own words, "the ridiculous Superstition of the Church of Rome."

In his "Advertisement" Oldham makes the following remarks:—

Whence he had the hint of the fourth, is obvious to all, that are any thing acquainted with Horace. And without the Authority of so great a President, the making of an Image speak, is but an ordinary Miracle in Poetry. He expects, that some will tax him with Buffoonery, and turning holy things into ridicule. But let them Read, how severely Arnobius, Lactantius, Minutius Felix, and the gravest Fathers, have railly'd the fopperies and superstitions of the Heathen, and then consider whether those, which he has chosen for his Argument, are not as worthy of laughter. The only difference is, that they did it in Prose, as he does in Verse, where perhaps 'tis the more allowable.

In the early part of his life, Loyola served in the Spanish Army against the French, and at the siege of Pampeluna received a severe wound in his left leg, and had his right thigh shattered by a cannon ball. The perusal of *The Lives of the Saints* during the progress of a lingering cure by turning his brain, heated his imagination with religious enthusiasm, and is said to have given that direction to the rest of his life, which finally led to the establishment of the Order of the Jesuits.

In the time of Henry VIII. there was at Boxley, near Maidstone, a crucifix famous because the eyes of the Christ shut and opened as a sign of heavenly

grace. Subsequent investigations at the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries proved that this strange phenomenon, or "Miracle" as it was considered by the uneducated masses, was due to no more supernatural cause than a rat of a priest concealed beneath the figure and a pair of strings. It is said that Henry VIII. caused this figure to be paraded through the streets of London with its eyes and hands working, so that the general public could see for themselves how they had been "done brown" by the Romish priests for so long.

Goddard had been physician to Oliver Cromwell and was member of Parliament for Oxfordshire in 1653, the year in which John Oldham, who mentions "Goddard's drops" in his satire, was born. Oldham died of the small-pox in 1683.

In the days of Oldham, there were fragments of the true and original Cross scattered up and down the shrines of Europe sufficient by themselves to build a small cathedral. I myself was shown not many years ago (1928) a piece of the true and original Cross in the "Treasury" at Cologne Cathedral. At the same time I was also "privileged" to see two links of St. Peter's chains shut up in a sort of glass bottle. I wonder whether Goering has "nicked" these for old iron yet?

When Oldham was writing, anyone who journeyed from Amiens to Constantinople would be able to discover John the Baptist's head preserved in both places simultaneously. It was also to be seen at Damascus. Evidently John the Baptist, or "Johnny the Dipper," as Mackenzie called him, was like the Christian "Trinity," in that he had three heads, but only one body. On the other hand, it is quite possible that one head was the one he had when he was a baby, another when he was a boy, and the other when he was a man. At Amiens, all I saw a few years ago of John the Baptist's head, was a small piece of his skull, which appeared to be remarkably thick, as one would have, previous to the viewing, supposed. Probably Hitler has now ordered it to be utilized for purposes of glue-making. I do not know where the Baptist's coat is now, but the sword that was supposed to have been used to behead him, was, and probably still is, in a certain religious house in Spain. This country is certainly one of those in which one would expect to find it, another being Italy, where they are still being fooled with "religious bosh" that would disgrace the belief of an intelligent child of six. Jesus Christ's coat without seam is still kept in Treves Cathedral, and shown to the "gaping Rout" every seven years, for seven is supposed to be a "holy" number.

The Jesuits undertook to give an exact description of the internal economy of hell as if they had been Surveyors of the place. They resembled those omniscient leaders of the Church behaving as though (in the words of Erasmus), "they themselves had been called into consultation when the Universe was made."

"Souls" can be delivered from "smoky durance" with a good round sum of money. No King's Bench ghosts are thence released. The King's Bench prison was one for debtors, and when Oldham wrote those words he little knew that Pope's own copy of his Works would come into the possession of John Wilkes, who gave it unto Edward Thompson in the King's Bench prison on September 23, 1768. Presumably Thompson brought out an edition of Oldham "in pinch-gut times to raise the ready penny," as Ned Ward writes in one of his poems. Thompson's edition of Oldham's Works came out in 1770, and is the last (nearly) complete edition that has been published. A modern edition of Oldham's Works should be appearing in the near future, but that is another story.

By means of Indulgences, one might estimate, says Oldham, the cost of a Rape, keeping a Harlot or an Ingle, murdering one Person or a whole Family. An expert Church sin-assessor also appears in Gilbert's *Bab Ballads*, where the priest says:—

Five crimes at half a crown.
Exactly twelve and six.

We now come to the wonders of the Mass. Oldham writes:—

Hey Jingo, Sirs! What's this? 'tis Bread you see;
Presto be gone! 'tis now a Deity.

The following quotation from Swift's *Tale of a Tub* is very close to this:—

Here is excellent mutton . . . at which word he carves out two good slices of a loaf. Peter explains with this "plain argument" to the puzzled and disappointed brothers: By God it is as good mutton as any in Leadenhall Market and God confound you both eternally if you offer to believe otherwise.

Hymns Ancient and Modern assuming what they have to prove, as is usual in religious "argument," sing a mighty miracle:—

Draw nigh and take the Body of the Lord.

To Dryden, as to Paul, Nature was set at defiance, or transcended, on the Lord's Table, and reason appeared in bondage to belief, as it always does in religious matters, whatever Dr. Matthews may aver to the contrary. Dryden says the following on the matter:—

And shall my sight and touch and taste rebel?
Can I my reason to my faith compel?
Superior faculties are set aside;
Shall their subservient organs be my guide?

Unfortunately this is merely the rhetorical protest of a man with brains, and is the sort of excuse for the doctrine of transubstantiation that one might expect from such a wrong-headed person as Cardinal Newman. Oldham, tacking the problem logically, cannot help arriving at a somewhat Rabelaisian conclusion. And here is Oldham's answer to Dryden:—

To see a silly, sinful, mortal Wight
His Maker make, create the Infinite.
None boggles at th' impossibility;
Alas, 'tis wondrous Heavenly Mystery!"

Sir William Scroggs, speaking of the Catholics at the time of the Popish Plot, said:—

Such are the wicked solecisms in their religion, that they seem to have left them neither natural sense nor natural conscience: not natural sense, by their absurdity in so unreasonable a belief as of the wine turned into blood; not conscience, by their cruelty, who make the Protestants' blood as wine, and these priests thirst after it.

That was the opinion of a learned judge in a Court of Law. The most notorious of all Scroggs' utterances, an acrid sneer at the doctrine of transubstantiation: "They eat their God; they kill their king, and saint the murderer," is paralleled almost exactly by Dryden's couplet from *Absalom and Achitophel*:—

Such savoury deities must needs be good,
As served at once for worship and for food;

Evidently a case of "very sweet, very tasty," and Dryden, who at this time belonged to the Court and High Church party, became within five years a Roman Catholic. Yet, to my mind it is almost incredible that a man with such a brain and such a sense of humour as Dryden possessed should have actually believed in some of the Roman Catholic doctrines. The only solution I can think of is that his brain deteriorated, as so often unfortunately happens in old age. For, at the trial of Sir George Wakeman, who

was the physician of the Queen of Charles II., and was accused of having tried to poison her, Sir William Scroggs delivered himself of the following remark:—

"Never brag of your religion, for it is a foul one, and so contrary to Christ; it is easier to believe anything than to believe that an understanding man may be a papist." Poor old Wakeman!

Cellier, mentioned by Oldham, was a whore mistress who narrowly escaped the gibbet in 1680.

DONALD DALE

Freethinkers and the Forces

FREETHINKERS liable for services in H.M. Forces should clearly understand their rights with regard to religion.

They should insist upon their own statement of Atheist, Agnostic, Rationalist, or non-religious being accepted, without modification, and duly recorded on the official papers.

If the person recording—usually an N.C.O. is not aware of the recruit's rights and refuses to accept the recruit's own statement, he should insist upon the matter being referred to the officer in charge. If the recruit's legal right is not then admitted, information should be sent to the General Secretary N.S.S. without delay. In all cases hitherto reported by the Society to the Army, Navy and Air Force authorities a satisfactory reply has been received.

Finally, a man serving in any of the Forces has the right at any time to have the description of himself with regard to religion altered should any change of opinion on his part have taken place.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON

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BETHNAL GREEN AND HACKNEY BRANCH N.S.S.—Victoria Park, near the Bandstand): 3.15, Mrs. N. Buxton.

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NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (White Stone Pond, Hampstead): 11.30, Sunday, Mr. L. Ebury, Parliament Hill Fields, 3.30, Sunday, Mr. L. Ebury.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Sunday, A Lecture. Brockwell Park, 6.30, Sunday, A Lecture.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 7.30, Thursday, Mr. E. C. Saphin and supporting speakers. Sunday, 3.0, until dusk, various speakers.

COUNTRY

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BLYTH (The Fountain): 7.0, Monday, Mr. J. T. Brighton.

BRIERFIELD: 7.30, Thursday, Mr. J. Clayton.

COLNE: 7.30, Friday, Mr. J. Clayton.

CHESTER-LE-STREET (The Bridge): 8.0, Friday, Messrs. J. T. Brighton and T. H. Elstob.

EDINBURGH BRANCH N.S.S. (The Mound): 7.30, Mrs. M. Whitefield.

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