

The

FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

EDITED BY CHAPMAN COHEN ■ ■ EDITOR · 1881-1915 · G · W · FOOTE

Registered at the General Post Office as a Newspaper

VOL. XLV.—No. 8

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1925

PRICE THREEPENCE

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Views and Opinions.

The Imaginary Jesus.

It is proverbial that superstitions die hard. The reason for this is not far to seek. To begin with the most general beliefs are usually the most primitive, and, being primitive, they have coloured the thinking of the race, and in a large number of instances have become incarnate in institutions. The consequence is that anyone or anything that runs counter to these superstitions is fighting some of the oldest of convictions, and those that are least open to the power of reasoning. More than that, the champion of these primitive beliefs is speaking a language with which the mass of the people are perfectly familiar. They may not understand the meaning of what is said, but in the case of a popular appeal that is not necessary. All that is required is that the familiar words shall be used, and in perhaps nineteen cases out of twenty, a particular kind of reaction is assured. The reformer is, on the other hand, addressing his audience in an unfamiliar tongue. It must be familiar with the words before it can respond to the ideas that lie behind them. This is, of course, true not merely of superstition, but of almost every subject with which one deals. Or perhaps it might be more correct to say that superstition is a frame of mind that can attach itself to any subject under the sun. But it is religion that serves as its spawning ground, and which conserves its operation in all directions.

* * *

Jesus, Old and New.

The two superstitions that appear to show the greatest tenacity to-day are the belief in a future life and in the character of Jesus as an ethical and social guide. The first is a very old one, the last is comparatively modern. The Jesus who was primarily an ethical and social reformer was unknown to earlier generations of believers. In that Jesus they never showed the slightest interest; in fact, they went out of their way to enlarge on the other world character of Christianity as a whole. It was Jesus the incarnate deity they cared about, and they only cared about him because he was the one who could save their own miserable souls from eternal damnation. But social developments could not help reflecting themselves in the region of religious beliefs, and as the humanisation of society went on, and as

advancing knowledge weakened the belief in Christian doctrines, the character of the New Testament Jesus underwent a gradual modification. He was no longer the crucified deity, put to death in accordance with a plan for saving men's souls in the next world, he was no longer the miracle worker, the believer in devils and their daily intercourse with human beings, no longer the god-man threatening damnation to all who did not accept him as their saviour, no longer the teacher who desired his followers to separate themselves from the world, but the gentle reformer who was pained at the political and economic injustice of the world, and aimed at securing a reign of social justice here whether there existed another world or not. One would dearly like to hear the comments of some of the early Christian fathers, or of John Knox, or Calvin, or Wesley, upon this kind of Jesus. Christians have never been weak when it came to demonstrations of sectarian vituperation, but this sort of Jesus would certainly have taxed their capacities to the utmost.

God or Man?

* * *

This transformation of the historic God into a mere social reformer was the easier because the ordinary Christian has always been, and still is, astonishingly ignorant of the history or origin of his creed. The policy of the Christian Church, from the earliest times, of forcibly suppressing all writings that told the truth about its religion, the strict injunctions laid upon believers not to read anti-Christian productions—a policy so generally pursued that to-day most Christians still regard it as a mark of virtue not to read anything that will upset their faith—and the constant plaint that we must follow Jesus, all this made it quite easy for the conviction to grow up that the Jesus Christ of the New Testament was a quite unique character alike in his life and in his teaching. It thus became comparatively easy to switch over from the miracle-working saviour God to the social reformer because it required no great change of terms. The old words could be used and the old reactions assured, and the cerebration that with most people did duty for thinking served equally well in both cases. Thus it has happened that as the one superstition concerning the saviour God weakened it has been replaced by another superstition—that of Jesus as an ideal social and ethical reformer. And, if possible, this last superstition is worse than the earlier one. That had a certain standing in the mythology of mankind, and has all the dignity that may come from its antiquity and its world-wide range. But this latter superstition has nothing on its behalf save the intellectual sluggishness of one set of people, and the mental dishonesty of another set. In the light of modern thought the saviour god is merely an ancient absurdity. But the reforming Jesus stands as the product of slovenly thinking and mental dishonesty.

* * *

The Crudity of Jesus.

The above considerations were forcibly suggested to me by a question put by a young man at the end

of a recent lecture in Birmingham. In answer to a question I said it was quite a mistake to say, as the questioner had done, that the teachings of Jesus had made the world better, or that the New Testament Jesus was 2000 years ahead of his time. Far from that I regarded Jesus as not being even up-to-date with the best thought of his time. Since then I have received from the same questioner a very lengthy letter in which the same statements are repeated, but without adding anything material to what was said at the time. And as the gush about Jesus is very common in this country, especially with that section of the Labour platform which is marked far more by flabby sentiment than by clear thinking, it may be well to repeat in substance what I then said. One thing that appeared to surprise my querist was the statement that Jesus was not ahead of his time in even the matter of religion. The crude demonism of Jesus contrasts poorly with the more enlightened views that were then held and taught by some of the best religious thinkers of Greece and Rome. The better educated Greeks were already teaching that disease was due to perfectly natural causes and considerable knowledge was afloat concerning the nature of the nervous system. With Jesus it was all a case of possession by demons, and there is no question that it was the influence of his teaching which re-established the belief in demonism in a world that had already taken the first steps towards outgrowing it. Greek thinkers were teaching the rotundity of the earth and the true structure of the solar system. Jesus held to the flat earth of the more primitive times. There was not in any part of his alleged teaching the slightest notion of the idea of natural law, nor the least conception of the crude savagery of his doctrine of eternal damnation for unbelief. If anyone doubts this let them spend a few hours with one of the Greek or Roman authors discussing the questions of the belief in a God or in immortality with the early Christian writers—who may be assumed to be nearer the actual influence of Jesus than anyone else—and they will see the enormous gap between them. The Salvation Army in its crudest manifestations is far nearer a picture of the kind of Christian that was developed under the direct influence of Jesus than anything else one can think of.

* * *

Moralistic Bubbles.

I am not concerned, nor am I impressed by the citing of handfuls of moralistic platitudes that have never done the slightest good to anyone. To tell people to love one another, that all men are brothers, that God will judge all, that God loves those who obey him, are the commonplaces of religious teachers of all ages. But they have never, so far as one can see, had the slightest influence that is of any consequence. My correspondent tells me that one must not blame Jesus because men have not carried out his teachings. But if we are considering the influence of Jesus we have to face the question of why there has been this conspicuous failure right through the ages. It has not been because the teaching has not been given. To do the churches justice they have never ceased to preach these commonplaces to the people, and their lack of value in the determination of conduct for good is seen in the whole of Christian history. Considerations as to the nature of morals, the way in which genuinely moral conduct may be furthered, of the conditions which make good conduct possible or probable, may be of use, but the use of phrases which may mean anything or nothing is always of doubtful value, and may even be of positive harm.

Jesus and Ethics.

Is it then probable that—assuming the New Testament Jesus to be an actual existence—one who was demonstrably so far behind the best knowledge of his day in so much that was of importance to mankind, who subscribed whole-heartedly to the most ignorant of superstitions, and who held unfalteringly beliefs concerning the nature of man and the world which the most stupid among us have outgrown, could yet be so far in advance of his times in regard to ideas on ethics and sociology? Merely to put the question plainly is to make clear its absurdity. Ethics and sociology are not so divorced from knowledge that one can be developed in the one direction and remain backward in the other. To be filled with the desire to do good, is beside the point. That may be found among all classes of people in all ages of the world and in all stages of culture. But it is not these qualities alone which will entitle a man to be called a reformer, or even in the true sense of the word a teacher. And it was not the quality of an ethical or social reformer that made Jesus the figurehead of a religious cult. He was that in virtue of his supernatural character. The early Christians were not moved by the moral maxims of Jesus. Why should they have been? There was nothing new, nothing original in them. They must have been familiar with them as everyday sayings, and one man more or less saying them could not have affected them greatly. Jesus Christ was believed in because of his supernatural character and because of his supernatural mission. If people can accept these they can hold on to Jesus Christ with some claim to self-respect. But to drop the supernatural Christ and to hold up the impossible social reformer is to invite the contempt of all serious-minded men and women.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Atheism.

In an interesting letter from a dear friend our attention is specially called to the above subject, and to that communication the present article will be deeply indebted. What is Atheism? Literally translated it means No God; and nearly all the dictionaries define it as "the denial of or disbelief in the existence of God." Atheism signifies the absence of Theism, and in most parts of the world it is bound to be an active denial of Theism. The famous Robert Hall regarded Atheism as "a ferocious system, that leaves nothing above us to excite awe nor around us to awaken tenderness." To some people God is infinite Soul, and it naturally follows that "Theism affirms, Atheism denies, Agnosticism ignores, the existence of any such Soul." There never has been a time in history when Atheists did not exist, nor has there ever been a time when they were not despised and badly treated. A Hebrew Psalmist calls them fools, even when the denial of God was only in their hearts, but not expressed in spoken words. With their cruel treatment in mind, the question naturally arises, how do you account for their existence at all? Their enemies, mostly Christian ministers, openly declare that their motive in disbelieving in God is the "wish to be delivered from the control of the Church and be free to commit all sorts of crimes." As a child, the present writer only knew one Atheist, a near neighbour, against whom such a wicked charge could not be made. He was a thorough-going Atheist, and it was on that account alone that he was looked down on by the community. All his neighbours, though shunning his society, were bound to acknowledge that morally and socially he shone

with exceptional brightness. He never committed a single crime, great or small. We venture to affirm that this Welsh Freethinker of sixty years ago was a type to which Freethinkers generally are delightfully loyal. They are seldom found in our prisons except in punishment for advocating their principles in public, or for publishing and circulating Free-thought literature.

Now, no one becomes an Atheist in order to be released from moral and social responsibilities because such responsibilities lie most lightly on the majority of Christians, who on that account do not hesitate to perpetrate the darkest and most hideous deeds conceivable. Besides, for Christian criminals full pardon is to be granted for the mere asking in true repentance. People never adopt Atheism from such an unnecessary and unworthy motive, but simply because Theism has become unreal to them. As our friend puts it, "Any man who turns away from the popular Christian superstition does so with intense internal agony." That is perfectly and sadly true. It is never easy to forsake the religious teachings imparted to us by our mothers which to them appeared so profoundly true and precious. Our emotions fondly cling to them long after our intellects have utterly discredited them. To tear ourselves away from them is a most difficult and painful performance. Our friend says: "Yet any man with intellectual courage must feel it his duty to be guided by his own judgment in the light of modern knowledge, rather than by his mother's judgment, who had not his advantages. Otherwise, intelligence would stand still."

No one knows better than the present writer how much it costs to exchange the Christian pulpit for the Secular platform, and after twenty-two years the cost has still to be paid. Christians are noted for their persistence in a course of systematic persecution, and Freethinkers are equally well known for their never-failing loyalty to their friends.

Another question is, "Why then do people become Atheists?" Our friend answers: "Simply because they will not accept the aggressive teachings of the Church," or, in other words, because they have found out that Theism is wholly false. Take the argument from Design, on which Paley dwelt so eloquently, and for many, so convincingly, and you will find that to-day the most scholarly and trustworthy divines make no use of it. Col. Ingersoll, in his marvellous lecture on "The Gods," shows its absurdity thus:—

A devout clergyman sought every opportunity to impress upon the mind of his son the fact that God takes care of all his creatures; that the falling sparrow attracts his attention and that his loving kindness is over all his works. Happening one day to see a crane wading in quest of food the god-man pointed out to his son the perfect adaptation of the crane to get his living in that manner. "See," said he, "how his legs are formed for wading! What a long slender bill he has! Observe how nicely he folds his feet when putting them in or drawing them out of the water! He does not cause the slightest ripple. He is thus enabled to approach the fish without giving any notice of his arrival." "My son," said he, "it is impossible to look at that bird without recognizing the design as well as the goodness of God in thus providing the means of subsistence." "Yes," replied the boy, "I think I see the goodness of God at least so far as the crane is concerned, but, after all, father, don't you think the arrangement a little tough on the fish?" (*Works*, vol. 1, p. 42.)

The argument from general laws is equally futile. This argument is thus stated by the late Mr. Romanes: "There must be a God because such and such an organic structure must in some way or other have been ultimately due to intelligence" (*A Candid Examination of Theism*, p. 45). During the last fifty

years the revelations made by science as to the self-evolution of the universe have completely destroyed the force of this argument. Intelligence is now seen to be a product of Nature, and in no sense whatever its producer. As the universe is now conceived by Science, there is neither room nor need for God. Supernaturalism is an exploded dream of ignorance. Nature covers all that is known by us to exist. All else is a tissue of beliefs not one of which can be proved. Knowledge of anything beyond and above Nature is absolutely impossible. This is a point upon which Dr. John A. Hutton never wavers, and so far as we are aware he is the only clergyman who has publicly taken up such a position.

Some ignorant and narrow-minded men of God positively assert that there is not one real Atheist in the world. Deep down in the heart of every human being, they allege, there is some vague sense or dim intimation of a Divine Being who bears witness to himself, just as they aver that every good man is a Christian. But they are fundamentally wrong, the truth being that veritable believers in God are few and far between, while many members of the Church are in reality unbelievers in him. Outside the Church Atheists are innumerable on the earth and there are many thousands of them in London alone. Many of us are proud to be such, and prouder still to be recognized as such by those round about us. The mission of some of us is to manufacture Atheists by cogent arguments, using reason as our mightiest weapon.

J. T. LLOYD.

Last-Day Lunacy.

Even the weakest disputant is made conceited by what he calls religion as to think himself wiser than the wisest who thinks differently from him.—*W. S. Landor.*

BEING of punctual habits, I am tickled by the newspaper announcement that the world will come to an end on the sixth day of next month at 9 o'clock at night. Of course, the journalists are not altogether to blame. They reproduce the prophecy, which comes from some zealous Christians at Libau, on the Baltic, but they do not accept full and entire responsibility. The onus is on the prophets, who appear to have actually frightened some folks. According to the telegrams so scared were some local Christians that they started digging graves with the intention of having a fully choral funeral service and waiting the end in funeral garb. But even a Christian cannot bury himself properly without assistance of some kind, so the odd man will have the laugh on the others if the end of the world is not up to time, and the lively corpses have to come out of their graves and see him smiling with his watch in his hand.

But, seriously, I am intrigued by this precise detail of time. Mark you, it is nine o'clock precisely, not five minutes to, nor five minutes after the hour. This is very unusual in matters of Scriptural prophecy. It is almost as exciting as going to Southend-on Sea for the day, when the railway company gives one precise times for starting and returning. Prophets, however, are very vague and wobbly as to dates in their predictions, and this chronological precision is a novelty.

In almost every century of the Christian era, prophets, more or less needy and seedy, have earned penurious pence by hazarding guesses as to the end of the world. Simple Christians have always believed them, and just as often the holy men have been hopelessly wrong. It is an astonishing fact that Christians seem unable to free themselves from this end-of-the-world obsession. From the historic world's-end panic in 1000 A.D. to that telegraphed from Libau the other

day, there have always been a sufficient number of dupes to keep the prophetic charlatans in countenance. And so the game goes on merrily through the centuries.

Maybe the advent of the machine-made ten-shilling watch has led the prophets into greater exactness in their prophecies. In earlier days the mere date of the year was considered sufficient. Emanuel Swedenborg, for instance, fixed the end of the world for 1757, Johann Beugel for 1836, Alexander Miller, the Seventh-Day Adventist, for 1843, and the Rev. John Cumming for 1866. Baxter, a more recent prophet, altered his date every year or so, and was still busy with his calculations when he died. Baxter used also to identify Anti-Christ, and, starting his career by denouncing Napoleon the Third, he finished up with pointing a finger at General Boulanger, as big a charlatan as he was himself, which is saying a lot. Baxter used to stump the country with a number of large maps and a long pointer, and nearly frighten the life out of old ladies and woolly-headed men. One of his maps, I recollect, bore a striking resemblance to a flying steamroller with spring onions sprouting from it. It was well calculated to impress the feeble-minded, for his audiences were always sufficiently panicky to buy his books, and to contribute liberally towards his expenses.

These prophets generally inspire a panic of greater or lesser violence. In the United States, the home of fancy religions, they are of frequent occurrence. As recently as 1922 Dr. George Harding, brother of President Harding, and a prominent preacher, warned his audiences that all would be over before his brother's administration was concluded. The president went to Heaven in August, 1923, if Americans ever do go to such a place, but the old world still wagged on its weary way. But modern panics are as nothing to the effect produced in the year 1000 A.D. That was an Age of Faith, and as the dread period drew near, monarchs gave up their thrones, and nobles their estates, and retired into monasteries. Women flocked to convents and nunneries, and every church and chapel was thronged day and night with hysterical worshippers. Historians, unhappily, are all silent as to what happened when these people found out that it was a false alarm. It must have been as nerve-racking an experience as the relations of Lazarus experienced when the supposed deceased turned up unexpectedly after the insurance money was spent.

A very bad end-of-the-world panic took place in the eighteenth century when Cardinal de Cusa announced from the pulpit that the end of all things was at hand. He proved to the satisfaction of the faithful that prophecy pointed to the year 1704 as the climax of everything, but the Cardinal's calculations were as erroneous as those of Mother Shipton, and his prophecies as windy as those of Old Moore's *Almanac*.

The Seventh-Day Adventists, who appear to specialize in this prophetic business, have lately revised their date for the end, and have fixed it for the year 1996. So, if the prophecy for next month should prove false, those who profess and call themselves Christians may carry on for a few more years in fear and trembling. There is one grain of comfort in all this story of faith and ignorance. Once these prophecies came from the lips of really prominent ecclesiastics, representative of the great Christian Churches. Now, in these degenerate days, the prophetic mantle is only worn by the fancy religionists. Baltic believers, with their gravediggers, and Seventh-Day Adventists with their butter-muslin robes of ascension, are sorry substitutes for Cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church, or for Patriarchs of the Greek Church. And later-day prophecy is of the crudest type, like the portentous utterances of Old Moore,

which can be purchased at twopence a copy. There is little or no brains of any quality left in the prophetic business. In fact, there are no first-class brains left in the Churches of Christendom. The Freethinkers, with the cunning natural to such people, have annexed all the fine intellects. In the circumstances, this is a good thing. The job of frightening people with end-of-the-world nonsense so that they shell out their savings is getting played out. It used to be a very profitable business for the clergy, but now it looks as if it were a part-time job, and precarious at that.

MIMNERMUS.

The Conflict Between Roman Catholicism and Humanitarianism

Will Men be like Gods? is the title of a book just published by Longmans Green, and written by Owen Francis Dudley, a Roman Catholic priest; with an introduction by Mr G. K. Chesterton, who, as we all know, has lately been received into the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church, where he will, no doubt, be at liberty to carry on the good work of Friar Tuck, and Father O'Flynn.

This book is a furious attack upon humanitarian ideals as represented by the Positivists, and more especially those set forth by Mr. G. H. Wells in his *Outline of History* and *Men Like Gods*. It is no part of our intention to defend Mr. Wells, who is eminently capable of defending himself, and will, no doubt, attend to the matter. Our concern is with the attitude of the Roman Church to humanitarianism.

Father Dudley does not believe in that bilge about loving your enemies, or, at any rate, the enemies of the Church, not he. He starts with the gloves off. His first words are:—

Men dislike being fooled. Men are in danger of being fooled to-day. And not merely fooled, but hoaxed. Not merely hoaxed, but utterly deceived. Men are in danger of staking their all upon what would prove to be the greatest delusion ever foisted on humanity, were it generally accepted. Men are being told that there is a certain road to human happiness in this world; that those who tread this road will find a Utopia of earthly bliss; that they will become "men like Gods." It is not the first time men have been so told. "You shall be as Gods," urged Satan in the Garden of Eden. But he lied. And the man and woman were fooled. So also will it be with the men and women who allow themselves to be caught in the snares of those who are repeating that invitation to-day.

Relying upon the ignorance of the general public in the contents of the Bible, the reverend Father carefully misquotes it, for it reads: "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Meaning, of course, in that respect only. Moreover, the Lord told Adam that in the day that he ate of the fruit of the tree, "thou shalt surely die." Whereas Satan prophesied, "Ye shall not surely die," and in the event Satan told the truth, and the lie was on the other side.

To the social reformers and "Humanitarian Christians" outside the Catholic Church, he declares, and truly declares:—

It is useless to try and square Christianity with Humanitarianism. The two are contradictories. They are aiming at opposite ends. We would remind them, too, that Christ did not make His Church a mere philanthropical society. Christianity does not exist to establish man in security and prosperity on earth.

Of course it does not; we have said the same thing over and over again. As Father Dudley rightly says: "Its purpose is to establish the Kingdom of God on

earth." A very different thing. A celibate kingdom of monks and nuns, engaged in prayer and fasting, all their thoughts and actions concentrated on the attainment of the kingdom of heaven, or, as our author puts it: "The object of Christianity is to put men in possession not of the things of this world, but of the things of Heaven." Father Dudley, in the same breath, makes the astonishing statement: "It is also a matter of fact that the Catholic Church has done more for humanity than all the Humanitarians put together." More what? Lord Morley declared that it had shed more blood than any other religion, and we agree. The Father then proceeds to what he describes as "the highly congenial task of exploding the humanitarian utopia" as follows:—

Human nature is ever demanding an answer to the question: "Why should I be good? Why should I be true? Why should I love?" To reply merely: "For the sake of Humanity" is to prompt a further query: "Why for the sake of Humanity? Under what obligation am I to be good for the sake of Humanity? What absolute or obligatory value can Humanity give to morality isolated from religion?.....Humanitarians cannot even offer me a serious inducement to lead a moral life."

"Religion," continues Father Dudley, "tells me why I should avoid evil and why I should do good. Religion tells me that in God alone can I find the principle of moral obligation: that God is the supreme legislator of the moral order." This priest has, apparently, never heard that morality, like religion, and the idea of God, is the result of a process of evolution, and that the works in which scientists have traced the origin of these ideas, step by step, to their rudimentary beginnings in the animal world, can be studied by anyone who wishes to learn the truth of the matter. The poet Young declared:—

Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,
Whate'r his boast, has told me he's a knave.

To which George Eliot replied:—

It is quite possible that you would be a knave, and love yourself alone, if it were not for your belief in immortality; but you are not to force upon me what would result from your own utter want of moral emotion. I am just and honest, not because I expect to live in another world, but because, having felt the pain of injustice and dishonesty towards myself, I have a fellow feeling with other men, who would suffer the same pain if I were unjust or dishonest towards them. Why should I give my neighbour short weight in this world because there is not another world in which I should have nothing to weigh out to him? I am honest because I don't like to inflict evil on others in this life, not because I'm afraid of evil to myself in another. The fact is, I do not love myself alone, whatever logical necessity there may be for that conclusion in your mind.¹

The Puritan and the ascetic are held back from partaking of the pleasures of this world by fear of future punishment. To their starved natures sin takes on a most alluring aspect; known in their jargon as the temptings of Satan. But, as Nietzsche remarked, "The she-dog sensuality looketh with envy out of all they do," and is at the bottom of the motive that spurs celibate bishops in their crusades against music-halls and night-clubs. The fact, which they cannot see, is, that morality is natural. For instance dishonesty is iminoral, not because some God shouted it down from a mountain, but because the experience of generations of mankind has proved that "honesty is the best policy." Again, drunkenness

is not wicked because of any ordinance of God, but because experience shows that it is ruinous and degrading to body, mind, and pocket. If a man makes a practice of selfishness and cruelty, he will soon find himself avoided and ostracised, an outcast from society. *It is the suffering it entails both to oneself and to others that makes the action immoral.* If an action injures no one, or myself either, then that action is not immoral, and no fiat of any God can make it so. Morality is natural, without some acknowledged rules of morality society could not exist.

As Professor Clifford has well said, the codes of morality "are derived from Secular sources"; and the most ancient version of the Ten Commandments originated, "not in the thunders of Sinai, but in peaceful life of men on the plains of Chaldea. Conscience is the voice of man ingrained into our hearts, commanding us to work for man."² And again, "The voice of conscience is the voice of our Father Man who is within us; the accumulated instinct of the race is poured into a cup."

Christianity is often claimed to be the religion of unselfishness, of pure altruism. Father Dudley makes this claim. He complains that Christians are sometimes accused of "only seeking their own eternal happiness; they are good only for the sake of the reward they hope to gain." He points to the Christian saints and martyrs, and putting the question, "Why are we good?" replies, "For the sake of God..... We love God, not for ourselves, but for Himself; not for our own reward, but for His glory." But just previously we had been told:—

If I disobey His moral laws, I miss my final end. If I obey them, I win eternal life and everlasting happiness. Religion thus gives my moral actions an absolute and eternal value. Humanitarianism gives them no value at all.

Really the holy Father cannot have it both ways. He cannot dangle the bait of eternal bliss, and escape from eternal punishment as the reward for leading a moral life, and then pose like a statue of altruism on a monument, declaring that such rewards do not influence him at all. Take away all hope of reward, and, more especially, all fear of punishment, and very few would find it worth while renouncing the world and immuring themselves in monasteries and convents.

W. MANN.

(To be Concluded.)

Carlyle: The Anti-Democratic Radical.¹

It is a difficult problem to fix a definite political, religious or philosophical label to a great thinker. His range of vision is so much larger than that of the man of average ability that, quite possibly, though drawn from the same premises, the conclusions of the great thinker may be in direct opposition to those of the lesser.

Witness the antithetic creeds, schools of philosophy and political parties whose respective adherents have claimed even Shakespeare for their own. They will prove his adherence to their particular cause by an infinitude of quotations, incidentally ignoring the context and the significance of the characters he happens to be portraying.

It is not without a qualm at one's temerity, therefore, that one claims the originator of the phrase "the rotten multitudinous canaille" as a staunch

² Clifford, *Lectures and Essays*, p. 384.

¹ For more extensive reading on this subject, *Six Radical Thinkers*, by J. MacCunn, is strongly recommended.

¹ George Eliot, *Essays*, p. 350-351.

advocate of democracy. Nevertheless, no writer in our literature realized better than Carlyle, contradictory as many of his ideas may seem, the possibilities of the individual life; and no writer has done more to foster and maintain the essence of the democratic spirit than he—the sworn foe of *political* democracy. For to him it was by no means clearly proven that the democratic spirit must of necessity manifest itself by democratic methods of government.

It is not because of his toils that I lament for the poor, we must all toil or steal (howsoever we name our stealing).....What I do mourn over is that the lamp of his soul should go out.....That there should be one man die ignorant who has capacity for knowledge, this I call a tragedy.

Thus Carlyle on the education question.

It must not be overlooked that if Carlyle, in his tributes to the natural aristocracies of insight and worth, bitterly satirised the aristocracy of titles, pedigrees and luxury, his judgment upon the Radicals was none the less bitter. Yet, paradoxically enough, he was a greater Radical than any. For although he gibed and scoffed at the political Radicals of his day, his advocacy of popular causes was far in advance of his day. Moreover, he brought to his aid such humour, pathos, satire, invective and eloquence that the questions under discussion were impressed into the mind of his generation.

Yet if Carlyle is claimed for Radicalism it is certainly not the Radicalism of Bentham, or Cobden, or Mazzini, or Bright, or Green. It is a Radicalism of total disbelief in and denunciation of democracy. Although he had great faith in the possibilities of the individual man to become himself a leader of men or to possess steadfastness enough to follow a chosen leader, he had an intense distrust and abhorrence of the Collective Will. The point must be emphasized that, despite his faith in the possibilities of the individual man, from whatever section of society he might spring, to become a leader—or at least the earnest follower of a leader—he nevertheless ridiculed the idea of the millions (mostly fools) ever working out their destiny through the ballot box. Neither did Carlyle believe in narrowing down the issues of a political programme to its simplest exposition, as, for instance, "A cow and three acres." He would probably have retorted that whilst you were about it you might as well make the offer of "A planet and three satellites"; that the average elector would be equally as embarrassed with the possession of the former as with the latter.

It is extremely difficult to understand Carlyle's attitude in this respect. He is also very vague as to how the leaders are to be chosen. It is left to the reader to surmise whether they are to assert themselves, their followers to remain subserviently passive, or whether, having been elected by the masses, they (the leaders) are to be controlled by the democratic will.

At least he is emphatic in that he firmly believed that amongst the unthinking mob, the mediocre and the equally unthinking, purse-proud middle-classes and place-seekers, are hidden the divinely chosen leaders of men, the workers, the *thinkers*, the men who, if mankind is ever to develop and work out for itself a more or less utopian state, will inevitably lead the way. "Ah, yes. I will say it again. The great silent men. Looking round on the noisy inanity of the world, words with little meaning, actions with little worth, one loves to reflect on the great Empire of Silence. The noble, silent men, scattered here and there, each in his department silently thinking, silently working, whom no morning newspaper makes mention of. They are the salt of the earth."

W. THOMPSON.

Acid Drops.

In London the other day a seven-weeks-old child died from asphyxia, due to four sleeping in a bed, owing to lack of accommodation. When next the Bishop of Durham or the Bishop of London complains that they are compelled to keep up a residence with a large number of rooms they might bear in mind the fact that in this Christian country theirs is the kind of trouble from which many thousands are free. Bishop Welldon may see in it another argument for the railway-men when he next lectures them on their selfishness, and for his own heroism in bearing the burden of his office. And as Jesus assured us that we should always have the poor with us, it might also come in useful as evidence of the truth of the Scriptures.

The manager of the Exeter City Tramway Company recently received one shilling as payment for fares out of which the sender had cheated the company from time to time. He said that as a Christian he wanted to put the matter right. We should have been more impressed if the conscience of this Christian had prevented him robbing the company in the first place.

The B.B.C. explained in a recent issue of its journal how popular its religious service on Sunday is. We have a suspicion that if many complaints had not been made about them there would not have been occasion for its attempted justification. For our part what has struck us about the sermons sent out by wireless is their unredeemed stupidity. We are not, naturally a regular Church attendant, and, as our readers know, we have not a very high opinion of the mental ability of the average parson. But we should never have thought it possible for man after man to deliver the unrelieved twaddle that these parsonic broadcasters do. The mentality of the clergy appears to be even lower than we had imagined. We are not criticising them from the point of view of a Freethinker. But trying to look at their sermons from the religious point of view we think our statement is quite justifiable. Either the B.B.C. is trying to show the public what poor things the clergy are by selecting the worst they can find, or the case is as we have said.

Someone has been writing to the *Manchester Guardian* protesting against money raised from the taxation of wireless licences being used for this broadcasting of Christian propaganda. At this the *Church Times* is vastly amused and explains that the B.B.C. tries to suit all tastes in the matter of religion as in other things. Now that is simply not true. The B.B.C. merely tries to suit all *Christian* tastes. No one would be allowed to say over the wireless that Christianity was not true, that it was obstructive to moral or social development. People who are not Christians may be allowed to speak, but it is on condition that they say nothing to which Christians will take exception. It is simply part of the usual Christian egotism and impertinence to assume that so long as all Christians are satisfied no one else has cause to grumble. Religion should either be kept out of the wireless or views for and against should be permitted.

A *Sunday Express* correspondent reports from Rome that an attack of influenza has left a young girl of sixteen in the possession of psychic powers. "Psychic powers" is a very fine mouth-filling phrase, and the most ignorant of scribblers can use it with an air of an ancient oracle delivering a message. All the same such things are not uncommon, although they used to be phrased differently. If Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had to revise medical records he would probably rewrite them thus:—

The use of one bottle of whisky per day has left William Scroggins in possession of psychic powers.

His friends say they have observed a strange, far-away look in his eyes and Mr. Scroggins asserts that he is in the grip of strange forces which compel him to do certain things. He also sees visions of an unearthly character. Neighbours also say that soon after Mr. Scroggins arrives home in the evening sounds as though pieces of furniture were being thrown about the house are heard. Several eminent students of psychic powers are investigating the case.

It is quite evident that our medical men have been quite on the wrong tack. Indeed, it would seem that the whole matter should be taken out of their hands. The proper persons to investigate these curious manifestations of the nervous system are lawyers, journalists, and the like. Their training is an obvious recommendation for a subject which involves a close acquaintance with the physiology of the nervous system and of abnormal psychology.

The amount of ignorance afloat concerning the subject of evolution is well illustrated by an article in *T.P.s and Cassell's Weekly* on the question of evolution. We do not know who on earth the writer, James Corbett, is, but it will astonish us if the readers of even *Cassell's Weekly* will not know far better than their would-be instructor. Mr. Corbett asks, "Is Man an Animal?" and he decides he is not. Man, he says, is a spiritual unit from the beginning of creation, it is so stated "clearly in the Bible, and there is no information in the Holy Book that man evolved from the animal state." That settles it, for Mr. Corbett. He does not care whether it is true or not, if the Bible does say so then it must be false. We are a little astonished that Mr. Corbett should accept the Copernican astronomy, or give up the belief in witches or devils. It is a pity not to go the whole hog while one is about it.

Mr. Corbett may be surprised to learn that the evidence of man's animal origin is not at all dependent upon the discovery of a series of "missing links" that would show a clear gradation from some ape-like form to man. The proof that man is an animal is a fact of anatomy and physiology. The proof that he has evolved from a lower form of life is given in the development of each child that is born. As Huxley said many years ago, embryology alone proves the truth of evolution. If some of these uninstructed scribblers for the press will set them down to a very elementary study of the subject they will discover that the only question that instructed men and women join issue on is the machinery of the evolutionary process. It is a question of the factors of evolution, not of evolution itself.

We see according to press reports that another Holy War has broken out between the Puritan Wahabis and Ali, King of the Hedjaz. And still there are religiously-minded folk who try to make our blood creep by telling us what a dreadful place this old earth would be if religion were tossed into the limbo of forgotten things. It would be an interesting task for a statistician to calculate just how many tens of millions of lives have been lost in recorded religious wars. We say tens of millions, for that number would probably be a useful unit for calculation in such a task.

The editor of the *Huddersfield Daily Examiner* must have a deeply religious set of readers. At any rate they must be profoundly ignorant—which is usually the same thing—if they are in the habit of swallowing articles of the intellectual quality of one which recently appeared under the heading, "Faith and Knowledge." It referred to "an extremely interesting lecture at the Huddersfield Technical College" by Professor Armstrong, in the course of which the Professor made a fierce onslaught on faith. "We have," he said, "to proclaim science militant and to meet and conquer the Church and obscurantism." Faith, he declared, was a

form of weakness, if not of error, because it involved belief through desire and not on reasoned, palpable evidence. Here entered the Christian editor with a piece of feeble casuistry such as even a Christian Evidence lecturer would no longer use, we fancy:—

The scientist, however, himself "walks by faith," indisposed though he may be to acknowledge the fact. All his investigations, all his hopes, are based on the tremendous assumption that he lives in a rational universe. He speaks of "laws," but what warrant has he for believing that these laws are dependable, save in so far as he makes this assumption? "Rationality," moreover, involves purpose, for laws which subserve no end would be strictly irrational.....The antithesis which the Professor set up in his lecture is not a real one at all. "Faith" and "knowledge" are allies, not enemies.

This has not even the merit of being plausible. The "faith" which the scientific investigator has in his "laws of nature" is simply the reasonable assumption that what has happened hundreds, thousands, millions of times before will happen again when the same concatenation of events is called into existence. His "faith," if the editor so chooses to mis-term it, is based upon experience, and is re-inforced by a knowledge of the laws which underlie a specific phenomenon. Christian faith is something totally different, as of course our editor fully knows. It consists in believing in the existence of a host of things, not merely in the absence of a shred of evidence for their existence, but in face of overwhelming evidence to their non-existence. If the scientist were prepared to believe that the protons and electrons of the atom were little worlds inhabited by Christian Scientists, who spend their time discussing the theological systems of St. Paul and Thomas Aquinas, he would feebly, very feebly, approach in faith his Christian brother. And if he spent the major part of his time seeking for something *utterly* opposed to reason, and then proclaiming with hysterical insistence that it was his rock of salvation, then he would be almost Christian in his faith—and lunacy.

The Rev. C. E. Dixon, vicar of St. George's, Barnsley, has taken unto himself the roll of the Fat Boy of *Pickwick Papers*. Writing in his parish magazine about the wireless, he gloomily warns his readers that "I have heard... that that ugly headgear does affect the hearing, and doctors will soon be busy attending to a largely increasing number of ear cases." Why this sudden solicitude for his neighbours' auricular organs? Well, "it certainly deafens people to the Church bell and call to worship, and when people tell me that they heard the whole Church service, I wonder what they did when the prayers were said. You cannot worship by merely listening-in. Worship depends on the amount of spiritual atmosphere present, and you cannot convey that by wireless." It seems to us that the parsons' trade union should consider this matter. If folk get in the habit of taking their religion by wireless, consider what a diminution in the numbers of the clergy it will entail. We can fully appreciate the vicar's anxiety about other people's ears. If they are ruined by wireless it may even be difficult for the servants of God to pull 'em down.

The impertinence and the conceit that lies behind most personal piety would be surprising if people were not so acquainted with it that it passes unnoticed. For example, the Rev. M. E. Aubrey, of Cambridge, assured his congregation that much as he would like to decline the post of secretary to the Baptist Union, yet "the fact that the Council chose with perfect unanimity a man like me convinces me that God is behind the call." So we are to assume that God Almighty, pausing for awhile from his job of running the universe, looks round and decides that Mr. Aubrey is the only man who is fit for the job of acting as secretary for the Baptist Union. The mixture of humbug and conceit in such a public announcement is quite illuminating in the light it throws upon the type of character developed by Christian influences.

May we with all humility suggest that we have in this a probable explanation of the disastrous floods that have occurred with landslides, etc. If God Almighty, instead of attending to the running of the universe, goes pottering about selecting secretaries for the Baptist Union, and preachers for tin chapels, it is not surprising that things go awry. It seems that the deity needs reminding that the most important things should be attended to first. Perhaps those who are in daily communication with him will care to pass on the suggestion.

Mr. R. J. Campbell says that to his "certain knowledge" the opening of the gates of death has been accompanied by "visions of something beyond, which shed the welcoming light of knowledge upon the passing soul." What elaborate nonsense! "Own certain knowledge" only means that some people when dying have said they saw something. But to my own certain knowledge people under the influence of whisky have had visions of things closed to ordinary eyes, and we should like Mr. Campbell to tell us why he would accept the one and reject the other? Why are visions of angels more authentic than those of green elephants. When nonsense such as that written by Mr. Campbell passes muster as profound thinking one is almost driven to despair of human intelligence. There is some little comfort in the reflection that it is profound religious intelligence—that is, it is profound for religious thinking.

Another gem of Mr. Campbell's thinking is that there is not a sign in the Gospel that Jesus Christ was ever perplexed by the question of whether there was a God or not. We should say not. But then he was not the only one in this state. There is not a savage in the world who is not equally free from that kind of perplexity. Children—if they are young enough—are equally free from doubts about Santa Claus. Doubts about the supernatural do not exist with the ignorant or the primitive anywhere. Such things only arise when positive knowledge begins to conflict with inherited and established superstition, and there is no evidence whatever for assuming that the Jesus of the Gospels had reached that stage of development.

We see from the *Calcutta Statesman* that a native was charged with stealing from the Cathedral a Bible and a picture representing Christ washing Peter's feet. He pleaded insanity. We should say that was quite a justifiable defence. A man in such a violent hurry to secure the "Bread of Life" must have been mentally unbalanced—at least temporarily.

The Vicar of St. Saviour's Church, Northampton, climbed to the top of the Church spire in order to sprinkle it with holy water brought from the Jordan. And these be the people who speak of certain native races as savages! We venture to believe that with all his faith in the water of the Jordan the vicar has not refrained from insuring his Church, nor will the company accept a lower premium because of the protection given the building by the sacred water. They know that the Lord when he is riding the storm knocks his own houses about with splendid impartiality.

We were misled by a newspaper announcement into saying that God Almighty had ignored Lord Hawke's petition to him not to permit the Test team to be captained by a professional. English cricket is saved from that catastrophe. It does not appear a very important matter anyway, but we must leave it to Christians to decide whether it is just a coincidence, or whether God Almighty is, after all, on the side of the snobs and Lord Hawke.

The Free Church Council announces that it would

welcome any sound plan for securing unity of administration in the schools with regard to religious instruction. By this it means that if some plan could be devised which would suit all classes of Christians equally it would have no objection to religion being taught by the State and paid for out of public money. But the Free Church Council professes to be opposed to the patronage and subsidizing of religion, and we should much like to know if it is wrong in the case of adults by what process does it become right in the case of children. The truth of the matter is that the Free Churches are not and never have been opposed to the State patronage of religion. What they would like is for their own Church only to be subsidized. Failing that what they are concerned about is that all shall get an equal division of the public plunder. It is not so much a case of honour among thieves—honour is out of place in such a connection—so much as them agreeing to share what cannot be grabbed in its entirety by any one of them. And all this is done with a mouthful of phrases about morality that is peculiarly and sickly Christian.

We wonder when a parson will come across an Atheist who is just an ordinary sort of fellow, neither better nor worse than other people? Somehow the ones they meet are either bad, or despairing, or cynical, or in some way rather unpleasant. Thus the Rev. Studdart Kennedy (Woodbine Willie) writes in a just issued book that when he was leaving Paddington Station a young man came up to him and touched him and asked to be allowed to carry his bag. The "air of abject servility, the crawling cringing for money," sickened this good man, so Mr. Kennedy asked him did he believe in a God and go to a place of worship? Then "there came into his face a look which was the most dreadful reply to such a question—a grin that was half a sneer, and he poured out to me his philosophy of life. It was just bitter, naked, disillusioned cynicism." There it is, and the use of the story is obvious. Now we do not doubt but that it is possible to find Atheists who are in every respect as bad or as silly as one can find among Christians—and that is about as bad as one can say about anyone. But in this case we do not hesitate to say that Woodbine Willie is just manufacturing an incident to suit his purpose and then passing it off as real. This is quite a common occurrence with parsons, and illustrates the small sense of truth that most parsons possess. It is not that they are by nature worse than other men, but the profession spoils the best. Does not the Bible say that one cannot touch pitch and not be defiled?

We have taken the above from a review of the book in the *Daily News*. It is about the only thing the reviewer cites, but he says the book is imbued with a "fine spirit." Our readers will be able to judge of the suitability of the description. Which leads us to observe that in connection with any other subject—if, for example, a Liberal had written thus of his meeting with a Conservative, or *vice versa*, the comment would have been of a different kind. But where religion is concerned most people do not expect a parson to speak either truthfully or decently.

Captain Maskelyne has offered a challenge to a Spiritualist medium who is paying a visit to this country to produce spirit writing on a slate that is sealed by himself. We fancy that Captain Maskelyne's money is quite safe. We don't know where the devil the money would come from if we lost, but we should feel quite safe in offering a thousand pounds to any medium who would produce a written message on a typewriter that is secured, say, in a glass case. It should be as easy for a spirit to tap the keys of a typewriter as to write through locked slates or throw heavy tables about. But the two outstanding features of all spirits is their excessive shyness in these matters, and the astounding stupidity of even the most brilliant earth characters once they get on "the other side."

Newsagents and the "Freethinker."

We beg to draw the special attention of newsagents and to those who are interested in increasing the circulation of this journal that a notice has been sent out from the head office of W. H. Smith & Sons to all their agents that the *Freethinker* will be issued on sale or return. Extra copies may be ordered without any liability whatever. We should be obliged if our friends will call the attention of newsagents to this fact, as many appear to be under the impression that the *Freethinker* is not sent out on sale or return. We need only add that all wholesale agents should send out the paper on similar conditions. We should be further obliged if any reader who receives a contrary report from a newsagent will let us know at once so that we can look into the matter.

To Correspondents.

Those subscribers who receive their copy of the "Freethinker" in a GREEN WRAPPER will please take it that the renewal of their subscription is due. They will also oblige, if they do not want us to continue sending the paper, by notifying us to that effect.

J. M. HINLEY.—The story is taken from Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad*, and is fairly well known. Thanks for cuttings.

T. LOVIE.—Will attend to the matter of the library. Writing on other matter.

T. DUNBAR.—Unless there is some special reason for departing from the practice, we do not favour the idea of collecting for the funds of the N.S.S. at the Annual Dinner. Those who are interested in the Cause know that funds are always needed by the N.S.S. to carry on its work, and there are plenty of opportunities for those who are willing to show their interest in the work. We quite appreciate your motive in making the suggestion.

"FREETHINKER" SUSTENTATION FUND.—J. Muir, 3s.

A. BELL.—The South London Branch of the N.S.S. is the nearest organization to you. If you pay a visit to their meeting place the Secretary will be pleased to give you any information that is within his power.

H. RAMSBOTTOM.—But why go hunting for a God? That is about as unhealthy an occupation as hunting round for a good patent medicine to cure an imaginary disease. You will presently end with the very complaint you are anxious to get rid of, but which at present you are not troubled with. "God" has never yet bothered a healthy mind, that is one of the reasons why the first object of the clergy is to make you "spiritually" sick. When they have inoculated you with the complaint they can then come round and offer to sell you a remedy for a disease which you need not have, and never would have had but for them.

S. WALLEN.—Mr. Cohen debated with Mr. George Wise in Liverpool many years ago. But we believe Mr. Charles Watts also debated with that gentleman. So both you and your friend are correct.

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

The Secular Society, Limited, office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

The National Secular Society's office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, giving as long notice as possible.

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

Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and not to the Editor.

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

Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

Friends who send us newspapers would enhance the favour by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.

The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):— One year, 15s.; half year, 7s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 9d.

Sugar Plums.

We have received several letters this week on the subject of the manner in which the B.B.C. is being utilised by the clergy as a means of propaganda. We deal elsewhere in this issue with the statement of the B.B.C., and we again repeat that the defence is evidence that many complaints have been received. And to our mind there is no doubt that the B.B.C. has been captured by the clergy, so far as the Sunday service goes, although the heads of the Company may be willing captives. But, as the writer in the *Manchester Guardian* points out, at the beginning the B.B.C. announced that a ten minutes "ethical address" was to be introduced in the Sunday programme. This was either done to placate the clergy, or to get in the thin end of the wedge so far as the subscribers were concerned. Anyway, it was noticeable that the "ethical address" was entrusted to the clergy, the very worst teachers on ethics we have. Then a sermon took its place, with all the sentimental platitudes which accompany these manifestations of an atrophied or undeveloped intelligence. And finally there was a full-blown Sunday service. The surrender of the B.B.C. was complete.

The lesson of the whole thing is plain. The only way to check the arrogance and underhand manœuvres of the clergy is to make Freethinkers, and Freethinkers of a type that have some mental backbone in their make-up. The Freethinker who is always bothering what Christians will think of him, and who is striving to get a word of praise from Christians, counts for very little in the fight, and may be a positive hindrance to our advance.

A gentleman who signs himself T. W. Linnell writes to the *Weston-super-Mare Gazette* challenging the National Secular Society to meet him in discussion on some of the questions at issue between Freethinkers and Christians. We do not know who Mr. Linnell is, but if he is at all representative of any Christian body in Weston it will not be difficult to oblige him. We do not know anything of Mr. Linnell. Perhaps some of our Weston friends can oblige us with information. The speakers of the National Secular Society do not run about throwing challenges, but, on the other hand, they are always ready to meet any clergyman who desires a public discussion.

To-day (February 22) Mr. E. C. Saphin will lecture in the Engineer's Hall, Rusholme Road, Manchester, at 3 on "God," and in the evening at 6.30 on "Christianity and Sun Worship." The evening lecture will be accompanied with lantern illustrations. Manchester friends will please note.

Mr. E. Clifford Williams will lecture in the Brassworkers' Hall, 70 Lionel Street, Birmingham, at 7 p.m., on "Freethought and Faith." We hope to hear that the hall was crowded.

In morality, I prefer Confucius to the Ten Commandments, and Socrates to St. Paul. In religion, I favour the Catholic emancipation, but do not acknowledge the Pope.—Lord Byron.

Ethics.

IV.

A DISCOURSE FOR NURSES AND CHILDREN—Continued.

In our last talk, nurse, I dealt with the food instinct in its relation to ethics, and, of course, the appetite for drink is only another aspect of the same fundamental desire. Hunger has been described as a sharp thorn, but how shall we depict the maddening agonies of a thirst unassuaged. The sea, the desert, the American prairie, the Australian bush, could all tell more harrowing tales of human misery caused by thirst, than it has ever been given to mortal to pen. And just as the food instinct is the basis of agriculture, so the desire to satisfy his thirst has led man to manufacture a bewildering number of liquors. I might remark here that the economy of nature has so ordained it that the satisfaction of our desires is accompanied by pleasurable feelings. Indeed, Jeremy Bentham and the utilitarian school of moralists reduce all moral action to the basis of pleasure and pain. They say that these are the only guiding rules to human conduct. But in making pleasure an accompaniment of the satisfaction of desire, nature has not drawn any fine moral distinctions. The savage smacks his lips after a meal from a juicy portion of a well-fed missionary, just the same as an Englishman does after dining from a piece of roast beef. And the vegetarian regards both as being immoral. The ideas surrounding the word pleasure are so varied, and so vague, as to make it impossible to set it up as a moral standard. Then we have another class of moralists who seem to think that nature made a grave mistake when she associated pleasure with the gratification of our desires, and who regard all pursuit of pleasure as a sin.

Have you ever noticed, nurse, what a lot of nosey Parkers go into the moralist business. They are always advising you what to eat, and what to drink, and how not to enjoy yourself. You mustn't eat meat on a Friday, and certain drinks you must only take "medicinally." The *Westminster Confession* even regards dancing and stage-plays as a breach of the Seventh Commandment. An amusing example of this spurious morality was recorded in the papers a few days ago. A deputation of the London Public Morality Council, headed by the Bishop of London, waited upon the Home Secretary to urge the introduction of legislation for the suppression of night-clubs in London, which the bishop alleged were snares to trap the unwary, and scenes of gambling, drunkenness and immorality. Of course, if there is a dirty end of a stick, you may trust a Christian Bishop to get hold of it. In his reply, Sir Joynson Hicks said that there were 11,000 of these clubs in London, and he would give them definitely to understand that he was not on a crusade against the lawful enjoyment of young men, nor would he endeavour to interfere with the liberty of the subjects of this democratic country. (One to Sir Joynson Hicks.) These were all working-men's clubs, and he had no evidence of any immorality or drunkenness disgracing any of them, such as the bishop alleged. The only way to check any irregularities would be to introduce police inspection, which at the present he had no power to do. He himself was a member of the Carlton, and the Bishop was a member of the Athenæum, and if he were obliged to introduce police inspection, he supposed the Bishop would have no objection to an inspector popping into the Athenæum to see that the Bishop and his fellow club-members were behaving themselves in a seemly manner, and not dancing jigs on the floor with the scullery maids. (Two to Sir Joynson Hicks.) He told them, in effect,

that what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander.

I would like to have heard the remarks of that deputation, nurse, after the Home Secretary had politely bowed them out. "The very idea! classing the respectable club of which the Bishop was a member, with the infamous night-clubs of London! Better a Labour Government, than a Home Secretary with such nasty ideas!"

Perhaps you would like me to say something, nurse, upon the great drink evil, as it is called; and which is a blot upon our social life which I have no wish to minimise. Well, you may lay it down as an axiom that a person will not knowingly eat or drink anything which he believes will injure his health or well-being. That there is a great deal of nonsense talked in reference to this subject goes without saying. For instance, when the teetotal lecturer assures us that alcoholic liquors are poison, we have only to look in an ordinary dictionary, where poison is defined as "any substance which in small doses destroys life," to see that he is letting his zeal cloud his understanding. Of course, excessive indulgence in liquors that intoxicate is to be condemned, but only in the same way that excessive indulgence in other appetites is reprehensible. And the rosy picture of the moral results, which the teetotaler says would follow from total abstinence is just as imaginary as the results which he alleges follows from the present intemperance. He looks upon the squalid misery and poverty which disgrace the civilization of modern life, and exclaims: Drink is the cause of poverty. The Socialist, on the other hand, points him to the crowded public-houses, with their reeking smell of beer, and their seedy habitues, and replies: Poverty is the cause of drink. And they are both wrong. In each case, the alleged causes may in some instances be contributory, but as universal and unqualified statements they do not accord with facts.

Some time ago a Church dignitary commented on the fact that when children in the Sunday School were taught to accept the literal interpretation of the Genesis story of creation, and found in after years that it was only a fairy tale, their faith was likely to suffer from the shock. And in like manner, the "truths" we were taught as children in the Band of Hope, in the light of later wisdom are seen to be of the fairy tale species, and we readjust our faith accordingly.

I saw the other day a temperance advocate appealing for the co-operation of educationists in the interests of what he called temperance education. Which shows what a queer view of child nature these temperance reformers must have. No one is more fastidious in their likes and dislikes in the matter of food and drink than children are; and if they needed any warning at all of the evils of excess, it would be in regard to Christmas pudding. As you know, nurse, a child has often to be coaxed into taking really needful things, and the taste of strong liquors is repulsive and nauseous. Even in adults, in those cases where it leads to excess the habit is of very slow formation. Jack London, who probably drank as much alcoholic liquor as would have been the death of most men, says that even to the end of his days he never really acquired a taste for the stuff. It was always the love of social intercourse and friendship that led to his excesses, and he believes this to be true in the case of nearly every drunkard.

Another thing which must not be overlooked is this: the desire for some form of stimulant or narcotic, if not universal, is very widespread among the peoples of the earth. It is recorded that Noah, after the Deluge, evidently having had a surfeit of water, brewed some liquor that made him drunk, to the

disgust of his family. It is said to have been a Buddhist monk who first discovered the properties of the tea plant, and no one will deny that this discovery has added no small addition to the enjoyment and comforts of Western civilization. Again, the man who discovered the tobacco plant deserves well of his fellow-men.

I think also it can be shown to be historically true that the suppression of an instinct is always followed by disastrous consequences. The history of celibacy is a case in point. Among the Aztecs of America the death penalty was attached to the manufacture of intoxicants. But the last remaining couple of this ancient race, who were exhibited in England some years ago, were a pitiful commentary upon enforced total abstinence. The Red Indian, too, whose forbears knew nothing of its manufacture, literally went down before the fire-water of the white man, like a thirsty, heated horse, which drinks itself to death. The same may be said to be true in regard to the Chinese opium curse. For long ages the Chinese laws against the production and manufacture of the poppy were most stringent, and the penalties of their infringement most severe. But when some profit-loving Englishmen in defiance of the Chinese restrictions, smuggled opium along their sea-board, their demoralization was swift and sure. So between the vice of excess and the total suppression of legitimate gratification the true moralist has to strike the happy medium.

But we must hurry on, nurse, to a consideration of the other desires.

JOSEPH BRYCE.

Odds and Ends.

CERTAIN antiquated (are there any modern?) reverends of a Clyde resort have forbidden a Sunday "sacred" concert, and for charity, too! Certain it is that "charity suffereth long," suffers fools and fanatics in pulpit, parliament, and press. It is free speech, certainly—for the dead, not for the living. But even these it seems cannot control the music of the spheres, the march of emancipation with science at its head. Dunoon and Salteats, those corners of holiness, are invaded by the wireless waves, and wicked concerts from Glasgow and London on their holy day. The crumbling St. Paul's with its crumbling creed still refuses to have its "services" broadcast. Great is the Church's humility! One wonders if the pessimistic Dean is pleased. Lesser shrines are eager to oblige and risk the loss of pew rents for the greater glory of God and incidentally the fame of the preacher. In being broadcast the preacher addresses a million instead of the few hundred of an ordinary congregation—rather extraordinary, I should say, as fifty or so persons is all the average parson can call together in these distracting and awakening days. Alas, if he could only take a wireless collection! But he must scatter his "bread" upon the ether (invented by Sir Oliver Lodge) and, like his Master at last, preach the Gospel of salvation "without money and without price."

Some "Adventists" in America have been expecting, and preparing for, the end of the world, the coming of the Lord, and their translation to the New Jerusalem. Again the event has not come off, but credulity suffereth long and is credulous still. We laugh at this. We Freethinkers have a right to laugh. But the most advanced religionist has no right to laugh. He can, of course, if he feels that way, but he is laughing at himself, his own faith, or what remains of it, all that his growing knowledge and commonsense will allow him to retain, and differs

not in kind, but only in degree, from the crude superstition he chuckles over in the newspapers. One is reminded that eclipses come off—and, of course, go on—up to scientific schedule. We all believe in science here. The wonder is that so many people retain their faith in "coming events" which in pious prophecy have a thousand times been foretold and a thousand times falsified. When the end of the world does come—which need not concern us, as beyond our help or hindrance, our praise or blame—it will be a natural not a supernatural event. When our earth collides with some other planet, or cools and dies, I feel sure the various sects of Christianity, for instance, will have no preferential treatment. So far they have not shown sufficient superiority over other people, with other faiths and no faith, to merit the interference of *le Bon Dieu*; but who, I fear, is but the innocent and non-existent cause of all the confusions and stupidities of religion.

I asked David and Jonathan, two intellectual, and practically Atheist, friends of mine, why they found the *Freethinker* unattractive; they answered that, while the paper was well written and cleverly edited, it was too much "the same" every week, like, say, the *War Cry* in this, that one always knew what was going to be said without opening its pages. Surely a "sad satiety"—we have all felt it at times with all sorts of books and papers—but, surely, also, a superficial judgment, common to a certain type of smart young man of all ages, good-natured to a degree, generous to a fault, passing for philosophers, without much philosophy, sated at last, even with "the rustle of a silken skirt," and the wondrous woman inside it—too much "the same"! Monotony overtakes us all, or we sail into its dead sea calm, its sad satiety. Yet something interests us still, "White as a white sail on a dusky sea," if it is only the fond conceit that we have outpassed philosophy, and, with no more worlds to conquer, sit grinning tiredly on our mountain top—"Above life's comforts and its weakness, too!" But, rather, is it not, that most minds are easily fatigued with what is purely intellectual? Now, the *War Cry* disdains being intellectual, but only spiritual. However, *chacun à son goût*.

As I write we are having an eclipse of the moon. How trite are the eternal stars! How tiresome is truth. How seldom the moon changes from shining gold to suits of solemn black. Give this man another mask; that another pair of coloured spectacles. For the man who has exhausted the universe why lament "He dies! alas! how soon he dies!"

A. MILLAR.

North London Branch N.S.S.

A packed house last Sunday listened to Miss Ettie Rout at the St. Pancras Reform Club. One could only wish the room had been far larger, for Miss Rout's message should be universally known. One cannot sufficiently praise her method of dealing with the subject of sex; Her fearless outspokenness is, as the Chairman, Mr. Ratcliffe, remarked, "Like a breeze from the briny," making her hearers feel ashamed of their apathy on this all important matter, especially from the Freethought point of view. Mr. Bedborough addresses us to-night. His subject lends itself to the discussion of some of the new American religious cults. We hope again to have every seat filled.—K.

A careful study of religious toleration will show that in every Christian country where it has been adopted, it has been forced upon the clergy by the authority of the secular classes.—*Buckle*.

The Schools of a Revolution.

(Continued from page 108.)

IX.

By the middle of April it was found necessary to suspend the courses at the *Ecole de Medicine* on account of the desertion of the professors. The Commission of Education said, however, that "seeing the urgency of putting an end to this state of things," it would immediately call a meeting of those interested with a view of reorganizing the school. For this purpose, the doctors and officers of health in each *arrondissement* were invited to meet on April 22 at their respective *mairies* and elect two delegates per *arrondissement* to represent their interests. The students at the *Ecole* and the *internes* and *externes* of the hospitals were also asked to meet at the *Ecole* and nominate ten delegates, whilst the professors themselves, at the invitation of the "citizen doctors," Rambaud and Dupre, were begged to elect three delegates in their interest. These various delegates were called to a grand conference at the *Ecole de Medicine* on the 23rd inst. to formulate a programme for the reorganization of the school.¹

This participation of the students in the reorganization of the courses and the appointment of professors and officials was, strange as it may seem, in strict accordance with two of the first principles of the Commune, viz.: (a) The sovereignty of universal suffrage, being for ever its own master, and constantly able to convoke itself; and (b) the electoral principle for every functionary.²

Two "citizen doctors," Dupre and Rambaud, were entrusted by the Commune to arrange this conference. Both men had some eminence in their profession and had written on questions of instruction. Dupre's book, *Le probleme sociale. La science et la methode en face du probleme sociale*, argued for social transformation by means of education. The Commune then nominated as Director of the *Ecole de Medicine* a brilliant young doctor named Albert Naquet, whose medical books had some vogue, but whose real importance with the revolutionary party was due to his audacious work, *Religion, Property and Family* (1868), which had shocked the dove-cotes of respectability.

Edmond de Pressense, a violent opponent of the Commune, says that Naquet "had the decency not to mix himself up in the affair," and that "the students had the good sense to refuse the mandate of the Commune."³ This is not true, since the present writer had it on the authority of the Delegate of Education that Naquet did all that was possible in the circumstances. The truth is that not only the staff, but the students, assumed a refractory attitude. The meeting of the 23rd was a failure, and another was called for the 25th, when the *arrondissements* were again begged to send their delegates. At a meeting on the 27th a motion was passed and forwarded to the Commune, and ratified by it the following day in a decree which said that in future the doctor's diploma would be bestowed upon examination, irrespective of the submission of a *thesis*. How far this obtained may be judged from the fact that during the Communard regime there were no examinations or theses. So I am informed by Dr. Hahn, the present librarian of the *Ecole*.

In spite of all these snubs, however, the Commune still tried to get the school into working order, and a fourth conference was called for April 29, when it

was announced that these meetings would be continued every Wednesday and Saturday. In May a final attempt was made by a new Commission of medical men, a member of which was Dr. Albert Regnard, the Commune's Chief Secretary of Police, but it appears to have had little success. Before concluding this section I might recall Naquet's words in his *Collectivism and Socialism* on the question of education: which serve to show the views of the Communard Director of the *Ecole de Medicine*:—

In the matter of education competition tends exclusively to lower the value of the product; and as the excellence of the product is fundamental for the welfare of society, it is evident that we have in education a service which cannot be usefully abandoned to the initiative of individuals.

X.

"In spite of the grave conditions" which prevail in Paris," says the *Journal Officiel* of April 13, "the competition for the *Prix du Rome* will be proceeded with at the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts*." As a matter of fact the *ateliers* and the *Ecole* were open during the whole of the Commune.¹ Many of the artistic adherents of the Commune had banded themselves as a *Federation of Artists*.² It was composed of all the artistic as well as the political rebels, and their battle-cry was "no official direction" in the arts, of which the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* was the outward expression.³ This *Federation of Artists* decided on the suppression of the *Ecole* as early as May 2,⁴ but it was not until the 10th,⁵ that we have any definite motion to that effect. The report said:—

Art being the free and original expression of thought, it follows from a point of view of education, that all official direction imprinted upon the judgment of the pupil is fatal and is condemned..... Even admitting that this direction may be good, it tends nevertheless to destroy individuality. That is why the rational teaching of art seems to us complete when the pupil has acquired the whole of the elementary and practical knowledge which enables him to translate unflinchingly his thoughts.

Just as in the Communard reforms for the primary schools, where it was insisted that education must confine itself with "facts," and must never enter the domain of "doctrine," so in the arts, and the *Federation of Artists* laid it down that all art instruction reached its limit "at the point where it left the domain of acquired facts, to enter that of authoritative doctrine."

Under these considerations it was decided, or at least suggested,⁶ that the Budgets for the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts*, the *Ecole de Rome*, the *Ecole de Athenes*, and the Fine Arts section of the *Institut de France*, be suppressed, the funds being diverted to the inauguration of primary schools of art, and for buildings to be devoted for the teaching of the sciences related to art.⁷

Art instruction in the primary schools had been grossly neglected by educational authorities in France. In 1865, an eminent sculptor, who was director of the Paris School of Art, wondered why general ideas of art were not inculcated in the schools.⁸ When drawing was introduced into the curriculum, only two hours a week were allowed for the subject. The Commune, however, was deter-

¹ *Gazette des B.-A.* 1871.

² The *Federation* became practically the Ministry of Fine Arts, a department of the Commission of Education.

³ *J.O.*, April 15.

⁴ *Gaz. des B.-A.* 1871.

⁵ *J.O.*, May 10.

⁶ See Vaillant's introductory remarks to this report.

⁷ *J.O.*, April 15.

⁸ *Moniteur Universelle*, 13-12-1865.

¹ *J.O.*, April 18.

² Paris was not a "student's university" like some of the provincial universities.

³ *Revue des deux mondes.* 1871.

mined to bestow the fullest attention to art instruction in the primary schools, and we know from the circulars of the 8th and 10th *arrondissements* that drawing, both artistic and industrial, were taught.⁹ The *Federation* had also taken the matter in hand, and in its mandate (April 15) it said that it would in future supervise the instruction of drawing and modelling in the primary schools. A sub-commission was appointed for this purpose, which included Jules Dalou (1838-02) afterwards the world-famous sculptor, and Arnaud Durbec.¹⁰

On May 10, the *Federation* proposed to establish schools of professional art, "as a complement to the elementary art instruction given in the primary schools." The sum required for this was estimated at 100,000 francs, and it was decided to start with two schools in the centre of Paris. Professors of drawing and modelling were advertised for, and on May 13 the School of Drawing in the Rue Dupuytren was announced to open immediately as a school of industrial art for girls under the direction of Citizen Parpalet. Here there was to be taught: drawing, modelling, sculpture in wood and ivory, and the general application of the art of design to industry.¹¹ This was the sole effort of the *Federation* on behalf of art education, outside of its organization of the museums and art galleries. Yet, however small the results accomplished (and its *régime* was only a matter of weeks) the efforts reveal the lofty ideals of the artistic supporters of the Commune, whom the world called vandals!

HENRY GEORGE FARMER.

(To be Continued.)

CHRISTIAN SLAVERY.

In the matter of slaves Florence had a better reputation than Genoa, where one trader claimed to have disposed of 10,000 children in a single year; but the Florentine merchants were busy with this traffic as early as 1274. Every considerable establishment in the city had its slaves, and the business was legalised by statute in 1364 so long as the victims were not Catholics, but the baptised children of infidel parents were not exempted, nor were Jews, and the traffic went on well into the sixteenth century.—*Times Literary Supplement*.

⁹ *J.O.*, April 22, 30.

¹⁰ *Gaz. des B.-A.* 1871.

¹¹ *J.O.*, May 13.

Correspondence.

A MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF MIND.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Congratulations are due, I think, to our friend, Mr. V. J. Hands, for his various concise, lucid, and excellent expositions, but as he invites enquiries on the above, there is just one point I would be glad if he would clear up. I am aware that "matter itself" is unthinkable apart from constant change of position, and obviously there could be no notion of movement without something to move, but it seems as confusing to speak of "mind itself" as it would motion itself, and appears to me to be mistaking the formula for the fact.

P. G. TACCHI.

CLERICAL SCHOOLS IN RURAL AREAS.

SIR,—Surely Mr. H. Cutner has allowed his political bias to run away with him in his criticism of the article by Mrs. Bridges Adams. His disgust at the cringing, vote-seeking attitude of the Labour Party to the churches of all denominations, and its efforts to attain power by any methods, is understandable, also his disgust at the attitude of Mr. Wheatley towards birth control, but this should not cause him to be blind to, or fail to take advantage of, any effort the Labour Party, or any other Party, may make in the direction of educational liberty. Anyhow, I fail to see anything in the article which involves Mrs. Bridges Adams in the defence of the Labour Party.

Mr. Cutner's three questions appear to me to be irrelevant to the subject matter of the article, a more pointed query, in my opinion, being, "Is Mrs. Bridges Adams in favour of purely secular education." That she is anti-clerical is all well and good, but is she out to abolish that "hymn, prayer and little Bible story" which Mr. Cutner finds so satisfactory?

T. DRAGE.

THE CAR OF JUGGERNAUT.

SIR,—I always read the articles by Joseph Bryce in this journal with great interest and pleasure, and I have a faint recollection of having read his article on the festival connected with the Juggernaut Car. When, however, I wrote my recent article on the screen version of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt I quite forgot the contention of Mr. Bryce. Although I am told that I am getting old I have always recognized that one is never too old to learn; and so to Mr. Bryce I cry *Peccavi*, and promise not to repeat the offence while "memory holds a seat in this distracted globe." I cannot say fairer, can I, Mr. Editor?

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

Religious Statistics of England and Wales.

	1916	1923	Increase or Decrease.	Per Cent.	Per cent of Total.
Church of England	2,359,599	2,451,647	92,048	3.47	32.35
Catholic	1,885,655	1,997,250	111,595	5.92	39.22
Wesleyan Methodist	464,055	484,134	20,079	4.32	7.06
Congregationalist	453,138	451,229	Dec. 1,909	.42	.67
Baptist	388,252	411,315	23,063	6.09	8.11
Primitive Methodist	198,805	213,278	14,473	7.28	5.09
Calvinist Methodist	185,278	188,412	3,134	1.69	1.10
United Methodist	141,336	154,219	12,883	9.11	4.53
Presbyterian	87,424	84,638	Dec. 2,786	3.18	1.00
Salvation Army	110,438	121,437	10,999	9.96	3.87
Other Denominations	67,029	(say) 68,000	.971	1.45	.34
Totals	6,341,009	6,665,559	284,550	4.47	100.00
Population	36,960,684	38,158,000	1,197,316	3.24	—

Net Increase in Religious Membership 1.23

NOTE.—Congregationalists have not published figures since 1917.
The Salvation Army's figures includes officials.

The Way of the World.

THE WARFARE OF SCIENCE WITH SUPERSTITION.

Using astronomical observations undoubtedly drawn from Babylonia, Thales predicted a solar eclipse in 585 B.C. Astonishing as it seemed to the Greeks, there is little probability that this feat was an unprecedented achievement. What was unprecedented, however, was the revolutionary generalization which Thales based upon his ability to make such a prediction. For he banished the erratic whims of the gods from the skies and discerned the sway of natural law throughout the celestial world. To tear away and fearlessly to trample under foot beliefs and superstitions which had been sanctified by age-long religious veneration demanded dauntless loyalty to his own intelligence. This first supreme enthronement of the human mind was probably the greatest achievement in the career of man.....From Galileo's struggle with the Church to Huxley's debate with Gladstone, the heavy guns of natural science have dealt tradition one destructive blow after another. It has been under this destructive attack at the hands of natural science that historical criticism has grown up in modern times since Niebuhr.—*Prof. J. H. Breasted, "Nature."*

CHRISTIANITY AND EUGENICS.

The spiritual atmosphere of our population, therefore, is one in which all stress seems to be laid on the soul, in which the severe standards are soul standards, and in which the importance of the body and its completeness are almost entirely overlooked.....For this reason it is surely somewhat muddle-headed on the part of a writer like Dean Inge, situated as he is, to plead with such vehemence on behalf of Eugenics. For how can we hope for a reaction in favour of the body as long as the values which lay all stress on the soul and despise the body abide as an influence among us? Are they not values by which he stands, and which he is officially expected to inculcate upon his generation?..... Dean Inge, while recognizing the widespread degeneracy and physiological botchedness to which allusion has been made, does not seem to perceive, as our observer has, the singular readiness with which all modern people overlook or condone it in themselves and others, and he argues, plausibly enough, that our regrettable physical condition is due to our industrialism and hypertropic urbanism.

But this is tantamount to regarding the latest accompanying symptom of our condition as its chief cause. For, in the first place, it is extremely doubtful whether the Industrial Revolution could ever have come about without that contempt for the body and its needs which lies embedded in our ruling values. Secondly, does Dean Inge find no signs of that contempt of the body before the industrial age? How about the Middle Ages? How about the Great Rebellion in England? The present writer once went to the pains of tracing all the Puritan contempt for the body, and the fatal consequences it had for the English people, to the values that Dean Inge upholds. He was even able to show that, without those values, the seeds of modern industrialism could hardly have been sown, as they were, in the middle of the seventeenth century. Was not this before the so-called Industrial Revolution?.....strict standards about the body had already gone long before the Industrial Age. And when the latter came, it found no barriers in the English people's prejudices regarding the body and health: otherwise it could never have proceeded as successfully as it did to a further debilitation of the national physique.—*A. M. Ludovici, "Lysistrata."*

Be broad-minded, reflective, intelligent men and bring up your children so that their minds will not be warped and dwarfed by enfeebling superstition. Make your scientific knowledge a part of yourselves, so that you can face every crisis of life as men.—*G. D. Tenney.*

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

Notices of Lectures, etc., must reach us by first post on Tuesday and be marked "Lecture Notice" if not sent on postcard.

LONDON.

INDOOR.

METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (160 Great Portland Street, W.): 8, a Lecture. The Discussion Circle meets every Thursday at 8 at "The Castle," Shouldham Street, Edgware Road, W.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N.W.): 7, Mr. George Bedborough, "In Tune with the Infinite."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (New Morris Hall, 79 Bedford Road, Clapham Road): 7, Mr. J. H. Van Biene, "Einstein's Theories—and what I don't know about them."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): Dr. C. W. Saleeby, "Iodine and Childhood."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11, Right Hon. J. M. Robertson, "The Ethics of Revolution."

OUTDOOR.

METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Hyde Park): Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Speakers: Messrs. Baker, Constable, Hanson, Hart, and Keeling.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Mr. C. H. Keeling, a Lecture.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Brassworkers' Hall, 70 Lionel Street): 7, Mr. E. Clifford Williams, "Freethought and Faith."

BOLTON SECULAR SOCIETY (Socialist Club, 16 Wood Street): 2.30, Mr. Partington, "Are Secularists Flogging a Dead Horse?"

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S. (No. 2 Room, City Hall, "A" Door, Albion Street, Glasgow): 6.30, Mr. A. Dearward, "Productive Power" Questions and Discussion. (Silver Collection.)

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Operetta, "Zurika, the Gipsy Maid," performed by the Secular Sunday-school children. (Silver Collection.)

MANCHESTER BRANCH N.S.S. (Engineers' Hall, 120 Rusholme Road, All Saints', Manchester): Mr. E. C. Saphin, 3, "God"; 6.30, "Christianity—Sun-Worship."

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