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Views and Opinions.

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Evolution and Morals.

It is no fault of Charles Darwin's that the very title he gave to his work on the origin of species should have given the theologians scope for a display of their characteristic mentality. When Darwin wrote on the title page of his *Origin of Species* the elaborative description, "The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life," there would have been no need to have said more to honest disputants. They would have seen what was meant by it, and the matter would have ended there. But theologians are of a different type, and it was not long before some of them began to point out that as "Selection" implies an intelligent choice, and "Preservation of the fittest" a benevolent one, Natural Selection bore its testimony to the existence of a God. But, in strict truth, Natural Selection is barren of any implication that nature does either one or the other. The positive aspect of natural selection, the working part of it, so to speak, is not preservation, but elimination. The better endowed are not "preserved," they are simply not killed. And killing appears to be the essence of evolution. It is noticeable in the case of diseases that where there is no killing there is no evolution against them. The native West African, for example, develops an immunity to malaria. That is because the more immune are being weeded out generation after generation. But if the West African removes to another part of the world, and his descendants return three or four generations afterwards, they are almost as susceptible to malaria as is the white man. The operation of Natural Selection is, therefore, not to preserve, but to destroy. The fittest survive, only because natural forces cannot—for the time—destroy them. And if we are to think of an intelligence behind it all, we must picture it as searching hour by hour to take advantage of the weaknesses of organisms, with a certain number escaping its clutches because of their superior fitness.

* * *

The Nature of Progress.

The echo of the Dayton case was heard at Southampton in connection with the meetings of the Bri-

Association. Here some of the preachers in the local churches dwelt upon the argument that it was more befitting the majesty of God to have created a growing world than one that was complete and perfect from the outset. The goodness of God, it was said, was shown by the gradual prevalence of goodness over evil. What, then, is shown when the opposite takes place? The less perfect may give way to the more perfect, but the claims of the less perfect still remain. A tiger may conceivably praise the cosmic order every time it dines off a sheep, but surely the sheep's point of view remains for consideration. And even if we pass by the conditions of the animal world on the ground that these paved the way for man—a view which is in itself not a bit more defensible than the tiger's view of the sheep—substantially the same conditions prevail in the history of humanity. For thousands of generations men live under the influence of the most degrading customs and superstitions, butchering and being butchered, before they glimpse even the possibility of a decent mode of life. And it must be remembered that this blundering, and stupidity, and cruelty, is not accidental, it is part of the very texture of evolution. No one need deny that some good results from the process; it is its morality that is called in question. If there is a God, then we may grant that the world displays his power, but common decency protests against the claim that it demonstrates his goodness.

* * *

Goodness and God.

Some of my readers may remember a once well-known book, *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, by the late Professor Drummond. Its chief theme was the power of goodness in the world, and that evolution vindicated the character of God. The argument was, at its best, feeble, and was quite beside the point. For nature pays not the slightest regard to the quality of our motives or our actions. The same effects follow identical actions whether our motives be good or bad. Courage may send a man into a burning house to rescue a child, and end in death or disfigurement for life. Cowardice keeps the one standing at his side quite safe. If I get wet through in going through the streets in a storm, it does not matter whether I am on my way to commit a burglary or to help a fellow human; I am as likely to contract a dangerous cold in the one case as in the other. And if there is a God behind this, the very best that can be said of him is that he does nothing. It is easy for the sentimental theist to talk of the horror of contemplating a world that is the scene of operation of "soulless" forces, but what could be more horrible than contemplating the cruelty, the bungling, the callousness of the world, and then think of it as being governed by an almighty intelligence who, to use W. H. Mallock's apt description, sits "like some blackguardly larrikin kicking his heels in the clouds, perhaps bent on mischief, but indifferent to the fact that he has caused it."

A Plea for Suffering.

But the plea that good results from the evolutionary process is itself based on a great fallacy. Suffering is presented to us as a necessary school of character, and pain is said to be our great teacher. And if the same one that suffered benefited from the experience, something might be said for this argument. But that is not the case. In the history of the race mankind undoubtedly learns from experience, by trial and error, by finding out what things are harmful and what are beneficial, and a more perfect form life survives through the elimination of the less perfect. But this does not in the least meet the point that arises. If I learn how to do things that are safe and right because racial experience has shown me what was dangerous and wrong, how can the past be said to have benefited from experience? We may repeat here Huxley's query as to the way in which the four-toed Eohippus benefited through being crushed out to make room for a nearer approach to the more perfect horse, because one of its remote descendants wins the Derby in 1925. It is the race that learns by experience, the individual profits from experience in only a very small degree, and in the less important things. In no single generation is it true in any important sense that a man learns from his own experience and his own sufferings. The great lessons of life have been learned for us by those who are not alive to benefit therefrom. Those who sow do not reap, those who reap do not sow. Civilization is built upon this fact, not upon the more ethical one of individual reward following individual merit.

* * *

Pain and Providence.

Even the plea that we benefit from pain is not true. Here and there one may find a character that has benefited from pain—of not too severe a nature and of not too great duration—but, in the main, the tendency of pain is to deaden and degrade. Everyone must know cases where continued pain develops selfishness and disregard to the claims of others. The sight of long-continued suffering dulls the edge of our sympathies. It was the case during the war. The first death-roll, of lists of wounded, aroused universal horror. Gradually, as the daily lists continued and grew in length, we took them as a matter of course, as part, almost, of normal existence. The plea of the beneficial nature of pain is one of the most hideous lies that were ever told in the interests of a hard-pressed theology. No one really believes it. The most convinced Christian avoids pain as much as possible. We eliminate it from our plan of education whenever we can. A parent who sought to educate his child by the deliberate infliction of pain would soon find himself in prison, and Christians would say it served him right. We learn from the pain that others have experienced, but we learn what to avoid; we do not take their experience as something that is to be followed in our own case. Some very hard things have been said by anti-vivisectors about the evil of inflicting pain on defenceless animals in order to benefit man. But what is that beside the pain which we are told the divine vivisector inflicts on the whole of the animal world as part of his plan of education?

* * *

Faith and Folly.

The Daytonites are in the right. W. J. Bryan is right. You cannot honestly harmonise Christianity with evolution. It is useless saying that these people are ignorant. Of course they are. They are as scientifically ignorant as were Jesus, and Paul, and the early Christians, and Luther, and Calvin, and Knox, and the long line of prominent Christians ending with the Bishop of London. They would not have been

such firm believers if they had not been ignorant. But the question is not whether they are ignorant, but whether they are right. Can they believe in both the Bible and Darwin? They say they cannot, and the reply does credit to their sincerity, even though it is a reflection on their knowledge. But you cannot have it both ways. You cannot at this time of day, with science in its present state, and with all that we know of the history of religious ideas, you cannot at the same time hold to a belief which is substantially identical with that held by the pre-scientific mind, and a sane theory of evolution. Modern science has no place for the primitive conception of a God, and no use for the beliefs that lie at the base of all religion. It is to the credit of men such as W. J. Bryan that they see this, and say this. It is to the discredit of the so-called advanced Christians that while they see it they will not admit it. Gibbon said that in the latter days of the Roman Empire, culture had so sapped the foundations of religion that two priests could not meet each other in the street without smiling in one another's face. Our priests have a greater command over their facial muscles.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Sir Oliver Lodge as Preacher.

EVERY now and then this distinguished physicist enters the Christian pulpit and treats with confidence of things not included or even hinted at in his department of science. He is the only preacher of the kind in the world. Whenever he takes up his place in the pulpit he has but one sermon to deliver, which but slightly varies from time to time, even in its phraseology. There is no other sermon like it. It stands absolutely by itself. The last time he delivered it was at Southampton in connection with the recent meeting there of the British Association. As his text he took the well-known passage in the Eighth Psalm: "When I consider thy Heavens." His first sentence was a highly characteristic one which we have read in his works more than once; but to which in the pulpit he was bound to give a peculiarly religious turn thus: "There was no end to the universe of God, neither was there any beginning." Evidently Sir Oliver does not believe the Genesis story of creation. As reported in the *Daily News* of August 31, the preacher said:—

There were many roads up the mountain of truth. Some flew up on the wings of faith, others crawled up, making a road for the others to follow. These were the men of science, working at various aspects, seeking to make a road for humanity to follow. Ultimately we should all reach the top. Differences and divergences would cease when we found we had all been aiming at the same end. We were all working in the same direction, but by different paths. There was now no divergence between science and religion.

Man of science though he be, Sir Oliver Lodge is capable of committing most gigantic blunders. There are no people of whom it can honestly be said that they fly up the mountain of truth on the wings of faith. The people who imagine that they do so are woeful self-deceivers as well as culpable deceivers of others. Not a single object of faith alone has a right to be looked upon as a truth. Immortality, for example, is not a firmly established truth, but a purely imaginary object. All so-called supernatural realities are such only to those who believe in them. To all others they are phantoms of the mind. Men of science have to do only with the material universe and the forms of life developed within it. It is simply not true that ultimately we shall all reach the top of

the mountain of truth. No such top exists for anybody. All of us are to the very end but seekers after truth. It is indeed completely false to assert that "there is now no divergence between science and religion." The fact is that Christianity, as defined in the New Testament and the creeds of the Church can never be reconciled with the teachings of modern science. Sir Oliver Lodge, as revealed in his works, is not a Christian at all, unless he has been converted since his retirement from the University of Birmingham.

Speaking of the material universe, Sir Oliver says:

The ancients had not known the extent of the universe. It is rather a chastening reflection that we might never have seen the other worlds if the atmosphere had been opaque. It behoves us to think whether that might not be true in other ways. The revelation of the hosts of Heaven has been accorded us, but might there not be an infinitude of existence of which we have no conception whatever.....I believe that creation is a continuous process like evolution, a gradual constant energizing thing not over and done with, but going on now.

All that may be perfectly true, and it violates no religious principle whatever. Many men of science are at one with Sir Oliver on this point. Sir Oliver goes further and puts strong emphasis on the infinitesimal degree of our knowledge of the universe. But in his conception of existence there is an undercurrent of superstition. It is his belief that the universe came to be what it is by the guiding hand of God. He recognizes a Divine purpose in all the changes that have taken place. To him Evolution is a supernatural process that knows no rest. Men of science generally do not thus regard the universe and its changes. Evolution represents a series of changes caused by natural law which has always worked and still works of necessity. The universe is what it is because it could not have been different. Apart from his belief in a Divine purpose, Sir Oliver's account of the universe is entirely scientific. He says:—

The origin of all things was not for us. We were exploring the universe as a going concern. We believed it had no beginning, and we felt it would have no end.

The *Daily News* represents him as teaching thus:—

It was a great epoch when man came out of his innocence, like the animals, and perceived the difference between right and wrong. He realized he could sin and the problem was to make a free being who went right of his own volition.

Here the man of science blunderingly turns theologian by teaching that man's rise proved his fall. Man never realized that he could sin. He was taught to regard himself as a sinner by the earliest theologians. Such a doctrine was invented in order to relieve God of responsibility for what came to be described as Adam's fall in the Garden of Eden. God had created him perfect, but presented him with a faculty possessed by no other animal whatever; namely the faculty of liberty, which made it possible for him to retain his integrity or to drop it, just exactly as he preferred. As a matter of fact he happened to decide to go wrong, to become a sinner, well knowing that by so doing he involved all his descendants to the end of time. A more immoral and absurd dogma was never devised, and the evils it has led to from the beginning until now are wholly incalculable, and yet Sir Oliver never preaches without giving expression to it.

According to his creed there are two universes, the one material and the other spiritual. Then he says:—

We belong to both universes, to the one temporarily for a matter of seventy or eighty years, to the other permanently. We are isolated from it now,

but we shall regain it. Many have returned. They have not gone out of existence, but merely out of our ken. I cannot too strongly emphasize it that nothing goes out of existence. They can disappear from us, but they are as real as ever. Take wireless. No one ever saw it or touched it, but it is there; it does the work. That is typical of a multitude of things. There are things which are hid from the wise which are revealed unto babes. Those are the big things, things in which the human spirit is at home, in which we shall be permanently at home when we leave this temporary existence.

Even though the earth lasted a hundred million years more, as it might, we shall last longer than that.

There was no end to existence. It was a formidable thought that here we were, and, in some sense, here we should be for ever. We only knew that we look with us our character for better or worse, and with that we should continue to all eternity.

Such is Sir Oliver Lodge's theory of a future life. He stated it many years ago in articles contributed to the *Hibbert Journal*, and he scarcely ever preaches without alluding to it. Curiously enough, to him it is not a theory, but an assured truth. The fact that nothing goes out of existence has no bearing whatever upon immortality. The dead, it is true, have disappeared from us, and it is a certainty that they have not gone out of existence; but there is absolutely no evidence that they still exist as conscious individuals. Death is the dissolution of the human personality, and there is nothing to show that it will be reconstructed after death. Of course, death does not end all, but it does end personality. The universe of mind, love, character, emotion, pity, does not exist at all, because all the things named are characteristics of the bodily life, and of necessity cease to be with that life in every case. To affirm that "even though the earth lasted a hundred million years more, as it might, we shall last longer than that," is simply to betray colossal ignorance. Sir Oliver does not know that we shall live a hundred million years; he does not know we shall be alive two hours after we die. What the well-known man of science supplies us with is blind belief, justified by not a single well-attested fact. Knowledge in this region is conspicuous only by its absence.

As a physicist Sir Oliver Lodge is immortal, but as a preacher he is quite as superstitious as are most of the ordained ministers of the Church.

J. T. LLOYD.

"English as She is Spoke."

The yea and no
Of general ignorance. —Shakespeare.

Crowds can wink, and no offence be known,
Since in another's guilt they find their own.

—Dryden.

AMERICA'S undoubted supremacy in the cinema world has quickened interest in this country in things Transatlantic, and enterprising and pushful British publishers have issued, or, rather, re-issued, a large number of books by writers hailing from the United States. Some of these books are by known authors, many are by unknown scribes, and a proportion are what is called, "publishers' remainders," that is, unsold stock marketed on this side of "the pond." After reading some of these alleged masterpieces, I am asking myself whether there is not an American language as distinct from the English language which is used in this country. For many of the expressions used are as formidable as those found in those extremely sad romances written in the Russian language by authors with appalling and unpronounceable

names. It has cost me some fever of the brow and much toilsome reading to pick out the philological pearls from these incomparable volumes from the Great Republic of the West.

Among the verbal puzzles I note "is the graft played out?" "a rangy person," "a rube town," "a four-flush drummer," "a rooter," "a josher," "the yellow rattlers," and a "hobo." Free and enlightened citizens of Minneapolis or Chicago, U.S.A., may know what these expressions mean, but I hold my head in shame and confusion. Can I be any of these things, as the late Charles Bradlaugh was said to have been a Christian without knowing it? To me they are as puzzling as Hittite, Iberian, or Aztec inscriptions. There is, of course, the terrible possibility that these expressions are meant to be humorous, but, if so, I must confess honestly that I prefer the more robust fun of such popular laugh-makers as Mark Twain or Robert Ingersoll.

Apart, however, from these extreme examples of American culture, it is interesting to note that ordinary English words appear to have changed their meaning by being transplanted to the United States. Doubtless there is an explanation for this variation, but there is a definite change in the meaning of many simple words. An English visitor mortally offended her American hostess because she said she liked her because she was so "homely." The visitor meant that her hostess made her feel quite at home, but "homely" in the rich language of America means plain-looking and devoid of charm. Trouble was caused by another verbal slip, when the visitor went out shopping and returned with a number of parcels. She said: "I've been shopping all day, and come home loaded." To English ears it is quite apparent what is meant; but in the Land of Freedom and Prohibition the word "loaded" implies that one has twisted the vine-leaves in one's hair, and has a burden of alcohol.

This leads us to the consideration of the word "sober," which in the United States means staid, serious, or solemn. In this country the word implies "temperate," but the old proverb, "Sober as a judge," suggests that the word once had the meaning now attached to it by Americans.

A most cursory examination of the ordinary speech of Americans and English reveals an astonishing number of divergencies. In an American home the window-blinds are "shades," and the bed-clothes "covers." To our Transatlantic cousins a terrace of houses is a "block," and a pavement is a "sidewalk." Where a Britisher fills up a form and posts it, the American fills out a "blank" and "mails" it. Were a young Englishman called "husky" he would think that his voice was affected, but in the States a husky young fellow is an athletic youth. A distinguished actor, just returned from New York, has related how an English play was nearly ruined on its first night by the unconscious use of a slang expression. The leading lady had to reject the ardent advances of a young man, and, wishing to dismiss him in as lady-like way as possible, she murmured, "Forget it!" The theatre rung with the merriment of an amused audience, for the phrase, "Forget it," was in constant use as a reproof to a windbag or a liar.

This linguistic divergence is noticeable in the case of the cinema, a novel form of entertainment without any historical background. Americans call this entertainment "the movies," and Britishers refer to it as "the pictures." In England the guardians of our streets are named policemen, but the countrymen of George Washington call them patrolmen, or squadmen. "Motors" in the great American language are "automobiles," and "luggage" is known as "baggage." Hotel "lifts" are "elevators," and the

"autumn" becomes the "fall." And so one might fill columns with the variants.

There is no end to the little differences between the two tongues, even in most ordinary words. Considering the very close relationship between the English and American newspaper press, it is remarkable that the purity of our own tongue has been retained. The credit is with the editors and correctors of the press, the latter being in a special sense the watchdogs of literature. Editors are, fortunately, the last of the great despots. Leslie Stephen, when editing the monumental *Dictionary of National Biography*, ruled out florid writing. "No flowers, by request," was his terse injunction to his numerous contributors, embracing some of the best-known of contemporary authors. Another famous editor used to tell his staff to write as if they were cabling to the Antipodes at several shillings per word. Men of diverse opinions, opposing interests, newspaper editors have in common the love of their native tongue. Indeed, journalism and literature are so closely united nowadays that many journalists become writers of repute, and authors of European reputation are proud of their association with the press. So much criticism may be levelled at the newspaper press with justice that it is a pleasure to find one thing which will secure universal commendation. Constantly tempted by the wish to be always bright and up-to-date, it is to the credit of journalists they have shown no desire to substitute the slang of New York's underworld, or the linguistic fireworks of the cowpunchers of Arizona for the great language used by Milton and Shakespeare. This is a matter for sincere congratulation, for the English language is the finest and the most used in the world.

MIMNERMUS.

Thomas Paine in Scotland.

II.

(Concluded from page 555.)

THE first part of Paine's book appeared in 1791 and the second part a year later. It made an immediate appeal to the workers, who at that time, were beginning to show an independence born of a better standard of living. They were beginning to use the "strike" as a means of extending that independence and making it more secure—a weapon that has grown puny with the passing of the years and to which the British workers still cling with a mulish persistence—and the lawyers were finding reasons for stigmatizing combinations as an offence fraught with more evil consequences to the public than any other. Government action helped on the circulation of the book. Dundas, the political boss, came out with the proclamations against seditious writings and the *Rights of Man* was very soon being discussed in remote hamlets where previously barren points of theology were the only subjects to engage the attention of the controversy-loving Scot. "I know," said the editor of the *Bee*, an Edinburgh journal, "that in a small town in the north of Scotland before the proclamation there was just one copy of Paine's pamphlet; and the bookseller of the place declared three weeks ago that he had since then sold seven hundred and fifty copies of it." A Sir William Maxwell, in Dumfriesshire, reported to Dundas that Paine's pamphlet, or "the cream and substance of it," was in the hands of nearly every peasant, and could be had for twopence. It was being read by the troops, who at that time were billeted in private houses, and the report caused such consternation that barracks were ordered to be erected for the first time in Glasgow and other towns in order to keep the

soldiers from being infected with the staymaker's doctrines.

Paine's books not only made adherents among the working men; they made converts among the more educated classes, despite the coarseness attributed to them. The men at the head of the corresponding clubs very often belonged to the middle classes, and, indeed, were the much-needed steadying influence in an otherwise too revolutionary society. Some of the men associated with the Edinburgh society, Muir especially, had little true idea of the powers ranged against them, and made an unskilful use of the power they then had. There was courage enough; in that sense, courage is a common thing in societies aiming at drastic changes in the constitution, but the wisdom that brings to full fruition the efforts of reformers was sadly lacking.

The poetic tribe was not behind the less inspired members of the community in responding to the new evangel. Wilson, the Paisley weaver-poet, had read Paine, and gave him forth in an "Address":—

The *Rights of Man* is now well kened
And red by mony a hunder;
For Tammy Paine the buik has penned,
And lent the court a lounder.
It's like a keekin'-glass to see
The craft of kirk and statesmen,
And wi' a bauld and easy glee,
Guid faith, the birky beats them
Off hand this day.

The *Rights of Man* being written with "a bauld and easy glee," is a diverting specimen of poetic licence. Burns, of course, is the most striking example of the influence of Paine. He possessed the *Rights of Man* and *Common Sense*, and probably the *Age of Reason*. There is a story of the poet having presented the Dumfries Library with a copy of De Lolme's *Constitution of England*, and writing on the flyleaf, "Mr. Burns presents this book to the library and begs they will take it as a creed of British liberty—until they can find a better." It was in the same year that saw the trial of Muir for sedition, and part of the evidence tendered against the prisoner was that of a servant girl to the effect that he had distributed copies of the *Rights of Man*. The stress laid on this particular piece of evidence alarmed Burns, apparently, for he pasted a slip over the sentiment in the library book and requested his neighbour, George Haugh, to keep a copy of the *Rights of Man* and *Common Sense* for him, as the possession of them was dangerous, more especially in the case of a Government servant, as Burns then was.

The well known "A man's a man for a' that" is undiluted Paine. The editor of Chamber's *Life of Burns* quotes Professor Maccunn, of University College, Liverpool, to the effect "that what Burns modestly terms two or three pretty good prose thoughts inverted into rhyme suggests not only the sentiments, but the very words of Paine. A few quotations from the *Rights of Man* make the parallel very striking. "The patriots of France have discovered in good time that rank and dignity in society must take a new ground. The old one has fallen through. It must now take the substantial ground of character instead of the chimerical ground of titles.....The artificial Noble shrinks into a dwarf before the Noble of nature.....Throughout the vocabulary of Adam Smith there is not such an animal as a duke or a count.....it (the love of titles) talks about its fine blue ribbon and shows its new garter like a child." Finally Professor Maccunn finds in Paine's "For what we can foresee, all Europe may form but one great republic, and man be free of the whole," a feebler version of the closing verse of the poem in which Burns proclaims the "universal brotherhood of man." It should be understood that Burn's influ-

ence during that period was of little account. He was a local poet with his writings circulating in manuscript mainly and in no case does he lead the way in either political or religious thinking. His political opinions were set up mainly by the writings of men who were inspired by the French Revolution or who had had a hand in bringing it about; his attacks on religion was directed against the Calvinist type of Christianity, which at that time had lost some of its sting and was beginning to be an object of ridicule even among orthodox Christians.

In Galt's *Annals of the Parish*, which is a valuable picture of Scottish life at the end of the eighteenth century, the spread of freethinking is often lamented. It was more manifest among the linen weavers than any other class, a class which right down to the Reform Act of 1832 played an important part in reform movements, and the reverend compiler of the *Annals* again and again denounces the establishment of public houses in the parish, where the weavers meet to discuss Tom Paine's tracts on religion—"bawbee blasphemies," as Sir Walter Scott makes Meg Dods term them in *St. Ronan's Well*—and politics instead of attending the kirk. The kirk itself was feeling the forward urge just then, for it began to consider the wisdom of inflicting fines on offenders against church discipline in place of the public rebuke and humiliation hitherto adopted. There is a ponderous compilation in twenty-one volumes, under the title of the *Statistical Account of Scotland*, written up by the ministers of the various parishes whose history it embodies, and quite a number of them mention and deplore the influence of Paine on their parishoners. The extent of that influence can, perhaps, be best gauged by the action of the authorities to stamp it out of existence.

Dundas was "King" of Scotland for nigh on a score of years. He ruled the Scots after the manner of an oriental despot, he and the English Cabinet. Reports from his numerous spies brought him to Scotland in 1792, and he was soon writing to the Home Office, "Within these few months I have visited several places in Scotland and corresponded with others, and find from every intelligence that all the lower ranks, particularly the operative manufacturers, with a considerable number of their employers, are poisoned with an enthusiastic rage for ideal liberty that will not be crushed without coercive measures." The coercive measures took the form of an increase in the militia and the formation of volunteer bodies to overawe the reformers. Robert Burns joined up along with others who feared the loss of their posts and a perfect reign of terror and intolerance set in. Shopkeepers who were suspected, however slightly, of sympathy with the ideas propounded by Paine were ruthlessly boycotted; the legal fraternity deposed one of their number high in office, and almost starved his followers out of the profession, while every little piffing coterie assured the king of their loyalty. The press was subsidised in the interests of sound government and religion, and the pulpit took the cash of the governing class and did the work of belittling Paine and his ideas. Christianity and the monarchy were upheld occasionally by cudgel work. A play entitled "The Royal Martyr" was staged at Edinburgh and the public were invited to "compare the similarity of circumstances which attended the two Kings, Charles I. and Louis XVI, as a lesson to warn mankind from stepping out of the paths of virtue and religion." The result was a battle in the theatre in which Walter Scott boasted that he had cracked three skulls. There was a similar scrap in a theatre at Dumfries in which Burns took part, of course, on the opposite side to that of Scott. When the lawyers, in their legal capacity, took a hand at suppressing demo-

cratic ideas, transportation to Botany Bay was their favourite weapon, although that punishment was clearly illegal. Scotland also had the distinction of anticipating Peterloo at Tranent, where the cavalry ran amok and sabred women and children with quite a loyal fury.

And it is no wonder that the Freethinking set up by the work of Paine and others waned more rapidly than it had grown. True it was that a more humane spirit gradually grew up in the sphere of politics and religion. A group of young scholars in the Scottish capital wore down, to some extent, the intolerance of the dominant class and made discussion a little more free, but the enthusiasm that pushed the ideas of Paine even into the remote Highlands was crushed almost out of existence. A certain measure of prosperity helped to keep it down, and in the course of time the attack on it underwent a change. The press was more and more used to induce political somnolence, and the process of debauching the mind of the people developed along lines of delusion and deceit. Paine's method of reaching the people was bettered by his enemies; every prejudice and hate was dressed up in the duds of good doctrine and fed to the masses. The men who had reacted to the vigorous reasoning of Paine left children who had become so well doped that the advent of another Paine was an utter impossibility. A miniature dark age descended on Scotland.

H. B. DODDS.

A Solemn Farce.

Two incidents in the Monkeyville trial struck me as being more significant and, in a sense, more humorous than most people seemed to imagine. The first was when Mr. Darrow objected to the judge allowing the proceedings of the court to be opened by prayer, the judge replied that whenever a minister of religion was present he invariably took advantage of the fact to ask him to offer up a prayer for divine guidance. And the second incident was a little later on, when the same counsel was again offering objections to the way in which the judge was conducting the trial, Mr. Ralston (the judge) threatened to commit him for contempt of court, and subsequently forgave him "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of Mankind."

Such incidents afford some idea of the primitive state of mind of the judge in such a trial.

What, may I ask, has prayer to do with either truth or justice in such a case? If the Lord is going to decide the case, what need for either a judge or jury? And on the other hand, if the jury are to decide on the weight of evidence, surely they do not want outside interference with their judgment. In this case, however, the jury were not allowed to hear the evidence as to whether the doctrine of Evolution was true or false—all they had to decide was whether the defendant had been guilty of breaking the law of Dayton, and they came to the speedy conclusion that he had, and they could certainly have come to that conclusion without the help of the Lord, as the fact was practically undisputed. And then what should we think of a judge in this country forgiving a defendant in a trial who had said something deserving of being committed for contempt, using the religious jargon of "I forgive you in the name of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, the Saviour of Mankind"? To have made the scene quite dramatic, however, Judge Ralston should have fallen on the neck of Mr. Darrow and kissed him and passed a blessing upon him in the name of "the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," and, if need be, all the little goblins also.

But we in this country must not pride ourselves on being much more advanced in such matters; as Mr. Cohen has so conclusively shown in his fine series of articles on the subject in these columns. Although we do not open the proceedings in our courts of law with prayer, we require all Christian witnesses to take an oath and call for the assistance of their God to help them to speak the truth; while the Freethinker is required, on his bare affirmation, to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, without any outside assistance whatever. In other words, as Mr. Foote used to say, the Freethinker is believed on his bare word, while the Christian's word will not be accepted unless he takes his oath upon it.

In that respect undoubtedly the Freethinker has an advantage over his Christian brethren, thanks to Mr. Bradlaugh's Affirmation Bill of 1888. But if we do not open the business of our courts of law with prayer, we certainly open the proceedings of the House of Commons with this religious ceremony. In short, in Parliament, where we make all the laws of the country, we cannot begin without calling in the chaplain to invoke the blessing of God on the deliberations of the members, which sometimes lead to disorderly scenes and the suspension of some of its most religious representatives.

Although I have been present on many occasions during important debates in the House, I have never been present at prayer time; but I have read that on such occasions members leave their hats on the seats to represent them and go into the lobbies to discuss all sorts of subjects, to laugh and joke as on other occasions, leaving only a few pious members to listen, or take part in the prayers; and perhaps a few hypocrites to pose as pious persons, to win the favour of their more sincere brethren. After all, such a performance is only a solemn farce.

But let me give some further examples. For twenty-five years, as many of my readers know, I was a member of the Camberwell Vestry and Camberwell Borough Council. Under the old Camberwell Vestry no prayers were offered, although the rector of the parish was the chairman, *ex officio*. And for some years the Borough Council performed all its business without anybody suggesting that the proceedings should be opened with prayer. But in 1912 the Rev. H. E. Jennings was elected a member, and very soon he put down on the paper of business a motion "that in future the business of the Council should be opened with prayer." I let him move his motion without any interruption, but directly he sat down I offered strong opposition. In the first place I said that the Borough Council was a Secular institution, and so far as I was concerned, I declined to allow the Council chamber to be used for prayer meetings. Further, I declared that everybody knew that answer to prayer involved the performance of miracles, and those who knew anything about what was called the law of causation must know that for a miracle to happen would mean the undoing of all phenomena. This statement caused quite a sensation. I said a great deal more, but this will be enough to indicate the line I adopted. There was only one other Freethinking member of the Council, the late Alderman Hearson, and he supported my efforts in a very outspoken fashion. In the meantime, I used my influence with all sorts of members on both sides of the house, and, together, we managed to defeat the reverend gentleman's motion. In a little while I found myself in a veritable hornet's nest. Indeed, on the following week clergymen and ministers of various denominations delivered sermons on the question, some of them prayed for us, others denounced us; while one of the

local papers opened its columns to a discussion on the question of the efficacy of prayer. This discussion was of a most lively character, and one of the correspondents suggested that both Alderman Hearson and myself "should be put in a strong box with six of the biggest men in Camberwell to sit on the lid" for raising such a discussion. This, however, was a new form of martyrdom which even some Christians could not approve of. And so the discussion went on for months, and I managed to get contributions from my friends, William Heaford and Chapman Cohen, in this local journal before the Christians decided to close down the discussion by refusing to advertise or take in the paper until the controversy was over.

And so the discussion ended and the brave little paper ceased to exist. And this is what comes of a struggle to try to secularize our institutions, and yet we shall never be free while we allow the clergy, the priests, or the parsons to be the predominating factors in any of our great public institutions.

ARTHUR B. MOSS.

Insular Godism.

RELIGIONS grow and change, although some of them claim to be "revelations from on high." I pointed out in a previous article that Christians nowadays are in many essentials more orthodox than was their alleged founder, the Jesus of the Gospels. So our makers of Godism they go one better than the "inspired word of God." For was not Yahweh a jealous God? and did he not give the commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods but me"? The same implication is found in the Psalms where Yahweh is represented as exhibiting his superior prowess in presence of the other gods. It is in the Psalms too, where we find that gem so dear to the ruder kind of Christian evidence mongers, "The fool has said in his heart there is no God," and seeing that gods were so numerous thereabouts at that time the denials of their existence must have been the height of folly. This piece of scripture must have been equally dear to our Bible makers, as they have printed the Psalm containing it in two places. Abuse is of course a cardinal Christian weapon. But surely the description must apply with the same kind of force to those Christians who deny the reality of the other gods whose existence is so clearly implied in their Bible. The god Jehovah or Yahweh—as we now say—has been traced in our time as the deity of a Midianitish tribe in the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai called Kenites. The ghost of an old chieftain obviously, as he was "a mighty man of war." In the Bible no reference is made to the "Book of the wars of Jehovah." To have preserved this book would have helped to give the show away. So Yahweh is usually rendered Lord or God in order to hide his tribal character evidently.

Time and change have wrought wonders with this old Kenite chieftain. Under the influence of superstition the priests and worshippers of him as a god have vied with one another in enhancing his achievements and attributes so now they make him not only the God of Gods, but he is regarded as controller of this stupendous universe. "He created all things," and "To Him all things are possible." This surely must be the limit in godifying. He is placed in a category all by himself in Christian countries and unbelievers give sanction to this *sui generis* placing; they favour this insular attitude as they do likewise by calling themselves Agnostics or Atheists with respect to it. (Ghosts are Its.)

A Roman Catholic some time ago dubbed the writer "Atheist." So I queried, "What do you mean?" "You deny there is a god," said he. My reply was, "I do nothing of the kind. I believe there are thousands that are just as real as yours is. You believe that there is just one, so you are more of an Atheist than I am."

There is a constant danger of Freethinkers being drawn into this false assumption. Sometimes this is the result of economy in expression; often of carelessness,

as when we talk of whether there is a God or "Does God care or exist?" Mr. Cohen has pointed out the silliness of such expressions in his outstanding contribution to the subject, "Atheism and Theism."

A close study of the subject makes it clear that Gods are but phantasmal creations. Imaginary existences or qualities applied to real existences, that belong—when at all—elsewhere. Gods are what are made Gods of.

Voltaire said, "If there were no God (insularity again) it would be necessary to invent "Him." Now we realize that the existence of these phantoms in men's minds is the chief barrier to the improvement of man's estate and that the first concern of the reformer must be to abolish them.

G. W.

Victoria, B.C., Canada.

Acid Drops.

The *Christian World* thinks it quite a good thing that Wembley is not to be opened on Sundays, and is glad that we have the Lord's Day Observance Act, which places obstacles in the way of this being done. We note this as just one more illustration of the lack of principle about Nonconformists. Professedly they do not believe in the State interfering in religion, which, in practice, means what Christians usually have meant by it, they do not believe in the State interfering with them. But when it is a case of interfering with other people to protect religious opinions which Nonconformists hold, the matter takes on quite a different complexion. What we should like the *Christian World* to tell us is wherein lies the difference between the State forcing certain religious opinions on people, and the same State interfering with the opening of an exhibition on Sunday because it is one of the Christian's taboo days? The plea that it means extra work is downright hypocrisy. Every occupation on Sunday, even opening the churches, involves Sunday labour. But there is nothing in the world to prevent it being made compulsory for all employees to have at least one day's rest per week, and that would benefit all and injure none.

Someone is thoughtful enough to send me a copy of the penny edition of the Gospel of St. John, with a request that I should read it on my knees. But why on my knees? Why not on my head? The advice comes all the way from Belfast, and it is perhaps symptomatic of the kind of intelligence with which the churches are filled. I can understand getting down on my knees to find a brace button, or a collar stud, but who on earth would think of looking for a God in that position? It sounds like a pious game of hunt the slipper.

The next letter we opened comes from a different type of reader who thinks we have not been quite fair to the press in the remarks we have made concerning it. As no proof is supplied we remain unrepentant. We can safely rely upon any intelligent person's judgment who takes half a dozen of the daily papers with the largest circulations and studies their make-up. The truth of the situation would seem to be that while the number of *intelligent* readers have not greatly increased in proportion to population, if they have increased at all, the number of actual readers have increased enormously. And, as a result, the aim of newspaper proprietors is, in the first place, to attract the big drapers and other large advertisers, and next to cater for the largest possible number of readers by writing down to the lowest common mental denominator. There are millions of people in this country whose sole source of education is the daily paper, and when one looks at the way in which the news is chopped up and served up, the character and the quality of the reading matter supplied, one is not surprised at the state of public affairs.

The Committee appointed to consider the question of the supply of candidates for Holy Orders thinks that the intellectual difficulties would be lessened if the

Bishops would not regard uncertainty as to the creed as a bar to ordination. That being interpreted appears to mean that so long as people will not say they disbelieve, whether they believe or not, does not so much matter. And it is also welcome as an admission that the Church can no longer disguise the fact that even the mentality of the average curate jibs at swallowing the nonsensical gibberish of the Christian creed. So either the Church must swallow its own teaching, or it must be content with a lower level of intelligence than it has even at present.

In an article on "Foreign Affairs," N. Slutzki, who is a member of the Disarmament Section and Economic Section of the League of Nations, gives a good diagnosis of the direction that the next war will take. His examination is comprehensive, but one factor has been overlooked, and that is, the silence of the Churches. As the prophecy is not copyright, we foretell that the next European war will be over before our army of priests can take off their canonicals, recruiting platforms will be underground, and religious yahoos, if there any left, will be searching the scripture to explain that it was all foretold in "Revelation." The business of flag-selling spinsters will be bad, and if intelligent people cannot make up their own mind that the whole world is a little house, in which there is a family table that never need be bare, Mars will make it up for them. A stray copy of the edition containing this notice may be found in the Hebrides.

The Rev. J. H. Howard, of Colwyn Bay, is distressed at the breaking down of Sabbath Observance in Wales, and sees in it the downfall of the people. He says it is ridiculous for the Town Council to fine a woman for selling sweets on Sunday, and then arrange for Sunday concerts on its own behalf. We quite agree with him, only from a different point of view. Mr. Howard says nothing should be tolerated that is done for profit on Sunday. But gas and electricity is sold for profit on Sunday. Mr. Howard's religion is preached for profit on Sunday. Work is as inevitable on Sunday as it is on other days. A world without "Sunday," says Mr. Howard, would be like a world without flowers. Well, we advise Mr. Howard to take a description of the old Puritan Sunday in America, Scotland, and England, and see the kind of flowers it produced.

The *Christian World* is relieved to find that the Modern Churchman's Conference was little influenced by the new psychology. We can quite understand the relief—to a Christian, because modern scientific psychology goes a long way towards explaining the bases upon which Christianity has been built. And anything which really does this is objectionable to a Christian writer and preacher. What he likes is vague and quite valueless language about the mystery of mind, the imperishable nature of the "religious faculty," "man's glimpses of the unseen," as in the case of "mystics" and the like. And when modern psychology comes along and explains many of these visions as an expression of a suppressed and distorted sex impulse, it does not like it, and vapours about the low nature of modern psychological teachings. It does not discuss whether they are correct or not; it is satisfied to speak of them as low and degrading. And as those to whom they speak have, for the greater part, little or no acquaintance with what it is all about, the words are enough. And yet Shakespeare asked, "What's in a name?" In a world of honest folk, not much, perhaps. In a world of Christians, a good deal.

Thus, the Rev. J. C. Hardwick is approvingly quoted as saying that "Modern psychology has its roots not merely in the soil, but in the dunghill." It is evident from this that however "Modern" Christianity may become, it never quite overcomes the very ancient form of blackguardism as a form of propaganda. What modern psychology does is to root its material in the animal passions of man, and to point out that however sublimated these passions may become, they are still there

and have to be reckoned with. And in the absence of this conception psychology is not a science at all; it is a mere cluster of terms of no great value to anyone. But Mr. Hardwick does admit that Christianity is a pessimistic religion. He says it holds that apart from God, man is impotent and insignificant. From which one gathers that the new Christianity is not, after all, so much removed from the older form. But Christianity really is one of the pessimistic faiths of the world, for it builds entirely upon the evil of the world and the weakness of human nature. That is one reason why it is opposed to any system which holds that human nature in itself and by itself supplies the incentives to right conduct and an adequate compensation for its performance.

How are the mighty fallen from their seats. Bishop Welldon (with photograph) is anxious, in half a column of the *Daily Mail*, to have clean football. What is the matter with the Bishop's new business? Time was, when his colleagues of the past ruled the roost; now, the present finds them and him anxious to keep in the lime-light somehow. The courageous Bishop with eyes turned on Spain thinks that "if Association football should destroy or gravely impair the popularity of the bull-ring it would achieve a triumph beyond the power of humanitarian sentiment of Christian civilization in Spain." This appears to be a black eye for the Pope.

A newspaper announcement informs us that Esperantist volunteers are wanted to translate an English book, entitled the *Spirit of Christ*. This is somewhat unkind to the Bible Society that works on a tonnage basis.

God has been at it again. At Ilkeston, the Society of Miniature Rifle Clubs was holding its annual meeting when a structure collapsed and a man, aged fifty-six, was killed. The coroner found there was no evidence of negligence on the part of any person connected with the meeting, and it "seemed to point to an act of God which caused the destruction of the structure." What a pity it is that God does not cease this interference with mundane affairs. If a man had caused the structure to collapse, and it had killed a man, the coroner would have had some pretty severe things to say. As it was God he probably went home and reflected on the goodness of the Creator.

Some of us may remember the flourish with which the Christian Endeavour Movement was started. It was going to revolutionise the position of Christianity by placing it before the world in quite a new light, and there was all the usual hollow gush about Christianity being a life, and not a doctrine, etc. We remember writing an article at the time in which we pointed out that this was only a new version of the old revival dodge, and that it would run the usual course. There would be a number of the present members of churches and of Christian families joining it, the old stage army would parade, and in the end things would be a little worse than they were before. We do not claim any great credit for the prophecy, nor do we for its fulfilment. A recollection of the numerous other missions that have been started was all that was needed.

Now we see that in America some Christian papers are pointing out that the movement is collapsing. They say that its educational programme is belated, its Fundamentalism is driving the mentally alert out of the churches, and its statistics are padded. And the *Christian World* on this side admits that its weakness here is a "sentimental pietism" which does not attract the right sort of believer. It is a confession of failure all round, and when Christians admit failure one need not question its existence. What we may expect to see is another Christian Brotherhood of some sort started, about which the same tales will be told, to end in the same manner. The only genuine revival of Christianity would be a revival of belief, and that in present circumstances is next to impossible.

To Correspondents.

MAY we again ask the writers of letters to please remember that our space is limited, and that we simply cannot print many of the letters we receive because of their quite unnecessary length.

G. JOHNSON.—Thanks for report. When a scientist goes about addressing Christian brotherhoods and preaching in chapels one must expect him to talk nonsense. Nothing else would be properly appreciated.

M. BARNARD.—We do not know much of Mr. Darrow, but, comparing him with Bradlaugh, strikes us as rather an exaggeration. It is hardly fair to judge the British Association addresses by what gets in the papers. You must bear in mind that the general policy of newspapers—particularly those that go in for huge circulations—is to write down to the poorest type of intellect. Catching items about the age of the earth, or the number of molecules in a glass of water, are the kind of things that take on, and the chief kind of thing to which the papers pay attention.

A. MOLES.—We note what you say. We try to keep as level-headed in the matter as is possible, but it strikes us that the fanaticism is not all on the one side. Thanks, however, for calling attention to the matter. We are always pleased to hear from readers, more particularly when they disapprove. It is healthy to get it.

J. R. RHODE.—Perhaps if something of a more definite and outspoken kind were attempted more might be accomplished. Half-way houses are not relished by those who are anxious to see some real reform accomplished, and it is far more important to turn Christians into Freethinkers than to find comfortable resting-places for those timid ones who have already left the churches.

F. W. HAUGHTON.—Glad to see your note in the *Morning Post*. Your statement of the aim of science will probably arouse some of the pious ones, but that will be all to the good.

H. R. WRIGHT.—We have no control over the writers of letters. They must always suit themselves whether they write further or not.

D. STICKELLS.—We share your admiration of the writings of the late G. W. Foote. He was probably the finest writer of the late Freethought Party has ever possessed. Men of the calibre of George Meredith and Sir Richard Burton saw this, and said as much. It was not the easiest of tasks to follow such a man in the editorial chair. We note what you say with regard to our own style and that of G. W. Foote. The surest method in this matter is to trust one's own feelings. If one cannot write well then, it is almost hopeless.

J. G. DOBSON.—We are very pleased to know that you had so good a gathering and so enjoyable a day on Sunday last. These outings serve to keep members in touch with one another, as the attendance at lectures cannot hope to do.

J. STEPHENS.—Thanks, quite good. 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.

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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.

The Secular Society, Limited, is issuing this week, through the Pioneer Press, a new pamphlet by Mr. George Whitehead, entitled *What is Morality?* Mr. Whitehead writes, as usual, very clearly and convincingly, and his careful examination of the various schools and theories of morals will be welcomed by many. It is quite free from extravagant claims, and its restrained tone makes it the more effective. It is a useful piece of work and we wish it the circulation it deserves. The booklet is neatly bound in coloured wrapper, and is sold at 4d.; postage 1d. extra.

Mr. Clifford Williams will lecture in the Brassworkers' Hall, 70 Lionel Street, Birmingham, to-day (September 13) at 7. We hope Birmingham friends will take this opportunity of introducing Christian friends to the meeting. His subject, "Fundamentalism, Modernism, and Secularism," should attract them.

We are asked to announce that the Glasgow Branch will hold its meetings to-day (September 13) in the City Hall at 3 and 7 o'clock. A visit to the Art Galleries has also been arranged for Sunday, September 20. Members will meet at the Galleries at 2.30. The annual Reunion and Social of the Branch will be held in the "D" and "Y" Rooms, High Street, Glasgow, on Saturday, October 3. Tickets, 2s. 6d. each, may be obtained of the Secretary, Mr. A. Stuart, 114 Blenheim Street.

A meeting of the Plymouth Branch of the N.S.S. will be held at the Labour Club, 6 Richmond Street, to consider the possibilities of work during the winter season.

Sunday, says a Weston-super-Mare preacher, the Rev. D. R. Jones, is a British institution inasmuch as it is only where you find the British race that you find the real Sunday. This reminds us of the manner in which a man repudiated an assertion that friends of his was not fit to black a certain person's boots. He said *he was*. If the Puritan Sunday is a peculiarity of the British race, and we believe it is, we might leave it for foreigners to say so.

Here is a good story, sent us by a friend, but taken from Swift MacNeill's "*What I Have Seen and Heard*". The Rev. J. C. Ryle, afterwards Bishop of Liverpool, was announced to preach at St. Aldgate's, Oxford. Some wag wrote across the announcement:—

Some men's names with their trades agree—
How J. C. Ryle must rile J. C.

A Poet's Sadness—and His Consolation.

Oh, happy skies, and childhood's vital glee;
Oh, dull despair, and wasteful reverie;
Come doting age, with joys and grievings past;
Come down opaque oblivion's cloud at last.

Ye winds that sigh, or chant with eerie croon,
And gloomy sky, with my sad soul in tune;
Come thickening green of wood and wild and lea;
Dash ever on austere remorseless sea;
Ambition die, and hope no more betray;
Despair be nigh and darkling dim the way.

So, purged at last, the spirit pure arise,
And truth appear, sans fool's or knave's disguise;
The past forgot, the present hurt no more,
The future lot leave nothing to deplore:

So, risen up, in destiny's despite;
So share the draught of man's poor, brief delight;
So, unabash'd, dwell with the sins of light.

A. MILLAR.

"Back to Jesus."

III.

JESUS A FREETHINKER.

BOOKS about Jesus, of course, are turned out in thousands in all languages under the sun. They may differ (and do so, in fact) in all sorts of things, but they are quite in agreement about Jesus himself. He really is the greatest being that ever trod this earth even if he is not the "only begotten" Son of God. I should like to refer to a large number, but I will choose a very amusing one by Miss Christabel Pankhurst. Fifteen years ago she and many of her disciples were conducting a campaign to give women votes. Freethinkers had advocated and fought for votes for women for many years before the Suffragettes started, but Miss Pankhurst's contention was that a new world would result once women had the vote. Poverty, hunger, war, venereal disease, and hundreds of other evils would disappear as if by magic and a new paradise would ensue. Well, she now pathetically bemoans the fact that somehow she and her friends expected too much. In fact, as votes for women do not seem to have made much difference either way, she insists none of the terrible evils inflicting the world can possibly disappear without Jesus. Jesus's second advent is therefore dragged in. Miss Pankhurst's book reads like a modern edition of the writings of those unwashed lady saints the Catholic Church is so proud of—those who have left works about the "bridegroom," I mean. The rapturous terms in which these unfortunate nuns wrote of Jesus translated into contemporary English would give one an idea of how *Pressing Problems* is written, and, of course, a book like Mr. Chapman Cohen's *Sex and Religion* will explain *why* it was written. Miss Pankhurst has now discovered—in conjunction with Jesus—the "sexless life." The fact that Jesus "honoured" with his presence the marriage at Cana shows he "honoured the union of man and woman," but as he never married himself, he, therefore, blessed the "sexless" life by living it himself, and his life was the most magnificent, the most memorable, that has ever been." In short, Jesus is the greatest exponent of the sexless life who has ever lived—though I must confess to a small wonder why that is something to brag about. Miss Pankhurst fills nearly a column in a recent number of the *Daily Express* with a conglomeration of words, mostly in praise of Jesus, which leave me breathless. I can only express my profound astonishment that a woman of her intelligence should be so wasting her time. And if Jesus is not to blame, who is?

In this and previous articles I have dealt, as briefly as I could, with the Christian efforts to bring us back to Jesus—perfectly laudable efforts from their point of view, one must admit. They have put up an ideal, and wild horses won't make them discuss that ideal in terms that really matter. But what are we to say to those also perfectly sincere people who call themselves Rationalists and Freethinkers, who insist that those of us who do not agree with their conception of Jesus, who have no wish whatever to go back to Jesus, who, if they thank heaven at all, thank heaven they have got thoroughly rid of Jesus for ever, should be dragged back to Jesus by hook or by crook—what are we to say to them, pray? Christians fill our newspapers, our magazines, and our lecture halls with articles and discourses on Jesus. They have captured the wireless people. They can be found in every open space they are allowed to speak in giving us Jesus by the hour. They can find any amount of money in attempts to convert Jews

and pagans or erect churches, though their fellow creatures starve in thousands. But I must really protest when a fellow "Freethinker" butts in with the same glorious tale. He has a right to say what he likes, to worship whom he likes; but why will he call himself a Rationalist then? I intend dealing with one or two of their pronouncements, but I hope I shall not be misunderstood. Let us have an open platform by all means, but when a Freethinker or Rationalist asks me to go back to Jesus with him, he must answer my questions and reply to my criticism. If he can, then I am bound to go with him. If he can't, then let him come over to my side or hold his peace.

For example, there is a book called *Troasm: A Belief for Plain Men*. I hope the men won't be too plain, but really I have to smile when I read in this Rationalistic work that "To the Troast, the simple teaching of Christ is the supreme embodiment of all moral truth; but the teaching as he accepts it, is shorn of all the encumbering doctrines of the Church."

Here you get the same old tale. Not the Church, you see, but Christ—and the "simple" teaching of Christ. Well it's so simple that ever since printing was invented hundreds of thousands of books have been written to explain it. It's so simple that thousands of commentaries in all languages have been written to unravel exactly what Jesus meant. It's so simple that one can hear at any time a Protestant Alliance speaker explain Jesus one way and a Roman Catholic, with the same passage before him, explain Jesus precisely in the opposite way. I shall give examples of the "simple" teaching of Jesus later.

Then we have Miss Ettie Rout and her book, *Sexual Health and Birth Control*. No one admires her splendid courage and work more than I do, and I agree with almost all she has written. But why drag in Jesus? To show us that Christians are wrong in their opposition to birth control, she tells us (page 42) that "Jesus was a Freethinker!" Of course, if Jesus is really a Freethinker, I'll embrace him as a brother, but (though it's not the first time I've been told the same thing), I haven't had, as yet, a scrap of evidence in proof of such a remarkable proposition. Miss Rout's is typical: "Jesus was a Freethinker, he thought freely and he spoke freely, and he attacked the Church, which is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

These are most convincing reasons why Jesus was a Freethinker. I have heard any number of Roman Catholics protest they, too, are Freethinkers—Roman Catholic Freethinkers—because they speak freely and think freely. So did Martin Luther and John Calvin, and the late Mr. Kensit and Madame Blavatsky, and countless others, they spoke and thought freely and attacked the "Church," but they are not, and could not be, Freethinkers. But the cream of the joke is when Miss Rout tells us Jesus attacked the Church. What Church? Where and how did Jesus attack it? He disagreed a little later in life with some of the tenets of Judaism, but he never made a wholesale attack on the "Church." He did not attack—as the Editor of this paper once said to me—even the *idea* of a Church. He was a Jew and remained a Jew to the end of his life. If he believed anything more than the average Jew of his time, it was in increasing superstition. Actually Jesus used the word "Church" *twice* only in Matthew and *never* in Mark, Luke, and John. The first allusion is that humorous sally which every Roman Catholic knows by heart about Peter and the Rock, upon one of which "I will build my Church." In the other, in the 18th chapter, 17th verse, Jesus, far from attacking it, *recommends* the Church.

The truth is Jesus attacked the Pharisees and the Scribes. Why? Well, he disagreed with them and they disagreed with him. But to say they were wrong and Jesus right is merely to accept Jesus as the plaintiff, prosecuting counsel, jury, and judge all rolled into one. There is no evidence whatever that the Pharisees were in the wrong or deserved the attacks of Jesus. At all events those who are for the "Son of God" in this matter should explain why he always accepted an invitation to dinner with one of his despised enemies? And this brings me to the words of Jesus as quoted by Miss Rout: "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves and them that were entering it ye hindered."

Miss Rout gives us this as something of a prophecy of what Comstock did in preventing birth control knowledge in America—an application of the words of Jesus which makes me despair. In the first place it is not lawyers who prevent knowledge, but *priests*, speaking as a general rule. Did Bacon prevent knowledge? Then it's nonsense to say that lawyers "entered not in" themselves. Most lawyers are pretty shrewd men even outside their own profession, which requires very difficult training. But Miss Rout did not tell us *why* Jesus used these words, and I advise readers to look up the passage from Luke ii. 37 to the end of the chapter. Briefly a Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him and "marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner." What a delightful example of sitting down to dine with filthy hands Jesus has given us! Strange that one rarely hears of this incident in the average sermon, and most Sunday school teachers skip it very hastily. But after the Pharisee "marvelled"—which, after all, isn't very much—Jesus "went" for him and all his pals and friends and relatives, including the lawyers, in a tirade which has not its equal in the whole of the Gospels. The cursing in Ingoldsby's *Jackdaw of Rheims* is not in it. How anyone can read this language of curses and talk about the pure, beautiful, loving, meek religion of Jesus is simply beyond me. Personally I consider the whole incident disgraceful, and I should like to ask all those people who wish us to come back to Jesus whether they would tolerate anyone sitting down to dine with them with dirty hands and then listen to a horrible and mostly irrelevant tirade because they merely "marvelled." Jesus believed he was the "Son of God," he believed in devils and demons, witches and wizards, spooks and spirits, in heavenly mansions and hell fire, but Miss Rout tells us he was a Freethinker. I give it up.

H. CUTNER.

The Unpardonable Sin.

RELIGION IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

A BEAUTIFUL sultry evening in August, ideal weather for outdoor sport and pleasure, the country walk, an hour or two by the sea shore. Theatres, music-halls appeared to have few patrons; the popular picture palace with alluring notice inviting us to "Come in out of the heat; much cooler inside," left one cold, so to speak. Yet, the large assembly hall was packed long before the hour fixed for the service, and every night for the past month huge audiences have gathered to hear the gospel according to the Old Book, according to Nicholson, according to Monkeyville; excursions from outlying districts are run by train and charabanc so that all may hear the precious words of wisdom.

What does it all mean? What is the attraction? This Nicholson is about as undignified and vulgar as

the average street corner Bible puncher. That, of course, is a good deal of the attraction, for Torrey, Billy Sunday, and others of that ilk always make a line of being "outspoken," and the coarse jest and extravagant utterance appear to be suited to mission work. I would say that four out of every five in the audience were women, and the interest they took in the proceedings, and the knowledge they displayed of the hymns sung showed quite clearly that there were few, like myself, present for the first time. It is cheerful Christianity, Salvationism without tambourines, and there is a fine free-and-easy, go-as-you-please style with the singing. "The married men now," says the evangelist cheerily, in quite the approved comedian manner. "Now the weemen hum the tune and the men whistle. That's good, but not loud enough. I want the top gallery now to let it go. Now for a change, the men hum and the weemen whistle. Now let it go all together." Violent clapping of hands, then "Wonderful, wonderful Jesus" reverbrates through the ether, and the two girls between whom I am sitting, embarrass me by offering a share of their hymn-books. It is a cheap show, two and a-half hour's entertainment for a penny not being out of the way.

The evangelist is a native of Northern Ireland, a well set up genial sort of chap who looks as if he could be particularly successful at the dinner table and useful with the boxing gloves. There is certainly nothing ascetic about him. I gathered that he spent some time in America, and that at one period he was a sailor, but I found it hard to believe that he had ever been a drunkard, although he told us so himself.

After the hymn-singing, the hand-clapping, the cross-talking and the back-slacking, and much cheap humour of Bob and Shingle variety, a number of letters were read to us telling of the wonderful conversions, or asking prayers for obstinate sinners. Then with heads bowed, we prayed and groaned until the address was announced. I gave a groan myself when I heard that the title was "The unpardonable sin." I blushed uncomfortably when I thought of the girls on either side of me, but I could see they were a little disappointed when, at his opening sentence, the lecturer pointed out that we were mistaken as to the nature of the unpardonable sin.

It appears that man (and of course man embraces woman) may commit any jolly old sin he likes and still be saved; any sin but one, for the unpardonable sin is—well, it is unpardonable. But what is this unpardonable misdemeanour? Ah, ah! that takes over half an hour of raving, of ranting, of reminiscing about murderers, drunkards, forgers, and other delightful sinners who are now saved, and whose cheerful company we are sure to enjoy for all eternity if only we can sidestep the unpardonable sin. Personally I'd go to hell to avoid such a scurvy lot, and I caught myself listening eagerly for full particulars as to how I might commit the unpardonable sin. It's something of a cross word business, or a severe cold which you think is the 'flu. You're sure you've got it, but then it turns out that you were mistaken. Murder isn't the unpardonable sin. Oh, dear no, that can be washed away. Adultery is not the unpardonable sin, not by any means. Gambling, drunkenness, smoking, wearing short skirts or low necks, cursing and swearing are sins, but not unpardonable ones, for there is but *one* unpardonable sin, and when a creature commits that, he is doomed, damned, and jiggered irrevocably to fry and frizzle through all the ages.

The process of elimination is slow when dealing with sins; we are told that processions of miserable sinners had lined up in queues to consult the preacher as to whether they had really committed it or not.

None of them seemed to have had any luck. It appeared to be tremendously difficult. A feeling that, after all, I might not be clever enough to commit it sent a chill to my heart, and involuntarily I clasped the hand of the girl on my right; she was profoundly touched, and muttered "God's truth," or something like that.

Then, amidst tense excitement the preacher was driven reluctantly to let us into the horrible secret. The unpardonable sin (and you could have heard a pin drop) was the sin against the Holy Ghost (loud and prolonged sensation, and a tremor from the girl on my left).

I will admit that I was not comforted; details seemed to be lacking, but luckily were now forthcoming. Sinning against the Holy Ghost was shutting the door in God's face. Now, a door is something tangible, but I don't think I ever shut one in any mortal's face, and I wouldn't even do it to God, despite the inducement to commit unpardonability. I'd sooner shut God *in* than out, for I'd have quite a lot to say to Him. After all the unpardonable sin revelation had become a wash-out, and I would gladly then have sneaked out of the building a disappointed man. But quite suddenly we were once more exhorted to prayer, heads were again bowed, groanings and gaspings, sighing and muttering, and respensing were indulged in as a welcome relief from long inactivity. By gum, we were being prayed at this time to some tune. A weird kind of dirge was chanted, and all who were willing to "take Christ" were asked to signify the same by standing up. More praying, exhorting, dirging, and good-Godding, and more standing up. It was like the tactics in a cheap auction room. "Another gentleman lend me a penny, thank you, sir. Lady over there, George; God bless you, ma'am. Don't go away now till you get your presents....." That was how the mesmeric evangelist was working, and I can tell you *his* eyes weren't shut. He seemed to ferret out everybody who remained seated. After a little hesitation both of my girls stood up, and I endeavoured to bring them together so that I might hide myself. But God sees all things, we are told, besides the right hand girl laid her Woolworth bracketed arm on mine and said that this was a remarkable opportunity to embrace salvation, and that I would never regret it. I felt like Artemus Ward among the Mormons. I was weakening somewhat, and when the other girl ogled me (religiously) I felt that I was lost and would have to be saved. Fortunately for my reputation as a hell-deserving sinner, a vulgar man prodded me in the back, and whispered in my ear to take Jesus. That saved me for I am weak, and could be coaxed by a girl, but to be prodded into "declaring for God" by one of my own sex is beyond me. I sat my ground firmly, and they prayed and prayed at me, and exhorted and groaned and good-Godded, but it was no use. I think I was the only one left sitting, the one black sheep in that huge fold. I was most uncomfortable, and I was greatly relieved when we were suffered to depart. I covered up my embarrassment a little by affecting something of a Christian smile, and humming faintly the tune which the organ was playing as we filed out.

Now, I'm not made of the proper heroic stuff. I am an Atheist, but not a "howling" one, and I don't like making a martyr of myself. If I go back to another of these performances, I think I'll get saved, beat my breast, sing "Wonderful, wonderful Jesus," grin ecstatically, clap my hands, roar out "Bless His Name," and generally act the giddy Christian.

But stay! There can be no other chance for me, for have I not committed the unpardonable sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost? I think I must plead

guilty for ghosts, devils, witches, hob-goblins, spooks, fairies, gods, angels, are subjects fit only for ridicule and mirth. The man who can be solemn about a "Holy" ghost needs a specialist to look at his head. Oh, yes, the old-fashioned "believer" is quite numerous, I grant you. But he has never thought about the imbecilities of Christianity; he does not even *believe* in these things, but merely accepts what has been dinned into his ears since childhood.

Yes, most undoubtedly the unpardonable sin is that against the Holy Ghost, for the man who thinks at all has no respect for ghosts, holy or otherwise.

Now, we have stumbled on the real truth—to make men think, *that* is the unpardonable sin.

J. EFFEL.

Correspondence.

"LOGIC AND SCIENCE."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—“Keridon” on “Logic and Science” is as trenchant and suggestive as usual. But perhaps he does not intend all he has written in his article on the 30th ult. to be taken too seriously; possibly he was in a captious mood. If man were fully rationally developed, like Swift’s wise horses, or like the man we meet in Gulliver’s travellers, who was so impressed with the infirmity of words in conveying meanings, he carried objects about, with him to use instead of words. Then perhaps deductive logic would be as useless as “Keridon” implies it now is, and practically always has been. But so long as men have no better medium to converse with them than words, while the majority of us are far more anxious not to be proved wrong than to be sure we have the truth. So long as men are a bundle of prejudices, selfish interests, bigoted, stupid, ignorant, then so long is deductive logic a necessity. “Keridon” impresses me as one who dwells on Olympus with the Gods in a translucent atmosphere where truth is obvious. Possessed God-like of a strong clear vision, to whom such devices as words, “definitions,” “syllogisms” so necessary to we poor mortals in this murky atmosphere here below as feeble, imperfect means to truth, are childish, puerile, and ridiculous. “Keridon” has the highest regard for inductive logic as an instrument of truth. Quite so, and so say all of us. “Keridon” gives a very simple example of the syllogism and demonstrates that here and in every other instance it begs the question in its major premise. But this judgment must go by default, deductive and inductive logic are complementary. The major premise of the syllogism should be the tested inductive generalization. Thus: “All great social changes are preceded by religious scepticism. There is religious scepticism in Russia. There are great social changes there.” Without, say, any further knowledge of Russian conditions than that here given, assuming the truth of the major, the conclusion could be predicted with perfect certainty. Hence the process is essentially scientific and valuable. The variations of the four primitive syllogistic forms may be indefensible deductive logic may have been abused in the past by the schoolmen. But yet I submit that it cannot be dispensed with. I am surprised that “Keridon” appears to regard it as an arbitrary device. Surely it is the outward objective expression of inward mental processes. Lots of people who never heard of it are continually reasoning deductively. In enthymeme form, omitting and assuming the truth of a premise, “He is a Scotsman; he won’t give anything away,” implies the major, “No Scotsmen ever gives anything away.” There are classic instances in literature, etc., where the premises are stated and the conclusion of the danger of a recurrence of persecution from Lecky’s *Rationalism*. Mr. Cohen justly complains that the anthropologists do not draw and apply the conclusions of their studies to Christianity. Of course, “Keridon” knows quite well the example of the syllogism he gives is simple, and that it has a much complex form where long trains of reasoning are sustained under the rigid discipline of a mechanism, where the

conclusion is shown to be identical in a sense with the beginning. This process, it was remarked by Mr. Spencer, was identical with cosmical processes in tracing the same cause through its multiform phases, establishing the identity of things apparently not the same is a unifying process. Prof. Soddy traces credit monopoly as a cause appearing in all the various disguises of social unrest, poverty, and threatened disruption. Henry George, *Progress and Poverty*, may be viewed as an example of illative syllogistic reasoning, and could be formally thus cast—the protean essence, or Noumena land monopoly. Cardinal Newman's work on *Development*, I consider a most brilliant instance of cumulative syllogism. Beginning with the postulate that great religious truths are too profound to be assimilated by their first recipients, but require the passage of time and many generations of men to fully appreciate them. This slow assimilation and its expression is a consistent logical development. Hence the judgment on the Church of Rome, "the more she alters the more the same she is," *semper eadem*. Attempts are periodically made to discredit deductive logic, but it survives by virtue of its value in stating in concise form the results of inductive logic. The two are really twins and ought to have been delivered together, but it seems by mischance one was left in the womb of time for some centuries. The "life force" was a careless midwife apparently. Anyway, it can be retorted on "Keridon" that even his infallible inductive method is under suspicion. It starts from unproved assumptions and calls them axioms because they cannot be proved. It is objected they are figments of the mind and all the wonderful inductive verity is a colossal begged question. As an admirer of "Keridon" I am neither "amused" or "shocked." I think what he says here is about as useful as a discussion by one sex to discredit the other.

M. BARNARD.

FALSIFICATION AND ITS USE.

SIR,—As the gentleman who hides his personality behind the mask, "Trepn," is unabashed, I conclude that his act was deliberate, especially as he proceeds to crown it with a new piece of falsification, apparently to conceal the gravity of his previous deed, on the principle, I suppose, of "smothering a lie with more lies." He says, "The point of discussion is whether the energy of steam is kinetic or static." In point of brazen effrontery this is probably a record. The phrase is his own, manufactured out of the very sentence which he falsified. Not only was it never "the point of discussion"; it never could be one, unless perhaps to a Hottentot. That the energy of steam is "kinetic" is as *undiscussable* as the statement that "two and two are four."

The "point of discussion" was re-stated by himself in the very letter in which he falsifies my wording, and was expressed thus: "The question at issue is a very simple one.....as to whether both man and machine generate energy." A comment is superfluous.

If your correspondent is a Christian, all this falsifying is in keeping with his profession; a Christian, when his creed is concerned, has no sense of veracity; but if he marches under the Freethought banner, he is, I submit, Sir, small credit to our noble movement and to a journal whose motto is Truth.

KERIDON.

[This correspondence is now closed.—ED.]

RELIGIOUS TEACHING IN SCHOOLS.

SIR,—This subject has been threshed out in this country times and again, and legislation has definitely committed us to "free, compulsory and secular education" in the public schools. The system has worked admirably—as it must—and the fact that the religious element will not be content to "let well alone" is, apart from other considerations, a deplorable nuisance, because it deflects from useful work a good deal of energy that, otherwise, might be directed to secure many social reforms of which the country stands badly in need.

Seeing which classes, in the main, are supporting the continuous agitation, one wonders whether the "red-herring" idea is not, indeed, the prime factor.

The columns of our leading journal have contained a large number of letters for and against the innovation

and although some have been outspoken, not one has voiced the definite object of materialists, as citizens, from the standpoint of mere democratic justice. The paper, naturally, is orthodox and Tory—or it would not be our leading journal; but, to do it justice, it is certainly better than many in the admission of opposing views. It seems that you may attack religious teaching from any oblique angle, but the direct attack from a freethought standpoint, the claim for citizen rights for that standpoint, is barred.

From the position of political and religious freedom this is the most backward of the British Dominions. Books that circulate freely elsewhere, that you can pick up in any shop in London, or New York, or Sydney, or Cape Town, are upon our censor's "Index." I mention Sydney, although in Australia many books come under the censor's ban that English and American and South African readers have access to. But the Australian censorship is nothing to ours, and it covers all classes of literature. You can imagine the feeling of irritation and enduring resentment at this interference with elementary liberty in the case of one, like myself, with five and forty years of London experience.

Although the largest city in the Dominion—by a good deal—this is, after all, a very small place; about 180,000 of population, and I suppose one must be patient. To breed and train, or import the necessary number of intellectual rebels is a work of time.

By all accounts there is much in the Old Country conditions just now that is not enviable. But we do envy your freedom of discussion, your books, your secular halls.

JOHN RUSSELL RHODE.

Auckland.

"Is Evolution True?"

ONE would have thought, especially after the Dayton case, that no educated person would have, or could have, questioned the truth of the *fact* of evolution. There are still, however, a number of people quite sensible perhaps in everything else, who claim that because the evolutionist can't take an ape and change him into a man before their very eyes, evolution is quite untrue or merely a theory sustained by faith and no facts whatever.

Among these delightful persons one must class Prof. McCready Price, late Professor of Geology of the University of Nebraska, and the author of a number of works on geology, and so sure was he of his opinions that he offered to meet Mr. Joseph McCabe in a public debate on evolution, a debate which duly came off last Sunday evening at Queen's Hall.

The place was packed not merely by those who believed in evolution, but also by a large number of people who evidently expected that Mr. Price would, once for all, annihilate the absurd pretensions of men of science, and champion the inspired account of Genesis. Alas! Mr. Price did not once refer to the Bible, which, in a way, was a pity, as we could then have seen how beautifully in harmony were religion and science, so often the claim of those who are not quite certain where they stand.

Mr. McCabe opened with a very fine and clear account of evolution as sustained by geology, the distribution of animals over the globe, and, coming to man, the facts of polymastism (the nipples of breasts in the male, etc.). He also threw on the screen a few slides illustrating his remarks. Mr. Price should have followed with as clear a refutation of the principal points urged by his opponent as possible. That was why we were all there and why we were all breathless with anticipation. Unfortunately Mr. Price had prepared his "reply" beforehand and carefully read it out, every now and then turning to a small library of books he had beside him and quoting as "authorities" a large number of obscure "professors" (who were mostly, it turned out, professors in theological colleges). The gist of his remarks was that while Mr. McCabe was quite right as to his facts, he was quite wrong in his interpretation of those facts. He admitted that nearly every professor in every University in the world was an evolutionist, but they had

all been deceived. Had he, Professor Price, the time, he could show us why they were deceived; but he hadn't the time. "On these lines" America was twenty years ahead of us and we should all be anti-evolutionists in, at the most, two years. (Here I somehow thought of *Martin Chuzzlewit*—how Dickens would have enjoyed Mr. Price!) As for bringing any real cogent facts to upset Mr. McCabe, Professor Price utterly failed. He merely denied this and that, and kept reiterating that his opinion was different from that of Mr. McCabe's. The geographical position of animals and the argument from polymastism or anything to do with geology, he disdainfully refused to even touch upon—probably he knew nothing whatever about them.

Towards the close of his last speech the audience felt they were "done" out of a debate, and said so—which was a pity, as Mr. Price should have been given a patient hearing. After all, it is very amusing to hear anti-evolutionists and they should be allowed as long a rope as possible. The more they say the more hopelessly they flounder, and Professor Price was no exception. Earl Russell, who genially filled the chair, concluded the evening's entertainment with a few happy remarks, pointing out that a verbatim report of the debate would be published and a full list of Mr. Price's "authorities" would be given for those who wished to study the other side.

And we all left in a very happy state of mind.

H. C.

Mr. G. Whitehead's Mission.

Mr. Whitehead reports a very satisfactory week's work at Ashton-under-Lyne. Very attentive crowds and many assurances of sympathy and promises of help. Several new members were made, and there is every prospect of a good working propaganda being established at Aslton. The new members are young and enthusiastic and ought to go far. From September 5 to 19 Mr. Whitehead will conduct a fortnight's mission in Newcastle.

HUXLEY'S "INFIDELITY."

I know that I am, in spite of myself, exactly what the Christian world call, and, so far as I can see, are justified in calling, Atheist and Infidel. I cannot see one shadow or tittle of evidence that the great unknown underlying the phenomena of the universe stands to us in the relation of a father—loves us and cares for us as Christianity asserts. On the contrary, the whole teaching of experience seems to me to show that while the governance—if I may use the term—of the universe is rigorously just and substantially kind and beneficent, there is no more relation of affection between governor and governed than between me and the twelve judges.—*Professor Huxley, in a letter to Charles Kingsley.*

THE GOOD OF GOOD.

To do good, not so much to the whole world or the world of humanity, as to certain definite people; to relieve actual misery, to lighten someone's burden—such things cannot deceive. We know what we are doing; we know that the aim will be worth our efforts—not in the sense that the result obtained will be of considerable importance in the mighty stream of things, but in the sense that there certainly will be a result, and a good result; that our action will not be lost in the infinite, like a small cloud in the monotonous blue of the sky. To do away with some suffering, that is in itself a sufficient aim for a human being. By so doing we change an infinitesimal part of the total sum of pain in the universe. Pity remains—inherent in the heart of man, vibrating in his deepest instincts—even when purely rational justice and universalized charity sometimes seem to lose their foundations. Even while doubting, one may love; even in the intellectual night, which prevents our pursuing any far-reaching aim, we may stretch out a helping hand to those around us who suffer.—*Guyau.*

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.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11, John A. Hobson, M.A., "The Humour of Psychology."

OUTDOOR.

BETHNAL GREEN BRANCH N.S.S. (Victoria Park, near the Fountain): 6, Mr. R. H. Rosetti, a Lecture.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Regent's Park, near the Fountain): 5.45, Mr. H. Constable, a Lecture.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 3 and 6, Mr. C. Baker will lecture.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Outside Technical Institute, Romford Road, Stratford, E.): 7, Demonstration. Speakers: Mrs. H. Rosetti, Messrs. F. C. Warner, F. G. Warner, A. C. High, and H. E. White.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (Brassworkers' Hall, 70 Lionel Street, Birmingham): 7, Mr. Clifford Williams, "Fundamentalism, Modernism, and Secularism."

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S.—All meetings held in the City Hall are at 3 and 7. On Sunday, September 20, an outing to the Art Galleries, meet at the Galleries at 2.30. Tickets for the Reunion and Social on Saturday, October 3, will be on sale.

OUTDOOR.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Town Hall Steps): Friday, September 11, at 7.30, Messrs. Addison, Partington, and Sisson will speak.

NEWCASTLE BRANCH N.S.S.—Mr. G. Whitehead's Mission. Sunday at 11 at Sandhill; at 7 at Town Moor; Monday at 7 at Bigg Market.

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