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Views and Opinions.

(Continued from page 66.)

Unscientific Science.

We left off last week with a protest against the assertion of Professor Needham, Sir Oliver Lodge, and others, that if we accept Materialism we must undertake to explain all phenomena, including those of life and mind, in terms of chemistry and physics. As a general proposition the statement is utterly inexcusable in the mouth of a scientific man. But a still more surprising thing is that many defenders of Materialism should set out to accomplish this impossible feat. For his own purpose the anti-Materialist gives an absurd account of Materialism, and then proceeds to show that it is not reasonable. It is not difficult to kill a proposition that is carefully fashioned for slaughter. But, as we said at the outset of these notes, it is much easier to state a fallacy than it is to expose it. And the complete exposure of this particular fallacy would mean a detailed consideration of the exact meaning of a scientific "law," and of the right understanding of causation. As the latter question has been one of the most debated in the history of the philosophy of science, and as such men as Hume, Mill, and Huxley have—we have the temerity to believe—gone astray in dealing with it, it will be recognized that it is not an easy task to deal with in the course of a few sentences. The anti-Materialist is here at a considerable advantage. He can appeal to established prejudice in familiar language, and assent calls for no great mental effort. But disproof requires a reconsideration of scientific principles such as only a few are inclined to give. Still, it is surely worth while making the position clear, even though one runs the risk of being thought wearisome.

* * *

The Nature of "Law."

Now it is an effective reply to the statement that Materialism ought to be able to explain everything in terms of physics and chemistry, to say that if this were so, laws of biology and psychology would be unnecessary. And to a scientific thinker the mere existence of these additional laws are alone enough to prove the assertion to be unsound. The

curious thing is that while all scientific workers recognize that a "law" in science does no more than describe what occurs, very few of them appear to have grasped its full implications. Consider the facts. We are surrounded with all sorts of happenings, and the first condition of understanding them is to reduce them to some sort of order. This is done in the first place by groupings. Phenomena showing a certain number of qualities or characteristics in common are brought together, and a formula or "law" devised that will express the qualities they have in common. To describe their physical properties we frame laws of physics; to describe other properties we frame laws of chemistry, biological laws are framed to describe other qualities, psychological laws to describe others. But it is clear that the sole necessity for devising laws of chemistry is that laws of physics will not cover what are called chemical phenomena. And the impossibility of describing certain things in terms of chemistry leads to the framing of laws of biology, and so on. Further, a human being may be taken as an illustration of the whole series. Certain characteristics of the human body, weight, etc., illustrate physical laws, the digestion of food illustrate laws of chemistry, certain reactions illustrate biological laws, and, lastly, mental qualities express psychological laws. But science does not say by this that physical phenomena are not the conditions for the appearance of chemical phenomena, physical and chemical conditions for the appearance of biological phenomena, nor that physical, chemical, and biological phenomena are not the conditions of the appearance of psychological qualities. As a matter of fact, science assumes that whenever the later and least restricted group of qualities are found the condition of their appearance is the prior existence of the larger, wider, and earlier group. Thus, there is not a scientific man in the world who, if he found psychological qualities, would not look for biological, chemical, and physical factors as the condition of their appearance. And a man who asserted that he had found biological phenomena in the absence of chemical and physical conditions would be stating something quite unknown in the world of science. The only reason for the creation of a new scientific law is that the existing ones are not found able to cover the known facts. That is why we say that the statements of Sir Oliver Lodge and Professor Needham are hopelessly unscientific.

* * *

The Materialistic Standpoint.

Now if we arrange these four main classes of "laws" in a certain order, we find that the widest is that of physics. The laws of chemistry are more restricted in their application. Still more restricted are the laws of biology, while the most restricted of all are the laws of psychology. And the vital difference here between the Materialist and the Spiritualist is that while the latter stands the scientific edifice upon its base, the former insists upon resting it on its apex. The Materialist says that the

conditions for the emergence of chemical phenomena are to be found in physics. There are plenty of illustrations of this in the phenomena of Allotropism, where the simple rearrangement of atoms will give rise to a quite new phenomenon. He also says that we must look for the emergence of biological phenomena in chemical and physical conditions, and so on. In other words, to the Materialist, nature is a developing whole in which each stage gives rise to the one immediately above it. But it is absurd to argue that because of this the identity of any stage is destroyed. The identity remains, however produced. This is a fact of plain observation. To say otherwise is equal to saying that because a blow in the eye is the condition of a man seeing stars, therefore you must explain the sensation of seeing stars in terms of the physical impact of the brick. Psychological facts must be explained in terms of psychology, biological facts in terms of biology, physical facts in terms of physics. We are once again only explaining that if things are different they are not the same, but even men in the position of Sir Oliver Lodge appear to occasionally require that reminder. You can give the physical and chemical conditions of a sunset, but our feelings regarding the sunset belong to a different category, and for that reason we have the existence of psychological laws. When you reduce a psychological fact to its chemical and biological conditions, you have destroyed its character as a psychological phenomenon. And no one in their senses expects to find in analysis that which is produced only by synthesis.

* * *

Factors and Products.

The Materialist, therefore, does not say that you can describe life and mind in terms of physics and chemistry. He is not quite so stupid as to explain difference in terms of identity. What he does say is that inasmuch as life is never found apart from certain physical and chemical conditions, we have to seek in these conditions the cause of life. True, our knowledge of these conditions is not exact enough for us to describe all that occurs, but that is no more than an admission of the need for more knowledge. To say that life gives us something different from anything present in the most complex chemical phenomena is quite beside the point, for it is an outstanding feature of all chemical phenomena that we can never infer the properties of a compound from a knowledge of the properties of its constituents. There is no taste of sweetness in carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen, but from a combination of the three we get sugar, and when combined in a different way we get starch. To look for life in the properties of chemical substances because we see life emerging from chemical conditions is scientifically absurd. Every fresh combination gives us new qualities, new properties, and the Materialist is only arguing from experience when he says we must seek in the direction indicated for the origin and explanation of life. If we are not to seek here, where shall we look? The assumption that life is an expression of some new and utterly uncaused force is an inconceivable proposition, and one that only commends itself to those who are not in the habit of seriously thinking out the implications of the proposition to which assent is asked.

* * *

Matter and Mind.

At the risk of being thought tedious I must again emphasize the truth that the search for an explanation of anything is never more than a search for the conditions under which it occurs. It is not an account of *why* a particular phenomenon should follow from

those conditions. I do not know why the union of oxygen, hydrogen, and carbon should produce sugar. But as we always get one as the result of the combination of the other, science treats the two as connected in terms of causation. And the same holds good of life. When we know all about the conditions which accompany the appearance of life we shall know all it is possible for us to know of the origin of life—all there is to know of the origin of life. Nor do we say, as Materialists, that life is a property of matter. (The theory that there is a particle of "mind-stuff" accompanying every particle of matter is a mere speculation of no value whatever to anyone and without any basis in fact.) What the Materialist says is that life is a property of certain organized bodies, which is quite a different proposition. And we say that because life is never found apart from certain organized states. That is all that is meant in science by saying that one thing is a property of another, or that one thing is the cause of another. Nor is it the task of the Materialist to prove the connection of life with material organization. That is already there. It is a fact of common, of universal, experience that can be denied by none. It is for they who assert that life is independent of material organization to show in what way it can exist apart. Seeing that A and B are always found together, and that B is affected by every change in A, their task is to explain how the two can be separated and B yet retain its individual character. The Materialist rests on an admitted fact, and relies upon a sound and proved method of investigation for an increased knowledge of the fact. Hitherto every increase in knowledge has served only to enforce the lesson that all phenomena, from the simplest to the most complex, is a consequence of the composition of natural forces. Wherever the work of science is being carried on that principle is admitted. And something more than our inability to answer every question that a discredited or disguised supernaturalism can ask, would be required to make us relinquish a principle and discard a method that every advance in positive knowledge has illustrated and enforced.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

(To be Continued.)

Foreign Missions.

It is a peculiarity of the Christian religion that, treating itself as the only true religion, it systematically endeavours to undermine all other religions, denouncing them as false. Ever since the day of Pentecost, its motto has always been, Without Christ there can be no salvation. It was this hateful spirit of exclusiveness that gave rise, from the very beginning, to its notorious methods of propaganda. As an example, take Paul's description of the conditions of life in the Pagan world in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. The orthodox view is that this famous Epistle was written about the year 55 or 56. According to the great Apostle, Pagans were people whom God had completely abandoned, with the result that they lived "in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness so that their bodies should be dishonoured among themselves." Yes, "God gave them up unto vile passions, for their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature, and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another." Verses 28-32 were probably no more true of Pagan Rome in Paul's time than they are to-day of Christian England. Evil-minded, lustful, and cruel men and women did live then without a doubt;

but they are to be found in London in the twentieth century, as numerous cases in the law courts abundantly testify. The present point, however, is that in Christianity it is gratuitously taken for granted that the Heathen are in a state of unfathomable degradation, and that even their religions are of the Devil. It was out of that false conviction that Christian Missions clambered into existence; but, alas, their history for centuries was more of a discredit than an honour to the Church. Christian leaders often boastfully exclaim: "The Holy Church brought Europe to the feet of Christ." Did it? We deny the truth of the statement. In the first half of the eighth century one of the most active and successful agents of the Church was Boniface, an Englishman, a native of Crediton, Devonshire. Born in 680, he went to Rome, already a priest, in 718, and Pope Gregory II. sent him to labour among the Heathen of Germany, and he did so for thirty years. Mr. John M. Robertson, in his *Short History of Christianity* (p. 210), says:—

The Englishman Boniface, who played a large part (720-755) in the Christianization of Northern Germany, and who in the usual fashion claimed to have baptized a hundred thousand natives in one week, secured the excommunication of several rival bishops of the anti-Roman school; and those who would not have re-ordination at his hands he sought to have imprisoned or flogged, denouncing them, in the style of the churchman of all ages, as "servants of the Devil and forerunners of Antichrist." His authority was established in new districts at the head of an armed force; and when with fifty priests he met his death in Friesland at the hands of heathen natives, he was marching with a troop of soldiers.

Eight hundred years later we find Francis Xavier in Japan, forcing the Christian religion upon the natives, and in about fifty years the Japanese were said to have accepted it as their own faith. By 1587 the Japs had become convinced that it did not fulfil the promises made on its behalf, and a process of expulsion was immediately set in motion. Unspeakably ruthless was the persecutions, and unnumbered thousands of Christians were cruelly massacred, with the result that in 1637 the eradication of Christianity from Japan was complete, and at this very day the Japanese nation resent its reintroduction.

The Protestant Missionary Societies now in existence originated from the belief that without Christ the Heathen are utterly lost in this world and will be everlastingly punished for it in the next. It is estimated that the Protestant Missionary Societies spend the sum of £9,600,000 annually to save the Heathen from going down to hell-fire after death. Curiously enough the Heathen generally have no desire to be thus saved. They are perfectly satisfied with their own religions, which they consider superior to any foreign cults. Consequently, Foreign Missions have not been crowned with overwhelming success. Nowhere in Heathendom is there any irresistible rush to the Christian cross. Is it not true that American missionaries worked in Turkey for nearly forty years without making a single convert? The truth is that the Turks do not need a new religion. The progress they are making in all directions is most amazing, and it is a certainty that Christian missionaries in their country are culpably wasting time, energy, and money, besides making fools of themselves in the estimation of all intelligent Islamites.

The Anglican Church has just held a convention for the purpose of calling special and most emphatic attention to "Missionary Needs Overseas." The Archbishop of Canterbury, being unable to attend, sent a letter in which he endeavoured to justify the attitude

of superiority assumed by Christians. A full report appeared in the *Times* of January 27, and in the Primate's letter occur the following words:—

A careless popular opinion is still prevalent among thousands of Christian people in England, that the furtherance of our missionary effort overseas is the obsession—I had almost said the fad—of a handful of enthusiasts, but has no necessary claim upon Christian folk generally. This strange misunderstanding you are now trying, by the help of God, to dissipate, or rather to destroy.....If a man says that the message of the Gospel, true for European nations, is inapplicable to the peoples of other lands and races, his opinion is directly opposed to what was taught by our Lord Himself and by his Apostles. The man who holds that strange theory should be reminded that he is thus in contradiction to the teaching of the Divine Founder of our Faith and of those whom He commissioned to extend His kingdom among men.

Now, we also beg to remind the Archbishop of two vitally important facts which he either deliberately ignores, or has never taken seriously to heart. The first is that there is no convincing evidence that Jesus either was or intended to be the founder of a new religion which would supplant Judaism. There is not the remotest hint in any of his alleged sayings that he severed his own connection or expressed a desire that his apostles should sever their connection with the national religion. Besides, his Grace cannot but be aware that many Christian scholars, men as competent to judge as himself, frankly admit the presence of legends in the Gospels, which renders it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to determine how much is historical and how much legendary. The other fact of which the Archbishop takes no notice is that in apostolic times there were two rival religions struggling desperately for supremacy; namely, the religion which Jesus himself was believed to have professed and practised, and which is fittingly embodied in the Epistle of James, and the other a religion consisting of fanciful interpretations of Jesus, or of a series of incredible dogmas artificially attached to him. It was Paul, not Jesus, who founded this religion, and Paulinism triumphed over its rival, simply because Paul was a man of genius, while the Jerusalem apostles were commonplace individuals, quite incapable of arguing with or against the apostle of the Gentiles. It seems to us simply impertinent to call the Gospel Jesus the founder of the Faith which found its full expression in the Nicene creed, in praise and defence of which the Primate recently delivered a most eloquent discourse in Westminster Abbey.

The President of the Convention was the Bishop of Salisbury, who was by no means blind to the fact that at present there are powerful anti-Christian forces at work. He said:—

There is positive teaching against our faith. There is an attempt to build up something constructive to compete with it, and our missionaries and fellow Christians in some countries are meeting with opponents who are out to capture the new civilization with anti-Christian intent. The focus of this tendency is, of course, Russia, but we feel the presence of it here in England, and it is a highly significant fact that in China the infant Christian Church has to contend, not only with anti-Christian bias of its Chinese fellow-countrymen and the persistent pressure of Russian anti-Christian agents, but with the anti-Christian lectures and essays of one of the most brilliant and powerful of our English sceptics. The more we look abroad, the more we become conscious of the culminating menace of an anti-Christian spirit in the world.

The Bishop of Salisbury is fully awake to the stupendous peril which threatens the Christian

Church, and he does not by a single iota overstate the case. Unbelief is spreading rapidly in this country, and the Churches are not wholly unaffected by it. Besides, owing to the diffusion of scientific knowledge round about them Christians not a few are having their eyes opened, with the inevitable result that they are bound to flick many of their old beliefs down the wind, one of the first of which is the idle, silly notion that the Heathen are eternally doomed unless they hear of and put their trust in Christ. In proportion as that superstition dies down contributions to Foreign Missions will necessarily decrease. That explains the present passionate appeals for funds to refill the depleted missionary coffers.

J. T. LLOYD.

A Scholar and His Work.

Who saw life steadily and saw it whole.—*Matthew Arnold.*

Without fears, without desires, without ceremonies, he has used sheer reason, and played the philosopher. *Voltaire on Confucius.*

Freedom is the one purport, wisely aimed at, or unwisely, of all man's struggles, toilings, and sufferings in this earth.—*Carlyle.*

THE Freethought Movement has always attracted the flower of the "intellectuals" of this country, and among this proud company are some names of real and unmistakable genius. Charles Bradlaugh was one of the outstanding personalities of his generation, and among his able lieutenants were men of such rare abilities as George Foote and John Mackinnon Robertson. Foote's work is well known, for he was the Prince Rupert of the Army of Progress, but the labours of Mr. Robertson, perhaps even more important in their influence, have never received their due meed of public recognition. This is almost entirely owing to the fact that Mr. Robertson has shunned publicity. Indeed, it is no paradox to say that he has taken more trouble to avoid notoriety as most men do to ensure it.

From the first entry of Mr. Robertson into the literary arena he commanded attention. His articles in the *National Reformer* raised the tone of the paper, so sure was their scholarship and so rare their literary quality. When Bradlaugh died, and Mr. Robertson became editor, the paper reached the zenith of its career. It was financial trouble that caused the end of the *National Reformer*, but during its latter years, it was one of the best edited and best written papers in England. The *Free Review* followed next, and was even more brilliant than its predecessor. It revealed, what had been long known to keen critics, that in Mr. Robertson this country possessed an intellect of first-class importance, and that his rare gifts were being given to the "best of causes." His own articles illuminated everything that he touched, and so great and various was his range and intellectual grasp, that he roused scholars throughout the civilized world with his trenchant criticisms of subjects to which they had devoted their lives. Not only this, but Mr. Robertson had a rare eye for merit, and merely to recite a list of his contributors is to mention names of real importance in so many branches of knowledge. That the *Free Review* should have changed ownership was an intellectual calamity. Beside it the other monthly periodicals were old-fashioned, prejudiced, and second-rate. But advertisers would not support a magazine with such very advanced views, and it had to go.

From that time began the publication of that series

of books which placed Mr. Robertson in the very forefront of living critics. As volume succeeded volume, so did his reputation widen, until, finally, his name on a title-page was a guarantee, not only of exact scholarship but of original thinking. His range was so wide, embracing such wide-asunder subjects as literary criticism, studies in comparative religion, economics, politics, biography, history, sociology, and Shakespeare studies. Beside such a record many a well-known writer looks like an amateur. Mr. Robertson writes always with scholarship and logic, and his works serve as useful textbooks for many who stand as the teachers of others.

Mr. Robertson was not born, like Charles Darwin, to ease and affluence. He had his own way to make in the world; and he chose the path of journalism and politics. No more high-minded man ever trod the dusty pathways of the political arena, and he seems like a Sir Galahad in comparison with so many of the others. Struggling for years against obscurity, against party influence, against the indifference of easy-going men to pioneer work, he persevered to the end. There has been no finer achievement of its kind since old Sam Johnson took his quiet walks down Fleet Street, the monarch of all he surveyed. Probably, the pendulum is swinging away from the austerity and high-mindedness which Mr. Robertson brought into politics, but this after all may be very largely the result of the upheaval of the world-war. There is a rhythmic movement in all thought, and progress appears to be in spiral curves, rather than in straight lines.

As a speaker and debater, Mr. Robertson is the most scholarly figure on the contemporary platform. His knowledge is so encyclopædic that one is rather sorry for his opponents. He emerges victorious in every debate, because, with Scots' sagacity, he never takes the wrong side. And his equanimity is wonderful. So fair and judicial is he, that he never relies on rhetoric, but only logic. I have seen his sympathies aroused, but only whilst lecturing on a personal subject, and never whilst debating. The magnificent finale to his lecture on "Herbert Spencer" remains in my mind across the gulf of years. And flashes in his speeches on Charles Bradlaugh show quite clearly that the art of oratory is his for the asking. *Modern Humanists* is a book any writer would be proud of, but it has little of the electrical effect of the original lectures upon which it is founded. Emerson was never more stimulating, nor Carlyle more contagious. They were never-to-be-forgotten experiences in the lives of so many young "intellectuals," and helped, in no small measure, to mould the finer minds of a generation.

There is real and unmistakable genius in this great scholar. It is seen in the fact that he does with ease what other men do with much difficulty. And what a debt do we all owe him. Biblical criticism is centuries old, yet he throws entirely fresh light upon Christian origins. Scholars have nearly exhausted their ideas on Shakespeare, and Mr. Robertson startles them all with a list of the things they have overlooked. So with many questions of economics and morals. The intellectual life of our generation had been shaped to other ends had not this great critic and scholar led the way in so many directions. Not only is he the Admirable Crichton of our Movement, but he is a ripe scholar who commands recognition throughout the civilized world. His country is the richer and the nobler for his life work. No greater praise could be given to any man than to have deserved praise from the worthiest. He has not only done this, but in dedicating his life to the service of intellectual liberty, he has helped to lay the foundations of the future greatness and happi-

ness of the human race. In face of such a record of high-thinking and noble living criticism becomes superfluous, and a frank gesture of admiration must suffice.

MIMNERMUS.

The Gospel History a Fabrication.

IV.

THE PREFACE TO LUKE'S GOSPEL.

THE form of dedication which Luke has prefixed to his Gospel (i. 1-4) has for three centuries been a source of misunderstanding to Bible readers, many of whom, misled by the wording of the English translation, have believed the writer to have lived in apostolic times. In the Revised Version several unimportant alterations are made in this paragraph; but the misleading portion is allowed to stand. Thus, Luke, in referring to the pre-existing narratives relating to Jesus, is made to say:—

even as they *delivered them unto us*, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.

Luke was one of the "us"; but he was not an "eye-witness" or a "minister of the word." The passage should read:—

even as they, who from the beginning, were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word, *delivered them unto us* [*i.e.* handed them down to Luke's day].

No one, from the latter statement, could mistake Luke for an eye-witness, or even the companion of an apostle; and it was for this reason that our priestly revisers would not put the words "delivered them unto us" in their proper grammatical position. The whole paragraph, as amended, reads:—

Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, as they, who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, delivered them unto us, it seemed good to me also, having traced all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.

From this dedication we obtain a glimpse of Luke's time. We see, in the first place, that several other Christian scholars had already compiled or edited a series of Gospel narratives; and it is clearly implied that any educated Christian was at liberty to do so; "inspiration" for such a purpose had not then been thought of. The Gospels to which Luke referred as recently compiled were those "according to" Mark, Matthew, John, and Marcion.

Next, Luke says that the matters contained in the Gospels had been "fulfilled" among them; that is to say, were a fulfilment of so-called "prophecy." Chief among these would be the destruction of Jerusalem, the prediction of which event was composed after its occurrence, and piously placed in the mouth of Jesus; to which Luke himself contributed some additional circumstances which he knew had actually occurred (Luke xix. 43, 44; xxi. 23, 24). From this Preface, again, it would appear that Luke really believed that the primitive Gospel from which he and the others took their accounts, had been written by "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word." There was, we may suppose, a tradition to that effect; but this did not prevent him from making alterations wherever he thought he could improve the narratives, not even in the sayings ascribed to his Saviour.

The next point is, that Luke states he had "traced all things accurately from the first": a statement which is simply untrue; for in the age in which that

compiler lived, it would be impossible for him, or for anyone else, to collect evidence concerning the sayings and doings of Jesus Christ. But Luke records several events which are said to have occurred thirty years before the ministry of Jesus (Luke i., ii.). How did he "trace accurately" these matters? He relates, for instance, a speech (of eight verses) made by the angel Gabriel to the priest Zacharias in the temple, no other person being present (i. 13-20); also, another speech (ten verses) by the same angel to Mary the Virgin, no one else being present (i. 28-37). He records an address (four verses) by Elizabeth to her cousin Mary, in a private interview, and an ecstatic declamation (ten verses) uttered by Mary in reply (i. 42-55), no other person being present. He records, again, an outpouring of the spirit (twelve verses) by Zacharias (i. 68-72), and a short speech (three verses) by an angel to some shepherds (ii. 10-12). How did Luke "trace accurately" these circumstances? As a simple matter of fact, he could not; and he did not trace anything. The Virgin Birth story is a Christian fabrication which Luke added from apocryphal writings of his time, and all the foregoing events in connection with it are of the same fictitious character. Luke simply selected the narratives which he thought most credible from the Christian writings known in his time. By "tracing things accurately" he meant his searching through Josephus for names or events to fix the time when Jesus was born, and when he and the Baptist commenced to preach.

Luke, again, records a number of parables which were unknown to the writer of the primitive Gospel, and of which, apparently the compilers Matthew and Mark had never heard. These are: the Good Samaritan—the Servants watching—the Barren fig-tree—the Great Supper—the Lost piece of silver—the Prodigal Son—the Unjust Steward—the Rich man and Lazarus—the Importunate Widow—the Pharisee and Publican—the Ten pieces of money—and several others. Where did Luke get all these? Where, also, did he find the account of the raising of the Widow's son to life, of which the other editors appear never to have heard? The answer is, Nobody knows; but there can be no doubt whatever that they are all Christian fabrications. The evidence for this fact, though inferential, is sound and conclusive. We have, in the first place, no evidence that they were uttered by Jesus; but, assuming that they were, they were not taken down at the time, and could not be remembered by hearing them spoken once. The alleged "divine inspiration" of the writers is a modern assumption which the Gospels themselves disprove. Where, then, did all these sayings come from? There can be but one answer: they were fabricated by some of the more cunning and unscrupulous scholars (probably teachers) among the early Christians. Those recorded only by Luke were fabricated at a later period than the others.

Again, if, as I have twice shown to be the case, the public ministry was a Nazarean fraud, then Jesus did not utter any of the sayings ascribed to him in the Gospels: we thus arrive at the same conclusion.

MOST EXCELLENT THEOPHILUS.

Who was the "most excellent Theophilus" for whom Luke wrote his Gospel? Respecting this great personage all Christian commentators and Biblical critics profess entire ignorance. There can be little doubt, however, that he was the Theophilus who became Bishop of Antioch about A.D. 168. This Christian bishop and Luke's Theophilus were both persons of distinction, and both had been "instructed" in the Christian faith. There was also a

tradition (referred to by Eusebius and Jerome) that Luke was a native of Antioch. From his *Letters to Autolycus* we learn that Theophilus of Antioch was a convert to Christianity late in life, and would therefore know less of the Christian writings than one brought up in that faith; and, being an educated man—he had read the works of Josephus, whom he names—he would naturally require a copy of the Gospel soon after his conversion. Apparently, the one in use at Antioch did not satisfy him; hence, Luke, an educated Christian of long standing in that church, compiled a revised Gospel for his especial use, and borrowed his *Josephus* for reference to historical matters. This Gospel was, no doubt commenced shortly after the conversion of Theophilus, which would be many years before that personage was promoted to the office of bishop—say, some year after A.D. 150. This bishop of Antioch is the only Theophilus known who in any way answers the Theophilus of Luke's Preface. Luke's Gospel is first mentioned in Irenæus about A.D. 185.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

A few brief comments are necessary respecting this second book of Luke. Like the Third Gospel, it was compiled for the use of the "most excellent Theophilus," and is from beginning to end pure fiction. Luke, it is true, was not the fabricator; that editor merely combined and put into shape some narratives from three apocryphal writings concocted before his time. We know from various sources that there were in circulation in the second century a number of fabulous stories relating to Peter and Paul, among which were the Acts of Peter, the Acts of Paul, the Travels of Peter, the Travels of Paul, and the Travels of Peter and Paul. Luke has simply selected, combined, and revised the narratives which he considered most credible in these writings, and has added names of procurators and other matters from *Josephus* to make the narratives appear more historical. Moreover, the long speeches which he has placed in the mouths of Stephen, Peter, and Paul have been shown to be his own composition.

The importance of the Book of the Acts is, in the sense, even greater than that of the Gospels; for not only are the miracles, ministry, and crucifixion of Jesus repeatedly referred to as historical facts, but the book is assumed by all shades of Christians to be a reliable account of the promulgation of the Christian religion by the so-called "Apostles" of Jesus, and even hostile critics sometimes accept it as such. Hence, it is used to fix all dates of the early history of the Church at Jerusalem, and also of the propagation of the gospel in other places by Paul. Now, if we carefully examine the Pauline Epistles, we shall find nothing in them—no name of emperor, king, tetrarch, procurator, etc.—to indicate when the writer lived. This period is obtained from the unhistorical "Acts," though the accounts of Paul's doings in that book are flatly contradicted in the Epistles.

That the narratives in "the Acts" are fictitious is beyond doubt: they simply require to be read to be recognized. In chapter i., for instance, is narrated the ascension of Jesus, with the apostles watching until he passes beyond the clouds: then two angels appear, and say that he will return in like manner. In chapter ii. we have an account of the descent of the Holy Ghost with "a rushing mighty wind," and tongues "like as of fire" alighting upon each of the apostles; after which these spirit-filled men are able to speak every known language. Next, on the day of Pentecost, all the foreigners in Jerusalem "hear them speak very man his own language," which is followed by a speech from Peter which converts 3,000

persons. And we are asked to believe that Peter would be allowed to address such a multitude, in Jerusalem, and at one of the three great festivals, and to set the city in an uproar, by preaching a new religion, without let or hindrance. Where was the procurator? and why did he permit such an innovation? And what were the armed Roman soldiers within the city, who were on the look out for innovators, doing? The writer of the Pauline document from which Luke took chapter xxiv. knew that no such innovation would be permitted in Jerusalem; so he represents Paul as saying xxiv. 12, 18):—

and neither in the temple did they find me disputing with any man or stirring up a crowd..... they found me purified in the temple, with no crowd, nor yet with tumult.

I have no space here to go into any more absurdities. It is true that the account of the propagation of the gospel by Paul appears more rational; but it is not historical. He is a miracle-worker in the Acts; but he has no power in his Epistles. He works in harmony with the apostles in the Acts; but he denounces them and their interference in the Epistles. He is called "Saul" in the Petrine portion of the Acts (i.-xii.), and "Paul" in the Pauline portion (xiii.-xxviii.), the explanation being that Luke found the name "Saul" in the *Acts of Peter* and the name "Paul" in the *Acts of Paul and Travels of Paul*, and, believing they referred to the same person, changed Saul into Paul in the first Pauline chapter (xiii. 9).

We are told by orthodox critics that Luke was the companion of Paul during certain journeys in the Acts which are recorded in the first person, in which the writer employs the words "we" and "us"—meaning himself, Paul, and other co-workers—but this is an apologetic perversion, and assumes that Luke was one of the "ministers of the word" in apostolic times, which his Preface tells us he was not.

As regards the "we" narratives, Luke has simply incorporated in the Pauline portion of the Acts some narratives relating to Paul which he took from another source—the latter being written in the first person. It is the writer of this document that employs the words "we" and "us." These portions of Paul's journeys are the following: Acts xvi. 9 to 18; Acts xx. 5 to xxi. 19; Acts xxvii. 1 to xxviii. 16. If the first two of these sections be read carefully, it will be seen that the writer was not a follower of Paul, and that when he said "we" and "us" he referred to himself and his own travelling companions, not to Paul and his colleagues: whence it may be inferred who this "we" writer was believed (in Luke's time) to be. I leave these questions as a little problem for critical readers.

ABRACADABRA.

God and Man.

Two Gods hath man in his own likeness made:
One is the God of Might, who offereth,
His servants, joys which ne'er shall failure fade;
Unending joys—yet darkened o'er by death:
For all the paths which lead to him are red
With innocent blood, through countless ages shed.
The other is the God of Love, and he,
For very love, elects man's slave to be.

Doubtful of both, I looked again—and there,
Where Might had triumphed, darkness reigned, despair,
Anguish and death—but where meek Love had striv'n,
Love who so foolish is, and yet so wise
That he can turn the veriest hell to heav'n,
Earth had become a radiant paradise.

E. M. HIVES.

Acid Drops.

Some people allege that the clergy have no practical solutions for solving the problems of the day. The Bishop of London, however, is doing his bit towards solving one particular problem. He is making a big effort to raise £250,000, of which nearly one-half is already subscribed, to purchase in the new South London building area sites on which he intends erecting houses—for God. It appears that having learned that houses are to be built in this area, the Bishop intends to erect churches there forthwith, his aim being to give the new residents a church to worship in as soon as the new houses are occupied. The houseless ought to be cheered when they learn that the Bishop intends using two hundred and fifty thousand pounds' worth of labour and material for building churches. But that is the Bishop's practical solution to the housing question. For such zeal in social service he deserves to be made either an honorary General in the Salvation Army or a Dame of the Order of the British Empire.

At the spring session of the Church Assembly, to be held on February 8, a proposal is to be made for a reduction of the salaries of the two Archbishops and all the Bishops by one-half or more. This looks extremely generous, until one discovers that the amount to be taken off the salaries is to be given back to them as expenses. By this means these reverend fathers in God will escape the payment of income-tax. So whatever foolish beliefs these gentlemen may entertain, they are sufficiently wide-awake when it comes to a question of hard cash.

Canon T. W. Pym is a brave man, but his confession is somewhat niggardly. In a sermon preached at Southwark Cathedral he stated that much good is to be found in all men whatever their religion may be, or even if they have none. Apart from the fact that religion is an elastic word (a man may even religiously beat his wife every week) we take his remark as a sample of that humility associated with the Canon's own particular brand of religion. In another hundred years it will be an accepted fact that there are other people in the world besides Christians, for the Canon is an ecclesiastical pioneer of an idea that is terribly in advance of the times of five hundred years ago.

A striking notice is to be seen outside a Bloomsbury Chapel. As subjects of address the following are taken in their order: The Atonement, The Methods of Coué, and The Grace of God. At first glance this may be called Irish Stew, but a little reflection will prove that birds of a feather, even on a notice board, flock together.

At long last our Bishops are taking off their blinkers and seeing the obvious. The Bishop of Salisbury, addressing a Missionary Convention of three thousand delegates, declares: "Humanity is moving, and behind the great confused, inarticulate movements of nations all the world over is the aspiration of the new generation, freshly self-conscious, and thrilling with its newly acquired knowledge of the modern world. The thrust of this aspiration is felt in every department of life." Intellectually, he continues, this is seen in the amazing hunger for education on modern lines discernable in all Asia and Africa. The Bishop and his merry band of missionaries no doubt hope to exploit this purely natural hunger in the interests of their un-modern creed. Their intention is to cover the evil dope of Christianity with a sugar coating of what they call education. A despicable game that, which puts them on a level with the market-place quack doctor. The poor Asiatic and African eager for Western knowledge is to be given, no doubt, a Christian education which consists of a smattering of the "Three R's" plus a large lump of Christianity.

The Bishop adds, "Certainly, humanity is on the move. The spirit of progress is in the air." That is true, but for this our thanks are not due to Christianity. It is accumulated knowledge which, by quickening intelligence, has aroused the spirit of progress from its religion-doped sleep. And all that the more astute Christian leaders are doing is to prune away the more repulsive features of their creed and to disguise the less objectionable ones by re-stating them so that they will appear to fit in with modern scientific knowledge and thought. From the Christian point of view this adroit manœuvring may be progress, whereas it is in reality a mere lopping away of the withered branches in order to keep alive a little longer a rapidly dying tree. One curious fact our Bishop forgets to mention is that this hunger for knowledge of education, these aspirations, this eagerness for progress, coincides with a noticeable slump in god-worship and interest in religion.

The Bishop declares this new movement is of great importance to the Church. For the non-Christian world is going to move on regardless of the claims of Christianity. But, says he, there is something more than this in the world situation. Something which he regards as sinister and menacing, which is challenging the very soul of the Church. The Asiatic nations are in an attitude of indifference, but in some quarters there is more than indifference. There are deliberate efforts to organize the destruction of the Christian religion, notably in Russia, where, he says, its very name is hated and blasphemed. And, he admits, the Church feels the presence of this tendency also here in England. We are glad to hear that. The Bishop's admission is a compliment to the *Freethinker* and to the efforts of our readers. It clearly shows that Atheism is not the moribund thing our newly-turned pious newspapers would have their readers believe it is. The Christian Saviour died on the tree at Calvary, and now his creed too is dying on a tree—the Tree of Knowledge. But we doubt if it will rise from the dead. And that's all the better for progress.

A reader of a Methodist journal tells us: "The drink question is a poor scapegoat that has borne, and does bear, much of the burden of other ill-considered social conditions." And so is the crime question. Even the "sin" zealots will realize that in time, when they observe and think more and rant less.

According to the Rev. H. E. Fosdick:—

What exciting things there are to be interested in now. Education—we call this a civilized earth, but out of every three people on the planet two people cannot read or write. Think of the work yet to be done for the cause of making Christendom Christian.

We should like Dr. Fosdick to explain what connection the ability to read or write has with Christianity. If we can judge from the fact that the nations in which people are most illiterate are those which are most pious, we should say that the ability to read and write tends to separate people from Christianity. Reading excites thought, reflection, because the reader encounters new ideas. The peoples that are least illiterate and the classes that read most widely, are those least under the influence of the priest, and are those less given to church-going. The Roman Church has always been astute enough to realize that it has kept the people illiterate so long as it could. And when that was no longer possible, it made certain that such education as the people had should be well Romanised. In effect the priests said, the people may have milk if they want it, but we will see it is well watered. Hence we have the *Roman Index* banning books likely to disturb the Faithful's belief; and hence, too, the special Roman "history" falsified with Romish "facts" and adulterated with special pleading or thinned down by the omission of inconvenient truths.

The result of this clerical manœuvring appears to be that Catholics do not rank intellectually on a par with

their fellows who are not Catholics. As confirmation of our statement we note the following admission by Cardinal O'Connell: "If we (Catholics) only think of dress and going to the theatre, we cannot complain at not having a first-class place in society." The Cardinal deplures, too, the fact that Catholics in America do not constitute a reading public. He exhorts them: "Buy the works of our writers; buy even if you do not read. Buy and buy and give them away." That is thoroughly Romish advice. He does not say buy all the books you can, written by all kinds of authors, that you may become conversant with as many different opinions as possible in order to broaden your understanding. He says buy *Catholic* books. That the Cardinal is not particularly concerned with books as a means of education is clear from the fact that he advises the Faithful, even if they do not themselves read, to buy and give Catholic books away, presumably to non-Catholics. He is concerned with books only as a means of propaganda, not as education.

But to revert to Dr. Fosdick and education. Protestant history and Protestant education are not free from the defects common to Catholic history and education. As served out in the State schools, history gives the child an entirely false notion of the part played by the Christian religion and the Protestant churches and of their influence on social events. It either adroitly belittles or completely ignores the contribution to social progress made by non-Christian pioneers and thinkers. It gives the child a false impression as to the beliefs held by those men and women; so that he leaves school firmly convinced that all the progress achieved by the nation is the work of staunch Protestant believers. There seems little doubt that the aim of our educationalists is to give the child a definite bias towards the Protestant creed. Education as they conceive it is a drawing out of information. So first there is the implanting of the special Christianised facts, and then the examination to see whether the dope has been satisfactorily assimilated. What the finished product of this system of "education" is capable of understanding we can discover by noting what it buys at the bookstalls and borrows from the libraries. Still, we must not complain, it is the result of the work "done for the cause of making Christendom Christian." And that is all that our Protestants and Catholics trouble about.

We like candour, especially in a preacher. A Methodist writer, Mr. Arthur Hoyle, declares there is an amazing amount of ignorance in the world. "Yet," he says,

I am in favour of ignorance—plenty of it. God be thanked for my ignorance is one of my daily and almost hourly thanksgivings. The longer I live the more I thank the Lord for so many things I don't know. Possibly it is better to go further than that and pray not to want it now.....We may know too much to be happy.

We understand a parson being grateful for people's ignorance. He trades on it. It is his greatest asset in assisting him to keep people Christian. We can understand too why the preacher is thankful for his own ignorance. It has a twofold benefit. It keeps him in sympathy with his flock, and it keeps at bay doubts as to the truth of his creed which might otherwise lay siege to his intelligence. If any readers doubt whether there is answer to prayer, let them make the acquaintance of Mr. Arthur Hoyle and his flock. The Lord has been requested to give them ignorance, and the Lord has responded with the goods. We are glad Mr. Hoyle is grateful; he will probably soon receive a "call" to a more remunerative ministry as a token of the Lord's appreciation.

Every now and again the newspapers record something which reveals the fact that in this civilized Britain of ours a large number of people still believe in the grossest of superstitions. Our civilization it

would seem is but skin deep. Perhaps this need not surprise us greatly when we know that there is at least one weekly paper which does its best—or worst—to manufacture the superstitious type of mentality. Before us lies a large advertisement adorned with crude drawings of magical totems and with the portrait of a lady holding out a crystal. This portrait represents a "wonder woman," by name Nell St. John Montague, who on receipt of a coupon will read your character from your handwriting. She also gives the credulous reader such valuable information about charms and their uses as this. A charm against infectious disease is a piece of red flannel cut in a minute triangle and soaked for three nights in dew. Secrete the charm among baby's clothing and it will guard him from infection of whooping-cough. A rusty nail from a white horse is also a charm against all infectious diseases. And so on, *ad nauseum*. All this twaddle, mark you, is given as quite serious information, and is printed obviously with the editorial approval. For letters are to be sent to the editorial address. It is clear, too, that the wonder woman is paid both for the services she renders to readers, and the information.

Now the women's journal in which this advertisement and information appear, is the stable companion of *John o'London's Weekly*, a quasi-literary journal with a bias towards "uplift," founded by Lord Riddell and frequently contributed to by him. Both papers are printed by the Newnes and Pearson Printing Co., of which Lord Riddell is an influential director. As such, the noble lord must be well acquainted with the kind of stuff printed in the journals he controls. Seemingly, his lordship's conscience is not troubled overmuch by the fact that his income is derived from publishing the most degraded superstitions. Possibly he thinks that by publishing also a journal of "uplift," this squares things up a bit. Perhaps Lord Riddell will oblige us with an explanation of why his firm adopts this very questionable method of circulation getting. Nearly all the Newnes and Pearson publications are guilty of pandering to ignorant belief in superstitions, by printing articles fostering faith in lucky charms, mascots, and so forth. Therefore we think Lord Riddell might well set about the task of cleansing his firm's Augean stables of their superstitious ordure.

Radio Times publishes a letter from Rev. H. G. Peile, The Vicarage, S. Acton. The reverend gentleman, who sees business interests threatened, also sees grave danger attending the broadcasting of sermons. He has very good eyesight, but as his interests are only his own, no normal person's flesh will be made to creep by the following quartette of disasters. The dangers he sees are (1) A religion without any corporate results in united action; (2) a religion without any almsgiving; (3) a failure to adopt a religious attitude when prayers are being said; (4) a religion without any definite teaching, but only consisting of good advice. This terrible state of affairs, however, is somewhat counteracted by what a listener told the Rev. H. G. Peile. He wrote, "When listening to a service, I always make a point of being careful about my bodily attitude when prayers are being said, and I always put aside one shilling to send to some church, instead of merely avoiding a collection on Sunday." This is all very fine and large, but who asks for church services to be broadcast? And furthermore, if any listener wants to put aside a shilling for collection, there are many branches of entertainment given on the wireless equally or more deserving. Everyone in the theatrical profession knows that an actor or an actress's life in the cause of art in a monetary sense is often flat stale and unprofitable. Here is a case where one shilling could be put aside with advantage for the benefit of the profession that was hounded about as vagabonds by the Church when it was in the saddle. But only a clergyman could keep a straight face after imposing a service on the wireless and then squeaking about a collection.

"Freethinker" Endowment Trust.

In October we issued a special appeal for funds on behalf of this Trust, which we may safely say is one of the most business-like attempts yet made to place the *Freethinker* in a position of permanent financial security. The response has been very good; no similar sum has ever been subscribed in connection with our movement in so short a time, and the Trustees desire me to thank heartily all who have helped. My own personal thanks may be taken for granted. It is a fresh proof of the regard in which this journal is held.

The Fund at present amounts to £3,767 2s. Of this, as was explained at the outset, £400 was taken to cover the deficit of the past year, which leaves £3,367 2s. for investment, less legal costs of forming the Trust. That has been done with nearly all the available cash, and those who have subscribed possess the gratification of knowing that they will have diminished the annual loss by nearly one-half; they have given an annual help, which will continue so long as help is necessary. Next year it will only be necessary to ask the friends of the paper for the difference between the income from the Trust and the estimated loss of £400. And as subscriptions flow in to the Trust, that deficit will gradually be extinguished.

It was not expected to realize the whole of the sum required by the Trust in one year, although there are enough Freethinkers in this country to do this with ease, if all lent a hand. But one must do what can be done with those who are always so ready and so willing to help.

It will be remembered that one friend offered £50 on condition that nineteen others would give a similar amount. This offer remained open till January 31, and as the number was not forthcoming, I wrote on Sunday releasing those who had promised from their undertaking. Promptly, one of these gentlemen wrote back saying that as I had hoped to get £4,000 this year, he would give his £50 provided three others will subscribe a similar amount. I have to thank this friend—who has already subscribed—for his generous offer, and it remains for others to say whether this additional £200 is to be gained for the Trust.

The programme for the future is this. There will be no special appeal for the Trust until next year. But the Trust will remain open for the receipt of gifts, large and small, until such time as enough has been subscribed to bring in the required £400 annually. The Trustees have also asked me to publish an occasional advertisement of the existence of the Trust, so that it and its object may be kept before the public. This will be done, and all sums received in this way will be acknowledged in the usual manner through the columns of the *Freethinker*. Anything of special interest to the friends of the movement will be made public in the usual way.

Previously acknowledged, £3,701 15s. 6d. "Hackney Wick," £15 15s.; H. Spence, £1; Miss C. Johnson, £5; "B.," £4; W. F. Clayton, £2 2s.; J. R. Lickfold, 10s.; J. Robinson (2nd sub.), 5s.; C. B. (Manchester), 10s.; H. Onslow, 10s.; H. Carter, £1; Failsworth Secular Sunday School, £5 5s.; A. J. Marriott, 10s.; G. G., £1; J. Lazarnick, £1; "Trepenn," £2; Mrs. K. Palmer, 5s.; W. Barton, 2s. 6d.; G. S. Lawson, 2s. 6d.; D. Marr, 2s. 6d.; F. C. Wykes (2nd sub.), £1; A. Cayford, 10s.; W. Clowes (3rd sub.), 10s.; S. Clowes (3rd sub.), 10s.; R. Lewis, £1; E. Pinder, £1; G. Chapple, 6s.; B. A. Milli-

champ, 5s.; F. E. M., £5 5s.; E. Johnson, £2 2s.; S. Cohen, 10s.; H. Black and family, £5; J., £2 2s.; L. Berryman, 10s.; W. Turner, 10s.; R. D. Voss, £1. Per F. Rose (Bloemfontein): "Nicholesien," 5s.; L. Lant, £1 1s.; F. Rose, £1 1s.
Total, 3,767 2s. CHAPMAN COHEN.

To Correspondents.

- G. G.—Thanks for good wishes. Message duly delivered.
- A. CLARKE.—Sorry we are unable to use MSS. There is material for a good article on the subject, but the one submitted does not grip sufficiently.
- E. MELTON.—If you find the articles on Materialism stimulating, that is enough. We would much rather know that we had stimulated a reader to pursue a subject on his own account than that we had satisfied him completely. The best teacher is the one who teaches others to do without him.
- H. SPENCE.—You have earned your retirement, and we wish you every pleasure during its tenure. Pleased you like the articles on Materialism. We take this opportunity of acknowledging the many nice letters we have received in connection therewith. It is not an easy task to make philosophical questions simple and interesting, and it is a compliment to the readers of the *Freethinker* that so many should have written to express their thanks. We shall have to close them soon, although there is very much more to be said.
- MRS. NEWELL.—Your previous lecture notice reached us on Wednesday morning, too late to be of any use.
- E. NEWTON.—Letter to hand. Please write as soon as anything definite is arranged.
- H. S. E. PANTON.—Your letter is very lengthy, and we cannot find space for it in this week's issue. It will appear next week, with the omission of one or two unimportant paragraphs. Although it purports to be a criticism of Mr. Cohen's articles on Materialism, in many places it quite fails to understand the position taken up. This may be due to Mr. Cohen's obscurity, but the fact remains. Anyway, readers will be able to judge for themselves.
- H. B. DODDS.—Received, and shall appear. Thanks.
- D. MARR AND OTHERS.—We have not yet decided whether or not to republish the articles on Materialism in book form. If this were done, there would be considerable additions, and some elaborations. We are glad you find them useful. The subject is not so very difficult if one can prevent oneself being a slave to words. Thanks for good wishes for the *Freethinker*.
- R. D. VOSS.—We very much appreciate your high opinion of our work, and hope to so act as to always deserve it.
- F. E. M.—Shall look forward to meeting you in the near future.
- E. PINDER.—Thanks for contribution. Sorry to hear of your ill-health. Hope to see you in your usual form in March. *The "Freethinker" is supplied to the trade on sale or return. Any difficulty in securing copies should be at once reported to this office.*
- The Secular Society, Limited, office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.*
- The National Secular Society's office is at 62 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.*
- When the services of the National Secular Society in connection with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Miss E. M. Vance, giving as long notice as possible.*
- Lecture Notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, by the first post Tuesday, or they will not be inserted.*
- Orders for literature should be sent to the Business Manager of the Pioneer Press, 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, and not to the Editor.*
- All Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to "The Pioneer Press," and crossed "Midland Bank, Ltd., Clerkenwell Branch.*
- Letters for the Editor of the "Freethinker" should be addressed to 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.*
- Friends who send us newspapers would enhance the favour by marking the passages to which they wish us to call attention.*
- The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):— One year, 15s.; half year, 7s. 6d.; three months, 3s. 9d.*

Sugar Plums.

To-day (February 7) Mr. Cohen will lecture in the Spinners' Hall, St. George's Road, Bolton, at 7.30, on "When I am Dead." There will be a number of reserved seats at 6d. and 1s. each. The local friends are looking forward to a good meeting, and we hope they will not be disappointed.

Next Sunday Mr. Cohen will lecture in the Gaiety Theatre, Plymouth. We are asked to announce that special meetings will be held by the Plymouth Branch on the North Quay to-day (February 7) and the following Sunday at 11 o'clock as a method of advertising Mr. Cohen's meeting.

West London friends worked very hard to make the meeting at the Century Theatre on Sunday last a success, and their efforts were well rewarded. Messrs. Harrison, Bradburn, Mathie, and Mr. and Mrs. Minnett carried out a house-to-house distribution of advertising slips, which had the effect of bringing many newcomers to the lecture. Every inch of available space was taken up, and we understand that many were unable to find room. Mr. George Bedborough occupied the chair with just that mixture of dignity and good humour that is so helpful to the success of a meeting. There were a few questions at the close of the address, with some "opposition" from a Christian Evidence speaker, which proved that the original type of this production is still with us. He explained that he did not know of the meeting till 6.30, and one can only attribute it to a vengeful Providence that the knowledge was not withheld until the day following. Still, it was a fine meeting, and deserves to be followed by others.

As might have been expected, some of the good Christian readers of the *Manchester Evening News* have been quite upset at the idea of the Editor of the *Freethinker* being asked to write an article on "Have We Lost Faith?" One man protests against the admission of articles by "Secularists like G. B. S. and C. C.," because they are likely to injure, if not to destroy, the faith of the young. Another writes that by yielding to the "insolent taunts of sceptics, the Christian and scholarly words of (Rev.) Dr. Hutton will be nullified." It is quite complimentary to Mr. Cohen for this Christian to feel that, even before he reads the article, it will nullify all that the Editor of the *British Weekly* has said. And we are conceited enough to feel that a Free-thought writer who could not destroy the windy rhetoric of the ordinary Christian writer ought to go and join a chapel at once. This correspondent adds that "Thousands of the weak and ignorant will gladly accept teachings which condone their lack of faith." We hope this person will not despair. We can assure him that nothing that we can say will convert the weak and ignorant from Christianity. The churches may be sure of these at least—to the end.

Mr. Cohen's article in the "Have We Lost Faith?" series, running through the *Manchester Evening News*, appeared in the issue for February 3. In answer to many enquiries, copies of this paper may be obtained by sending three-halfpence in stamps to the office of the paper, 3 Cross Street, Manchester, or to the London office, 43 Fleet Street.

This paragraph is written for the one whom it concerns. One of our friends who is doing a little propaganda by sending copies of the *Freethinker* to persons abroad has failed to stamp them sufficiently. As a result we have had several copies returned to this office. We have redirected, stamped, and posted them. We make this announcement as some may go astray altogether unless the Post Office requirements are complied with.

The N.S.S. advertisement has brought a number of applications, but not nearly so many as it ought to have done. It is surprising the trouble it is to get people to join an association with which they are in full sympathy, and which when approached personally they are quite ready to join. We daresay a deal of it is just laziness. It has been suggested to us that as many readers keep their copies of the paper, they would not like to tear out the membership form. In that case they need only ask for the ordinary membership form to be sent them and it will be done at once.

Lord Justice Renan, one of the Irish Judges, who left considerable property in the Free State, bequeathed £5,500 to one of his nephews on reaching the age of twenty-nine, provided that by that time he has not taken any steps towards joining any of the religious orders. He also ordered that his funeral should be simple and inexpensive, and without any religious ceremony or clergy. The sum of £100 was also bequeathed to the Rationalist Press Association.

It seems we were wrong in announcing the various sums forwarded to the Endowment Trust Fund by Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Rosetti in the way we did. They should have been acknowledged as "Per West Ham Branch," as the Branch desired to identify itself with the object of the Fund. We regret the fact that this was not made quite clear, and fully appreciate the good intentions of the Branch. We also take this opportunity of expressing our thanks to our Failsworth friends for the cheque received from the Failsworth Society's funds.

"At the Sign of the Bull, Lewes."

THE recent "Acid Drop" anent Thomas Paine's house at Lewes recalled pleasing memories of my visit to the place last August. Certainly the residents of Lewes are very proud of his association with this old-world town. At a stationer's shop in the High Street opposite Bull Lane corner, where the house stands, picture postcards of the latter are on sale; also an interesting book with the above title, containing photographs of the interior, with a fair and generous history (by the Rev. J. M. Connell) of Paine's career whilst at Lewes. As it was late on Sunday evening when I reached the town, though the stationer's shop was open, I could not inspect the interior of the house. It is at present occupied by the city architect, Mr. W. H. Godfrey, who is responsible for its present excellent condition, in conjunction with Alderman J. H. Every, who provided the means for preserving the fabric. The house, dating, as it does, from the sixteenth century, was originally an Inn, known as "The Bull." Part of the premises was turned into a Unitarian chapel early in the eighteenth century, and the portion left was bought by John Ollive, whose son Samuel was the father of Paine's second wife, Elizabeth, whom he married at Lewes on March 26, 1771. John Ollive was the minister of the chapel, but Samuel took up the occupation of tobacconist and snuff-maker.

The inscription on the building records the fact that Thomas Paine lived there from 1768 to 1774. He was in his thirty-second year when he arrived to take up his duties as exciseman after working as a teacher of English at a London school. In 1769 S. Ollive died and the next year Paine joined the widow in the business, subsequently marrying the daughter. It was from Bull House that Paine first commenced his agitation for improvement in the conditions of the excisemen, which led to his second dismissal from the service, and, as his tobacco and

grocery business was not paying its way, his possessions were sold by public auction on April 14, 1774. A few weeks afterwards he and his wife separated by mutual agreement.

Homeless, and almost penniless, he left Lewes, and in the following October left England for America bearing a letter of introduction from Dr. Benjamin Franklin, whose acquaintance he had made in London. "Clio" Rickman, his friend and subsequent biographer, writes that no one ever knew the cause of Paine's separation from his wife, but that he always spoke tenderly and respectfully of her and sent her money several times without her knowing whence it came. She went to live with her brother at Cranbrook, and died there in 1808.

He never revisited Lewes, but, in 1792, he addressed a letter to Lewes, which was about to hold a meeting in response to a Royal proclamation for suppressing seditious meetings. From this letter (quoted below) we are able to see how his life then looked to him in retrospect after eighteen years:—

It is now upwards of eighteen years since I left Lewes. My situation amongst you as an exciseman for more than six years enabled me to see into the various distresses which the weight of taxes even then occasioned, and feeling, as I then did, and as it is natural for me to do, for the hard condition of others, it is with pleasure I can declare, and every person then under my survey and now living, can witness, the exceeding candour, and even tenderness, with which that part of the duty that fell to my share was executed. The name of Thomas Paine is not to be found in the record of the Lewes Justices in any one act of contention with, or severity of any kind whatever, towards the persons whom he surveyed, either in the town or country: of this Mr. Fuller and Mr. Shelley, who will probably attend the meeting, can, if they please, give full testimony. It is, however, not in their power to contradict it. Having thus indulged myself in recollecting a place where I formerly had, and even now have, many friends, rich and poor, and most probably some enemies, I proceed to the import of my letter. Since I left Lewes, fortune or providence has thrown me into a line of action which my first setting out in life could not possibly have suggested to me. Many of you will recollect that, whilst I resided amongst you, there was not a man more firm in supporting the principles of liberty than myself, and I still pursue, and ever will, the same path.

The Rev. J. M. Connell concludes his sketch of Paine as follows:—

The meeting at Lewes had a personal interest for Paine, for his *Rights of Man* had just been published and was denounced as "seditious." That book is now a classic of our political literature: its main doctrines have become the axiom of all parties. He escaped to France, where the *Age of Reason* was written. Although the book was directed almost as much against Atheism as against Orthodoxy, its publication brought upon him such odium as made him a sad and lonely man for the rest of his life, and has wronged his memory ever since. But justice is at last being done to him, and there are few names in English history, and none in American, likely to be more honoured than his. Lewes has reason to be proud that in the person of her sometime exciseman, one of the truest prophets and emancipators of mankind trod her streets and mingled for a few years in her various life.

I can recommend this book with its interesting photographs and details to all admirers of Thomas Paine. It is printed by Eyre and Spottiswoode, Downs Park Road, London, E.8. The price is 3s. 6d., and I think was first published in April last year.

H. BLACK.

The Story of Evolution.

"IN THE BEGINNING."

So commences the first book of the Hebrew religion, so also commences the Christian Gospel of St. John. Similarly, if not in the same words, every religion professes to give a description of the start of things, how mankind has appeared upon the earth, his actions, and his destiny.

In keeping with old custom, the science of evolution commences with the "beginning." It shows the formation of planetary systems and traces the causes and effects of all changes in animate and inanimate nature, until suns and planets dissolve again into dust. It is divided into a number of sections, and that one which treats of the evolution of the human family is of special interest to men and women.

That section is called Anthropology, the Science of Mankind, and it is our intention to review the facts relating to it, in the simple language of the people, so that an ordinary reader may fully understand it without hard study and brain-fag.

FIRST LIFE.

The human race has evolved from the simplest forms of life, through numerous gradations, to the position of supremacy over all animated beings upon the earth. By the aid of geology: the study of the earth, and embryology: the study of the development of individual animals, scientists have fully discovered how this has come about, and shown us the proofs.

All life upon the earth commenced by a natural process: the chemical combination of common substances, millions of years ago. This chemical group of substances consists of carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, phosphorus, sulphur, potash, and soda, and, when combined, is called proteid or albumenoid. The phenomena of life are never exhibited without the presence of an albumenoid substance.

The lowest form of animal life is found in microcosms (tiny) formed of protoplasm (first life-matter) which grew by absorbing nutriment from surrounding water, like "jelly-fish" do now. They came into being in warm, shallow seas where there was a deposit of mud and vegetable debris. Clinging together they formed colonies and, in the course of time, which extended over ages, a nucleus formed in the little colony. This was the rudiment of the brain of future animals, and also gave rise to many other developments. The rest of the colony, composed of simple albumen, absorbed minute particles of nutriment and moved about by expansion and contraction of its several parts.

Finally, to form an organism, a number of nucleated colonies were joined together, and some were specialized to perform one function, others changed for other purposes, certain sections took over the duties of collecting food; protecting the gathering; distributing and assimilating nutriment; and other duties, which were all performed for the benefit of the whole gathering. The cells increased in number by growing and each one dividing into two, and still remained together, forming one complex individual.

The kind of animal which first appeared upon the earth is seen in the *Amœba*, a minute being with a nucleus, but no organs or covering. But many Protozoa (first animal) conserved the lime which they collected with their food and formed shells. In some this covering takes the form of a globe, or flask, or of several joined together, like scales, through holes of which thread-like portions of the body thrust themselves to suck up food. Foramina is Latin for holes, so these animals are called Foraminefera. Others,

like the Coral, built up walls through which water could percolate, and still others formed a horny coat like the sponge, or made extremely small needles or spicules, composed of flint.

Among the next evolved forms there are found in the rocks the Radiolaria, a geometrical form of tiny shell; traces of the Vermes (worm-like), which had an internal cavity acting as a stomach; and the Trilobites (three-lobed); the worms burrowed in mud and sand; their casts being seen in slate, and the shells of the others are in many of the oldest sedimentary rocks, the spicules being frequently met with.

It was a great step upwards when a backbone began to grow and the animal obtained a muscular arrangement to move it, so that it could move about in search of food, but that occurred in very early times, although after a long period. This finally became a Fish which had divided into male and female, one having a roe consisting of eggs, the other conserving a sperm with which to fertilize the eggs. Doubtless fish evolved from a family of the Vermes. A horny covering grew over the nerve portion, this at a later stage hardened into bone, then projections started which became fins. So far, the studies of geologists have not shown quite how this came about, and so there is a certain amount of speculation, but as research continues, this will be surely demonstrated.

Fishes made comparatively rapid progress, and from them came Amphibæ (living in water and on land), possessing both lungs and gills, like the "mud-fish" of Australia. Through some thousands of years, during the Carbonaceous period, when the earth was very warm and vast forests and heavy rains covered the surface, the reptiles slowly evolved. There is no break in the evolution of species from this time, fish-reptiles gave rise to flying reptiles, these produced birds, and, lastly, came forth mammals, the female of which suckles her young.

The Mammals comprise an immense order of beings, including a forest-living family, whose arms and legs terminated in fingers and toes, able to grasp the trunks and boughs of trees. These primitive arboreans in turn divided into a number of species—the monkey, ape, gorilla, baboon, orang-utan, and chimpanzee. The last two were able to stand upright at times, and this produced an increase of brain. Finally from some species of ape-like animal came Man, with a continuously upright figure, and sufficient intelligence to obtain and use weapons for defence against, and attack upon, other animals.

The Orang-utan is so near a relation to the human family, that a description of him is of the greatest consequence. His name, given by natives of Borneo, is Mias, and he is the undisputed lord of the forests of that island. He approaches mankind less closely in appearance, however, than the chimpanzee, for his hind legs are shorter, while his arms are so long as to reach his ankles. He excels the chimpanzee in intelligence, but a brutal expression is given to his hideous physiognomy by his thick protuberant lips and projecting jaws. He differs in habits and character from the monkey, being indolent to phlegmatic supineness, suspicious, morose, and melancholy. Nothing but hunger and terror rouses him from his lethargic repose. He loves to sit for hours together upon a branch of the forest trees, in a kind of crouching attitude, with his back bent, and his eyes fixed upon the ground, while from time to time the seemingly melancholy nature of his reflections is indicated by a low, sad wail. In inclement weather he makes a couch of leaves and small twigs in a sheltered place among the ferns and orchids at the roots

of the trees, and sleeps, as men do, on his side, and not as apes do, in a sitting position. His food is the fruit found in the forest, especially the *durian*, a very luscious one, which grows prolifically in Borneo, but which has a very disagreeable odour to our sense. Sometimes he varies his fare with leaves, buds, and young shoots, and prefers unripe fruit to ripe, appearing to like those with some acidity. With his long arms he can climb the loftiest trees, swinging himself from bough to bough, but deliberately, never leaping or jumping, and never showing any signs of haste. When he walks the pressure is on the knuckles of his hands and not on the palm. Though he is apt to meet the panther, tiger, and other dangerous animals, it is said they never attack him, and if men approach, he will break off branches and rain a shower of missiles at them. Woe to any adversary whom he should seize with his long muscular arms, for he will be rended with the cruel teeth; he has been seen to engage in a fight with a crocodile, while seeking food along the bank of a river, and come off victorious. He is therefore a formidable opponent, but he will not attack man, woman, or child, except in self-defence, and is always eager to escape from the neighbourhood of mankind. His height does not exceed four feet, and the average girth of his body is about three feet and a half. E. ANDERSON.

(To be Continued.)

A Note on Burns.

THERE are two sacred books in Scotland, the Bible and Burns, both more honoured in the breach than in the observance; two sacred persons, the Carpenter and the Ploughman. The first, weekly in the pulpits, and nightly at the street corners, by the learned preacher, and the ignorant devotee, extolled as the sole means of salvation here and hereafter. The second honoured annually as the "Immortal Memory" of a chosen people—not so perfect, not so noble, as the Eastern Prince, not the Son of God, but of the soil, a commoner, and human, all too human, but rivalling at last in esteem and reverence the very Christ himself; the Devil in him, in drink and women, being disowned or disguised by the solicitous attentions of the "Whitewashers." The glory of Scotland must be sober and chaste as the Scotch have ever been! But this devil in Burns will out, and the whitewashers are so far justified, for Burns has been made the exemplar of many a wine and women salmagundi, so great a name covering so many sins.

The Son of God became man, but never man like Robert Burns, and is therefore "out of nature," but Burns was nature's child, and, good and bad, the brother of every man; his highest and best is still only for the elect, his lowest all too apt to lead the vulgar more astray. Burns never reached the classic heights of the Sonnets—by Shakespeare and others, or glorified, mainly, love as these have done. He must have admired and understood them as few peasants, even poet-peasants, ever have, but his muse was a wilder flower, by times a weed: he was a mighty but all too modest gardener; now he would blush to know his fame. His was not a classic heritage, nor had he classic possibilities, but the distance between him and the classics was less than that between him and his forbears and contemporaries in the Doric. He was the Avatar of the vernacular muse, a long line of nameless poets—the Inomiaters, as Henley so well calls them—great spirits many of them—the whining, mindless doggerel has been winnowed out by time, and even by the bucolic

taste of the Scottish muse—great spirits, light-hearted laughers at fate, lovers, patriots, humanists, most precious of all, perhaps, old tramp-balladists, most of whose jingling wares, flashes of wit, romance, and real poetry, have vanished with the dust of old roads and older years—such things as Burns and Scott searched for as for hidden treasure—such as he who writes now would give a fortune, if he had it, to retrieve. Burns, through the shaping of evolving centuries, was the heir to all this: he was thus, with Shakespeare, not so much a creator as a culmination; even though through “blind evolution” and accidental lineage he stood in that broken, starry path, the one being able to absorb, assimilate, remodel, reinspire, and express for all time, with none to follow him, the climax of the Doric muse. Before his time this garden of Scottish song had been but a roughly tilled field with sporadic but unmistakable shoots and blossoms of genius forcing their way through the “stubborn clod”: the virgin soil was there, and the starved and stunted minds of the peasantry, then the superb husbandman, appeared, and though still rude his culture, resowed the seed, the fruit of which has ever since been the delight and wonder of the world—what a culmination, what a man!

As Henley says, the poet was a peasant to the end, with all the peasants' faults and failings and excesses, prides, humiliations, inconsistencies; most noble and sounding mock heroics; stilted, emotional, affected addresses to the great and the fair!—but these were not the Burns who is immortal: He lives in his love lyrics, that leave the sonnets cold; that make him a king and a classic in a country and a language of his own. And the attributes of this king and classic are—nobility, humanity, clarity, courage, love, friendship, wit and satire. No fagged and feeble muse, in those scores of brilliant best things, is here, but the richest, readiest, most ardent and robust brain ever evolved in Nature's processes. All this, and more than all, leaves Burns, in the estimation of proportioned judgment, the solid gold at one end of the scales; while the temporal and trifling sweepings at the other, and at the beam, can be but mountains on the heads of those puritans who decry or doubt the aureate residuum. It may be said, however, that puritan and liberal, learned and ignorant, are at one on the final verdict; the ignorant a little too confident, admiring not wisely but too well; the liberal a little too easy, the puritan too severe; all may be so far wrong, but Burns is here, and will remain, and has precipitated his revolution; and that other Scottish Bible, whatever the poet's conscious purpose, has fared but ill in the Gospel according to Burns.

ANDREW MILLAR.

Correspondence.

FREETHOUGHT IN GERMANY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—Anent to your paragraph in "Acid Drops" (issue January 24, 1926), dealing with the large number of people in Germany renouncing membership of the churches, I beg to quote some figures taken from a recent issue of your German contemporary, *Der Freidenker* :—

1910 ...	12,297	1919 ...	229,778
1915 ...	1,678	1920 ...	305,584
1916 ...	3,269	1921 ...	246,302
1917 ...	3,438	1922 ...	149,709
1918 ...	5,569	1923 ...	111,866

The figures refer to the Protestant churches only, which, as you know, largely preponderate in Germany. It is

interesting to observe how during the war militarism pinions thought, relaxing its grip as the murder goes on, and how after the (tame) revolution the intellectuals of a long suffering people shake off the shackles of the Church.

A new wave of renouncements not shown in above figures has been brought about by the new taxation laws mentioned in your paragraph, which very frequently make the amounts to be paid in Church taxes many times higher than they were before 1925.

Knowing the Christian regard for the truth, many readers will be rather distrustful of the above figures and reserve judgment until the official returns of the last census are made known, when they learn that the figures are taken from *Clerical Annual for the Protestant State Churches in Germany*.

An interesting item culled from the *Annual* is that the number of theology students in Germany is rapidly dropping. From 4,263 in 1914 it dwindled down to 1,835 in the winter term 1924-25, "so that," as the *Annual* puts it, "there will be an immediate scarcity of clergymen." Well, German Freethinkers are trying their level best to make even this small band too large for the reduced number of believers.

Berlin.

L. WAHL.

THE ATHIEST AS VILLAIN.

SIR,—The articles of "Mimnermus" are to me one of the chief charms of the *Freethinker*, but I must take exception to his somewhat covert praises of the medical priesthood. Inferentially from his article above-named one would think that something had been done beneficial by the medical priesthood *re* hydrophobia. As a fact, Pasteur did nothing but mischief of a most serious character. If your readers want to understand how in the main the religious and medical priesthood resembles one another, let them get the current issue of *Truth*, and read the case of Dr. Bell and cancer. I have a medical acquaintance down here, and although we don't agree *re* vaccine and sera treatments, he quite agrees with me that the stereotyped lines on which medical research is pursued makes it of little value.

A. J. MARRIOTT.

PENAL REFORM.

SIR,—While your correspondent, Mr. Bedborough, like so many ethicists, so strenuously opposes physical punishment for grown men, hardly anybody has the courage to denounce that infinitely more cruel, cowardly, and despicable outrage, the corporal punishment of our little helpless children at the State schools throughout the country, at the sole caprice of any irascible vixen or brutal ruffian, who has them in their absolute power. This is quite unethical and unjustifiable enough even in the case of unmannerly and quarrelsome boys, but is immeasurably worse when little sensitive and helpless girls are thus attacked, especially by male teachers, an outrage of the vilest and most despicable kind, yet, apparently, so much is the whole nation in awe of its arrogant and contemptuous teachers, that only most rarely does a parent dare to make complaint, while if he does, the magistrate nearly always takes the side of the "authorities."

A "Parents' Union," to challenge the impudent pretensions of the "Teachers' Union," the most arrogant and defiant body in England, is much needed to put a stop to the insolent pretensions of public teachers.

EVACUSTES A. PHIPSON.

North London Branch N.S.S.

A small but interested group gathered last Sunday to hear Mr. Graham Peace, who, as always, delivered an inspiring address on the Land Question. To-day (February 7) Mr. Ratcliffe and Mr. Palmer debate the question of Socialism, and we hope for a greatly improved audience.—K. B. K.

National Secular Society.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON
JANUARY 28, 1926.

The President, Mr. C. Cohen, in the chair. Also present, Messrs. Corrigan, Moss, Neate, and Samuels, Mrs. Quinton, Miss Kough, and the Secretary.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. The monthly cash statement was presented and adopted and the pass book produced.

New members were received for the North London Branch and for the Parent Society.

Various items of correspondence having been dealt with, in response to an application from the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam Memorial Committee, it was unanimously resolved:—

That this Executive contribute the sum of £2 2s. towards the Memorial now being raised to the memory of the Rev. Stewart D. Headlam as a slight recognition of his steadfast support of the rights of Freethinkers, and particularly in regard to his work for the abolition of the Blasphemy Laws.

Arrangements were made for outdoor propaganda during the summer months, both in London and the Provinces. Secretaries to be requested to make early application for the services of outdoor speakers.

Instructions were also given for the sending out of the circular inviting the Annual Conference.

A successful Annual Dinner was also formally reported. Various routine matters of business were dealt with, and the meeting closed.

E. M. VANCE,
General Secretary.

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.

NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (101 Tottenham Court Road): 7.30, Mr. Howell Smith, "The Mythical God and the True."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N.W.): 7.30, Debate—"Would Socialism destroy Initiative and Ambition?" Affirmative, Mr. T. F. Palmer; Negative, Mr. C. R. Ratcliffe.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): 7, Mr. G. F. Holland, "The Drama of Eugene O'Neill."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11, Right Hon. J. M. Robertson, "The Truth about Democracy."

COUNTRY. INDOOR.

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Spinners' Hall, St. George's Road, Bolton): 7.30, Mr. Chapman Cohen, "When I am Dead."

GLASGOW BRANCH N.S.S. (No. 2 Room, City Hall, "A" Door, Albion Street): 6.30, Mr. D. S. Currie, "In the Beginning." Questions and discussion invited. (Silver Collection.)

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Dora Russell, "What shall Women do Next?"

LEEDS BRANCH N.S.S. (Trades' Hall, Upper Fountain Street): 7.15, Mr. Walter Brooke, "The Limits of Small Holdings." Questions and discussion invited.

RING OUT, WILD BELLS, lay old ways by; ring in the days of loyaler part; let Atheists for you needles ply, write straight to-day for measuring chart and any of the following:—*Gents' A to H Book, suits from 56s.; Gents' I to N Book, suits from 99s.; Gents' Latest Overcoat Book, prices from 48s.; or Ladies' Latest Fashion and Pattern Book, costumes from 60s., coats from 48s.*—MACCONNELL & MABE, New Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire.

SALE AND EXCHANGE.

This column is limited to advertisements from private individuals only. Letters may, if it is so desired, be addressed to the Box Number, c/o "Freethinker" Office. Advertising rates 6d. for first line, every additional line 4d.

FOR SALE.

ONE H.P. HORIZONTAL PETROL ENGINE, complete; new; £17; £5 goes to Endowment Fund when sold.—HAMMON, Garden House, Duxbury, Nr. Chorley.

FOUR White Angora Rabbits; splendid pets for children; 6s. each, carriage paid; accommodation limited; dislike killing.—AINSLEY, 37 Westgarth Terrace, Darlington.

PAIR of Electric Brass 10-inch Motor Head Lamps (Ducceller, Paris).—Box 63.

Anthropology (Topinard), from C. Bradlaugh's library; *Bible Handbook*; original edition; what offers?—Box 65.

ENGLISH Concertina; Lachenall's patent; mahogany case; as new; 2 guineas.—Box 67.

BROWN Tweed Suit; 34 in. chest, 5 ft. 7 in. height; worn once; £5 15s. 6d. new (1925); accept £2 15s., carriage paid; £1 to Endowment Trust on sale.—Box 98.

WANTED.

SHARP Wire-Haired Fox Terrier Dog, must be over distemper and absolutely house clean; this most essential; no fancy price; approval; 5s. to Fund if satisfied.—WOOD, Rozel House, Chard, Somerset.

Devil's Pulpit, vol. i.; Thomson, *Essays and Phantasies*; Sherwin, *Life of Paine*.—A. G. BARKER, 29 Verulam Avenue, Walthamstow, E.17.

BOUND Volumes of *National Reformer* prior to 1866; also vol. for 1875; purchased or exchanged for modern Freethought works.—Box 64.

FOOTE'S *Crimes of Christianity, Freethinkers' Text Book*, Part ii. (Annie Besant).—Box 65.

The Glory of the Pharaohs (Weigall).—Box 81.

WORKING-CLASS Mother wants book on Motherhood; cheap or on loan; every care taken if on loan.—Box 99.

FREETHINKER in urgent need of employment. —Can any reader offer me a job as Collector, Assistant in Warehouse, Porter, etc.? Strictly sober and honest; good references.—C/o MISS E. M. VANCE, *Freethinker* Office, 61 Farringdon Street, E.C.4.

"THE HYDE PARK FORUM."—A Satire on its Speakers and Frequenters. Should be read by all Freethinkers. Post free, 6d., direct from J. MARLOW, 145 Waiworth Road, S.E.1.

UNWANTED CHILDREN

In a Civilized Community there should be no UNWANTED Children.

For List of Birth-Control Requisites send 1½d. stamp to
J. R. HOLMES, East Hanney, Wantage, Berkshire.
(Established nearly Forty Years.)

PIONEER LEAFLETS.

WHAT WILL YOU PUT IN ITS PLACE? By CHAPMAN COHEN.

WHAT IS THE USE OF THE CLERGY? By CHAPMAN COHEN.

PECULIAR CHRISTIANS. By CHAPMAN COHEN.

RELIGION AND SCIENCE. By A. D. McLAREN.

DOES GOD CARE? By W. MANN.

DO YOU WANT THE TRUTH?

Price 1s. 6d. per 100, postage 3d.

Why Not Join the N.S.S.?

There are thousands of *Freethinker* readers who are not members of the National Secular Society. Why is this so?

Naturally all who read the *Freethinker* are not convinced Secularists. With all who are, and are not members of the N.S.S., there appears only two reasons for non-membership. (1) They have not been asked to join. (2) They have not thought about it.

Well, the Society now asks all non-attached Freethinkers to consider this advertisement as a personal and cordial invitation to join, and those who have not thought about it to give the matter their earnest and serious consideration.

For more than sixty years the National Secular Society has been fighting the cause of every Freethinker in the country. Its two first Presidents, Charles Bradlaugh and G. W. Foote, were the most brilliant Freethinkers of their time, and they gave themselves unstintingly to the Cause they loved. It is not claiming too much to say that public opinion on matters of religion to-day would not be what it is but for the work of these men and of the Society of which they were the successive heads.

Many of the things for which the Society fought in its early years are now well on their way to becoming accomplished facts, and are being advocated by men and women who do not know how much they have to thank the Freethought Movement for the opinions they hold. The movement for the secularization of the Sunday has grown apace, and may now be advocated with but little risk of the abuse it once incurred. The plea for the more humane and the more scientific treatment of the criminal has now become part of the programme of many reformers who take no part in the actual work of Freethought. The same holds good of the agitation for the equality of the sexes before the law. Other reforms that have now become part and parcel of the general reform movement found in the National Secular Society their best friend when friends were sadly needed.

To-day Freethinkers have won the right to at least standing room. They can appear as Freethinkers in a court of justice without being subjected to the degradation of the religious oath. The abolition of the Blasphemy Laws has not yet been achieved, but it has been made increasingly difficult to enforce them. Thousands of pounds have been spent by the Society in fighting Blasphemy prosecutions, and thanks to the agitation that has been kept alive, the sister organization, the Secular Society, Limited, was able to secure from the House of Lords a decision which stands as the financial charter of the Freethought Movement. It is no longer possible to legally rob Freethought organizations, as was once the case. For that we have to thank the genius of the Society's late President, G. W. Foote.

The National Secular Society stands for the complete rationalization of life, for the destruction of theological superstition in all its forms, for the complete secularization of all State-supported schools, for the abolition of all religious tests, and for the scientific ordering of life with one end in view—the greater happiness of every member of the community.

There is no reason why every Freethinker should not join the National Secular Society. There should be members and correspondents in every town and village in the kingdom. The Society needs the help of all, and the help of all should be freely given.

This is intended as a personal message to unattached Freethinkers. If you have not been asked to join, consider that you are being asked now. If you have not thought about it before, think about it now. The membership fee is nominal. The amount you give is left to your interest and ability. The great thing is to associate yourself with those who are carrying on the work of Freethought in this country. To no better Cause could any man or woman devote themselves.

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