

# The FREETHINKER

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## Views and Opinions.

### The Choice of a Trade.

The *Daily Express* has been publishing a series of articles on careers for our children, and one of the most recent, by the Rev. W. R. Matthews, Dean of King's College, and Chaplain to the King, dealt with "What Religion Offers." The article does not say very much, and a deal of what it does say is covered by our notes in last week's *Freethinker*. So far as we are concerned we should say that whether a boy goes in for the clerical business or not depends upon the boy. If he is shrewd and methodical and far-seeing he might do better in a commercial career. If he is acute and observant there is the law. With another set of qualities dominant he might be better placed in journalism, or science, or medicine. It entirely depends upon the boy. But if he is neither astute enough for commerce, logical enough for the law, smart enough for journalism, nor patient and persevering enough for science; if on the positive side he possesses a fair presence, glibness of speech, confidence in himself, and while not manifesting ability in any direction in particular, shows fondness for managing the universe in general, then it would seem safe to say that the clerical profession holds out many advantages. There are few professions that would suit him so well, and none that would suit him better. If he is a failure in the pulpit, it is hard to say in what walk of life he would be a success.

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### An Easy Trade to Follow.

Many years ago George Eliot, writing of the evangelical preacher in particular, said:—

Given a man with moderate intellect, a moral standard not higher than the average, some rhetorical affluence, a great glibness of speech, what is the career in which, without the aid of birth or money, he may most easily attain power and reputation in English society? Where is the Goschen of mediocrity in which a smattering of science and learning will pass for profound instruction, where platitudes will be accepted as wisdom, bigoted narrowness as holy zeal, unctuous egotism as God-given piety? Let such a man become an evangelical preacher; he will find it possible to reconcile small ability with great ambition, superficial knowledge with the prestige of erudition, a middling morale with a high reputation for sanctity.

Things have changed somewhat since George Eliot wrote those lines, the intellectual status of the clergy, —established and dissenting—have shown a marked decline in quality and in open influence, but, in the main, the picture is still a true one. The pulpit still remains the place in which mediocrity may the most easily achieve distinction. Deficiencies that would be fatal elsewhere oppress but little there. Qualities that would be of small service, or of positive disservice out of the pulpit, are of advantage in it. A training of a sort is, of course, necessary. But once through with that everything is plain sailing. There is no need to keep oneself abreast of new knowledge, or to review one's opinions in the light of new facts. For the clergyman everything is arranged for him—beliefs, prayers, postures. All that is essential is to acquire the art of pouring a deluge of words over a desert of ideas and to confuse his hearers by a display of showy verbosity. He may pose as "mystic" merely because his ideas are misty. He may pass as a daring thinker on the strength of questioning the literal accuracy of such nonsensical narratives as the creation story in Genesis; or the Virgin Birth. And he may gain the reputation of a social reformer on the strength of mouthing amiable commonplaces concerning the working classes. What would have been heard of such men as the Bishop of London, or even of Bishop Gore, or of Bishop Barnes out of the pulpit? It is the pulpit that gave them their chance. They occupy a position because, as George Eliot said, the pulpit is the Goschen of mediocrity.

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### The Stronghold of Mediocrity.

Here is another passage from George Eliot that is as true to-day as when it was first written:—

The clergyman has an immense advantage over all public speakers. The platform speaker is subject to the criticism of groans and hisses. Counsel for the plaintiff expects the retort of counsel for the defendant. Even the scientific or literary lecturer, if he is dull or incompetent, may see his audience slip out one by one. But the preacher is completely master of the situation. No one may hiss, no one may depart. Like the writer of imaginary conversations he puts what imbecilities he likes into the mouths of his antagonists, and swell in the triumph when he has refuted them. He may riot in gratuitous assertions confident that no man will contradict him; he may exercise perfect free-will in logic, and insert illustrative experiences; he may give an evangelical edition of history with the inconvenient facts omitted; all this he may do certain that those of his hearers who are not sympathetic are not listening.

Here, then, is a profession for which almost anyone may qualify. Short of downright imbecility, lack of intelligence offers no serious obstacle. Men have been expelled from it for thinking too much, but none have ever been expelled for not thinking enough. And modest as the requirements of the Church have been in the past, they are likely to be less severe in the future. A little over a hundred and fifty years ago



there were still great men in the Church. Life was simpler, and the gulf between scientific teaching and religious doctrine less clear. But life broadened and deepened and the Church was left with what could be got, and was thankful for it. Mediocrity in the secular world ranked as genius in the Church, because the better type of mind no longer entered into competition with it. It would indeed be an eye-opener to many if they had drawn up for them a list of the men—beginning with Darwin and Matthew Arnold—who were intended for the Church, but who forsook it for a more intellectually respectable profession. The calibre of those whom Freethought has gained when compared with those who have remained faithful to the Church is not at all a bad measure of the degree to which life has beaten back the armies of superstition.

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#### The Mission Field.

There are other considerations that may commend the clerical profession to many. Bad times are reduced to a minimum. It is true that many of the clergy may get but modest incomes, but all hope for more, and there is no ground for believing they would do better in the open market. And even though there should be a temporary "slump" there are many ways of getting on. The mission field is open, and there are some very comfortable jobs here, both at home and abroad. The home secretaries are very well paid, and very many of the "workers" abroad lead very comfortable lives. If a man is a failure at home, he may always have a "call" to convert the heathen. All that is needful is a lively imagination when sending home reports. Or, if one does not care to go abroad there is the home mission field. Here the sphere of operation is practically limitless. Christian society presents no lack of material for philanthropic effort, and the method of working is simple and profitable. A large house may be rented, a room or two labelled "offices," and the expenses of the whole comes out of the mission. You may live up to anything from £200 to £1,000 a year, pose before the world as a Christian philanthropist, and blandly ask the Freethinker where are his benevolent institutions. So long as some of the contributions given you are—legally—safe. You are not obtaining money under false pretences. Of all professions, that of a Christian philanthropist is the easiest. The capital is supplied by the public, the profit is taken by the promoters. A liberal use of religious phrases disarms criticism—save from Freethinkers, and their comments are not likely to attract attention from those who give.

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#### The Price that is Paid.

There are, of course, certain drawbacks to the clerical life. One can get nothing in this world without paying some sort of a price for it. Years ago the late Lord Morley said in his excellent work, *On Compromise*—a work that forms a bitter satire upon a large part of his own life:—

It is no light thing to have secured a livelihood on the condition of passing through life marked and gagged. To be compelled week after week, and year after year to recite the symbols of ancient faith and lift up his voice in the echoes of old hopes, with the blighting thought in his soul that the faith is a lie, and the hope no more than the folly of the crowd, to read hundreds of times in a twelvemonth with solemn unction as the inspired word of the Supreme Being what to him are as meaningless as the Abracadabra of the conjurer in a booth; to go on to the end of his days administering to simple folk holy rites of commemoration and solace when he has in his mind at each phrase what dupes are these simple

folk, and how wearisomely counterfeit their rites; and to know through all that this is to be the one business of his prostituted life.

Truly no light business, and yet it is a burden that many appear to shoulder with ease. One must assume that there is comfort in numbers, and when mental prostitution assumes the rank of a recognized profession, many there are who fail to see clearly the nature of the path along which they walk.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

### The Alleged Resurrection of Jesus

It would have been the greatest of all miracles if the Apostolic Church had failed to believe in the resurrection of its Divine Redeemer. Death and resurrection were the two essential qualifications of a Saviour-God. Osiris died and rose again, and so became the Egyptian merciful Judge. Attis was doubtless a god of vegetation, but in Phrygia "his death and resurrection were annually mourned and rejoiced over at a festival in spring." Adonis was a similar deity who reigned in Syria. He too was cruelly put to death, but it was generally believed that he returned to life the following day. Mithra was a Persian god of great renown, who as a bull was sacrificed for the redemption of mankind, and who, after lying for a while in a rock tomb triumphed over death and lived a glorified redeemer. Thus we see that Jesus could never have taken his place among the world's Saviour gods without dying a violent death and rising from the tomb and ascending to heaven as Lord of Life for ever more. Now, curiously enough, Christians assure us that Osiris, Adonis, Attis, and Mithra were purely mythical beings, and that the acts attributed to them were nothing but empty fables. But Jesus actually lived as related in the Gospels, died a sacrificial death, and on the third day reappeared among the living, and ultimately entered heaven, there to sit as Judge on his Father's right hand to all eternity.

Such is the teaching of Christian theologians; but what evidence of the truth of their position do they adduce? Confining our attention to the dogma of the resurrection of Jesus we ask what proof is there that it really occurred? The leading article in the *Guardian* of April 1, entitled "The Challenge of Easter," attempts to answer that question. This Anglican Church organ approaches the subject in the following manner:—

The birth of the human Jesus is a fact disputed only by a few fantastic mythologists who have quaintly mistaken themselves for scientific historians. That the same Jesus was put to death by Pontius Pilate is, again, a fact which only the Pontius Pilate of Anatole France's ingenious fancy would be likely to forget. But that he rose again and appeared to his disciples in such manner as to convince them, not that ghosts might walk by daylight, but that he was the Eternal Son of God—this, indeed, is an affirmation not lightly to be made, nor easily to be received.

The writer of that passage assumes an attitude of proud superiority to those who do not share his beliefs. The so-called mythologists may, after all, be fully justified in regarding themselves as "scientific historians." Christian critics not a few frankly admit the presence of legend in the Gospels, and judging by the present tendency discernible in literary criticism, the time will soon come when the New Testament will be pronounced as fully mythological as the Sacred Writings of the East. Be that as it may, our present point is whether there is or



there is not, any convincing proof that Jesus rose from the dead. The *Guardian* says:—

In the last resort all historical evidence is reducible to what certain men have believed themselves to experience, and, in like manner, our willingness to accept their testimony depends upon what we believe, first, about their qualifications as witnesses; secondly, about the intrinsic probability of the events reported by them.....There are no data without interpretation; there is no interpretation that is not the work of a fallible human being..... As soon as we begin to consider the stupendous assertion that Christ rose from the dead, we have to ask whether men alive at the time believed it and, if so, what manner of men they were.

That is perfectly fair, and thus we are brought to the very crux of the whole question. We must examine the Gospel narratives of the resurrection. The first thing that strikes us is their glaring contradictions. In Matthew xxvii. 62-66, we read:—

The chief priests and the Pharisees were gathered together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest haply his disciples come and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; and the last error will be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a guard; go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, the guard being with them.

Now Matthew's statement that a watch and seal were so carefully set upon the sepulchre is flatly contradicted by both Mark and Luke, who represent the tomb as perfectly free of access to all. The only difficulty that troubled the women was, not the presence of a military guard, but their own inability to roll away the stone from the door of the tomb. According to Luke (xxii. 54, 56) the women procured their spices before sunset on Friday, but Mark says that they did not buy them till after sunset on Saturday. According to John's Gospel the women had no chance of doing what Mark and Luke ascribe to them, because Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus did the work, the latter "bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, and so they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury."

Coming to the so-called appearances of the risen Lord to various people, we are confronted with many difficulties. Two disciples on their way to Emmaus were overtaken by Jesus who entered into conversation with them, but they did not recognize him, treating him as an entire stranger. Why did they not know him? Because "their eyes were holden." At last, after he had delivered a long address on Prophecy, and while he was blessing and breaking the bread and giving it to them, "their eyes were opened, and they knew him." Who held their eyes and then opened them? On the face of it the incident is fictitious, and not good fiction either. The risen Jesus appeared and disappeared with equal ease. Locked doors were no barrier either to his entrance or exit. Distances did not count. If we ask, what was the object or purpose of the alleged appearances? the answer is not clear. Even the *Guardian* makes the following curious admission: "When we are told that no trained judge of evidence would have been convinced by the appearances of Jesus, we are strongly disposed to agree." And yet the *Guardian* itself is convinced by that which it admits would not convince "a trained judge of evidence." And if the appearances are not calculated to convince "a trained judge of evidence," what else is there capable of convincing such a person? Nothing what-

ever. The history of the Church plunges believers in Christianity into the dismal slough of despond. In a remarkable discourse recently delivered and published, the Bishop of Durham sorrowfully but candidly confesses that the Church has always been and is the most tragic failure conceivable, and we are not ashamed to add that the admitted failure of the Church is the strongest possible argument against the belief in the resurrection. Had there been a risen and ascended Christ the promise that he would draw all men unto himself would have been fulfilled long ago, and the whole world would have been transformed into his own image. People of certain temperaments may derive unspeakable consolation from the believing repetition of the words, "Jesus lives, Jesus lives," but such an emotional rapture does not inspire the world to tread the path of righteousness and peace. The *Guardian* denounces certain versions of the resurrection, and one of them is depicted as a version "which most certainly is not the version that inspired the Church to convert the world." But, surely, the *Guardian* cannot be ignorant of the fact that the orthodox version of it has utterly failed to convert the world. Why has it so completely failed? Simply because no truth underlies it. The whole doctrine of the resurrection is an illusion, a groundless fable. The only explanation of the total failure of Christianity is to be found in Matthew Arnold's most beautiful and powerful verse:—

Far hence he lies,  
In the lone Syrian town,  
And on his grave, with shining eyes,  
The Syrian stars look down.

J. T. LLOYD.

## The Old Order Changes.

The services of the clergy are imaginary, and their payment should be of the same description.—G. W. Foote.

The clergy have acquired the reputation of being unbusinesslike quite unjustly.—Dean Matthews.

It used to be said in ancient Rome that no soothsayer could pass another of the same peculiar profession without smiling. It is surprising that in modern England a Christian priest can pass another without winking. That they do so is a proof of the Stoicism of the Anglo-Saxon race. No racing tipster can gull the public more shamelessly, or more profitably. With an effrontery at which Casanova would have blushed, or Baron Munchausen hesitated, the clergy tell any tale that answers their purpose, usually a financial one. Not long since lawn-sleeved prelates earnestly assured the pious public that St. Paul's Cathedral was in danger of falling down. After the large number of subscriptions had rolled in it was found that the building was safe, but not a shilling was ever returned to the duped donors. One leading clergyman chortles of a revival of religion; another laments that the country is going to the dogs, or "the devil," or both. Still another reverend tearfully tells us that the end of all things is at hand. The Bishop of London has often told us that the wretched clergy are starving, and the Dean of King's College points to the clerical profession as a desirable one for young men. The Bishop of London suggests that the poor priests, like Nebuchadnezzar, are eating grass; whilst the Dean says that even curates can count on "a living wage" amounting to £250 annually. So the game goes merrily along, the public never troubling to check the contradictory statements of their "pastors and masters."



During the past generation the number of well-paid jobs in the Anglican Church has been doubled. Bishops, and suffragan bishops, are being multiplied at a rare rate. Old dioceses have been cut up, and new ones invented. One Anglican bishop is jocularly supposed to be in charge of Central Europe, where it is quite certain that the majority of his alleged faithful sheep never heard of their shepherd. Whilst this game has been prettily played, the actual number of ordained Anglican priests has constantly diminished. In the latter part of the nineteenth century the number was 25,000. In the earlier years of the present century the number dropped to 21,000, and to-day there is a further drop to 16,000. There has also been a decline in quality as well as quantity. First-class brains no longer enter the Anglican Church, and dunces, however saintly, are but dullards at the best. In all the present 16,000 priests of the Anglican Church there are not a baker's dozen worth listening to at the present time. If another Professor Huxley entered the theological arena the entire Church of Christ would be hard pressed to find a champion worthy of his steel.

However the matter is camouflaged, the clerical profession is a business proposition, just the same as that of a doctor or an architect. The clergy foster the idea that they are unbusiness-like, but they are as commercially-minded as any other tradesmen. That they vend "spiritual" goods makes little difference. Benefices are bought and sold just the same as doctor's "practices." Promotion is given to the man who raises the most money, and bishops are but disguised sales-managers.

It would be interesting to discuss the function of the clergy in the modern world, which would raise the whole question of the place of the out-of-date clerical caste in a democratic civilization. At bed-rock there is little difference between the Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Free Church clergy. They may wear longer or shorter petticoats, but they are all the same type of men. In the last analysis they are but medicine-men engaged in similar work to their dark-skinned prototypes in savage nations. They tell us of jealous gods who get angry with us; of a dreadful Devil who must be carefully guarded against; of angels who fly from earth to heaven; of saints who can render assistance if supplicated. About 40,000 men in this country alone are engaged in this sorry business, to say nothing of their cats-paws and satellites. And they are all alike from the Archbishop of Canterbury, with his £15,000 yearly, to the spring-curate who conducts an open-air service with an harmonium and a dozen flappers. And the clerical profession is as honest as fortune-telling, but not more so. Many a poor, old woman has been sent to prison for taking money from a servant-girl, after promising her a wealthy husband and a dozen children; but these saintly men of God are allowed to take millions of money for promises of good fortune in the alleged golden streets of the New Jerusalem.

There is money, too, in the clerical profession. The pages of Crockford's *Clerical Directory* give the comforting figures for the Anglican clergy, and nice reading they make. The Bench of Bishops, forty in number, share £182,700 yearly; and the higher ecclesiastics do almost as well. The bachelor Bishop of London enjoys a modest salary of £300 weekly, a sum sufficient to keep fifty ordinary families in comfort. In addition, he has two residences, one being a palace. Evidently, he is not eating grass, or boiling his shoelaces to get food. "Londoniensis" is the best known ecclesiastic in England. At the height of the Suffragist agitation, some excited

women damaged the pulpit at St. Paul's Cathedral as a protest against the hostile attitude of the Anglican Church clergy. When the Bishop of London officiated in that building following the damage, he said: "This is devil's work!" If he had been an African witch-doctor he would have said the same thing if his dignity had been offended. It was the most caustic commentary on the mentality of a distinguished cleric, and all the more forcible because entirely unpremeditated.

The first step towards resolving the clerical caste into its constituent elements is but to resume the work of the Radicals of fifty years ago. No reform of the Church of England is needed. It should be disestablished and disendowed, and then let it reform itself like any other society. And why has the disestablishment and disendowment of the Anglican Church been dropped out of the political programme by vote-catching Socialists and Labourites? The Established Church is antagonistic to democracy. It still buttresses the old Tory order; and offers prayers for individual members of the Royal Family. The Anglican Church simply absorbs so much money and so many offices and dignities, and is an ecclesiastical variation of the Primrose League, an organization founded to perpetuate the memory of the most Machiavellian of modern politicians. The Church is opposed to the spirit of Liberty which animates the progressive peoples of the civilized world. Parliament made it; let Parliament unmake it, and the sooner the better. Yes; it is a most reactionary body, this Anglican Church, and too long Englishmen have paid tithes and tribute to it. The Church is as greedy as ever; only at long last it is being found out.

MIMNERMUS.

## A New Prophetess.

THIS is the revised chronological order of the prophets of the different dispensations: Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Isaiah, Jesus Christ, Mary Baker Eddy, and Annie C. Bill; and the greatest of these is Mrs. Bill. We have pleasure, ladies and gentlemen, in introducing to your notice this latest female wonder. This remarkable lady is the founder of the Christian Science Parent Church of the New Generation, which, under her active living leadership, claims to be the practical present-day organized embodiment of the advancing movement of Christian Science and the only legitimate successor to the former organized body, which, under Mrs. Eddy's leadership, was, in her "day" the "Mother" Church of Christian Science. I am quoting from a propagandist booklet entitled *The Evolution of Christian Science*, issued by the Publishing Society of this New Church at Boylston Street, Boston, and which, we are told, has no connection with the Christian Science Publishing Society of the First Church of Christ Scientist, of the same city. Purchasers of Christian Science metaphysics are therefore requested to see that every bottle bears the signature of Annie C. Bill, without which none are genuine.

As a purveyor of metaphysical commodities Annie is fully qualified both by birth and inspiration.

Mrs. Bill is the daughter of an English clergyman, the descendant of a long line of spiritually-minded ancestors of that lineage of the "House of David," from which had also been uplifted Mary Baker Eddy. She discerned the way and humbly but courageously answered the call to lead the next advance on the great upward and onward journey toward the practical final attainment of man's moral and spiritual dominion over the earth.

Mrs. Eddy claimed that "God had been graciously fitting her during many years, for a reception of a



final revelation of the Absolute principle of Scientific Mind-healing." Mrs. Bill, however, maintains that Mrs. Eddy was mistaken, and that the "final" revelation has been vouchsafed to herself as the Divine mouthpiece. One shudders to think what would have happened if such a claim had been made in Mrs. Eddy's lifetime. Considering the quality of the vituperative language that the old lady could use when a rival crossed her path, the probability is that Mrs. Bill would have lost a few feathers.

Mark Twain said of Mrs. Eddy's book, *Science and Health*, that "of all the strange and frantic and incomprehensible and uninterpretable books which the imagination of man has created, surely this one is the prize sample." And the opinion was not hastily or lightly expressed, as the great humorist assures us that he had read "acres" of Christian Science literature purporting to be from Mrs. Eddy's pen, for the purpose of trying to understand its meaning. Another American writer describes it as "the endless phantasmagoria of contradictions which defies any explanation accordant with common sense." But these critics seem to forget that *Science and Health* is an inspired book like the Bible, and should not be treated as ordinary literature. The peculiarity of all inspired writings is that they contain a number of hidden meanings, lying on top of each other like layers of geological strata. The advantage of this cryptic form of writing is that when any accepted meaning is found to be opposed to any newly-discovered facts it can always be claimed that such was not its true interpretation. Hence arises the need for a succession of interpreters to harmonize the cryptic sayings with the new knowledge. And no one who is acquainted with Christian Science literature will deny that Mrs. Eddy's book stood sorely in need of some divinely gifted person to extract, if it were possible, some kind of sense and meaning out of its mental chaos and confusion. If Mrs. Bill can succeed in doing this, she will no doubt render a service to many who have racked their brains over Christian Science phraseology. Mark Twain said he had known many Christian Scientists who professed to understand the book, but he was certain from his own intimate study of it, that they only *thought* they did.

Of Mrs. Eddy it may truly be said that "she saved others; herself she could not save." After she had "launched the thunderbolt of her basic discovery that 'all is infinite mind and its infinite manifestation,'" in her later years she returned, like the proverbial sow, to wallow in the mire of material remedies. "After years of struggle against the encroachments of physical disease and old age, she was forced as a lesser evil to utilize the common faith attached to material remedies." One is a little puzzled as to what was the greater evil discarded by Mrs. Eddy in favour of the lesser evil of material means. As the only inference appears to be that it was her own metaphysical doctrines which failed her in the hour of trial. Mrs. Eddy's later years were indeed clouded by doubts and difficulties and fears. Not only did she herself suffer from periods of "partial dependence upon material means," but she also realized that her Church "had failed to illustrate to the world a practical demonstration of her teaching." These later years were also saddened by "a sorrow due principally to her fore-vision of the condition developing in her Church." The fore-vision was fully justified by events. After her decease the mental phantoms she had created began to play havoc among her followers. This is Mrs. Bill's description of the mental and moral degradation that attacked her community:—

There was developed a deathly fear of "malicious mental malpractice," "malicious animal mag-

netism," and other phenomena of evil. This fear of bodily harm through various forms of thought transference began to constitute an embodiment of evil far worse than any superstitious theological misconception of a personalized devil with hoofs and horns. A large number of "mental workers" were officially employed at substantial salaries by the central Boston Church organization to "protect" its officials and institutions against the operations of evil spirits. This process of "treatment" and its effects upon the victims of their delusions differ in no essential way from the effects produced by the superstitious rites of tribes of far less pretension to civilization. The doctrine of *malicious animal magnetism* became, and is to-day among the older generation of Christian Scientists from its highest officials to its most humblest members, a superstition unparalleled in the religious or secular history of the last hundred years.

The thought of the future of her Church was also a sorrow that preyed upon Mrs. Eddy's mind:—

During the last few years of her life she sought to find someone to succeed her as "leader of this mighty movement" which she had set in motion. But no one was found who had gained sufficient understanding of the deeper things of God to make him a safe moral and spiritual guide and sound administrator.

Notwithstanding Mark Twain's eulogy of her immense abilities, she apparently lacked the practical foresight of General Booth to appoint a successor. But Mrs. Eddy's extremity, so to speak, was God's opportunity; and He found in Mrs. Annie C. Bill the one competent person to exorcise the devils which were beginning to play havoc in the Christian Science camp. But Annie's fate was the usual fate of prophets. She came unto her own, but her own received her not. "The organized religious community claiming the name of Christian Science, and most vitally concerned with the new message and most greatly needing it, turned a deaf ear" to her pretensions. The Board of Directors of the First Church of Christ Scientist, who had assumed the reins of power, refused to abdicate in favour of Mrs. Bill, and so

this new and proven discoverer and leader, through reason, revelation, and experiment, step by step, similar in many ways to the fadeless footsteps of Mrs. Eddy in the earlier dispensation, finally under various names and in differing forms evolved and established a community in unity on the essentials of her discovery and leadership under the name of "The Christian Science Parent Church of the New Generation."

All which, being reduced to simple language, means that Annie set up a rival establishment.

It appears that prior to Mrs. Bill's discovery, no one, not even Mrs. Eddy herself rightly understood the meaning of Christian Science:—

The popular opinion of what Christian Science is differs widely from the fact. The average person, even including the large majority of those enrolled as members of the generally recognized Christian Science Churches, supposes it to be a sectarian activity for mental healing and the attainment of purely personal benefits.

Annie says it is something quite different. And all the Christian Science literature published before her discovery, like theological works written before—and after—the discovery of Evolution, are only so much waste paper. The wonderful achievement of Mrs. Bill consisted in supplying the key to unlock the mysteries of all the previous prophets. "Mrs. Bill discovered in Mrs. Eddy's writings, and in the Scripture the sevenfold system of spiritual unfoldment, the universal design of immortal life." To



those practical persons who expect all terms to represent some realizable material or mental object, such phraseology may present a difficulty. But before beginning the brain-racking process of trying to discover its meaning, we gather from the pamphlet that it is better to wait and see. Its meaning will unfold itself in due course. The "practical development of any new vital fact, in the thought of the discoverer is *evolutionary*, and is naturally misunderstood in its earlier stages of struggle for adequate presentation." In the meantime Annie is putting up a good fight.

The true members of this Church stand unmoved in the face of either the threats or the pleadings of those who would attempt to perpetuate an organized embodiment of the world's highest revelation on a basis that openly reverses the fundamental teaching of the great Founder of the Science of Life.

It is the same old trouble of the "organized embodiment" of a religion straying away from the original teachings of its founder. And "the tragic records of hopeless resignations and collective withdrawals" from the older "outworn" organization seem to Annie a favourable opportunity for opening a new fold into which the lost sheep may be enticed. The official publication of the New Generation of Christian Science has a world-wide circulation. Now in its second year; published monthly; sample copies free.

JOSEPH BRUCE.

### Drama and Dramatists.

THE impertinent suggestion of a parson, who belongs to the type that can be impertinent without being conscious of it, opened up a trend of thought that may be fruitful in results. This man of the cloth suggested that "listeners in" to church services should put aside an amount of one shilling for collection. With the death of Miss Florence Saunders the usual obituary notice brings to light the usual story of a struggle for existence. The *Star* publishes her photograph taken in the part of "Queen Gertrude," and reveals her early life at a time when she received half-a-crown a week. In the life of an actor or actress the enjoyment of palmy days does not banish the thoughts of those periods elegantly termed "resting." The delightful hours of amusement and instruction that the judicious playgoer may receive seldom give rise to any concern about the circumstances of the grave and gay characters that cross the stage. The banquet on the stage may be—a stage banquet, but the appetite may be real. The heart of the buffoon may be a heart of lead. Grimaldi, the famous clown, who did not reveal his identity to the doctor whom he consulted, was advised to go and see—himself—the visit would cheer up his spirits. We are told by astronomers that the brightest stars in the firmament are not necessarily the nearest to the earth; in the same way the most advertised dramatic stars do not come home to our dearest wishes. There are, in stock companies, in small theatres, in travelling bodies of actors and actresses, splendid examples of the truth of the lie that there is always room on top, and, from the most superficial knowledge of the domestic side of the stage, the church is in no special place of gratitude for that shilling with which we commenced this paragraph.

The late Miss Florence Saunders was in our opinion better suited for comedy than tragedy; she seemed to be at home completely in the "School for Scandal" in the part of Lady Sneerwell, Dolly, the Earl's Mistress, in "Christopher Sly," Julia in "Two Gentlemen of Verona," Rosaline in "Love's Labour Lost," Rosalind in "As You Like It," and Portia in "The Merchant of Venice." The tragic parts appeared to demand from her that close attention which was a brake on spontaneity. As Goneril in "King Lear" she succeeded in stirring up

a hatred for this half savage type of woman, yet, as Queen Gertrude, this character was well sustained, and in many subtle ways she drew out our sympathy for the mother in the maelstrom of intrigue, plot, and passion. She had no particular help from the press, and was beloved by her audience in the good old days of the Old Vic before Oxford had marked the place for what might be called distinction—and those were the days when real merit in acting was rewarded by that bond of affection making the sign of good taste and discernment. There's rosemary for remembrance for her, yet, in a profession where fame is ephemeral, where the actors and actresses are brief chronicles and abstracts of our time, we give both praise and thanks for the gifts she shared with the spectators when she transported them to another world.

"Androcles and the Lion" is a play that will be remembered by its preface. G. B. S. is going somewhere—it is certainly not towards Rome or to the dogs—and he takes the dramatist's privilege of not defining his destination. At the Regent Theatre, "The Showing Up of Blanco Posnet" preceded the above play. There is much talk about Christianity, but nothing is said about it either to knock it over the ropes or give it a keen and drastic examination. Blanco's moonstruck state before the rainbow was one of those hundred dramatic devices; the dramatists could have chosen a turnip to serve his purpose just as well. The two plays gave Mr. Esme Percy an excellent opportunity of playing two utterly opposite parts as Blanco Posnet and Androcles respectively. It is a thrilling moment when the timid tailor, meek and subdued throughout, bursts forth with an account of the only time when he was in a rage. That was when he saw a man cruelly using a horse. Lavinia is amusing and the author has succeeded in making her reason like a woman. In a pictorial sense "Androcles and the Lion" presents the question of Paganism and Christianity in a much more enjoyable form than the torture of learning about it in books, but it is not presented with precision. A clerical writer in the *Morning Post* expresses his approval of the stage for the discussion of ideas; we gather from him that the slumbers of the church are being disturbed and that another competitor with the pulpit is being recognized. The reverend gentleman mentions Shaw, but does not specify any of his plays. For the teaching of moral lessons he commends Sir Arthur Pinero's "His House in Order" and Sir James Barrie's "Dear Brutus," both of which are as disturbing as Stanton Coit's "Ethics."

It is many years ago since Maeterlinck's play, "The Betrothal," was produced in London at the Gaiety Theatre, and as we recently read this play in story form for children, distance seemed to lend enchantment in looking back at a play that was, and is, in many senses a Freethinker's play. The living world is the nexus between the past and the future, and Maeterlinck handles this idea in a masterly manner. Tytyl is to be married—it is a serious matter. The fairy godmother takes him to see his ancestors and a pretty mixed batch they are, but they are not fallen angels. They are simply the imperfect creatures of evolution back to the cave man, the Great Ancestor, who advances to Tytyl saying: "Shake hands. Don't be afraid of me.....I am quite clean really; and I don't smell bad." Our little hero also meets there the Great Beggar Man, who has an iron constitution and has done a very great deal of thinking in his corner under the porch. With the help of the Great Peasant Tytyl's fate is decided. By this method Maeterlinck has romanticized the ideas of the late Rudolph Steiner and given them a more acceptable countenance. And in doing so he has, consciously or otherwise, paid homage to his own species without slipping into the wearisome question-begging vocabulary of theology. When Tytyl is taken to see his posterity up in the Milky Way the interest is not so keen but the artist's privilege is that of making the picture to suit himself. When leaving the theatre, a somewhat



mystified member of the audience—a young woman—was heard to say to her friend: "I wish we had gone to see the 'Savage and the Woman,' which was a tacit admission that the savage is still in our midst. And we do not begrudge praise and encouragement to Maeterlinck in his efforts to exorcise this product by his own particular methods.

WILLIAM REPTON.

## Acid Drops.

Lecturing at Liverpool, Lord Beaverbrook claimed that the nation owed a debt of gratitude to the late Lord Northcliffe because he had founded the modern press, and had "kept the press absolutely clean." That has quite a Christian flavour about it. All that Lord Beaverbrook has in his mind is the exclusion of sex news from the press, unless it be served up in "spicy" accounts of divorce cases and the like. It does not matter that opinion in the press is now standardized to a greater extent than it has ever been before, that journalists are forced to write to order as though they were delivering coals, that all kinds of stupid "stunts" are worked to attract notice. Nor is the lying, the suppression, the exaggeration, the Northcliffe creations of European massacres in Peking, slaughter of English in the Transvaal annihilation of the British Army at the opening of the war, nor the boiling down of Germans for fat of any moment. Nor does it matter that no single man did more to force this kind of thing on the English press than Lord Northcliffe. The press is *clean* if it keeps clear of sex matters. That is why we call it a quite Christian utterance. The ancients when they spoke of a moral man, meant a man who acted rightly in all walks of life. The unclean Christian imagination became obsessed with the fact of sex. With the result that a man might steal, or lie, or forge, or slander, and yet not be in the Christian view an immoral man. That is why we call Lord Beaverbrook's utterance a quite Christian one.

The destiny of the League of Nations is in the hands of the teachers of the world, declared the Bishop of Manchester at the Portsmouth Teachers' Conference. If the League was to rest on a solid basis of public opinion, he added, its ideals must be deliberately and systematically cultivated in the schools; teachers must free the rising generation from the lure of narrow patriotism. We beg leave to point out to his lordship that what is equally important is the need to free the young from narrow sectarianism which in the past has proved so very fruitful a cause of hatred among the nations and among different sections of the nations. At present this sectarianism, by means of the religious instruction given, is fostered in the schools controlled by the various Christian sects. In our opinion this Church patriotism is as evil a thing as narrow national patriotism, and does not blend with the League's ideals. Perhaps when the teacher's organizations realize this, they will openly advocate a purely secular education for the State schools. And perhaps they will not; for to do that, teachers need to acquire a little more intellectual courage than they at present possess. Meanwhile, they will continue to be the parson's lackeys and dutifully dance to their master's piping.

There was never more practical Christianity in England than now, and never more applied Christianity in every sphere of life, declares Dr. Ritson, president of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference. That, we think, is a rather curious state of affairs; for we are assured on the highest clerical authority that the masses are entirely pagan. Probably, though, all the good doctor means is that people are exhibiting to-day more thought for others and more humane feeling than did their forebears of the Age of Faith. As this improvement is coincident with a widespread decline in the Christian faith, Christian leaders are more than a little puzzled

to account for it. Hence they, with the sublime egotism of their caste, explain it away by dubbing it "practical Christianity." That is a pretty trick, but it deceives only the unreflecting. What Dr. Ritson ought to do is to explain why this so-called "practical Christianity" was so little in evidence when the Church was at the height of its power and the majority of people were earnest believers.

Once upon a time Christians dogmatically asserted that the sense of justice was a God-given quality, and that sympathy for others was mainly the result of men's contact with religion. Now, however, some Christians appear to be admitting the Freethought contention, that these qualities are social in origin. Thus a Baptist writer declares that the social as well as the individual quality is present in the personality from its beginning; that there is no stage in life at which we can separate the individual life from its social relations. The child, he says, learns that his eager self-assertion must be adjusted to the claims of others. Coming in contact with others, we discover that the exhibition of certain traits brings unhappiness to ourselves no less than to others. Hence, to live peaceably we develop a sympathy with the thoughts, feelings, and aims of other people, and so learn to do as we would be done by.

Exactly. All that explains quite naturally how arises in men's minds the feeling of sympathy and the notion of justice. God and religion do not enter into the affair at all. But our Baptist friend will not admit that such is the case. He continues: "On the highest level of all, this social consciousness may become a definite social conscience, and be taken up into a religious faith, with all the new motives that religion can employ." Not so. There is no "may" about it; social consciousness *does* become a social conscience. We admit this conscience is taken up into religion; but all religion does is to exploit it and to obscure in a cloud of mystery its purely natural origin.

The wise use of leisure is a problem which deeply concerns Principal L. P. Jacks. He declares: "So many people spend their leisure time in fooling, and thereby they make trouble for other people." That may be true enough; but the trouble which arises in this way is relatively small in comparison with the trouble which has been created by serious and egotistic fanatics in their endeavour to shape society to the pattern they fancy is indicated by the asylum philosophy of Jesus the Nazarene.

"There is always this comfort to me that however great is the wrong in the world, there is not nearly so much as there was, and it is enough that other things are in course of being put right. That is Christian optimism," says the Rev. James Learnount. This Christian optimist ought to be highly elated to learn that if the Bill for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws passes, another wrong (to Freethinkers) will be put right.

A hundred years ago women were brought up to ask nothing, expect nothing, and endure all things, declares Mrs. J. E. Francis. Ah, that was in the "good old times" when men believed in the Bible and took St. Paul as their guide, philosopher, and friend. Christian women would do well to ponder on that fact; and on this—that it is not until the dawn of this Freethinking era, when the Bible and the churches have lost their power over men, that women are able to get something like fair treatment.

Writing about Religion as a Career, the Rev. W. R. Matthews, D.D., Dean of King's College, London, says: "The day of the 'Private Secretary' type of parson is



over—it never really existed. Certainly the timid and colourless individual will have a hard time as a minister under modern conditions." The reverend gentleman seems a wee bit muddled. First he says the day, etc., is over; then he declares it never existed. After that he tells us the type of parson mentioned would have a hard time under modern conditions; which implies that under former conditions the same type could easily have existed. Dr. Matthews continues: "I think there is no virtue which we clergy need to cultivate more than courage in thought and speech and act. We have suffered through the lack of it." That is indeed a humiliating confession. Evidently the Christian religion and intellectual courage are not boon companions. And evidently, too, timid-minded parsons exist after all—the Church breeds them.

One reason for the shortage of candidates, says Dr. Matthews, is that there is a considerable amount of unsettlement and perplexity in the minds of the younger generation, and a hesitation to assent to formularies. This, we fancy, is a polite way of saying that modern youth strongly suspects religion to be all tosh, and its formulæ and ritual to be mere piffle. If that is so, then the shortage is likely to continue; and such candidates as do present themselves are rather unlikely to be of the intellectually courageous class. On the contrary, they will be backboneless men willing to assent to anything the Church requires of them so long as they are assured of a safe job. Hence, Dr. Matthews and Dean Inge will find reason for continuing their lamentations for many a long day yet.

We advise Mr. George Sampson, author of *English for the English*, to be careful, or he will have the joys and Sabbatarian bigots who read the *Daily News* suspecting him of Freethought tendencies. After affirming his love of Shakespearean drama and of quite simple pleasures, he adds: "I don't interfere with other people's pleasures, and I don't want other people to interfere with mine." These be dangerous sentiments to express in a leading Nonconformist journal with a bias toward Puritanism. For they are what the wicked Freethinker declares to the bigots when he asks to be left alone to play games or to follow other rational amusements on the Sabbath. Hence we suggest that Mr. Sampson needs to walk warily. For though some of the broader-minded Christians no doubt would agree with Mr. Sampson's sentiments, yet their agreement would probably be only a week-day one; they are not yet liberal-minded enough to extend the implied principle to Sunday and to advocates of Sunday amusements.

If the New Jerusalem is ever to be built in this country, it can be done only by quiet methods, declares Dr. Cyril Norwood. Howling Salvationists please note.

We had often wondered what exactly is a "good Catholic." We know now. Speaking about the United States negro, a Catholic paper says: "When properly instructed, the negro makes a good Catholic. He takes a real interest in his church and school and contributes generously out of his small earnings to their support." In other words, a "good Catholic" is one who thinks exactly as he is told to think by the priests, and who dumps his hard-earned cash into the greedy maw of the non-producing or socially parasitic men of God.

The Gospel Sky Sign Mission, we learn, has secured the use of the scintillating (or moving letter) sign at Piccadilly Circus for continuous display each evening of selected passages from the Scriptures. We sincerely hope the passages will be selected with great care. For if certain unprintable (except in the Bible) passages are thus given to the world, the Mission may excite the displeasure of the Bishop of London's pet society which is active on behalf of public morals.

"English working men read too little. If they read more they would have fuller and happier lives," declared Mr. E. Salter Davies, director of education for Kent. That statement is true enough; nevertheless it needs amplifying. Working men and women read a good deal, but it is the quality, not quantity, of the matter read, and the quality of the manner of reading that makes for a fuller and happier life.

When State education was first instituted, people thought that if the masses were taught to read and write the outcome would be an educated nation. But our educationalists have not secured that result. They have taught the masses to read, but not *what* they should read nor *how* they should read it. Examine the cheap daily and weekly papers, the popular weeklies, and the books in common demand at circulation libraries. What one finds in them is feeble and shallow reasoning, "snap" judgments on important matters, childish rumours and petty gossip, clap-trap, superstition and cheap sentiment. Can working men and women get fuller and happier lives through reading more of this garbage? No. As all this stuff obviously supplies a demand, that demand is a pretty commentary on the kind of intelligence our educationalists have trained at heavy public expense.

Nowadays some attempt is being made to inculcate a love for better-class literature. But that alone is not sufficient to produce a better educated and happier nation. In good literature may be found illogical and sophistical reasoning, unwarranted assumption and inference, bias, false ideals, and so forth. Is there anything in ordinary school training to prepare the scholar to detect such defects? We believe there is not. Little or nothing is done to instruct the child in the principles of right reading. Is he, for instance, taught that an essential for sound thinking is challenging before accepting? Is he told to scrutinize keenly all statements and to compare and weigh one writer's with those of another? Is he trained to reflect on what he reads and shown how to detect bias or unwarranted inference? Unless he is so instructed he is very unlikely to become a truly educated person, however omnivorous a reader he may be.

Since writing the foregoing we note that at the Portsmouth Teachers' Conference, Mr. Barraclough (President of the N.U.T.) declared: "If our education is worthy of the name it teaches us to think. The trouble with uneducated people, and even more with half-educated people, is that they accept their opinions ready-made." That statement calls for little comment, since what has already been said appears to indicate one cause of the trouble mentioned by Mr. Barraclough. But there is another. If people are prone to accept ready-made opinions rather than to do their own thinking, religion is largely to blame. It creates the very type of mind which Mr. Barraclough condemns. It asks for, nay demands, assent to a collection of dogmas—which are nothing but ready-made opinions. It discourages, and has always discouraged, independent thinking; history—not the Board of Education's variety—plainly reveals what unlovely rewards the Churches have reserved for liberal thinkers. That being so, religion is obviously inimical to an education "worthy of the name," and therefore has no rightful place in the school curriculum. We suggest to the teachers that instead of bemoaning an evil they should remove its cause.

#### EPIGRAM ON HUMAN DESTINY.

The lightning's flash; the tempest's roar;  
A wild confusion of the rain—  
This Man's brief life on earth's bleak shore:  
He seeks a Cause; but seeks in vain!

Nigeria.

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.



### To Correspondents.

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

"FREETHINKER" ENDOWMENT TRUST FUND.—A. J. Marriot, 10s.; W. Pugh (2nd sub.), £5; D. H. Kerr (Sydney), £25; T. O. Thomas (New Hebrides), £10.

J. HUTCHINSON.—The Atheist does not ask for *absolute* proof of the existence of God. A reasonable assumption would do. For the rest we can only advise you to seriously attempt to understand Freethought, instead of repeating childish legends about the death-beds of Freethinkers.

E. PINDER.—If you will consult Prescott's *History of Mexico*, Wyllie's *History of Hospitals*, Fort's *Medical Economy During the Middle Ages*, Lecky's *History of European Morals*, or Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe*, you will find plenty of evidence for the non-Christian origin of hospitals. In Persia there were hospitals long before the birth of Christ, in India the Buddhist Emperor established hospitals for both man and beast, in Rome there were military hospitals, as also in other parts of the Empire, and the Temples of Æsculapius, Serapis, and Hygea served the purposes of medical schools and hospitals. Sorry we missed you at Leicester.

W. PUGH.—Thanks for additional subscription to Endowment Fund. Many have promised to contribute regularly to the Fund until the amount is complete. It will, we are convinced, all come along in time. We do not expect that the B.B.C. officials will alter their conduct very much for the present. They seem determined to run the thing as an adjunct to the Churches, but it is good, all the same, to let them know that others beside church and chapel-goers are alive.

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

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

### Sugar Plums

We beg to call the attention of our London readers to the back page advertisement of the meeting on behalf of the Society for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws, to be held in the Essex Hall, Strand, on Friday, April 23. There is a good list of speakers, and others beside those named may be present. It is incumbent upon all Freethinkers to show they are in earnest in this matter, and they should induce any of their Christian friends they can to accompany them to the meeting. The meeting opens at 8 o'clock.

Voting papers to decide the place of meeting of the N.S.S. Annual Conference are now out, and we hope soon to announce the result. Two places, Manchester and Birmingham, have applied for the Conference, and it is for the Branches to decide which it shall be. But which ever it is, we hope that every Branch will try and send a delegate to the Conference. It is an expense which is only incurred once a year, and care for the common good demands it.

Notices of motion for the Agenda should also be sent in without delay. As we have before announced, these notices may be sent in by ordinary members as well as by Branches, and some fruitful suggestions for the carrying on of the work might be given in this manner.

From a daily paper we learn that a suit which is intended to be a counterblast to the "Monkeyville" trial at Dayton will shortly be begun in the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia—Washington's own State. Mr. J. S. Elliot, of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, has filed the suit, which seeks to stop the payment of salaries to chaplains of the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Army and Navy.

There seems something sensible about this, from the pen of Mr. Bruce Beddon. We take it from the *Teacher's World*:—

Much has been written about the indecency of *Ulysses*, by James Joyce, and most of it has come from the pens of people who have not read it, people who know no more what Joyce stands for in modern literature than their forefathers knew what Columbus or George Stephenson or the Pre-Raphaelites or the Vorticists stood for. The modern world (with its addition to civilization, the Yellow Press) seems to applaud the American idea, that so long as you all bawl in unison, it doesn't matter whether you are bawling truth or falsehood, witness its treatment of the Conscientious Objector, of Spiritualism, of the Boer, of the Bolsheviks, of the Elementary School, of ten thousand things beside. "Don't stop to enquire, but join the general chorus," seems to be their excited injunction. It is unfortunate that the Yellow Press has enquired before it began to shout; for were it merely a matter of haphazard shouting, the right things might sometimes be lucky enough to be upheld. It is the reader, not the Yellow Press, who shouts without enquiry. Thus it is that the word "indecency" has been bawled at the work of James Joyce. But so long as we remember that knowledge is the first essential in the business of making up the strange nucleus of thought, or opinion, we shall be safe.

Mr. Joseph Lewis, of New York, has just published *The Bible Unmasked*, price 6s. The book is well produced, and, in the light of what is going on in America, his examination of the Bible should prove useful in the United States. It is plain and outspoken, and does not mince matters in its denunciation of the "sacred" volume. The book is dedicated "in all seriousness to rabbis, priests, and ministers, in the hope that it may bring them to realize the fraud they are perpetrating by preaching the Bible as the Word of God, and as a moral and intellectual guide for the human race." We are afraid that this is a rather extravagant hope. The only way that ministers of religion are stopped preaching their particular doctrines is by the public developing beyond them. So far as Mr. Lewis's book does that it will do its work.

Mr. Lewis is, by the way, gaining considerable publicity, judging from the number of American papers that reach us bearing his portrait, in his fight to prevent religion being taught in the schools, and in taking legal steps, wherever possible, to secure that the United States shall remain completely neutral in matters of religion. In the matter of giving publicity to the Freethought side of the case American papers are rather better than our own. In this country the policy of boycott and silence is more effectively organized.



## The Cycle of Energy.

Any disquisition upon energy must of necessity begin with the idea of force. But what is force? The term is applied to two very dissimilar things, indeed to two attributes of matter which are not only unlike but are diametrically opposite in nature. How they came to be grouped in the same class, will become evident as we proceed.

In the first place it denotes any one of the four kinds of properties inherent in material substance which tend to set in motion their own mass—the mass with which they are indissolubly associated. That is, those attributes in virtue of which matter is essentially, in a restricted sense, an automobile. But the term is also applied to *impulses* or impacts due to the impetus of moving mass like the blow of a hammer or that dealt by any moving projectile. These are often denoted by way of distinction as “impulsive forces.” These two orders conjointly form a complete cycle around which, so to speak, the energy of the universe perpetually flows.

With a view to finding out the relation existing between these two orders we will examine them in turn and ascertain their individual significance beginning with those tendencies to self-motion which all forms of matter possess.

Force, even in the first sense, is a generic term comprising several kinds, and our object will be best served by considering the different varieties in order. These bear specific names such as gravity or weight; molecular cohesion or tension; elastic strain; chemical affinity; magnetic and electric attractions and repulsions. They all agree in being names of attributes of matter which endow it with automobile tendencies. And force is simply a generic name for these different propensities.

It may be well, however, before we proceed further, to enter a caveat against the very common mental habit of taking for granted that an object or agency is understood if it bears a name, and that all mystery attached to it vanishes by simply uttering or writing the name. No policy or practice in the realm of thought could ever be more misleading or deceptive. If it be asked, “Why does a stone fall, or the rivers of the earth flow into the sea? The answer is given pat: “Because gravity makes them do so.” But “gravity” is only a name for heaviness. The question is, *Why* is matter heavy? What makes it heavy? By giving the quality or property of heaviness a new name we create the impression that we can account for or explain this automobile behaviour of all matter. All we have succeeded in doing is to satisfy the mind by a piece of self-deception. We are gulled by the label. And such has been, and ever will be, the detrimental power of speech to deceive the mind.

The explanatory power of a term depends solely upon its connotation or implied meaning. If a constituent item of its import is a causal relation, and *retrospectively* so, it is a help to understand it, for that mental state or process means an ability to tread the path of causation backwards towards its causal origin. The moment we know *why* a thing came into being we ascend from the plane of mere class recognition to that of understanding—the highest plane of knowledge which human mind can reach. To know whence a thing came is to account for it—to explain it. To know parentage gives one a sense of knowing the offspring. Till we know the source a phenomenon, even if familiar, it is a stranger—a mystery. A term that has no retrospective causal constituents in its meaning sheds no light, and is at best only a dummy fingerpost pointing the class

to which it belongs. Hence the names of any of the different species of force, since they denote ultimate things, do not emanate one ray of light to dispel the gloom that shrouds them. They are usually defined as attributes of mass that tend to set it in motion. That is, they are defined by their effects—by what they can do—and not by how they came into being—a fact that is tantamount to a confession that we do not understand them.

If the reader will ask himself why is a stone heavy? Why do the particles of granite or of steel cling together with such tenacity? Why do the bubbles in his teacup float to the sides? Why does the nail fly to the poles of a magnet? Why do bits of paper jump towards the excited glass rod? Why do oxygen and hydrogen atoms rush into each other's embrace with such impetuosity? and he cannot fail to realize that he is up against a blank wall. The human mind has been so concentrated upon the automobility of living substance as to divert its attention from the intrinsic tendencies or proclivities of matter to self-motion in the non-living state. The effort being more an attempt to *unify* the living with the non-living than to account or explain the ultimate auto-mobile attributes of matter.

These different tendencies of matter form a succession of invisible coatings or layers like those of an onion, if we may fancifully compare that which has no dimensions with that which occupies space.

Each layer acts quite independent of the others; and they differ much in respect to conditions under which they become operative as well as in regard to their resultant effects.

As an outer layer, so to speak, we have gravity or weight. This tendency is *un*-conditional; it acts on all matter irrespective of size or distance save that its intensity varies inversely as the square of the distance separating the particles or masses in mutual approach. The effect of this automobile attribute is to agglomerate matter into vast masses of which the millions of suns and worlds scattered throughout space are permanent and impressive examples familiar enough to all.

Then we have, as a next layer, the molecular forces which tend to bind the molecules or particles of matter which gravity enmasses, into liquids and solids. These become operative only when in closest proximity—a condition that can be realized only by the attainment of one of two other conditions—viz., either the substance must be in a state of fusion or the particles must be brought into contact by means of great pressure acting through æons of time as exemplified in geological formations. The resulting solids are of five kinds—viz., rigid, flexible, tough, brittle, or elastic. In the case of the first four, the persistent urges inherent in matter which makes each part an automobile and cause them mutually to approach, now act as static forces, binding them together into solids which resist separation or rupture. In that of the last, they primarily resist distortion. In all elastic substances, we have a potential force or tendency re-developed as a secondary property of matter that plays a very important part in the realms of life and of industry. What machine could be built without the good services of the steel spring; and how could the earth have become covered with perennial forests if the tree and its branches did not bend and sway in the breeze?

Within this layer, as it were, we have the forces known as chemical affinity. And a very appropriate term it is, for it operates only between atoms or molecules which are drawn towards each other in consequence of a specific “lock and key” relation; that is, when each member of the pair is an intrinsic counterpart of the other—a relation which the



term affinity well connotes. This material propensity is more fundamental than the preceding and its effects are infinitely more diversified as exemplified in the organic world.

Lastly, we have electric and magnetic forces, probably these constitute the inner "sheath" of all—the attributes of the very core of matter. These forces display the characteristic of *polarity*, a fact that seems to indicate that matter, in the limit, is polar and may possibly account for the polarity that "crops up" in the realm of life as difference of sex. As attributes of matter in the bulk or mass, they are the most conditioned of all. Electric forces require insulators for their manifestation. And magnetism is more specific still, as it is fully and readily displayed only in the metal, iron.

These four kinds of attributive tendencies inherent in matter agree in being all bi-polar or two-headed. In no conceivable instance is it manifested by one wholly isolated particle of matter. On the contrary, they all involve two portions separated by space either infinitesimally small or infinitely large. The influence emanates, as it were, from either portion, crosses the intervening space, then recollects, and locates itself in the other. These propensities act very much like an invisible elastic cable hooked to two buoys or vessels at sea pulling them together, or like compressed buffers driving them apart. That the auto-mobility of matter is a mutual affair cannot be over-emphasised. Strictly speaking, it is *not* an isolated propensity to move but a reciprocal tendency to approach.

To my mind this fact is highly significant, as it seems to indicate, or indeed, to imply the further fact, that the medium acts as a co-operant factor in the causation of these auto-mobile attributes of matter; that is to say, the intrinsic tendencies to move possessed by all material substances are partly due to the medium, call it ether or what you like.

To question the existence of an immaterial medium is a new stunt of human dementia recently added to the perennial one of spiritualism. These irruptions of insanity are probably as inevitable to human nature as are those frequent and irresistible catastrophes that rend and disfigure the earth in the volcanic regions of our world. An immaterial medium is logically and physically as absolute a necessity for linking and pulling together two separate portions of matter, as the material atmosphere is for aviation, whether of bird or of aircraft, leave alone the impossibility of transmitting energy across space, as exhibited in the propagation of light, heat, and wireless phenomena, without such aid.

There are two other facts related to these auto-mobile tendencies that demand special notice. One of them is a fact of similarity and being common to all, it is necessarily a unifying principle. The other is one of difference and is peculiar to one, and therefore stands out in contrast to the other three. But these will be best discussed after we have considered another fundamental property of matter—an attribute that is diametrically opposed to these auto-mobile tendencies, and is known as inertia. And through being, in every possible way, complementary to the moving propensities described above, the outcome of its interaction with them forms the very foundation of the material universe—viz., physical energy, which enterally flows round the cycle formed by these antithetical attributes of matter.

(To be Concluded.) KERIDON.

## Cain and Abel.

I BELIEVE the present theory was suggested in a previous essay, but as the Freethinker is not likely to have paid much heed to that essay or its contents, a brief restatement of the speculation may be permitted here. Those who have even a slight acquaintance with Slav popular legends and folklore can hardly fail to perceive the Arctic origin of the root ideas in them. The comparison with the most ancient Lapp folklore tales renders this a palpable certainty. To anyone, that is, whose brains are not learning-logged and befogged by orthodox German scholarliness the main scope of which is to reject obvious and rational explanations in order to publish reams of learned verbiage to support the most far-fetched and outlandish, that national vanity and beer can hammer out. Given this Arctic origin it is difficult to avoid the further conclusion that the Cerny boy, a baby boy, the black and white god of the Cechs, was simply another form of Janus (of the Latin proverb, *mors j'annua vito*) the janitor who opened the door of life to the rising sun child, i.e. the Arctic day of summer, and closed it when the sun child descended into hell and left the world in universal darkness. The black god was the god of death and pestilence, the white one of life and health. But in their double capacity chickens were offered to them, a sure indication of the usual cannibalistic sacrifices to the sun god.

Volney has shown clearly enough that the Adam and Eve legend was merely an annual myth connected with the astronomical constellations of the serpent, the reaper, and the virgin; but in its Siberian form it is still more obviously an Arctic annual one. There is a tree of good and evil with five good fruit-bearing branches looking east and four evil ones looking west. There are also nine Adams and Eves. One of the nine Eves eats one of the evil-bringing fruits and occasions the collapse of the Arctic Paradise. The allegory is obvious. When the tempter persuades the ninth Eve to eat the evil-bringing fruit of the lowest, i.e. ninth branch of the four western branches, the three months' Arctic night of the latitude to which the legend belongs closes in with the descent of the sun-child into Hell. The Cerny boy was killed and buried in it. We have here then the simplest form of the Cain and Abel legend. The very names let the cat out of the bag if our bespectacled big-wigs were not bat-blind. Cain is simply Cerny black and Abel Baby white. The very change of the attributes ascribed to Cain and Abel is significant. Cain must have originally been the shepherd god, with his flock, the stars, which he pastures in the meadow of the Arctic night. And Abel, the God of light and vegetation. And this is in perfect harmony with the tragic history of Europe and more or less of Asia as well. It is the pastoral peoples and *not* the agricultural ones who are the murderers and butchers of humanity. When the nomad's flocks increase beyond what their pasturage can maintain, the nomads invade their agricultural neighbours. Tamerlane, in precisely these circumstances (the excessive increase of his herds or the failure of his pasturage, or both combined), levied a province of Northern China and proposed to exterminate the whole of the inhabitants to devote it to the pasturing of his cattle. A wise Buddhist or Confucian official dissuaded him by pointing out the enormous amount of wealth and provision it produced in its populous condition. Besides the economic reasons, physical ones may cause northern pastoral peoples to be particularly savage and bloodthirsty:—

1. The constant slaughtering of animals speedily

God and Man. An honest god's the noblest work of man.—Samuel Butler.



results not only in indifference, but erotic delight in the infliction of death.

2. Exclusive flesh-eating without vegetables to some extent poisons the blood. This most likely is one of the causes of the thirst for blood of the pastoral peoples, as well as the economical ones. The lowland Scotch were ferocious cannibals by *preference*, not sacrificial ones, as late at least as the middle of the fifth century. But this did not prevent the Christianized Roman Empire from employing them as mercenaries, against one another in their internal feuds or to prop their infamous but tottering Christian despotism. These Scotch cannibals regarded the female breasts and male buttocks as special delicacies.

I hope and believe they at least cooked their victims and did not eat them raw. The "haggis" is most likely a relic of Scotch cannibalism. The blood-thirsty fanaticism of the primitive Jews of the Holy Land was simply Hun and Tartan in miniature. They butchered its injudicious agriculturists to make room for their monotheistic sheep and goats. And then, in the true spirit of sacrificial religion, they applied Turganieff's maxim that the best way to injure an enemy is to ascribe to him your own secret sins.

Cain became an agriculturist, and his victim Abel, a gentle, loving, Jewish sheep and cattle breeder and butcher.

La Paz.

W. W. STRICKLAND.

## A Day Abroad.

I HAVE just returned from a short visit to Italy, and in the notes before me there may be something interesting and amusing to readers of this journal.

It was to the north of Italy that I went. Not to the towns, but to those little hamlets, those scattered cottages that are tucked away in the niches of lake-bordering hills and mountains.

I knew that I had not chosen a very fitting time for my fleeting visit, and what I saw then of the Maggiore, the Como, and the Orta Lakes were drab grey expanses of mist-hidden waters, out of which, here and there, rose those glorious isles which looked now but desolate and forlorn under their canopy of vapour and frozen snow.

I spent one day at a little town—a very little town—on the slopes of the Orta Lake. Here, to use a hackneyed expression, I looked about me.

It was on a Sunday morning that I arrived. A warm sun shone from a clear blue-grey sky that warned of coming snow, and I felt that all was well. I strode through what we would call the High Street, and at the top, at the cross roads, I saw a splendid monument. A really fine piece of sculpture. I thought that this must be to the Caduti—the Fallen. It was not. It was to the Virgin, and there, in magnificent stone sculpture, sat She, holding out a wreathed crown to the very diffident populace around.

I asked a peasant about this—what it was all about—and why they should put a giddy thing like that in the very Piazza.

"Oh," he answered, in a dialect which was absolutely unique, "that is in commemoration of a victory. *Nel quaranta nove.*"

"But," I replied, "this is to the Virgin."

"Sir," he replied respectfully, "The Virgin stopped the Austrians, so!"

I was not satisfied. It was a fact that in '49 the Austrians had entered the little town and pillaged it. I reminded the peasant of this.

"*E vero,*" he replied hastily and, I thought, rather foolishly, "but they did not enter *here*; they went round the other way"—indicating with a sweep of his hand the hills around—"and it took them a long time, *per Dio!*"

Now I consider putting up a monument for a reason like this rather uncommon. I decided to play the sightseer a little longer. All the churches—and they were many—were tolling their bells, and vying each other in making a din. I had plenty of time on my hands so I decided to go through one or two of these temples.

I began with the Chiesa Grande—that being the fashionable church—and, after getting past three beggars, each with divers limbs missing, and past a young girl holding a plate for the poor, I got in.

Great marble columns that extended far above to a richly decorated ceiling, a mosaic floor, three altars and innumerable statues with rows of lighted candles around each, paintings and memorials on the walls—all these things I took in at a glance. I looked at the principal altar. Six bronze gargoyles adorned it; its purple hangings and rich lace brought into relief the sumptuous tabernacle. At the other end of the church a massive organ warbled pleasantly. In the midst of all two or three priests stalked majestically up and down the aisles, mingling with the crowds that now entered the church, smiling and nodding with arrogant austerity.

Methought I was in a palace, yet the men and women I saw filing into the seats and crowding round the altar were poor; not the sort one sees in a palace. However, the mass, or service, began, and I escaped from a side exit.

I walked along the streets (followed, of course, by sundry small boys and girls marvelling at my spats and "butterfly" collar), and soon I came to another house of God; this time a poor one—a very poor one. I entered it and found a mass in progress. A little wizened old priest prayed squeakily, and turned ever and anon to lift his trembling hands over a scattered gathering of ten or twelve. On the altar was a candlestick, some flowers, and an improvised table-cloth. No gargoyles and no purple hangings.

I rather liked the place. I liked the homeliness and sombre poorness and the spirit—the true Socialist spirit—which united those few people with the poor old man.

After that, I went to my albergo (the hotel, shall we say?) and had a talk with the proprietor—a great hearty fellow, well known for his enormous wine-drinking propensities and his broadminded views on all things worldly.

We talked of various things and I approached the subject of religion. In a matter-of-fact way he told me that, generally speaking, religion in northern Italy is only tolerated so long as it does not interfere with the rights of the public to enjoyment and amusement. It is there and you can take it or leave it—*come vuole*. He went on to say that *he* would never object to it so long as it did not upset his Sunday evening game of cards and his bottle.

The women of course are more particular. An Atheist or Communist is literally spoken of with bated breath. This reminds me of an amusing incident that occurred at this place during the War.

An Atheist—an Italian—had entered one of the churches during the interval between two masses, and, going boldly into the pulpit, he derided in a fond voice the foolishness of religion and the hypocrisy of priests. The men, it is understood, enjoyed themselves on the quiet, but the women promptly chased the fellow out of the church and into the



road and half-way along to the next town. His was not a discreet mind.

The houses of these little towns and villages are particularly disheartening. Cows and pigs and poultry are not, as in this country, kept in the fields and sheltered there. In Italy they seem to form part and parcel of the household. The entrance to a country house, for instance, is a huge gate-like door. This opens into the yard, on the one side of which are the living rooms, and on the other side the cows' rooms, the pigsty (in corner of same), and the general feeding ground for the poultry. The available space in the yard is mostly taken up with stacks of firewood, and, what is more conspicuous, a great manure heap rising to four or five feet in height and as much in breadth. The atmosphere, as you enter the door, is enough to knock one down.....

The sanitary system does not exist—that is obvious. Plague and pestilence is kept at a distance by attaching holy pictures to the stable-door and other convenient places.

The people lived frugally. Minestrone—a kind of pot-pourri soup—and bread and cheese, are the principal food, with, of course, a certain abundance of wine. Yet these people are cheerful and hardworking. The women work like men, the men like horses. They are not intelligent, yet more cunning and persevering than our country people. They adapt themselves to new surroundings—as will be readily imagined when I say that most Italians who emigrate come from country parts such as these. There are many large families, ten or twelve members being very usual.

There is extremely little cruelty among Italian peasants. Cows are yoked to carts and are used to bring in the wine butts during the harvests, and for all purposes of farm work. However, as I said, they are treated as part of members of the household, more or less.

Gossip, it may be easily imagined, is in a high state of perfection. Everyone has a nickname, and this sometimes outlives the surname. The priests form the most popular subject for scandal. I heard, for instance, at the place I have described, of the large household of female relatives which the reverend prevosto keeps, and of that young priest who disappeared at the same time as the daughter of that woman who—'Tis not fit for the ears of men.

But let me go on to more pleasant, if rather irrelevant, talk. The streets are cobbled—great and little stones sticking out at all angles from a kind of soft wet dirt. I used to wonder what would happen when it rained for days on end—whether the water just "accumulated" or whether it managed to squeeze through the soft, wet dirt.

I know I haven't painted a very invigorating picture of an Italian country town, yet the little place I've depicted is a source of æsthetic joy to those tourists who cross the lake by rail in summer.

The whitewashed walls of the houses bathed in sunlight and reflected in the glittering water below, the winding narrow streets, the natural beauty of the surroundings—all these are efficient in falsifying the true nature of things. To pay a visit to such a place is to break a dream: let us keep to Turin with its lofty-arched pavements and wide garden streets, and Milan with its cathedral and its wonderful cemetery, and Venice and Cuneo, with their history and beauty. For if we stray from these it is only to find a semi-enslaved people—illiterate, narrow-minded, and unreasonable. Italy must turn to her countryside and drive out the parasitic worm which feeds on the mind and pocket of the peasant, namely, the clergy.

G. A. BELLONI.

## Correspondence.

### THE PERSONIFICATION OF NATURE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—A contributor who signs himself "Ephphatha" accuses me of not meaning what I say or of not saying what I mean. If he takes palpable metaphorical expressions for literal statements, what he accuses me of is obviously true. But I should be very surprised to learn that many readers of this journal would for a moment question their metaphorical character. Now, as no one but a purist or an arrant pedant would demur to one the privilege of using similes and other figures of speech if apposite, it must be that his strictures are levelled against my personifying Nature. As I am often guilty of the offence, it is a serious indictment. And what is worse, not only do I practise the evil, but I love it. I am very partial to metaphors and I love personifying Nature. It often avoids cumbersome circumlocutions, and gives vividness and colour to facts and reasons as well as relieving and softening the aridity of a style that has no natural piquancy. And if they are mere figures of speech he blames me for not entering a caveat to prevent misapprehension. If I were a perfect stranger to this journal there would be some justification in the charge; but in my case it was not only unnecessary but superfluous to the point of silliness. For I am known to the readers as a pronounced evolutionist. If there be a principle in philosophy susceptible of universal application, it is, that an affirmative statement or belief implies the negation of its contradictory. It therefore follows that the affirmation of universal evolution is in itself the negation of an "absolute commencement of anything," as Spencer pointed out years ago in his *Principles of Biology*.

Teleology or purposiveness is stamped upon every organ, tissue, gland, or function of every living thing, whether plant or animal, but it was the ruthless elimination of the least fit that served as the searing brand.

Moreover I contend that I have never attempted to trim my sails to the veering winds of Materialism. And what is more, I have never ignored or even slurred over a fact that did not favour my "ism." On the contrary, I have invariably drawn attention to it. For instance, the "survival of the fittest" presupposes the impulses to survive (to feed and to procreate) as the operator's chisel presupposes the continuous rotation of his lathe. If the spinning ceases the chisel is worthless. So in Nature; but whence came the impulses to live? Where has "Ephphatha's" beau-ideal scientist stressed this fact?

I do maintain that mind is *not* an entity, but is simply a name for the sum-total of the psychic capacities of any living creature, be it an earthworm, a gorilla, or a human being. The difference in the mind manifested is invariably concomitant with a corresponding difference in the size and complexity of its organ—ganglion or brain.

His illustration is absolutely irrelevant. Energy is an entity in the sense that it is a scalar and not a vector quantity—being a product of two factors. But the term "stagnant" is wholly *inapplicable* to it. Energy as long as it remains in matter is always either static or kinetic, and when it quits matter it becomes radiant. What is in a "stagnant" condition in the seed is not energy, but the phenomenon of life which accompanies living substance. This suspension is, by the way, a proof that life, like mind, is not an entity, but simply a generic term for all the manifestations of living substance, just as mind is for those of a living brain.

No one has denounced the folly of dogmatizing about ultimate things more often than I have done.

Mr. Panton will see from the above what I understand by term "Mind," but I fear it has little or nothing congruent with his own. My remarks were based on the assumption that action preceded *re*-action. And I regret that I am mentally much too obtuse or dull-witted to follow his subtle proof that the reverse is the correct order and that reaction comes first.

KERIDON.



## A CORRECTION.

SIR,—In the issue of the *Freethinker* of April 4 appears the usual report of the Sunday evening's meeting of the North London Branch of the N.S.S. In it is the statement: "Mr. L. Ebury made a virulent attack on Birth Control." I wish to make an emphatic protest, as I made no attack, virulent or otherwise, on Birth Control as such. What I did attack was the claim that Birth Control would cure unemployment and poverty. As I made it perfectly clear that I was in favour of the propagation of Birth Control itself, I trust that in the interests of truth and fair play you will publish this letter, and thereby prevent my being misrepresented to your readers and my friends.

L. EBURY.

## MATERIALISM.

SIR,—Pray forgive me for responding once again to Mr. Panton, for I am already conscious of having overstayed my welcome in your correspondence columns, but I am very anxious to come to a better understanding with him.

Mr. Panton's conceptions seem to deal with the question of identity between an object and our impression of it. Let me say in passing that this is not necessarily the question involved in the remark that "the world outside of us cannot be the same world that is within." This statement, I think, is more properly discussed in terms of two types of experience, and in these terms the contrary would be unthinkable; for the very ideas of identity and difference are based upon the ultimate and arbitrary discriminations of consciousness. But though I hold that Mr. Panton's argument is not strictly relevant to Mr. Cohen's remarks, it remains nevertheless an argument relevant to the question of identity between object and impression, and I willingly turn to a consideration of it. The fly has set foot at last upon the flypaper.

The illustration of the gramophone appears to be reducible to this: that the vibrations involved in the gramophone rendering of song are identical with those registered in the brain of the listener, and because they give rise to a motor reproduction, in him, of the exact song we are able to say that his "impression" of the original gramophonic vibrations is actually identical with them. If the identity is only cerebral and not psychical then Mr. Panton's whole case breaks down. Now in all this it is the use of the word identical which I question. The original sound waves impinge on the drum of the ear. We are then to suppose that vibrations identical in frequency are somehow transmitted through the cochlea and along the auditory nerve and registered (still identically, mark you) in the brain substance. Then an "impression" somehow arises which can be spoken of in terms of vibrations identical with the others, and from the motor centres of the brain are discharged more identical vibrations down the buccal and laryngeal nerve tracts, till ultimately we get the identical sound waves again in the form of the repeated song. That is what I called a physiological inspiration, and can you wonder at it? But let us not mince matters. It is altogether unwarranted as a conception in physiological science, and does not flow as a scientific conclusion from the fact that the song is repeated. If Mr. Panton means that these processes are fundamentally reducible to transformations and manifestations of energy, that is an entirely different proposition. The conception of ultimate substance and its manifestations is as old as Democritus and his age of thinkers, and it was beautifully developed by the giant mind of Spinoza. But does not Mr. Panton see that the very conception of manifestations implies difference, and has it escaped him that in order to construct his illustration of the gramophone he presupposes two things and then sets out to show that they are not two things, but one, unless he means by identity something that we do not understand? An argument which conceives identity to follow from the fact that two things are ultimately manifestations of one, would permit us in the end to say that all existing things are identical, and have done with it. But what, then, would become of the idea of identity, for there would be no difference? I wish Mr.

Panton would tell us what he really does mean by identity, for I am sure we are wishful to fathom his conception.

MEDICUS.

## North London Branch N.S.S.

A good discussion followed Mr. Marsden's interesting and thoughtful address on Marxism. Next Sunday, we understand that Mr. Rex Roberts's non-committal "Recent Reflections" will be a continuation of his elucidation of the Freudian philosophy, on which he debated last autumn, and ought to evoke an excellent discussion.—K. B. K.

## 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, Debate—"Has Man an Immortal Soul." Father Vincent McNab v. Mr. C. Ratcliffe.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N.W.): 7.30, Mr. Rex Roberts, "Recent Reflections."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): 7, R. Dimsdale Stocker, "Public Opinion—The Myths and the Reality."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2.): 11, John A. Hobson, M.A., "Morality and its Substitutes."

## OUTDOOR.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Brockwell Park): 3.30, Mr. H. Constable, a Lecture.

## COUNTRY.—INDOOR.

BURSLER, STAFFS (Queen's Hall): Monday, April 19, Debate—"That Christianity is necessary for the attainment of Social Justice." Affirmative, Rev. W. Mason; Negative, Mr. Chapman Cohen.

LEEDS BRANCH N.S.S. (Trades' Hall, Upper Fountain Street): 7.15, Mr. Thomas Hands, "The Use of Libraries."

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ON

**FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 1926**

In support of the Bill now before the House of Commons  
for the Repeal of the Blasphemy Laws

The Chair will be taken at 8 p.m. by the

**Rev. CANON DONALDSON, M.A.**

SPEAKERS:

**Rev. W. COPELAND BOWIE, D.D.**

**Mr. ERNEST THURTLÉ, M.P.**

**Dr. ALFRED SALTER, M.P.**

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