

SUNDAY IN MANCHESTER.

The

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*Acid Drops, To Correspondents, Sugar Plums,
Letters to the Editor, etc.*

Views and Opinions.

Sunday in Manchester.

SEVERAL readers of this paper sent me copies of a letter on the Sunday question, written to the *Times* by the Rev. Hewlett Johnson, Dean of Manchester. I would have dealt with it last week, but attention to other matters, and want of space, prevented my doing so. In any case, the subject of Sunday Entertainments loses none of its importance by waiting a week. It appears that the *Manchester Evening News* distributed a number of voting papers to Churches and Cinemas within a five mile radius, to see what replies would be given to the question of whether Sunday games were required, and should cinemas be open on Sunday. In Manchester, neither are tolerated, so far as the government of the city is concerned. From the figures supplied by Dean Johnson, it appears that the voting was as follows:—

SUNDAY GAMES—For, 37,609; against, 195,603
SUNDAY CINEMAS—For 30,078; against, 205,643

The result, we are told, has caused wide-spread astonishment, and the moral drawn from it by the Dean, is that residents in other places would do well to pause before giving heed to the cry that there is a general desire for entertainments, and that these are only prevented by a very narrow and very bigoted majority. That is the Dean's summing up. My own conclusion, assuming the complete reliability of the figures as a test of the feeling of the population, is that Manchester is in a very backward state on this question, probably more so than many other places. But I can well understand the Dean being pleased at finding Manchester so little advanced. It makes his business prospects appear brighter.

* * *

Figures can Lie.

We are not surprised, however, that a vote taken in this way yielded an overwhelming majority for the churches. To be at all representative it should

have been taken from the whole of the population over a given area. But bigotry is notoriously active and aggressive, otherwise it would not be bigotry; and the bigot is far readier to thrust his opinions upon other people than the average man is ready to express his. To canvass a church on such a question, particularly if a little prompting had been given by the clergy, would be to make sure of a practically unanimous vote of the whole of the church members. It is really asking them, “Do you prefer the Church to the Cinema?” and their presence in the church should have been enough to determine the answer. Moreover, we are a trifle suspicious whether in a given radius there were actually over 200,000 different people at church on a special Sunday. It would mean that something like 40 per cent. of the adult population of the City was at church on that particular Sunday; and I should like some proof that this is ever the case. It looks as though some people signed the papers twice, or that they canvassed among their friends to get signatures. On the other hand, it is extremely likely that a large number of the people who attended the cinemas were merely told that such a paper was there to be signed, which would mean that they would have to go out of their way to sign it, and one can realize what that would mean. The majority would simply not take the trouble. I fancy you would get much the same result on any question, tested in the same manner, on any subject where the interests of the church are at stake. Dean Johnson, must be either very simple or very artful.

* * *

Puritanism and Sunday.

But Dean Johnson, either unknowingly, or deliberately, mistakes, and therefore mis-states the issue. No advocate of a civilized Sunday argues that it should be decided by a mere vote, or that there are more people who want an enlightened day of leisure than there are who wish to preserve this ancient taboo. If an overwhelming majority favoured the more enlightened view, the matter would soon be decided. The argument in favour of greater freedom on Sunday is that it makes for a better training of the young and a better generation of citizens. Games in public recreation grounds are better for the young, or for adults, than merely hanging about the streets or shut up in the slums of a city. Musical and other entertainments may keep some out of public houses, save them from the boredom of the puritan Sunday, or protect the public against the hooliganism resulting from lounging round street corners. For one must remember that, if Dean Johnson's arguments are sound, they are just as good against Sunday excursions to the seaside, or into the country, as they are against the opening of cinemas and the playing of games. It means that the working man and the

business man would not be allowed to take exercise in the fresh air, other than such as could be obtained by a sedate walk between church hours. Will Dean Johnson advocate publicly, that all the opportunities that exist for enabling men and women to get away from the city on Sunday should be stopped? If not, why not? Is it because they are well established, and if their abolition were proposed the professional intolerance underlying the opposition would be clear? And is it because other forms of Sunday entertainment are not so common, that he feels he can rely upon the stupid conservatism of a class in opposing Sunday games and Sunday entertainments? I ask, but I am not sanguine of a reply. The clergy never do reply to straightforward questions, in which there is a danger of them showing their hand should they venture on an answer.

* * *

Entertainments and Public Health.

But suppose the Manchester figures are quite representative of Manchester intelligence. I hasten to say that I am only assuming this for the purpose of argument. I really should not like to think of it as quite so low as these figures would indicate, if we took them as Dean Johnson does, quite seriously. But suppose they implied all the Dean thinks they do imply. What then? A reform is not advocated because the majority want it, but because a number of people wish them to enjoy it. Sunday games are believed by many to be healthful, and even morally better than attending Sunday School. Sunday entertainments are believed to be preferable to street lounging, and Sunday music and the like would have a better æsthetic and moral influence on the general body of the public than would dreary idleness, or even listening to sermons in which no belief is placed. It is surely no reply to this to say that the people at church do not wish it. Police officials all over the country have testified to the fact that entertainments on Sunday have usually meant a diminution of street hooliganism. This has been so obvious that some of the churches, as a means of keeping in touch with young men and women, have started Sunday entertainments of their own; and at Wolverhampton, a Church has boldly opened a cabaret, where there is no religion of any kind! What does Dean Johnson make of these things? Does he ask us to believe that what has been the case in other places will not be the case in Manchester? If the opening of the London Parks for games on Sunday, if the opening of London Cinemas on Sunday, if excursions to the sea-side or into the country on Sunday, have not led to demoralization elsewhere, but have had plainly beneficial effects, why should not the same results follow at Manchester? Does he wish us to believe that the Manchester folk are such a poor lot that the liberty of choice given them elsewhere on the day of rest cannot safely be given them in Cottonopolis? If he does not mean that, what does he mean? Or has he no more in mind than the fear that it will mean diminished church attendance? That is quite possible; but his remedy is clear. Let him turn his church into a picture palace. Then he may have the profit and pleasure of seeing "House Full" put up, even though he is not one of the star performers.

* * *

Business Interest.

Suggesting that the Dean fears the effect of games and entertainments on Church attendance "touches the spot." Of course, he talks about games and amusements involving Sunday labour, but, then, so does opening churches and chapels, or running tram-cars, or police duties, or keeping the electric light

going. The curious thing is that these advocates of a closed Sunday are most careful for labour on Sunday. Nothing like the same solicitude is shown for the working man during the rest of the week. And even here the Dean shows the cloven hoof. For he says that though by no means Sabbatarians, Churchmen are far from averse from "healthy bodily activity on Sunday, when it does not hinder worship nor disrupt the family." The idea of games on Sunday disrupting the family is so absurd that there is only left for serious consideration, the hindrance to worship—that is interference with the Dean's own business. Again, it will not do to give the workman, who is employed on Sunday, Monday off—although this plan appears to work very well in France—because "It sets the worker free when his family are employed and the churches are shut." That is really not clever. It shows the game quite too plainly. Monday will not do because the Dean's place is shut, and he only wants the workman to be on holiday when he is open. I am surprised. Dean Johnson has been represented to me as one of the cleverest parsons in Manchester. Of course he may be that, but parsonic cleverness must be at a low ebb, when one of its cleverest representatives cannot make out a more plausible case than that. I really believe I could do it better myself.

* * *

Church and Cinemas.

Two final facts, and then I shall be done with Dean Johnson. We are told that people do not want Sunday games and entertainments. Who does not want them? Clearly those who do not want them. That is the only reply. And because some people do not want things that are in themselves admittedly good, those who do want must not be permitted to have them. That is the ultimate logic of the Dean's position. Churchgoers do not want to go to the cinemas or to the theatre, or to the music hall on Sunday. Therefore, the non-Churchgoer shall not be permitted to go to these places. Dean Johnson does not want to play games on Sunday, therefore no one shall play games on that day. But no one is asking the Dean to play games or to go to a theatre. No one is anxious to coerce him; it is he that wishes to coerce other people. And his only reason is that he and his friends do not wish to do the things that the other people wish to do. They may do them on Monday or on Saturday but not on Sunday. A more ridiculous piece of petty, narrow-minded tyranny it would be impossible to conceive. The second reply to the statement that people do not want cinemas, is that, any rate, they go there. No one forces them to go. They have to pay for a seat. And yet the cinemas are filled. The churches are quite free, some persuasion, or even pressure is brought to bear upon people to attend, all sorts of bribes are dangled before them, and the churches are not full. What, now, does the Dean make of these facts? The churches are half empty, the cinemas are full to overflowing! Yet Dean Johnson tells the authorities not to be led away by the plea that people want the cinemas open. I do not think the Dean is quite so foolish as he seems. If he were quite convinced that the people preferred the churches to cinemas, he would not oppose their opening. It is because he knows that they prefer cinemas to sermons, cricket to choirs, games to gammon, that he is crying out against the public being permitted to attend. The gospel is a mighty force, but one can hardly expect it to stand up against a picture palace or a game of bowls.

The Cross.

EASTER is with us once more, and Christians are expected to concentrate their minds upon the death and resurrection of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The pulpit assures us that Good Friday and Easter Sunday are the greatest, most highly important dates in the history of the world, but in the present article we shall confine ourselves to a discussion of the event alleged to have occurred on the former. To the apostle Paul, the Cross was the most precious object in the universe, because on it the Son of God had offered himself up to his Father as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. In the *Christian World Pulpit* of March 24th, there is a sermon on the subject by the Rev. Percival Gough, M.A., vicar of St. Mark's, Hamilton Terrace, London, N.W., in which we are informed that "Lent confronts us in the most solemn manner with the way in which God meets the suffering, pain, and anguish that befall mankind in this world, and I need not say that God's way with suffering is, for us all, the way of the Cross of Christ." Mr. Gough pities the man who imagines that he can "find salvation by banishing suffering to the realm of illusion and non-existence," but admits, however, that by this means one may perhaps experience "a sense of well-being that yields a kind of buoyancy." But the sense of well-being so gained is a curse if it makes one "turn away from the Cross, and from the creative and recreative powers which the Cross confers upon us." Such emotional observations are an affront to reason and commonsense, because there is no truth in them. In fact, they are wholly false, and mischievous as well. The Cross, in its theological interpretation is the most gigantic farce ever seen. Of what service has it ever been to Berlin, Paris, New York, or London? Mr. Gough's eulogy to it is doubtless perfectly sincere, but the belief in witchcraft was, while it lasted, equally honest. Sincerity in holding a view is no test whatever of its truth.

Let us examine Mr. Gough's interpretation of the Cross. He says:—

The meaning of the Cross is no philosophical one; it is not a scientific one; nor is it a meaning that carries us away from the stern realities of life. It was and still is to-day, God's practical way in which he has, so to speak, shouldered the burdens of the suffering caused by sin, by entering himself into all the changes and chances of this mortal life, and crowning them with the victory of the Cross. The great glory of the Cross is that it does not undo the act of sin and suffering, nor does it relieve us of moral responsibility. It recreates the man who sins and suffers, binding back again to God man's moral consciousness, and vindicating the holiness of the broken law by clothing man in the strength won by Man.

The whole of that extract is the product of the religious imagination, and can be true only to Christian believers. To all others it is nothing but naked fiction. It is no doubt a source of comfort to those who suffer, to believe that there is a loving Father in heaven who shares their pain and anguish; but of the truth of their belief there is not a tittle of proof. It is their *belief* that does the work, not the *object* thereof; and the belief itself is a relic of the primitive age of ignorance and superstition. The ever-growing tendency of the present scientific day is to repudiate supernatural beliefs and to walk through life, not by faith, but by knowledge.

Mr. Gough frankly acknowledges that "there are many, perhaps a growing number of those who declare the test of trust to be the unreality of evil." Most probably the preacher means by evil here, sin against God, in which case we are at one with those

who deny its reality. Now comes a strange and essentially untrue declaration:—

The Cross has its roots in the reality of evil, and in the blessed reality of the victory over evil which he who hung upon it, won for us and will win in us if we will let him.

As a matter of simple fact the cross was an ancient instrument of punishment, on which criminals were fastened and exposed until death by exhaustion came to their relief. From very far off antiquity, it was looked upon as a sacred or mystic symbol. Even in ancient Mexico it was so regarded and used. In the case of the Gospel Jesus, it was primarily an instrument of torture for alleged disloyalty to his own nation and to the Roman Empire. It was afterwards that a religious interpretation was attached to it; and in the course of time it came to be interpreted as the emblem of Christianity. In his glorification of Christ, Robertson of Brighton, said: "The Cross was once a gibbet, but it is now the highest name we have because he hung on it." Mr. Gough, however, believes that the Cross is a mystery which cannot be revealed to non-believers, saying:—

We cannot put the meaning of the Cross into words and nothing that has ever been said or thought can reveal its secret to any of us. That secret is only unfolded to those to whom Christ is all in all, and who humbly try to enter into his teaching by simple obedience. For if we try by the simplest act of faith to touch but the fringe of his glory, we shall be caught up into and shall never leave it, and it will unfold its deeper meaning as we place ourselves and keep ourselves within its radiance.

If that is true there is only an insignificant number of professing Christians to whom the meaning of the Cross has been made known. To the overwhelming majority of them, it only conveys the notion that Christ died on it, and that by putting their trust in him they will be delivered from the sense of guilt in this world, and from the doom of burning for ever in hell fire in the next.

In many churches and chapels to-day congregations will probably join in singing:—

There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.

But in the world at large the crucifixion is of no account, and faith in Christ as its Redeemer is quite dead. Fully aware of this, Mr. Gough says that "the teaching that is so prevalent concerning the unreality of sin and evil, makes it imperative at this time, that we should state and restate again and again our undying faith in the unchanging verity of God's act of Redemption here on earth, under a darkened sun, and amidst people as real as we are to-day." Whatever the clergy and their diminishing followers may say and do in the attempt to revive belief and interest in religion, the inevitable result will be failure. Faith and knowledge cannot dwell together and thrive in the human mind. In past ages faith and ignorance flourished amazingly in the same individuals. It is a most significant and inspiring fact, that in proportion as knowledge increases, faith flags. It has often been stated that there is much less religion among those who live in cities and towns than among peasants, the reason being that the former acquire knowledge more easily than do the latter; but we learn that even in country districts church attendance is seriously falling off. It is utterly in vain that religious leaders protest that empty churches and chapels do not indicate the decay of religious beliefs, but the question which demands an intelligent answer is, why is it the seventy-five *per cent.* of the population of Great Britain are outside all the churches? This could

not be the case if religion swayed the people even as it did fifty years ago, and there is no sign whatever that it is destined to become more dominant in the future.

Like Christmas, Easter has succeeded an old Pagan festival, namely the spring festival, which was celebrated as the advent and triumph of more light and warmth, and for millions of people in Christendom, to-day, such is the real meaning of Easter. The Gospel Jesus did not die for the sins of the world, nor did he rise again and ascend into heaven. As the poet says:—

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

J. T. LLOYD.

"What are Keats?"

The bloom whose petals, nipped before they blew,
Died on the promise of the fruit.

—Shelley, "Adonais."

To bear all naked truths,
And to envisage circumstance, all calm;
That is the top of sovereignty.—Keats.

AMONG the unnumbered wonders of the Eternal City the tree-clad burial-ground outside the Porta San Paola holds a place apart in the affections of literary men. Pilgrims come from remote corners of the earth to linger in the quiet corner, where the infidel, John Keats, lies beside his friend, Joseph Severn, his gravestone bearing the bitter words: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." Not far away rises the slope where the generous heart of Percy Shelley lies buried near his friend, Edward Trelawny. Time has played havoc with this old Protestant cemetery at Rome during the past century, but when Shelley visited it years before his own death, he described it as "the most beautiful and solemn cemetery I ever beheld"; and, in the preface to *Adonais*, he repeats the praise: "It might make one in love with death to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place." John Keats's grave is the oldest in this Roman cemetery, and his reputation has already outlasted his death by a hundred years.

Despite the innocent question, "What are Keats?" attributed to a once very prominent member of the British Royal Family, this great poet has an ever-increasing audience. This is a real proof of his rare qualities, for few poets have wooed Renown with so small a nosegay of verse. To the present day he remains a poet's poet, rather than a singer for the multitude. From the far-off days, when Percy Shelley sang his brother-poet's death-song in *Adonais*, and coupled Keat's name with his own for ever, the younger singer has been "caviare to the general."

Keats's life was overshadowed by the dread disease of consumption. His friend, Joseph Severn, cheered his last days. "Poor Keats," he wrote, "has me ever by him, and shadows out the form of one solitary friend; he opens his eyes in great doubt and horror, but when they fall on me they close gently, open quickly, and close again, till he sinks to sleep." Is not this the true pathos and sublime of human life? Is there a diviner thing in the whole world than pure affection shining through the mists of death? At the last Severn held his dying friend in his arms for seven hours. Severn outlived Keats for fifty-seven years, and his remains were removed from their original resting-place and buried beside those of Keats in the Roman cemetery under the blue Italian sky. It was well and happily done. In the

presence of such a perfect friendship. "Death is a low mist which cannot blot the brightness it may veil."

Because of these infidel graves, generations of educated English and American visitors to Rome make pilgrimage to where they lie beside the Pauline Gate at the opening of the Ossian Way. Such widespread interest is in every sense noteworthy, for it is a public confession that two young Freethinkers confer glories upon one of the greatest cities of the civilized world, and that even the Eternal City itself is made more honourable and illustrious by their presence.

Keats was not only a Freethinker, but he remains the most Pagan of the English poets. If there is a poet whose poetry was uninfluenced by supernaturalism it is Keats'. His correspondence with his friends shows quite plainly that religion had little attraction for him, and there are but few references to religious beliefs. Writing after the death of his brother, he says: "I will not enter into any parsonic comments on death." In the last days of his own short life he writes to Fanny Brawne, the woman whom he loved, that for her sake he would "wish to believe in immortality." In the midst of his poetic career he writes to a clergyman named Bailey, who afterwards became an Archdeacon, and voices his own complete scepticism: "You know my ideas about religion. I do not think myself more in the right than other people, and nothing in the world is provable"; and he classes "religion" as a "mental pursuit." Like politics, Christianity played no part in his life. The only time he allowed his ideas concerning religion to assume metrical form was in his youthful days, and the sonnet entitled: "Written on a Summer Evening" was not considered important enough to be included in his first published volume. In his brother's transcript of the poems this poem was called: "Sonnet: Written in Disgust of Vulgar Superstition." As Keats grew in mental power he consigned religion to the limbo of forgotten things, and his poetic confession of faith in his prime was:—

Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

It is not strange that Keats was Pagan in his outlook, for poets have long since ceased to gain inspiration from the sixth century crudities of the Christian religion. Byron was a thorough-going sceptic, and Leigh Hunt an unbeliever. Edward Fitzgerald was as epicurian as that old Persian, Omar Khayyam, whom he added to the illustrious company of English writers. Burns was an "enfant terrible" to the Scottish Kirk. Tennyson was heterodox, and Matthew Arnold a "kid-gloved Secularist." James Thomson was a militant Freethinker, and George Meredith and William Morris were both sceptics. Swinburne surpassed them all in his ardour and devotion to Liberty. Thomas Hardy and William Watson are both Freethinkers. The plain, blunt truth is that the Christian religion no longer attracts men of genius, and therein lies its doom. The great river of thought rolls on, and ever on, and bears us further and yet further from the shadow of the Cross, and its allied mediæval mummeries.

MIMNERMUS.

Broadly speaking, all popular religions and political creeds are dodges to avoid work and creative activity.—
The Fighting Rationalist. By W. Margrie.

Of no use are the men who do exactly as was done before, who can never understand that to-day is a new day.—R. W. Trine.

Fundamentalism in Excelsis.

(Continued from page 235.)

WHEN young Asbury was between fourteen and fifteen years of age, all the Protestant congregations in Farmington combined together to engage a noted revivalist named McConnell, for a week's Mission. The price fixed by McConnell, six hundred dollars, although high, was not considered exorbitant, says Mr. Asbury: "As Brother McConnell was a professional devil-chaser with a national reputation and it was felt that he, if anyone, could put Farmington on the right side of the heavenly ledger."

The boy, as we have seen, had by this time, come to utterly detest religion and all its works. Many attempts had been made to convert him, but he had always held out. It was Brother McConnell, he says, "with his improved technique and Circus methods," that brought him to the penitent form. The night young Asbury was brought to the meeting, like a sheep to the slaughter, the church was crowded. He says:—

Brother McConnell was an extraordinarily agile man. Throughout his service, and particularly after the collection had been taken up and found to be good, he bounded back and forth about the pulpit, chasing the Devil hither and yon, shaking his hair from his eyes, sweating at every pore, and roaring charges about dens of evil that I, for one, was never able to find in Farmington, although I headed several exploring parties. . . Here and there throughout the house was an echoing gasp and a strangled sob, utterances of tortured, frightened souls about to be swirled into a great wave of religious frenzy. And standing in the aisle, and about the pulpit were Brothers and Sisters, experienced revival workers, eager retrieving for the Lord, their faces flushed with emotion and their eagle eyes roving the congregation in quest of just such persons. (H. Asbury, *Up from Methodism*, pp. 102-103.)

Directly the evangelist sat down, the band leader rose, and the band, with the augmented choir, struck up the revival hymn: "Oh, that will be glory for me." The emotional appeal was terrific, and presently the audience joined in, bellowing the words with fanatical fervour. Then suddenly the music stopped and there was silence. Mr. Asbury says:—It was theatrical hokum, but effective as always. Then Brother McConnell leaped and lunged to the front of the pulpit, his eyes glaring and his hair streaming down before his eyes. He flung his arms wide: "Come to Jesus!" he shouted. "Brothers! Sisters! Come to Jesus!" He stood there trembling, imploring the sinners to abandon their hellish lives, and the choir boomed into song:—

Lives there a friend like lowly Jesus?
No, not one!
No, not one!

All over the church now there were cries of ecstatic agony as the victims writhed in emotional torture, and after a little while, people began jumping to their feet and shouting: "Glory! Glory to God! Hallelujah!" The noise was deafening. People were shouting in every part of the audience, they were weeping and moaning. One old woman jumped to her feet, climbed on to her seat, and began to yell: "I see Jesus! I see Jesus! I see Jesus!" She repeated it over and over again, "I see Jesus!" and finally she collapsed into her seat, mumbling and weeping. The evangelist took up the cry. He roared back and forth across the pulpit, shaking his hands above his head, calling on God to damn the sinners. His whole body quivered and he screamed at the top of his voice: "Jesus is in this house! Come to Jesus! Give your heart to God!" And

above the roar of his voice and the rumble of the seething congregation rose the music. It ebbed and flowed, it beat against the rafters and rebounded from the floor, always that regular beat of a hymn, like tom-toms in the jungles of Hayti. Many of the members sang hysterically, their voices rising on the high notes into veritable shrieks, but there was no change in the steady thunder of the organ or the wail of the violin, and there was no escaping the emotional effect of the song:

Bringing in the sheaves,
Bringing in the sheaves,
We shall come rejoicing
Bringing in the sheaves."

Only those who have been through the Evangelical mill can really understand the feelings animating these religious orgies.

Speaking personally, I never took part in one of these religious debauches. The Congregationalists—to which sect we belonged—looked upon Revival meetings as vulgar; the nearest thing we had to them were Anniversary Services. I well remember one which happened when I was about the same impressionable age as young Asbury. A large choir, including the Sunday School, had been trained, for the occasion, to sing specially selected hymns not included in our hymn-book. Printed leaflets of these were distributed in all the pews.

The service began, as usual, with a prayer, and then a hymn from the ordinary hymn-book, sung by choir and congregation. So far, it was the same old weary business, and I was heartily wishing it was over and done with. I little knew what was about to be sprung on me. The next hymn was from the printed leaflet, and was to be sung by the choir and Sunday School alone, the congregation remaining seated. The hymn was:—

Will you meet me at the Fountain?

I must explain that previous to this I had picked up a delightful new tune, which seemed to embody all those sensuous yearnings, tinged with romantic melancholy by which youth is ravaged at that susceptible age. I did not know the words, or indeed, if there were any words to it; and now the choir were singing this delightful tune to the words, "Will you meet me at the Fountain!"—I may say that, later on, some unspiritual person saw the worldly possibilities in this sensuous tune, and wrote a parody of it, in which the Fountain of the hymn, figured as the name of a public-house. It had an enormous success on the music-hall stage, entirely owing to the tune. But there was another surprise in store. There was a chorus to the hymn, but the choir did not sing it. A young girl, clothed in white, and wearing a tiara, hitherto unseen, appeared in a gallery high up, and in a wonderfully pure and penetrating voice, answered the appeal of the choir:

Yes, I'll meet you at the fountain,
At the fountain bright and fair;
Oh, I'll meet you at the fountain,
Yes, I'll meet you, meet you there.

The effect was electric. I was submerged in waves of emotion. I thought at the time it was religious emotion, but I can see now that it was merely sensuous. The man who arranged the programme—the Sunday School Superintendent, I believe—was a very clever man, he had missed his vocation, and the theatrical world had lost a great stage manager. He was one of those geniuses who achieve the greatest effects with the simplest materials. He saw the possibilities, the pull, in the words and music of the Fountain hymn. He seized on the idea of getting a solo voice to sing the chorus. He found the young girl with the beautiful voice in the Sunday School—I learned afterwards that her parents lived in a slum

near the Chapel—he had her made up like an angel in everything but wings; and sprang it all on us as a surprise.

Of course it was, as Asbury remarks of his affair, all "theatrical hokum," but it was very effective nevertheless. Where God the Judge, and his woc-begone, spiritless son, had repelled me; this angelic apparition attracted me—for, at that time, I believed in a material heaven—how delightful it would be to meet that radiant and diademed singer, by the fountain, and walk the golden streets hand in hand, ever young and ever fair. If there had been a "penitent form" there to receive converts, like they had at Revival meetings, I do not doubt but what I should, in that hour, have found my way to it.

As to the girl, the praise she received threw her off her balance, she considered herself above work after that, and went utterly to the bad.

W. MANN.

(To be concluded).

The Canadian Blasphemy Trial.

[We are always pleased to see an approach to a sense of justice to Freethinkers from the Christian ministry, and we gladly record the following from the Rev. W. A. Cameron, of Toronto, concerning the recent trial for blasphemy.]

I was surprised to discover that a law was on the statute books of this country which permitted the crown to prosecute a citizen for his religious opinions or the crudity of the form in which they were expressed, with the result that the citizen has been sentenced to a term in jail. Of course I share the regret of the crown and the presiding judge that these religious views were expressed in language unworthy of the discussion of religious opinion. But I maintain that the issue at stake is a far more vital and serious one than most people seem to imagine.

Here is a man in a free country, where no State church exists, brought into court because of the manner in which he expressed his religious views. Can anyone suppose for a moment that such a thing could have occurred in England, even with the existence of a State church? If the offending articles had been delivered in the form of a speech in Hyde Park, London, would the law of the land have interfered? Everyone knows the answer is in the negative, for England is a land of soul liberty and freedom of speech. Surely it is an amazing thing to discover a law in Ontario that permits the courts to come to the defense of God.

Notwithstanding the fact that men may presume upon their religious freedom even to the extent of turning liberty into licence, that freedom must be kept secure. If an occasional person employs unworthy language in the expression of religious convictions, that is but part of the price we must pay for our religious liberty. The separation of civil and religious authority must be maintained. Our fathers have purchased our religious freedom at tremendous cost. Surely we are not going to surrender it now.

Religious persecution by civil authority is a return to the old days of religious slavery. The subordination of the religious element to the control of the State seems to be an actual fact in modern life. I protest against this principle just as I would protest against the theory that the State must submit to church authority. The true ideal is not a free State dominating an enslaved church, nor a free church dominating an enslaved State, but a free church in a free State; each recognizing the other, and each performing its own functions, unhampered by the interference of the other.

Acid Drops.

Our remark, in last week's issue, that in any other direction than that of religion, a Judge who had strong personal opinions on any matter brought before him would probably decline to take the case, was illustrated almost as soon as the words were printed. A North London magistrate had before him a man whom he recognized as having been under him during the war. He promptly stopped the case, and adjourned it for some other magistrate to take it, on the ground that his judgment might be prejudiced. One wonders whether a Judge called on to try a blasphemy case will act in the same way? As it is we have heard judges, who were most fauatical advocates of extreme religious views solemnly going through the farce of trying a Freethinker for blasphemy, and enlarging to the jury on the terrible crime of outraging their religious feelings.

According to a weekly paper, in Denmark, Sweden, and Turkey health certificates must be obtained before a man and woman can be married. The object of the proviso is to improve the health of the nations by attacking disease at one of its sources. The motive at the back of such legislation is a good one, but whether the result will be as anticipated remains to be seen. The probability is that the unfit will simply contract illicit unions, which will leave matters much as they were before, and perchance force legislators to legalise the teaching of Birth Control methods to all who desire such knowledge or ought to be conversant with it. This Eugenic view of marriage, which demands health-certificates is in striking contrast to the traditional Christian view. Christian priests have never been concerned, nor are they now, with improving the national stock. Regarding marriage as a "spiritual" affair, they have always been willing to unite any man and woman, however defective, mentally or physically, such might be, provided the two parties gave assent to the Church's silly dogmas. The Eugenic way of looking at marriage is essentially modern, and a considerable advance on the Christian, in that it would appear to do something towards reducing the sum total of human ill-health and misery.

In connection with the Adoration of the Wheaten Fetish controversy, which excited the prehistoric gentlemen engaged in Prayer Book Titivation, the Rev. J. C. Carlile makes some illuminating comments that reveal just how much the man-in-the-street yearns for religion. The Press, says our Baptist friend, gave considerable attention to the controversy, and Protestant Societies did their best to create general interest. But so far as could be seen the general public was unconcerned. There seemed not very much interest in the questions raised. The man outside the Church, says Mr. Carlile, is indifferent; he does not care what the service is. He regards himself as separated from all issues. He lives in another world and talks another language. One of the tragedies of the time, continues the rev. gentleman, is the widening gulf between organized religion and the great mass of the people. That is indeed a tragedy—for priests; a tragedy in a pint pot. Still the giant wedge of knowledge keeps driving in, and the gulf between religion and the masses grows wider. And all the funny little antics of pious journalists and sorrowing parsons cannot bridge it. The queer part about the "tragedy" is that the world is not suffering because of it. It grows slowly better. The masses are becoming less superstitious and brutal, better mannered, cleaner and healthier, wider read, more receptive to culture, and more thoughtful of others. These facts are patent to all except those with a patent nostrum to advertise.

Apropos of Lord's Day Observance, a Methodist contemporary says: "We have moved a long way from the strict Sabbatarianism of our grandfather's days, and there is no likelihood of a return to it." That is true. And the reason why Methodists have departed from

their forebears' narrow views is that, in the main, they are considerably better educated, a little broader-minded, and a fraction less bigoted. But this improvement has not resulted from anything within the Church; for, the old Sabbatarian arguments are just as cogent, and the texts they are based on are still in the Bible. What has happened is that Methodist thought has been subjected to pressure from outside enlightened opinion, including Freethought ridicule. And Methodist thought has given way under the pressure. It will give way still more yet, we prophesy; for only by moving can the Church hope to retain any considerable portion of the younger generation. In the meantime, we congratulate Methodists upon a very welcome improvement.

To all Faith-Healing Fakirs, in and out of the pulpit, and their followers, we commend the case of James Donaldson, of Stockton-on-Tees, as narrated in the papers of April 12. Donaldson lost his sight some twelve years ago. On April 11, while drinking a glass of water, he suddenly recovered the sight of one eye. From the religious point of view this is quite wrong. Donaldson should have been attending a healing mission. But we should not be at all surprised if some of the faith-healing evangelists presently discovers that he did ask the Lord to attend to Donaldson's case.

At Giggleswick, Yorks (shades of a smile) there are extensive preparations to take place in order to photograph the eclipse of the sun. We are informed that it will take a fortnight to erect the equipment. A giant telescope-camera, 45-feet in length, will be used: The following company unfortunately will not be present as their absence is unavoidable, but there is no penalty for speculating on their views:—Joshua, Isaiah, the Author of Revelations, the illustrious company of clodhoppers who condemned Bruno, the judges who sentenced Francis Bacon to twenty years imprisonment, Luther who denounced Copernicus as a fool, and Melancthon. And if the spirit of Galileo is there it will murmur "*E pur si muove,*" or at least, "What did I tell you?" The eclipse will also take place without any stage directions or permissions of the million circulation tarrididdle or command performance of Mussolini.

Dr. F. B. Meyer, aged 80, has adopted an abandoned baby. What a wonderful event this must be, since all the daily and weekly Press feel urged to mention the fact and print a portrait. Yet thousands of babies are adopted yearly, and mostly by persons with an income not a fifth of that enjoyed by Dr. Meyer, but the journalists are not moved to record their names, and to extol the goodness of their hearts. Perhaps the Press is surprised to find that a man of God has ordinary human feelings.

Sir Samuel Hoare, the Air Minister, stated recently in the House of Commons, that attendance at Divine service was compulsory for all ranks at Service air-stations. Soldiers are evidently supposed to lack sufficient intelligence to know whether they want religion or not. The Air Ministry believes in applying literally Christ's injunction, "Compel them to come in," in order to justify paying a salary to its chaplains.

Reviewing a book on Christian Foundations, a Methodist writer says that in our time, questionings—often passing into doubts or denials—have affected some of the fundamental truths of religion itself. As a responsible representative of one of our Universities has lately said, he continues, where the sceptical undergraduates formerly debated whether Christ was God or not, now the question is raised whether "God," in the old sense of the word, exists at all. A straw shows which way the wind blows.

The Rev. C. B. Johnson, preaching at Blackburn, confessed that organized religion had for the moment lost its grip. Nevertheless the good man was not despondent. Said he; "I believe that England will ere long put religion in its rightful place, and become a God-fearing nation once more." Well, the nation has put religion in its rightful place—in the dust-bin. And it is mentally much healthier for ceasing to be God-sacred.

Signor Mussolini is reported to be taking great interest in the methods of Madame Montessori, the famous educationist, and to have promised his support for the development of her work. We hope the Dictator appreciates what he is committed to. Dr. Montessori aims at teaching the child to be independent and to think for itself. The key-note of her system of education is freedom. That being so, she seems unlikely to produce the kind of young Italian essential to a Fascist scheme of things—the kind that swears to obey without question the commands of a castor-oil Dictator. Perhaps, however, Signor Mussolini is interested in the Montessori system merely in order to curb any dangerous tendency he fears it may possess. If that be so, he may be sure the Holy Roman Church can be depended on to render all the assistance he requires.

Upper Holloway Baptists have erected an 18-inch sign in gold letters, illuminated by electricity, across the front of their church to attract the public. One would have thought a few deacons standing on their heads in the doorway would have been more effective as advertisement and considerably cheaper, besides giving the public an inkling of the kind of thinking it would be treated to inside.

To commemorate the million British soldiers who fell in the war, a tablet has been placed in Malines Cathedral. Seeing that the Christian priests, claiming to be in direct communication with their Deity, failed to persuade him to prevent the appalling slaughter, a house of God seems the right place for such a memorial. It should serve to remind the Lord of the result of his policy of non-interference. And it may set a few of the more thoughtful worshippers wondering exactly what kind of God it is they are adoring.

Of Lister, the pioneer of anti-septic surgery, a pious paragraphist says, Lister was certainly one of the greatest benefactors of the race—perhaps, from the standpoint of the prevention of suffering, the greatest. Yes, but the warmer the praise of Lister as a preventer of suffering, the stronger the indictment of God as the prime cause of suffering, and as the withholder, for thousands of years, of the knowledge necessary to avoid that suffering.

New guns for the Navy can hurl a projectile weighing 2,100 lb. a distance of twenty miles every minute. When in war, English Christians pray for victory; what they are asking their Lord God to do is to guide each projectile to its appointed objective. That being the only way in which a Christian nation can defeat its enemy, God has a busy time when there is a war on. Possibly he finds a use for Conan Doyle's spirits as projectile directors.

"Ezra" of the *Methodist Recorder* re-tells a story told by the Rev. F. W. Macdonald. "I was once talking to a friend in the presence of a little boy, of whom neither of us was taking notice. I happened to say of a certain writer: 'He not only does not believe there is a God, but takes for granted that no intelligent person does.' The little boy listened and was shocked, and said, 'Was he never by himself in the dark?'" The Methodist scribe adds, "A very pertinent query." We should have said—a very illuminating query. For it helps one to appreciate the real basis of belief in God and in religion.

Fantasy run riot, says Dr. S. Herbert, does not make the artist. We are not so sure. Look what artists in storytelling it made of the dear old fellows who gave the world the Holy Bible.

Sir Wilfred Sugden, M.P., told a meeting of local preachers that there meets every Tuesday, in a room at the House of Commons, members of all parties from both Houses, who pray to be guided to apply Christianity in the making of laws. The pious petitioners would be better employed in thinking out how they could apply to the making of laws the principles of justice, equity, humanity and truth. If they did that the nation might benefit considerably, and Freethinkers might even see the iniquitous Blasphemy Laws removed from the Statute Book.

The *Baptist Times* is attempting to raise a Superannuation Fund for Pastors. The Editor says:—

The Fund will make it easier for men to enter the ministry. It is said that there are plenty of candidates to go to College, but are they of the right type and standard? The best men do not enter the ministry because of the salaries paid or the provision made for retiring. There are parents who are afraid to encourage their boys to follow the vocation they would love to enter, but for the haunting thought that poverty may dog their steps and weigh them down at the last.

The Editor seems a wee bit muddled. According to him the best men are not attracted by monetary or pensionary considerations. Yet he commends a pension fund that will make the ministry easier of entry to the type of man who hesitates at candidature, because of the alleged poverty attached to reaping in the Lord's vineyard! By "easier" he means, of course, more attractive. Seemingly, the would-be Baptist pastors do not like the prospect of being wedded to poverty as their Master was. So that if the Church is to get men to fill vacancies, it will have to have its Pension Scheme and take what comes in the way of candidates. After all, isn't a Superannuation Fund inconsistent with the Christian teaching of "the Lord, will provide"? Perhaps, however, the pastors think £300,000, the money required, is too much to expect the Lord to provide. Hence, they believe it better to cadge the amount from their Baptist Flock.

With all the quarrelling that is going on over the new Prayer Book, no one appears to think of putting the matter to a practical test. Why not let one lot pray for a given thing in the old way, and another pray for something else in the new way, and then judge by results? Clearly, if we are to use any common sense in such a matter, prayers are intended to accomplish something. They accomplish something because God is pleased to grant the prayers offered him; and the only way to test the matter is along the lines suggested. That much ought to be evident, even to the intelligence of Sir William Joynson Hicks. If the Lord grants the prayers of the new Prayer Book advocates, he will then show that he likes the change. If he grants those of the Old Party, he does not wish any change to be made. If he accedes neither, then we might assume that he doesn't wish to be bothered with either. If he grants both petitions, then he doesn't care a hang how people pray to him so long as they do pray. And in this case some may conclude, with Barrie and his theory of the fairies, that they are only kept alive by people believing in them, and so they are content to be kept in existence by any kind of belief. Anyway, we offer the suggestion for what it is worth.

It is rather difficult to determine whether the new Bishop of Blackburn is poking fun at those to whom he preaches, or whether he is just silly. For example, he lectured at Clithero the other day on the subject of prayer. He said he loved to think about prayer, but it was a subject about which "he knew so little." That, we can assure him is nothing to be worried about, since not to know about a religious topic is no disqualification at all. Rather the other way about. Then he discovered

that prayer is universal with man; is, in fact, an instinct. On the other hand, he saw that "very few people prayed with regularity or meaning." Which leaves one wondering what kind of an instinct is it, that very few manifest, and still fewer attach any meaning to. Again, if you asked the first dozen people you met if they prayed, they would say, "Oh, yes, I used to pray, but it did not seem any use, so I left off." That seems an excellent reason for not praying. They had put it to the test of experience, and found it of no use. Bishop Herbert appears to think that an excellent reason for keeping on with it.

A last gem deserves a paragraph by itself. The Bishop quotes the late Will Crooks—not usually regarded as a very profound thinker on any subject—as saying that "It made all the difference in the world to a man when he could get five minutes alone with his Maker." Perhaps Will Crooks was pulling the Bishop's leg, or the Bishop was pulling the legs of his congregation. For I quite agree that it would make a deal of difference to us if we could get five minutes with God almighty—that is, if we could only make sure of him. We would drop the *Freethinker* at once. Still, as we say, it is hard to determine whether the Bishop is merely a humourist out of place, or if he is just—a parson.

Mr. A. J. Cook, at a meeting, stated that brains were better than bombs. We are not sure if this note ought to go in "Sugar Plums," but Mr. Cook is growing up, and if he will allow us, we congratulate him. If democracy evolves an aristocracy of brains that does not mistake a part for the whole, there is plenty of room for it in the world of ideas, which contains less theological cobwebs than formerly.

READING FOR DISCIPLINE.

If the question rises, Why read for discipline? the answer is suggested, not dimly, by a consideration of the two objects that in our day govern, well nigh, the whole field of general reading. Men read either for information, as represented by the newspaper; or for pastime, as represented by current fiction; and in both cases, not only is the manner of reading rapid and cursory, but the matter ordinarily provided is such as bids for such perusal—light in weight, catchy, and of transient interest. A third way of reading is needed, then . . . in order to put on the brakes, to stay with a book long enough to get some flavour of culture, to get below those surface points which merely catch a casual attention, to the undercurrents of thought and ideal and invention that have swept in the deep personality of the author.

The question what to read for discipline thus very nearly answers itself. Not the superficial but the searching books, the works of creative invention and of great men; more especially the books that are recognised as the great masterpieces and vital springs of literature. Not many such books, but few, and one at a time; not necessarily or preferably bulky books, but those wherein much is said, and especially much large personality revealed in little space. The specific books of this sort must be left for the reader's peculiar bent to find . . .

The answer to the question how to read for discipline falls into line with the rest. When you have chosen a work that rises out of the centre of a deep life, read until you are in possession of its inner secret. That is what disciplinary reading amounts to: the method is but devising detailed means to this. Read both rapidly, to get the grand sweep of it, and with slow studiousness, to resolve phrase and allusion, and to fathom the involvements of thought and imagination. Read analytically, until all the elements are vitally joined again; read so many times that the spirit and substance of the work become a part of your own mind's tissue. . . This is the true meaning of reading for culture, so much talked of. Few pursue it far enough, or patiently enough, to know what is in it. . . For the thinker and writer such reading should be the custom and habit of every day. It has thus something of the nutritive power of daily food.

—John Franklyn Genung ("Principles of Rhetoric").

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.—J. F. Aust, 10s. 6d.; J. H. Saunders (China), 14s.; E. L. Bishop, 1s.; Don Walton (S. A.) (fourth Sub.), £2 2s. 6d. The subscription acknowledged from W. Pugh last week should have been the fourth, not third.

G. PETERS.—A good plan. Many are ordering two or three copies of Draper's work.

F. A. H.—We are dealing with the Rev. Desmond Morse-Boycott's articles next week. No space in this issue.

H. MARSHALL.—We could only advise a reading of Professor J. A. Thomson's *Science and Religion* on the general ground that it is always well to read both sides. As to the intrinsic value of the book we do not know, of recent years, 200 pages of print in which there is more confused thinking, sheer scientific misunderstanding, or a greater number of fallacies. The book is published at 7s. 6d.

J. W. SILKSTONE (Toronto).—Very pleased to hear from you. We have very pleasant recollections of both you and your father. Nothing would have given him greater pleasure than to know that you are still interested in the good old cause.

M. L.—If you wish to have a dozen copies of Draper's *Conflict* to send to Christian acquaintances, we should be glad to send them at wholesale rates. Please write our shop-manager. The book is, as you say, a wonderful two-shillings' worth. It will never be reprinted at that price.

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

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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.

Mr. Walter Mann's new pamphlet *Christianity in China: an Exposure of Foreign Missions*, is now ready, and we are expecting a big demand for it. It is a very searching and effective exposure of the real influence of Missionary activity in China, and presents a point of view that cannot be obtained in any other direction. Those who have noted how effectually the churches brought their influence to bear on the discussions that were beginning to crop up as a consequence of Lord Inchcape's remarks on missionaries in China, will feel the more interested in reading what Mr. Mann has to say. As usual, the fullest authority is given for every statement made, and in this way the work is an armoury from which all may select weapons. The pamphlet is issued by the Secular Society Limited, and is published at 6d., postage one penny.

The Picton Hall, Liverpool, was comfortably filled on Sunday last, to listen to Mr. Cohen's lecture on "Does Modern Science Support Religion?" and the structure of the large hall shows off a good audience to the fullest advantage. Mr. Egerton Stafford occupied the chair, and our old friend Mr. McKelvie, was busy at the book-stall. There was quite a good sale of literature, and very many applications for copies of Draper's "Conflict," which could not be supplied. The copies on hand were cleared out directly the doors opened. The others who wanted them had to be told to send for them in the usual way. We may take this opportunity of mentioning, for the benefit of Liverpool readers, that Draper's book may be obtained from Messrs. Grant & Sons—who have ordered a large supply. Other Pioneer Press publications may also be obtained at the same place.

We were glad to see so good an attendance at the Picton Hall, for the reason that there is a revival of Free-thought in Liverpool. A number of very earnest young men and women seem determined to throw themselves into the work, and with the aid of the older members such as Mr. Egerton Stafford, Mr. McKelvie and others, there should be built up a strong Branch. The intention is to widen the area of the Society's activity, and this should attract many members. On Sunday evening there were friends present from Chester, a contingent from Port Sunlight, and some from other places. The chief difficulty at present is the securing of a hall for regular meetings. Like other places, Liverpool is frightfully short of halls for public lectures. But the Branch has one or two places in view, and may before long have a regular home. Intending members and others willing to help, please write the Secretary, Mr. A. Jackson, 7, Kirk Street, Bootle, Lancs.

At a meeting of the Birmingham Town Council, on April 5, one of the members, Mr. Bradbeer, moved:—

That this Council considers that in the letting of the Council Schools throughout the city, no distinction should be made on political or religious grounds, in the case of any responsible organization applying for the use of such schools; that the National Secular Society should not be made an exception in this respect; and the Education Committee instructed to act accordingly.

The motion was carried, and this should have the effect of rescinding the resolution, under which the N.S.S. has been prohibited using the schools.

We congratulate the local Freethinkers on their victory, and we wish to express our appreciation of those members of the Council who have stood up for the exercise of elementary justice. A special word of acknowledgement is due here to the Birmingham *Town Crier*, which has championed the rights of Freethinkers in Birmingham whenever opportunity offered. We wish we could speak as well of all the other Birmingham papers. There never was any reasonable justification for Freethinkers being refused the use of schools. The original resolution belonged to a handful of parsons and other bigots, and it has taken many years to undo their work. Of course, it has not stopped Freethought being preached in Birmingham, it has only served to illustrate the truth, that if Freethinkers wish to retain the limited freedom they possess, they must be perpetually on the alert.

If Newton had never lived, the world at this day would be in many ways more such as Newton would have approved than it is in fact. It would be simple, quieter, less organized; but also poorer, more ignorant, and less full of hope.—Mr. Bertrand Russell.

The whole of modern life rests upon the control of natural forces achieved by science, and all modern science in almost all its branches is to a greater or less degree dependent upon Newton.—Mr. Bertrand Russell.

Faith, which can remove mountains, is powerless in a traffic entanglement. One, Two, Three.—Paul Selver.

Zola and Religion.

THE name of Emile Zola, the most realistic of French writers, is one that is anathema in all respectable circles; he stands for complete social anarchy, moral chaos, intellectual and spiritual revolt, the destruction of conventional bourgeois standards, and the application of free scientific enquiry. Truly, in the Cæsarian formula, "such men are dangerous." Zola is still "written down" consistently because in all his work he has been at greater pains than almost any other novelist to reveal the levels at which life moves for the greater part of mankind and to indicate thereby, more than by the precise theories of the didacticist, what could and should be. He is held, resultantly, not to have a *nice* mind, for has he not presumed to suggest that justice and equity are only in the estimation of a self-deluding society the ruling principles of the world? Extremism is considered to be the *motif* of his work, for assuredly modern civilization, into which has been poured such amenity, contains none of the horrible elements that the ill-balanced and depraved imagination of Zola has conceived.

At heart, everyone knows that Zola gives only what is there. But in the main, people are still of the kind that affect to be pained, shocked and revolted by the modern problem-play, psychological novel and film that the Censor has passed only after many misgivings. They will not have it that, however "immoral" these things are held to be, they really present nothing that is not a reflection of thoughts that inhabit somewhere in the mind even of a nun. Withal, there are those who, while assailing Zola and his school, go clandestinely to Rabelais or make discreet enquiries in a Parisian side-street for James Joyce. The reason is not far to seek. Zola, far from being a mere pornographer, brought to his task the conviction of truth and the verisimilitude of exact observation of life's processes. No one ever took his art more seriously. For him the writing of fiction was vested with the seriousness and zeal of scientific exposition. A novel was not the easy composition of the dilettante, written with Rivierian geniality and detached artificiality, but in every sense "a criticism of life." The fault of Zola is that "he thinks too much" for the ordinary student of life.

Like all reforming natures, he has been completely misunderstood by his generation, nor has the succeeding age yet accorded his ideas a right interpretation. Otherwise, how would it be possible for critics still to condemn him, often unheard or unread, as one glorying in vice and capable of seeing only life's sordid side! Admittedly he has not spared the feelings, for he was aware only too intensely that life as a unit does not. He could not shut his eyes on the bitter fact that for the majority of men life is not the joyous and glorious affair that West-End preachers and small-visioned cathedral functionaries hold it out to be; he was determined to see truth face to face "even if it slay him." Certainly he harrows our feelings at times, for life itself is sometimes too terrible, perhaps even for any words to convey. Only the supreme art of a Dostoevsky can elaborate for us an utterly brutal murder or reveal to us the hidden life of the idiot and yet succeed in retaining in the readers a paramount sympathy for the unfortunate characters concerned, and only the fearless expurgation of a Zola, conducting us through unplumbed depths of misery and degradation, can strive to make us feel that man's potentiality for great and noble conduct is nevertheless unbounded.

His portrayal of life is not so poetical as that of a Shakespeare or so picturesque as that of a Stack-pool, but in essence it is scarcely less optimistic. The optimistic tendency is not so apparent, but it is there, for it is usually the case that those who have torn away most completely the veil of hypocrisy, delusion and empty convention that surround every aspect of human existence give evidence of possessing greatest faith in basic human nature, which is the only true optimism. In finding the world so deplorably out of joint, Zola's final cry has not been one of despair but of frank acknowledgement of the duty his awakened perceptive sense has laid upon him.

It is customary, of course, to dismiss Zola's novelistic sociology as one-sided and partial, or to assail him on the score that he has not sought to "uplift" mankind. Far from his realism deserving such weak-minded neglect and such pious recrimination, it merits the highest praise for not seeking to gloss over what is unpleasant and at every turn true to the facts of modern life. If he does not serve us with pretty pictures of the Paris of the English tourist but with "sordid" accounts of coal-mines, of the havoc wrought by drunkenness, with unrelieved (externally) studies of the paramount horrors of war, and of the sheer wretchedness of subsisting in appalling peasant fashion, he does so in no Juvenalian spirit, but because in such things does he touch the root of the innumerable sorrows that afflict mankind. His realism, intolerable only if life is intolerable, demonstrates, like the realism of the Russian school of fiction, like the superb realism of Thomas Hardy, how much more deeply he has tried to read into the cosmic process than most professional philosophers. The results of his researches have not been futile and despairing views of life, throwing the mind back upon itself, with no possibility of stimulation from the social background or of hope in the march of the human race. For the various major ailments of mankind the clear-thinking Frenchman has wrought heroically to suggest, in novel-guise, the appropriate remedial counter-agents in the right ordering of the economic forces through the application of principles of justice and humanity.

Under the major ailments of mankind he places prominently the superstitious farces staged so meticulously and regularly by the Catholic Church. In a special series of powerful novels, the celebrated *Three Cities* series, he has given profound consideration to this so-called "universal" system of organized religion, and, of course, reaches the inevitable conclusion that through it the mind is shackled and an entirely false, puerile and despicable view of life presented, and, worse, rigorously imposed upon the sufferers. His thesis is that whenever the implications of such a creed are faced there must prevail "reason in her most exalted mood," and that man need not live by faith at all. He lends piquancy to the problem by making his chief character a Catholic priest into whose mind stray pieces of doubt have entered. Naturally, with such a type to operate on, the author was required to submit very adequate motivation for the final invalidating of the whole absurd mass of doctrine so long and so perniciously asserted. Needless to say, his books, with their fine, often magnificent, free-thinking qualities were such as could only have been accepted in a country so sensibly rational in its general attitude towards religion as France.

Zola's hero, the Abbé Pierre Froment, was at first a priest in whom orthodoxy would outwardly have found nothing to cavil at. Among women he inspired even more confidence than most of his kind,

while in all ceremonial and charitable functions he discharged his duties in exemplary fashion. But within all was not well—that is to say, for the Church he was supposed to serve. His "faith" stood in need of reinforcement, and he made the experiment of sojourning for a time in the miracle-city of Lourdes, there, under the inspiration of divine daily "revelation," to become his old self again. But it did not happen as is supposed to befall a good Catholic; the Abbé was only repelled by the crass superstition of the pilgrim-visitors and the imposition, crudity and error which he witnessed. In desperation he went to Rome, feeling that there, if anywhere, was to be found the buttress he so much required. But again, even in the Eternal City, he experienced only revulsion at the whole gross deception of the priestly policy. In presence of the sovereign universal divinity the spirit he found was still the old spirit of Domination.

Returning in perturbation and disappointment to Paris he reverted to carrying out the Church's woefully feeble palliative of haphazard charity, but in indiscriminate charity, which did not connote even the Biblical idea, he found one of the very evils that the Church sought to remove. The littleness of this charitable dabbling in contrast to the universal travail filled him with despondency. In the last volume of the remarkable trilogy, *Paris*, following *Lourdes* and *Rome*, he asked himself whether elementary probity did not demand that he should throw off the cassock and return into the midst of men. "Was it not," he asked himself, "cowardly and dangerous to leave the masses in superstition. Certainly the theory of a just and vigilant Providence, of a future paradise where all the sufferings would receive compensation, had long seemed necessary to the wretchedness of mankind; but what a trap lay in it, what a pretext for the tyrannical grinding down of nations; and how far more virile it would be to undeceive the nations, however brutally, and give them courage to live the real life, even if it were in tears. If they were already turning aside from Christianity, was not this because they needed a more human ideal, a religion of health and joy which should not be a religion of death? On the day when the idea of charity should crumble, Christianity would crumble also, for it was built upon the idea of Divine charity correcting the injustice of fate, and offering future rewards to those who might suffer in this life." That was a good beginning for the honest-minded priest, who, unlike so many other clerics, felt he could not continue to teach as eternal truths dogmas what he regarded as primitive errors.

Feeling the issue to be a clear one he determined on casting aside his cassock, the badge of his false apostolate. In vain did his friend, Abbé Rose, a misguided but sincere and rather pitiable old churchman, seek to deter him from so absolute a step. Pierre Froment was proof against all appeals not based on reason. "For nearly two thousand years now," he answered, "the Gospel has proved a failure. There has been no redemption; the sufferings of mankind are every whit as great and unjust as they were when Jesus came." His final conviction was that the world must be freed from such irrationalism.

Having taken the irrevocable step and found an immensity of relief and satisfaction in doing so, the ex-Abbé reviewed his evolution from hard-and-fast theology to intellectual sanity and useful forms of work. He recalled the experiments he had made. "First had come one at Lourdes, where the glorification of the absurd had simply filled him with pity for any such attempt to revert to the primitive

faith of young nations, who bend beneath the terror born of ignorance; and, secondly, there had been an experiment at Rome, which he had found incapable of any renewal, and which he had seen staggering to its death amidst its ruins, a mere great shadow, which would soon be of no account, fast sinking, as it was, to the dust of dead religions." Then he turned to Paris, the capital of Mankind, over-topped no longer as the ruler of the world by the basilica of Montmartre with its impertinent symbolism of a bleeding heart, but by the topless temple of Science. From effete Catholicism, hypothetical and uncritical, he had risen to a religion that would really serve humanity, he had found on earth "the love that passeth understanding" and he was happy. Those who manage to make their escape from the most subversive of the so-called "higher" religions deserve no less.

JANSEN.

Tell-Tale Prague or Germany's Great Men.

FROM time immemorial, the centre of Prague has been a Jewish citadel. In its labyrinthine coils, a veritable Prague in miniature, the old Jewish cemetery there contains the bones of hundreds of thousands of Jewish citizens from remote times down to the present century. It is now closed, but a no less populous new Jewish cemetery has been opened in the suburbs. Besides the interest of its baroque and mediæval architecture, the picturesque capitol on the Moldan, of which I am proud to be a citizen, thanks to the intensity of its Jewish population in the Old Town and Josefstadt, offers an unrivalled means of determining with something like mathematical exactitude what German names are generally the patronymics of Jews and what names are not. In Prague, as in the Jewish triangle of Bonn, Strasburg Frankfort, in Munich, and perhaps in other towns of central Europe, the Jewish element monopolizes a large part of the trade. In Prague certain categories of shops are almost exclusively in Jewish hands. These are—Booksellers, all forms of haberdashery, clothing, hats, tailors and women's finery, jewellers, bankers, and largely butchers, and some extent also pastry cooks. And these predominate largely over any other form of stores and shopkeepers. Speaking very generally, in Prague there is a presumption that a German name over a shop indicates a Jew. Another aid to scientific determination is the Christian or first name. Thus, if in a central part of the city, we meet with a haberdasher's shop belonging to a Josef Wolff, or even the Bohemian Vlk, we may be practically certain that the shopkeeper is a Jew. Not necessarily a synagogue Jew. I am here dealing with race and blood, not the idle trappings of religion. It is well to remember that in Roman Catholic countries Jews readily adapt themselves to the prevalent superstition, often from interest, not seldom perhaps from sentiment. Putting aside for the moment obvious Jewish names, such as Jacob, Joseph, Abraham, Ephraim, etc., there are certain Christian names to which they give a marked preference. To mention only a few, we have—Heinrich, Wolter, Alois, Emil, Felix, Max, Paul, Sigmund, Juluss, Albert, and not a few others. Again, in German names, certain terminals give a presumption that the bearer of the name is Jewish. There are, amongst others—Bach, berg, thal, stein, mann, and in Cech, ele or eles. The three colours—Schwartz, rolti and green, but particularly the two first, indicate a Jewish name. There is yet another element. Observation shows that there

is a very strong tendency for all the names over the shops of a particular block to be Jewish; most likely the owner of the block is a Jew who prefers to let the shop to members of his own race. Combining all these data, it is not difficult to determine with tolerable certainty which names are those of German Jews and which are not. To take an example:

In the block along the north side of Prikop Street, which ends just opposite the east side of Vacslavske Narnesti, which runs south and north, the names of the shopkeepers from east to west are as follows:—Corner Vaclav Vlk, haberdasher; Meindl Singer Co.; Vilhem Sheck, shirts, ties, etc.; Schiller, ladies' finery (an immense shop); O. F. Hess, hatter; Arnost Hoffmann, trunks and leather wares; Goldschmidt, jeweller; Salamander (Salaman), shoe shop; S. Greenhut, women's finers; Ephraim Lobl, ditto (a large business). Offenbach, the composer, is unquestionably a Jew (it is the name of a village near Frankfort), and Offenbach chose the stories of Hoffmann as the theme of his posthumous grand opera; again, Arnost (Arnold) is a predilected Jewish name.

We are therefore compelled to admit as highly probable that the name Schiller is Jewish, but this becomes a moral certainty when we find in the very heart of the Jewish old town a small butcher of the name of Joseph Schiller. History is in the main a tissue of falsehoods, and half truth and biography is not in a much better plight. As soon as a person distinguishes himself an attempt is always made to provide him with illustrious ancestors, though they were probably mudlarks or chimney sweepers. But, in addition to this, the German Jews always endeavour to veil the Jewish origin of Jews distinguished in German literature or music, not to mention German science, where they are far less numerous. At the same time, for the initiated, they provide certain indications of the real origin of the great man. Thus, Goethe is generally regarded as a pure blood German savage, but there is not the shadow of a doubt, after all the biographical falsehoods are discounted, that he was a pretty nearly pure blood Jew.

Why does the Danish Jew, Brandes, single out Goethe to prove about, if not because of the same race? Before the great man had outsoared the shadow of his night (the Frankfurt Hirschengraben), the little Jewish tailor and his descendants employed the Jewish sculptor, Melchiorne, and immortalize their material personalities, afterwards the great man called in the milched creator of the colossal Kellnerin, brazen as well as its original, known as Bavaria, which towers above and obliterates the ridiculous pseudo Doric Ruhme's Saal of the Munich beer barrels. This illustrious sculptor, guilty also of sundry lions upon a triumphal arch near the University, which look more like the silkworms just before they turn into crystalids than lions or anything else, bore also the purely Jewish name of Schwannthaler. The Jewish city fathers of Frankfort saw to it that the statue of the great man, the work of Schwannthaler, should be placed just opposite the bourse, the very centre of their national life, all round which even the restaurants are indicated by Jewish characters.

As to Heinrich Heine there is no question whatever. Thus Germany's three greatest poets—Goethe, Schiller and Heine—all three bore purely Jewish names, and there is practically no doubt but they were pretty nearly pure blood Jews as well. I may observe that Goethe is *not* a German name at all. I have run through various German directories and found the name, I think, only once, viz.: as that of a doctor in Stuttgart. On the other hand it is

connected with the name of the Leeds haberdashers gott and the Munich ones gotz.

Let us now take stock a little of the names of distinguished so-called Germans, where there is no doubt whatever. We have first and foremost the Mendelssohn family with the great musician, Felix Mendelssohn. Then comes Mendel, the famous naturalist. As these and the Jewish, musician, Mozart, there is no doubt at all. Mozart's sister's house in Munich, frequently visited by Mozart, still exists in the very middle of the Jewish quarter of Munich. Next comes the purely Jewish name of Bach, reminding one of the big Jewish haberdashers of the same name, also of the same Jewish quarter of Munich. Then comes Offenbach, Auerbach and Feuerbach—the latter an original painter and distinguished Freethinker, not to say Atheist. Then we have Meyerbeer, the late Professor Meyer, a distinguished Professor of Forestry in the Munich University, and the Hungarian Jewish doctor, Mayer, whose discovery of the Law of Conservation of Energy was "guyed" by official German science in order to ascribe it to their own creation, the "illustrious" Helmholtz. This scurvy treatment ultimately drove the real discoverer out of his mind. The evidence of the Jewish origin of the greatest German, or rather Amsterdam musician, Beethoven, is overwhelming, but I must omit it. Brahms seems to be clearly Abraham. Schumann, totally un-German in appearance, has a name ending with the Jewish terminal mann. At least admit Schubert to be true German, Tedescophils will plead. This name occurs in the very centre of Prague's Jewry as that of a restaurant-keeper. After considerable observations, I discovered it again in a purely Jewish block of the Kralovska Street vic Pavel Soubert,¹ as that of a small silver and goldsmith as well as watch-seller. I have not examined them closely, but Heller, Hiller and Hummel are most likely Jewish names. In another purely, or almost purely, Jewish block, we have the shirt and collar sellers, Buschek & Suda Associated. But there is no need to prove that Sudermann is a Jew, unless his portraits belie him, for he looks as though he had only just stepped down from the Assyrian bas relief. Haeckel was the descendant of a French Huguenot family. Weismann's name is purely German-Jewish. The celebrated Chamisso and also De la Motte Fouque are French. English, Spanish, French and Italian literature have been built up mainly, though not altogether, by native writers. But the best of German literature, if there be any truth in the above observations, and I have by no means cited the whole of them, and German music mainly the creation of the Jewish element, which also occupies a sufficiently important place, though not such a predominant one in German science. Tell-tale Prague thus knocks on the head one of the most pernicious myths of modern Euro-Christian barbarism, viz.: the greatness and originality of the German people. They constitute a bulky and prolific, but anything but a gifted type of humanity.

W. W. STRICKLAND.

Prague.

The road to knowledge is not by the way of memorising facts, but by the understanding and relation of facts.—J. D. Beresford ("W. E. Ford: a Biography").

There is no harm in guessing. It becomes harmful only when you persecute others for not accepting your guess.—*The Fighting Rationalist*. By W. Margrie.

¹ The block consisted of: Josef Friedmann, jeweller (1); Josef Anderle, furrier (2); K. Hairdi, bookseller (3); Max Traub, india-rubber wares (4); Josef Fallenda, leather wares (5); Pavel Soubert, goldsmith and dealer in watches (6).

Lucretius.

(Concluded from page 237.)

It has been said that Lucretius wrote primarily as a man of science, and as one who attacked religion because it was in the way. To me the case seems the other way about. He appears to have written as one wishing, primarily, to raise life out of the mire in which it lay, and develop its highest possibilities. That he possessed, what Tyndall calls the scientific imagination, is unquestionable. Intellect and imagination run well together in his poem, and Lucretius lifts easily a burden that would have crushed most writers. His attitude and method are also eminently scientific. He believes that the whole of nature admits of rational explanation, and that explanation is to be found by observation, experiment, and verification. His illustrations are usually well chosen and suggestive, and disclose a man who not only studied nature, but one who, in its living aspect at least, approached it in a sympathetic spirit. His references to the gulls seeking their food in the brine, the serpent casting its skin among the thorns, the doleful, liquid cry of the swan, the dog lightly sleeping, with faithful heart, the horse with an eagerness for the race that outruns the swiftmess of its own limbs, the cow seeking in vain the calf that has just been sacrificed at the altar, are among some of the most pathetic passages given to us by ancient literature. It might, indeed, be said that the true heroine of his poem is universal life, from its lowest to its highest forms.

But withal the primary object of Lucretius is a moral, and a social one. Avarice and lust and ambition pervert life and render it useless and a curse; but the master evil of all is the ever present fear of the arbitrary will of the gods. He flashes out into a blaze of indignation against the religious ceremonies going on around him. "No act of piety is it to be often seen with veiled head to turn to a stone and approach every altar and fall prostrate on the ground and spread out the palms before the statues of the gods.....but rather to be able to look upon all things with a mind at peace." There is infinite pity, with profound scorn, for the crowds of men who snatch at luxury and power as a means of happiness of life and amid how great dangers is passed this little term of existence and all there is of it!" And for the right ordering of life there is no need of a faith in the providence of the gods nor in a future life. These are all terrors of no more value than those which children tremble at in the dark. The wrongdoer, if not found out by othes, yet does not escape punishment.

Violence and wrong catch all who commit them in a net, and for the most part recoil on him from whom they sprang.....There is in life a dread of punishment for evil deeds, signal as the deeds are signal, and for atonement of guilt, the prison and the frightful hurling from the rock, scourgings, the dungeon of the doomed, the pitch, the metal plate; and even though these are wanting, yet the conscience stricken mind through boding fears, applies to itself goads and frightens itself with whips, and sees not meanwhile what end there can be of ills or what limit at last is to be set to punishments, and fears lest these very evils be enhanced after death. The life of fools at length becomes a hell here upon earth.

One writer on Lucretius remarks that every line of the poem is indirectly a protest against the religious errors of antiquity. The double qualification is absurd. The attack of Lucretius is not on religious errors only, but on religion itself; and it is not an attack

upon the religion of antiquity only, but upon all religion past, present, and to come. His desire to rid nature of its "haughty lords," his oft-repeated declaration that he will show how nature does everything of itself without the aid of the gods, the scornful comment that if people care to call the sea Neptune or the wine Bacchus, "let them say it in the sense of a symbol, so long as they sully not their souls with the stain of foul religion," is more than a protest against a contemporary religious belief, it sounds the death knell of all the religions that then were and those that were yet to be.

It is, indeed, the fact that Lucretius is dealing with issues that are as real now as when he wrote that makes his work one of the most living that antiquity has given us. He sees, as modern science has taught, that nature is no more favourable to man than to the earthworm. The true relation between man and nature is that of armed warfare, the weapons being natural forces *versus* human intelligence. And by the side of the future of religion "scowling downward from the skies," upon man's knowledge, there is a counter presentation of the figure of science wide-eyed and fearless, crushing error, dispersing tyranny, and lifting man from the mire in which religion had so long held him. No other writer of antiquity was so impressed with the vision of natural law as Lucretius, and no writer has ever put his vision to a more practical use. And it is in his fearless rejection of all shams, his belief in the value of human fellowship, love, and reason, and the conviction that life can never be lived at its best until it has been made self-centred and independent, that Lucretius represents principles we can only neglect at our peril.

SIMPLE SIMON.

Obituary.

MR. WATSON WALKER, JARROW.

WE announce, with regret, the death of Mr. Watson Walker, of Jarrow. Mr. Watson was a very useful member of the South Shields Branch, and was highly respected by all. His death will create a gap among Tyneside Freethinkers. A secular service was performed at the house by Mr. Ralph Chapman, Secretary of the South Shields Branch. We extend our sympathy to the members of Mr. Walker's family.

Society News.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH.

The meeting last Sunday night brought our Sunday evenings at the St. Pancras Reform Club to a close, for this session, as Mr. Hornibrook's lecture on the 24th inst. will be given in the North London Labour Party's rooms, 293, Kentish Town Road.

It is sincerely hoped that when our North London Debates open again in the Autumn, all those who have attended during the last few months will do their best to broadcast these meetings. It is extremely regrettable that such an excellent discussion as last Sunday's was not better attended. The opponents were well-matched, and Mr. Alexander Thomson's arguments were most excellently put, and far more likely to carry conviction than the usual out-pourings of the Temperance fanatic we have been accustomed to. Mr. Palmer, as usual was impregnable. Mr. Kerr, who had come all the way from Croydon, was able to give some useful information on the subject of the Drink traffic, from his experiences in Canada during the War, when the country "went dry" for the time being. To-night, Easter Sunday, there will be no meeting, but we hope for a good muster for Mr. F. A. Hornibrook, on April 24.—K. B. K.

Correspondence.

THE GLACIAL EPOCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—William Clark has kindly offered some criticism on my article entitled, "From Protoplasm to Man." His criticism with reference to glaciers is perhaps substantially correct. However, I would like to point out that I was discussing prehistoric man in particular, and only casually referred to glaciers. He estimated the actual extent of glacial ice at 10 per cent. of the Northern Hemisphere, but made no reference to the accompanying non-glacial ice.

At the culminating height of the last great Ice Age, the plains of Europe, Asia and North America were deeply covered with ice and snow. The North Sea was completely frozen over, and life became almost extinct in the British Isles. There were abbreviated glaciers creeping southward from the Alps and Pyrenees towards the Mediterranean, and great snow storms swept across Spain and Italy. Indeed the evidence favours the hypothesis that so much water, in the form of snow and ice, was piled on the land that the level of the sea was lowered perceptibly, leaving the Mediterranean Sea an inland lake and connecting some of the East Indian islands with the mainland.

Although scientific evidence indicates that there were four great glacial epochs, this does not preclude the hypothesis that there may have been minor glacial epochs; or that the ice barriers slowly advance or recede during long periods. Until quite recently it was believed that the sun did not move, but now it is generally conceded that the sun is travelling through space at an enormous speed, carrying the planets and their satellites with it; and that its elliptical orbit is of an almost inconceivable extent.

The astronomical theory seems the most reliable, because the exact precision of the universal clock-work of the heavens can be demonstrated to a nicety. At certain regularly recurring epochs, owing to the gravitation pull, the elliptical orbit of the earth may be enormously elongated, thus producing an ice age.

ONA MELTON.

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.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S.—No Meeting.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (30 Brixton Road, S.W.): 7.0, Mr. J. H. Van-Biene, "Pricked Bubbles."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): 7.0, Dr. J. Warburton Brown: "Psycho-Analysis and Ethics, in relation to Crime."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY.—No Meeting.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (101, Tottenham Court Road): 7.30, Mr. E. C. Saphin—a lecture. Thursday April 21—Social and Dance.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.0, Special Lecture—Mr. H. H. Hyatt. 6.30, Messrs. Campbell-Everden, Darby and Jackson.

OUTDOOR.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Lecture by Mr. Leonard Elbury.

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Hyde Park): 11.30 and 3.0, Speakers—Messrs. Botting and Hart.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (M'Ghie's Cafe, 56, White-chapel): Saturday, April 23, at 7.0, Members' Meeting. New members cordially invited.

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