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

Views and Opinions.

More about Religion and Science.

EVERYONE knows the reply of the Judge to the thief who pleaded that a man must live—"I do not see the necessity." I was reminded of this by an article from the pen of Professor Julian Huxley, in which he tries to effect a reconciliation between religion and science. For quite apart from the value of the effort, one does not see its necessity. Were Professor Huxley a parson, or even a professing Christian, it would be different. The business of a clergyman is to supply the world with his particular brand of religion, and he is at present faced with a competitor who threatens to take away his possible, and actual, customers. Once upon a time, attempts of this kind were met with a sort of "Safeguarding of Industries" policy, which forbade the rival firm to exist. That policy broke down and other plans were tried. One of these was the once fashionable method of "Spheres of Influence." So much was to belong to religion and so much to science, and neither was expected to encroach on the other's territory. This also broke down; and the next plan was to suggest that religion and science were concerned with two aspects of the same thing, it being conceded that all positive knowledge belonged to science and all else to religion. It is quite easy to appreciate the reason why the modern clergy might grasp at these compromises. But the Scientist? What was he doing in that galley? If he supplied the facts, in what way did these gain in value by their being given a religious significance? I do not know, and Professor Huxley's articles does not make it clear—unless he belongs to that group of people who will have some sort of religion at any price.

* * *

The Real Issue.

Professor Huxley opens his article with a passage which conveys an important truth, and also a profound error. As he sees it:—

The present conflict is not so much between science and religion as between two different views of the universe. The one based upon orthodox theology was born in the early centuries of our era, and reached its fullest expression in late medieval time; the other is based upon the scientific spirit, which leaving aside the brilliant but temporary achievements of ancient Greece, took its real rise in the seventeenth century and has not yet reached its zenith.

The truth here is that the real conflict between science and religion is the conflict between two views of the universe. But it is quite absurd to date this quarrel from the opening of the Christian era, or as being concerned only with Christian theology. The battle between religion and science is continuous; the contest with Christianity is only one of its phases. To restrict the quarrel to the present phase is to lose sight of the significance of the whole question. Professor Huxley might surely have bethought himself that there were conflicts between religious beliefs and positive knowledge long before Christianity was heard of, and that the quarrel is not confined to Christian countries. Christianity is responsible for much that is evil, but there is no need, in the face of historic fact, to saddle it with originating the struggle between religion and science. It began when positive knowledge first found itself in conflict with inherited and established religious beliefs. And it will end only when religion surrenders to science the whole field of human knowledge and endeavour. Why, then, does Professor Huxley restrict the survey to the Christian era? And what would he think of a man who claimed thoroughly to understand the significance of the structure of the human body, while restricting his survey to the human stage of animal evolution?

* * *

Science and Religion.

It is really important to grasp the fact that the contest is between two rival views of the same universe. The unfortunate thing is that Professor Huxley appears to realize it only, so to speak, in spasms. Here, for instance, is a very finely confused passage:—

Both these world views have their religious and their intellectual aspects. Religions may take their origins in spiritual and emotional realms; but they cannot remain long without attempting to satisfy intellectual needs by proffering explanations of man's origin and destiny, and his relation to the rest of the universe.

But as it is quite obviously the work of science to proffer explanations of man's origin and destiny and his relation to the rest of the universe, one is left wondering why religion must do this, how it can do this without becoming scientific, and so ceasing to be what it is, or how religion can do it without first

getting the information from science, and what is gained by its getting it in this way and then passing it on? These are questions we should dearly like Professor Huxley to face—for his own soul's sake.

I would also emphasize the point that the quarrel is between two views of the universe, not views of two different universes, but two views of the same universe. That, in my judgment quite knocks the bottom out of the proposed reconciliation. It is not a matter of opinion, but of observed and verifiable fact that all religious beliefs are fundamentally so many "proffered explanations" of facts with which uneducated primitive humanity finds itself in contact. The facts are not different from those with which we are in contact; we differ from our primitive ancestors only in the explanations we give of them. All the things with which early religions deal, the movements of the planets, the rain, the wind, the growth of plants, the presence of disease, the various subjective experiences in health and disease, etc., are still with us. We have all the facts upon which early man built his religious explanations, but we account for them in a different manner, and we are either religious or scientific as we adopt the one explanation or the other. Early man explained everything in terms of human or superhuman volition and intelligence. And that gave him his religion. Take away his explanation of the facts and there is nothing left upon which to build religion. Modern man takes the same facts and gives a non-religious explanation in terms of natural forces and natural causation. Accept these and there is no room and no need for a religion. It is not true that religion takes its rise in "spiritual or emotional realms." That is sheer jargon. Religion takes its rise in the same way as do other phases of man's mental life. Religious conclusions are reached precisely as other conclusions are reached. They are valuable only so far as they serve to explain things; and one would like to ask Professor Huxley on what ground he champions an old interpretation of a given set of facts, when we now interpret the same facts in a different way? If the religious explanation of facts goes, what room is there for religion? What is the value of the name if the thing is given up? What is the use of calling our astronomy Ptolemaic if we accept the theory of Copernicus? Surely the first duty of a scientist is to be scientific.

* * *

Knowledge and Science.

The thing gets "curiouser and curiouser," when one comes to deal with Professor Huxley's definitions. One can excuse a man who is not a specialist in religion defining it in a loose manner—that is perhaps as good a justification as any for accepting it. But what are we to make of the following definition of science?—

Science, I take it, is the pursuit of knowledge for knowledge's sake . . . A desire for truth, irrespective of where truth may lead its discoverer, an insistence upon fact, and not opinion, desire, or any a priori general principle as its touchstone; and the methods of verification and publication—these seem to me to be the essential characteristics of science.

These are quite excellent descriptions of the spirit, the temper that must accompany scientific work if it is to be of the greatest value. But as a *definition* it has the peculiar quality of leaving out just the one thing that constitutes science. It is a definition framed with a view to a compromise, and when we take his definition of religion, we see that each is framed with an eye to working in with the other. Neither is drawn up solely with an eye upon the sub-

ject matter of religion and science; if that had been done, a reconciliation would have been impossible. But if one draws up a definition of science that leaves room for religion, and then frames a definition of religion that leaves room for science, one must not be surprised if they fit each other. The only fatal objection to Professor Huxley's method is that his definition of science is not scientific and his definition of religion is not religious.

* * *

The Meaning of Science.

It is quite correct to say that the pursuit of knowledge *leads* to science; it is also correct to say that the love of knowledge for the sake of knowledge is one of the most valuable of all the accompaniments of science, but neither of these singly, nor both collectively constitute science. Science is built upon a host of ordinary, everyday observations, these are the raw material of science, but they do not constitute science. The love of knowledge leads to the mastering of facts, is an expression of that insatiable curiosity to which we owe so much, but that is not science. The knowledge acquired by a savage that he can float down a stream with greater safety if he hollows out a log, instead of merely sitting on it, is of the same kind as that which a chemist acquires by mixing two or three substances and observing the consequence. A man may, in the course of a journey to Glasgow, pursue knowledge, and classify knowledge, every step of the way. He may classify the knowledge so gained into organic and inorganic, vegetable and mineral, etc., etc. But when he has done this he has not acquired science. To assume that he has is to share the vulgar misapprehension that a man by acquiring a knowledge of the number and motions of the planets, how long it takes a ray of light to reach the earth from Sirius, with a host of "facts" in addition, has received a scientific education. Science begins only when and where a number of diverse objects are bound together by some general law, and their movements, or behaviour, shown to result from some general cause. That was one of the distinguishing features of Greek thought, and which has led some to claim for the Greeks the honour of having created science, as distinct from the mere knowledge acquired by the Egyptians and others.

I do not imagine for a moment that Professor Huxley will dispute what I have just said. He is too capable a scientist for that. But if it is admitted, I do not see in what way he can justify the definition of science he gives. It is a good description of the scientific attitude, it is an excellent rule of mental guidance, but it does not express the essence of science; and as Professor Huxley says, the business of a definition is with what is. But I can see no reason for his definition of science save that it paves the way for his proposed reconciliation of religion with science. He is not dealing with what is, but with what he would like to be. Which goes to show what a dangerous thing it is to cultivate too great an affection for the historic enemy of sane intellectual progress.

I will deal with the question of religion next week.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Great souls are like mountain summits. The wind beats upon them; clouds envelop them; but we breathe better and deeper there than elsewhere.

Romain Rolland.

We forget that every good that is worth possessing must be paid for in strokes of daily effort.

William James.

"Christianity and Dogma."

SUCH is the title of a sermon by the Bishop of Norwich, published in the *Christian World Pulpit* of November 10. The Right Rev. Bertram Pollock, K.C.V.O., D.D., was for seventeen years Master of Wellington College, and appointed Bishop in 1910. The Bishop is generally regarded as a profound theologian, whose pronouncements are treated as possessing considerable authority. He is one of the most influential speakers at Church Congresses and other Anglican assemblies. In the discourse now before us his theme is "Christian doctrine and the forms of dogma which express it." Like most preachers he indulges in general statements which are not only unsusceptible of verification, but contradicted by well-established facts. He declares that the number of those who have the audacity to doubt the historicity or even to belittle the value of the life and teaching of Christ, is comparatively very small. Then he adds: "When we think of the position which He has held among varying civilizations, in the hearts of the learned, the ignorant, the rich, the poor, the young, the old, in every country, in every age, we may without exaggeration speak of His appeal as universal. Devotion to Him is world-wide, age-wide." Let us, then, take one age in the history of the Church as a test. In the eleventh century the so-called spirit of Jesus was conspicuous only by its absence. The Church was in a state of never-ending confusion and strife, the Eastern and the Western communions excommunicating each other in the name of the Lord. The Latins were bitterly condemned because they employed unleavened bread in the Eucharist. The moral conduct of professing Christians received but slight attention, and consequently was seldom distinguished by its excellence. The Popes were even morally worse than the laity. In the year 1045 the papacy was for sale, and the man who bought it at once occupied St. Peter's chair as Gregory VI. He became enormously rich and, on his own admission, used his wealth chiefly for his own advancement. Writing of this period, Dean Milman says:—

There were now three Popes, by themselves or by their factions engaged in deadly feud. They had laid aside, or had taught each other to despise, their spiritual arms; they encountered with the carnal weapons of ordinary warfare. For Benedict had not obtained his bride; Gerard de Saxo had joined the faction of Silvester III. Benedict's brother would not brook the obscuration of the house of Tusculum: they brought back, not unreluctant, the abdicated Pope and reinstated him on his throne. Benedict held the Lateran, Gregory the Santa Maria Maggiore, Silvester St. Peter's and the Vatican (*Latin Christianity*, Vol. III, page 360).

There followed other ages more corrupt and wicked still; but as this is merely a side issue in the Bishop's sermon we must hasten on to the main subject.

Of course, Dr. Pollock is fully justified in affirming that without dogmas there could have been no Christianity at all. There are clergymen who disparage creeds, maintaining that Christianity is life, but from every point of view that notion is utterly indefensible, because the moment the Christian life is defined it becomes perfectly obvious that the root out of which it springs is a cluster of doctrines. That is surely self-evident. As the Bishop well says, "And if our doctrine is to be coherent and communicable, it must be capable of statement. Here is the spring of dogma." It matters not, as far as the present argument is concerned, whether the dogmas are true or false, the vital point being that they must be held by those who call themselves Christians. But are they true or not? The question naturally

arises, why have there been periods in the history of the Church when injustice, oppression, wickedness, and immorality seemed to reign supreme; when God's alleged representative on earth was at once a swindler, a libertine, and a murderer? Would such periods have existed had the Christian dogmas been true? Why has the Christian religion been such a dismal failure? Even granting that "we may without exaggeration speak of His (Christ's) appeal as universal," we ask why has the world failed to respond to it? Take the Christian doctrine of God, concerning which his Lordship says:—

It is a doctrine of God, and therefore is not only intellectual, but it must always be spiritual, and bring us into some moral relation with God. Doctrine, the statement of doctrine, dogma, are necessary to educate, to guide, to unite, to defend Christ's disciples. But all the time we want to reach Him to Whom these things point us, to God in Christ. Since our phrases cannot carry us all the way, their value is to lead us to apprehend Him with the eyes of the soul. "The Catholic faith is this: that we worship"—not that we systemize our beliefs, but that we worship God; and service is a part of worship.

As a statement of the doctrine of God as held and taught to-day that extract is quite satisfactory, but it leaves the all-important problem involved entirely untouched. Of what practical value is the Bishop's doctrine of God? What has God ever done for the world which he is believed to have created? What is he doing now? The Church of England is broken up into absolutely irreconcilable parties which spend their time reviling, denouncing, and cursing one another, and when asked what they are doing for the good of the world they become of necessity significantly dumb. The truth is that the Christian God, like every other, is simply the name given to a purely mythical being, who has never supplied the world with a single sign of his objective existence.

Bishop Pollock bemoans the bitterness and violence of the controversy now in operation within his Church, but prides himself upon the Church's essential loyalty to the Scripture, though, alas, "little has been said about the truth of Scripture in recent discussions of the Prayer Book." As to the value of the test of Scripture, he speaks thus:—

The appeal to Scripture has not been very strong. Perhaps people feel upon less safe ground now than of old when they turn to Scripture, for science, physical and historical, has led to fresh views of some aspects of the Bible, and many do not recognize that this does not touch the cogency of its spiritual message, and that it is the frame and not the picture which has been altered.

We are convinced, however, that the Bishop is labouring under a fatal delusion, so far as the historicity of the Four Gospels is concerned. Even so orthodox a divine as the late Professor Denny, of Glasgow, frankly admitted that the Gospels were not in themselves historically reliable, and that to him even their story of Christ's resurrection would not have been believable apart from the testimony of the Apostle Paul. To us the only acceptable view of the Gospels is that which treats them as exclusively legendary documents. Jesus is not one whit more historical than Osiris, Adonis, Attis, or Mithra. A God-man is a natural impossibility. The Bishop acknowledges "the weakness of our texts or of the memories of those who reported Christ's words," but whatever this weakness may be he is quite confident that "still in the New Testament we have the surest guide in stating and testing our doctrines." We are equally confident that, however well founded on Scripture such doctrines may be, the history of Christendom gives them the lie direct. God in Christ has

been as unsuccessful in reorganizing and uplifting Europe as Zeus was in redeeming Greece. The conclusion to which we are logically driven, therefore, is that the dogmas of Christianity are absolutely false. All through the centuries men and women have been putting their trust in wholly imaginary beings and setting their affection on fabulous things in a non-existent heaven. In this sense Christianity has been a terrible barrier to human progress, just as the Churches of to-day undoubtedly are. Our comfort and hope lie in the indisputable fact that in proportion as natural knowledge grows and spreads supernatural beliefs and hopes inevitably wither away and die.

J. T. LLOYD.

The Nation and the Abbey.

"I have nothing to say now, I am still alive. I am not ready for it yet.—*Bernard Shaw.*

"With the sound of those they wrought for,
And the feet of those they fought for,
Echoing round their tombs for evermore."

Tennyson.

THE housing shortage is still acute, and it has at length reached Westminster Abbey, the most famous shrine in Britain. There is this difference, however, that the Abbey cannot accommodate more dead people, and the national need is for more homes for the living. According to the view of the Cathedrals Commission of the Church Assembly, whose report has just been issued, there is urgent need of an additional building at Westminster. This is not the first time such a proposal has been made, but previously the idea has fallen through on account of the great cost, and because of the general reluctance to hand over a national pantheon to the custody of priests who have so often in the past shown themselves unworthy of so important a trust.

For Westminster Abbey, by the irony of events, has come to be regarded as the most important shrine of the nation. Even St. Paul's Cathedral, "in London's central roar," has not so great a claim upon the imagination of Englishmen, although Nelson and Wellington are both buried there. Westminster Abbey as a national Valhalla has grown in importance with the growth of our country, but, owing to priestly influence, it has been an irregular and imperfect commemorator of greatness. It is notorious that far too many of the tombs and effigies in the Abbey are those of people who, at their best, were nonentities, and not always respectable nobodies. The priests who refused to recognize the splendid genius of Byron embellished the Abbey with a memorial to Broughton the prize-fighter. And more recently priestly custodians, who flatly refused a tribute to the rare talents of Swinburne, yet found room for the remains of the widow of one of their own archdeacons.

Years ago burial in Westminster Abbey could be bought as easily as honours from politicians, and much more cheaply. It will astonish many people to learn that one hundred years ago burial in the Abbey could be obtained for about £50, and in the cloisters for a paltry £20. Burials in the past were actually regarded as a regular source of ecclesiastical revenue, without any regard to the position or accomplishments of the dead. The higher the rank of the deceased the higher was the fee demanded of the sorrowing relatives. So great a scandal did this become, that it prompted Goldsmith's sneer: "I forget the names of some of these great men, but a few of the tombs were sculptured by little Roubilliac." Queen Anne was very impartial in her patronage of burial in the

Abbey. Sir Cloudesley Shovel, a half-forgotten admiral of that period, has the largest and weightiest tomb in the whole building, and the Queen's washerwoman, Mrs. Atkinson, was also given burial amid the Abbey's sculptural glories.

The Cathedrals Commission's recommendation to erect forthwith an entirely new building close to Westminster Abbey requires the most careful scrutiny and examination. The risk is that such a new building would be under clerical control, which would, inevitably, injure and narrow its field of usefulness. Such a suggested Valhalla must not be merely a bigger Westminster Abbey, but a national memorial, such as the Pantheon is to France. If there is a desire for tombs, statues, and busts to keep alive the memory of our illustrious dead, there must be no nonsense in placing it in the hands of a purely sectarian body animated with ideas as moss-grown as their own venerable cloisters.

The erection of a Hall of Remembrance is a national question. It cannot possibly be left in the hands of men who rejected Shelley, the sweetest-souled of all English poets, and who commemorated Jonas Hanway, the first man in this country who had the distinction of carrying an umbrella. The Temple of Remembrance must be the House of Liberty, or else it becomes but a charnel-house full of mere bones and ashes. We come to this in the end, that great men may have any religion, or none at all. This country is no longer Christian, and the priests of that particular religion now only represent a minority of the population. It is significant that even in stern Caledonia the popularity of Saint Andrew's Day is far less than that of Burns's night, and Robbie Burns was an outspoken Freethinker. In the sheer fight of personalities for the possession of England's day, William Shakespeare has beaten Saint George, as our American friends say, "to a frazzle." A real Hall of Remembrance must include the greatest names in our history, and also lesser men and women whose achievements were less important, but, who, because they dedicated their lives to the service of intellectual liberty, laid the deep foundations of the future greatness of our race.

MIMNERMUS.

Modern Science and Materialism.

SINCE the beginning of the present century wonderful advances have been made in all departments of science. The ancient and apparently insoluble mystery of the constitution of Matter, which has tormented philosophers from the time of the ancient Greeks down to the present time, has at last yielded up its secret to the marvellously delicate instruments and methods of modern science. It is electricity.

Einstein's theory of Relativity has introduced a radical change in our view of the cosmos and our relation to it; but to declare, as some do, that it is the greatest scientific revolution known in the history of science is ridiculously untrue. The discovery by Copernicus, that the Sun is the centre of the planetary system, and our earth, instead of being the central body for which all the others were created, as stated in the Bible, was merely an attendant satellite, came like a veritable bombshell into the thought of the time, and was promptly condemned by the Church. Even when Galileo, nearly a hundred years later, with his telescope—which his opponents refused to look through—proved the truth of the Copernican system, it was so radically opposed to the reigning ideas that it was still condemned and Galileo made to recant. The condemnation lasted for

two hundred years. Even the discovery of the laws of gravitation by Newton, which explained how the planets were held in their orbits, and put the copestone on the labours of Copernicus and Galileo, was denounced by the clergy as atheistic, although accepted by men of science.

Nearly two hundred years after Newton, another bomb fell in the shape of the Darwinian theory of the descent of man from the lower animals. This was fought as fiercely as the Copernican theory, and even to-day there are millions in this country and Europe, who repudiate the theory of Evolution. Mr. Maynard Shapley, in his book, *The War on Modern Science*, declares that there are twenty-five million Fundamentalists in the United States! These ideas were much more startling, at their first onset, than the new ideas of Relativity.

In the case of the movement of the earth, religion, in spite of the fact that it had an infallible Pope—according to the Catholics—and an infallible Bible—according to the Protestants—on its side, had, in the end to give way to the truth. Then they turned completely round and impudently professed to discover a support for religion in the very system they had been so vehemently denouncing as Atheistic, Pope even going so far as to declare, in his poem, "On Sir Isaac Newton":—

Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night;
God said, "Let Newton be!" and all was light.

It does not seem to have struck the poet that the revelation came rather late in the day. How much better it would have been, if God, when sending his son to earth with the New Testament, had also instructed him to correct the scientific errors of the Old Testament, instead of waiting sixteen hundred years for the advent of Newton.

However, the clergy learned nothing from their defeat over the movement of the earth. When the theory of Evolution was expounded they rushed to the attack like a swarm of angry bees, but again they have had to retreat. That is, the more advanced, who can see that the policy of fighting science does not pay, have. Learned prelates in the Church, and influential nonconformists outside it, now preach that Evolution is God's method of working. They have learned their lesson, and now directly a new scientific discovery is announced, they fall over one another in their haste to claim it as another proof for religion, or the existence of a God, or of a future life; and as the Press acts as a filter, by allowing everything in favour of religion to pass through, and excluding everything against it, the impression has got abroad that the new discoveries on the constitution of Matter, and the theory of Relativity have entirely disposed of Materialism and re-established religion. Nothing is further from the truth.

Let us take the case of the latest discoveries concerning the constitution of Matter. It is well known that about four hundred years before the Christian era, Democritus, by a singular intuition of genius, taught that all material existence was made up of, or consisted of, atoms. This hypothesis has been confirmed past all possible dispute by modern scientists. It used to be a favorite subject for discussion, by the word-spinning metaphysicians and philosophers, as to whether you could go on dividing and subdividing a piece of Matter until there was nothing left. Or whether you would finally arrive at an ultimate atom not further divisible. Like many other metaphysical questions, the subject was capable of being argued for all eternity. The only answers to such questions are to be found by the use of the microscope, the balance, the retort, the spectroscope,

and other scientific inventions to aid our very limited senses. The metaphysician, the philosopher, and the priest, have to submit, in the long run, to the final verdict of the scientist. And science found a verdict in the conception of the fundamental atom.

But further research during the present century, has revealed the astonishing fact, that notwithstanding its minute dimensions—far too small to be seen by the most powerful microscope—the atom was composed of a central body, around which its constituent parts revolved as the planets round the sun, and the whole of it was composed of units of positive and negative electricity.

At once a shout went up from pulpit and press, that at last the Materialist had met his Waterloo. Matter had disappeared and left him without a foundation. Berkeley was right after all, there was no such thing as Matter. "Where's your Mighty Atom now?" they said in effect. "Where's your Law of the indestructibility of Matter now? It is gone, and its place is taken by electricity, which is much more akin to spirit, and may be an emanation from the spiritual." So exulted the preachers both lay and spiritual.

The Rev. W. Hodson Smith, in his Presidential Address, upon being elected President of the Wesleyan Conference, at Bradford, on July 13 last, and reported by the Press, observed: "It was now agreed that there was a strong tendency in the borderland of physical science and philosophy towards the more spiritual interpretation of the universe. At any rate physicists were agreed that there was no ultimate distinction to be drawn between matter and energy. Might they not take a step further and affirm that the basis of all things was spiritual, and that the ultimate issue of all things was spiritual?" Jesus Christ, according to the Gospels, died and rose again, but Materialism has been reported dead and done with thousands of times, but it always rises again on the third day, more vigorous than ever.

Well, where is our ultimate atom, and the law of the indestructibility of Matter? Exactly where they were before. It would take far too long to describe all the steps by which the nature of the Atom was established, but the description given by Sir Oliver Lodge—who is the last man in the world to be suspected of favouring Materialism—will suffice. He says: "To picture an atom as we now regard it, we must try to think of a minute proton at the centre and a group or family of electrons revolving round it." And again: "No one is denying the existence of matter, for it is practically the only thing that affects our senses; it exists all right, but we are resolving it into something far more fundamental . . . Atoms are still the foundation stones of the material universe." (Page 45.) The proton which constitutes the centre of the Atom, consists of positive electricity, the revolving electrons consist of negative electricity. To quote another scientist, who always writes on the side of the angels, namely, Professor Arthur Thompson, who remarks: "It is of interest, however to note that investigation has shown that there is a remarkable perfection of hardness in the modern atom. For it seems that the inner rings of electrons form an impenetrable bulwark, so that the heart of the atom is, after all, as hard as a cannon ball."² But there is more than this to be said for the solidity of the ultimate atom.

W. MANN.

(To be continued.)

¹ Lodge: *Modern Scientific Ideas* (1927). Page 39.

² Thomson: *Science and Religion* (1925). Page 41.

The Menace of Catholicism.

ALL Freethinkers must be aware that the most powerful active opponent of Freethought is the Roman Catholic religion, and that the exact opposite of Freethought is the theology of the Roman Church. On the one hand, we have a philosophy which advocates the complete removal from the mind of all ideas which have no practical and logical foundation, and are not the result of human reasoning on the subject of theology; and on the other hand, we have a scheme by which the mind is made the receptacle for mystical and supernatural ideas conceived by some external authority.

Bearing this in mind, I was much amused some days ago, by the statements of a woman speaker, who lectures regularly on behalf of Roman Catholicism in Hyde Park. As she spoke, the hearer might imagine himself back in some far-distant age, where philosophy was subservient to the awful power which terror of the unknown held over the human mind. But what was most astonishing were the efforts of the speaker to attempt to bring the religion of the Roman Catholic Church into harmony, so to speak, with modern thought, and her combination of philosophic strivings with theological humbug was most pitiful. Confessing herself a convert, she stated that before she joined the Catholic Church, she was unable to speculate and think for herself on the meaning of things. We are to suppose, then, that Roman Catholicism opened to her a wide field wherein she might think clearly and logically on the subject of God and Humanity. Are we to believe this of a religion such as she has chosen to be her guide in life? Consider the most notable points of Roman Catholicism, as history and experience show them to us.

From the time of her inception to the present day she has assumed a position of dogmatic supremacy which is unrivalled for its impertinence in the whole of the civilized world. She has chosen to regard herself as the one reliable authority in matters religious, and will brook no interference with or criticism of her doctrines. In less enlightened days, those who dared to doubt for a moment the statements she made were terribly tortured or put to death in the vilest conceivable manner. She has a history as grim, as black and as terrible as any institution, civil, political or religious could have; the enormity of her outrages against decency, feeling or common humanity staggers the mind with its awfulness. To-day, when the progress of humanity outside the Roman Church has made physical punishment less possible, she deals with offenders by means of excommunication, and with works which question her doctrine by means of the notorious "Index," which forbids her members to peruse such works. The "Index" would be a humorous affair, were it not for the fact that the use of it means intellectual stagnation for hundreds of thousands of possibly intelligent human beings. Here again, the Roman Church exhibits her ridiculous disregard for logic. Professed students may obtain permission to read works of science and literature which are banned to their fellow-Catholics. Now the Roman Church admits by this that it is necessary for the mental growth of students, *i.e.*, men who are going to use their brains, and think in this world, to read and digest doctrines other than their own, but she clearly shows that she does not intend the majority of her adherents to think or use their brains at all—in other words, she intends to keep all the subjects she can in a state of intellectual stagnation, so that she may assert her doctrines, unchallenged. The Roman Church knows that she can only retain her religion by keeping her disciples ignorant, by blind-

ing them to reality. This is the foundation-stone of the Catholic propaganda—ignorance—and Authority, that terrible and awful power, its superstructure. Now this is the very opposite of Rationalism, the very opposite of Freethought, the very opposite of philosophy, of speculation. Yet we have a supporter of the Roman Church stating that before she joined it, she was unable to speculate, and to think clearly!

As long as Authority, in the shape of papal decrees, infallibility, and such humbug, is supreme, reason must be dead. Were the Roman Church to come again into power (which we think, it is not likely to do), all attempts at a rational civilization would be useless, and the whole structure of modern progress would crumble again. The world would enter into another such dark age of mental deficiency and stagnation as she endured when the Church of Rome was before in power, and our History would have to be made all over again. The Catholic acknowledges the fact that, given power, he would give no privileges, all things would come under his thumb—and woe to those who disobeyed. It is the great task of the Freethinker to fight against this power which threatens the whole fabric of our present civilization, to fight against the influence of the Roman Church; to strive with all his might against the possibility of the Roman philosophy becoming supreme; to influence in all the ways he can the minds of the people against this deadly theology.

GUY R. BUCKERIDGE.

Acid Drops.

The Salvation Army has devoted November to a "big push," in order to get converts; and if the Army runs true to type, to make something out of them in the shape of hard cash. The organizer of the campaign, Commissioner Hurrell, says that the Army will permit no argument among either its officers or in the ranks about its beliefs; and it still believes in hell, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the fall of man and the redeeming blood of Jesus. That we would expect. It has always marked the lowest level of religious belief, mixed with an infernally sharp eye for trading with the largest possible profits, and we assume it will run true to the end. But the type of men bred and developed under such a system can be of but scant service to the cause of human betterment. Drunk, they are a nuisance; sober, they are a danger. And in the long run the nuisance is less costly than the danger.

Opportunity is a fine thing, and in these hard times for priests, no compassionate soul could possibly begrudge the parson his Armistice Day opportunity of showing off his pretty white shirt and tinselly decorations, and of mouthing his choice selection of beautiful platitudes. "O God, our help in ages past," sing the parson and his dupes; and who could doubt it when he sees how God had helped the decaying industry of ecclesiasticism with a heaven-sent Armistice Day?

According to the *English Churchman*, there are special reasons for observing Armistice Day for thanksgiving to God. We need to give thanks for his help and merciful deliverance. God, it appears, made the young hearts ready to respond to the call of duty and danger. We have also to acknowledge Divine mercy in the provision of men and means to meet the terrible crisis when it came. This being interpreted means that God has for years been encouraging the armament makers, and keeping a watchful eye on human breeding, lest the right supply of cannon-fodder should not be forthcoming. What a comic God the *English Churchman* worships! And how exactly fitted to Christian intelligence!

Our contemporary declares that unfailing Providence orders all things in heaven and on earth. Accordingly,

our pious friend recognizes that sudden occurrences which at supreme moments in the war averted impending disaster were the work of God. So, too, we learn, was the turning of the tide in our favour at the end of the great conflict. The *Churchman* doesn't seem to realize that it is indicting God either for stupidity or callousness. God had all this power at his command, yet he either lacked the intelligence to prevent the horrible affair or he refused to end it until millions of men had been slaughtered or maimed. What a God! How thankful we are he belongs to the Christians!

Armistice Day rarely fails to bring forth, somewhere or other, the dear old myth that a parson was the first person to suggest the burial of an unknown soldier in Westminster Abbey. As a matter of fact, a Sheffield journal, *The Weekly Telegraph*, was the first English paper to make the suggestion, on October 18, 1919. But the editor claimed no originality for the notion. He got it from a paragraph in *El Seculo*, a Lisbon paper, and reproduced a translation of the paragraph, giving it a heading likely to appeal to English people. This is it:—

CAN WE NOT ADOPT THIS IDEA?

In the most splendid cathedral of each of the allied nations, the glory of the private soldier should be commemorated for all time. How can that be done? Not by stone monuments or bronze tablets, conveying nothing to future generations, but by burial in the vaults of the building of one nameless hero, unrecognized, and at present buried as "unknown," one pathetic corpse in whom Mars has trampled out the semblance of humanity. Thereby can we celebrate the magnificence of the poilu. Thus can a nation render gratitude to the thousands of nameless heroes.

As the parson (a Church of England clergyman) to whom is given the credit for the suggestion has never, so far as we are aware, disclaimed that credit, we have therefore stated the truth about the whole affair. It doesn't do to let a myth run unchecked.

The Treasury will not seriously contest the remark of Lady Houston that "Good intuition comes from God." She is paying to the Treasury the sum of £2,000,000, in respect of death duties from the estate of her late husband.

The nose of wax is twisted weekly by Dr. T. R. Glover, in the *Daily News*, and this week he discourses on Eskimos. Civilized people took the joyful news of one day in the week, being known as "Sunday," to this tribe of childlike people, and various forms of physical and mental disease followed; but we should imagine that it would strain even the intelligence of a china dog to believe that teachings from Palestine would be received with open arms by the Eskimo. Dr. Glover is running round with a religious hat that he wants to fit on every head, and we suggest that this is a case for interference by the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Dr. Wm. J. Thompson, a professor of religious psychology, who has been studying foreign missions for twelve months, declares that missionaries treat their converts with disdain; they suffer from a superiority complex, he says. There is nothing extraordinary about that. Few priests there are who don't suffer in that way. Priests believe they are special favourites of God; "swelled head" is the natural result from such a fancy. That explains what Dr. Thompson is deploring.

A man, at Marylebone Police Court, applied for a warrant against an M.P., on the ground that the M.P. had obtained public money—three years' salary—by "false pretence and promise." The applicant had about as much chance of getting such a warrant as he would have if he wanted one against a bishop on the same grounds.

As a people, says a daily paper, "we have been rather famous in the past for dodging awkward issues and sweeping them under the sofa. Since the war there has

been much less of this habit of evasiveness; our people are more and more taking refuge in truth. Their attitude towards life is firmer and franker than it was. They discuss many things that formerly were taboo. They are more inclined now to look realities in the face, instead of squinting at them, and to look below the surface instead of skating over it with inverted eyes. Humbug and hypocrisy were never at a greater discount in Britain than now. Facts and realities and not bunkum and appearances are what move our people now. It is a most wholesome development." We congratulate the daily paper on possessing excellent observation. All we need add is, that besides this wholesome development there is to be noted a widespread neglect of religion, Bible-reading, church-going, and parsons. One might almost fancy, though it seems absurd to suggest it, that there is a relation of cause and effect between the two sets of facts. If that should be the truth—and it is almost unthinkable—our contemporary's efforts to revive interest in religion would seem likely to be doing the nation no useful service.

Canon Antony Deane has written a book called *Jesus Christ*. A *Daily News* reviewer says: "The Canon tells the facts of the life of Jesus, the carpenter's son, simply and plainly as they are revealed in the Gospels . . ." Which prompts the query: When is a fact not a fact?

"Liar" is a word that has a very strong effect on anyone who is a man of honour, Sir Robert Baden-Powell tells his scouts. Formerly, he says, the man you called a liar would challenge you to a duel and try to kill you for the insult. Nowadays, though duels are forbidden, the word rankles just as strongly; and a fellow who cares about his honour, if accused of lying, will knock the man down who says it, or will ask him to step outside and have the matter out with fists. Excellent precept this is, no doubt. But we cannot help wondering what the scout attached to some church makes of it, when he tries to square it with what his pastor and Sunday school teacher tell him. The Chief Scout advises settling the "liar" difficulty by resort to fists. The pastor or teacher teaches that the insulted should "turn the other cheek" to the insulter. The scout who wishes to be the perfect Christian and the perfect scout at one and the same time would therefore appear to be in a bit of a fix. If he smites the offender, he is no Christian; if he ignores the insult, he is no scout. Surely Sir Robert must be aware of the awkward predicament the Christian scout is likely to find himself in. We regretfully suggest that the Scout Code needs revising to cover such a contingency.

Sir Robert also says that, just as the word "liar" is not a word a scout likes to hear, so too it is not a word he should ever use against another fellow without very good cause. Here, again, the advice needs amplifying. Would a "very good cause," be one where a Christian scout heard an Atheist telling the truth about the Christian religion? On the other hand, would an Atheist be justified in smiting a Christian who called him a "liar." It is on points like these that Sir Robert might be able to suggest something helpful.

At a Cambridge Union debate Mr. Rowe Harding, captain of the Cambridge University Rugby Football Club, declared that there was too much crooked thinking prevalent on the subject of athleticism. It was, he said, a kind of misguided hero-worship. "There is something wrong with a nation that has heard of Hobbs the cricketer, but not of Hobbes the philosopher." Mr. Harding added: "Let us judge men by the breadth of their minds, and not by the breadth of their shoulders." These views appear to indicate the revival of paganism, which the parsons are always deploring, and rightly, too. Even our Universities seem to be getting infected with that vile pagan doctrine of ancient Greece—a sound mind in a sound body. Jesus never advocated it, and it is to be hoped that the Christian leaders of the Universities will discourage it, lest it permeate the thinking of the whole nation.

Dancing is a very fine thing, declares Herman Darewski, the composer. It is a stimulant to body and brain. It gives one an upright bearing, grace of movement, and ease of manner. It calms nerves and temper. The composer also says:—

You don't hear half the hard things said about dancing that you used to. Even clergymen and bishops defend it, and are beginning to realize that it is one of the finest outlets for energy which young people could possibly have.

Maybe these bishops and clergymen who approve of dancing have just realized why King David danced, "in the altogether," before the Ark of the Lord—he was gathering in a little stimulant to body and brain, and calming his nerves and temper. In view of the fact that exposing the body to light and sun is now approved by medical science, it is quite possible that some advanced clergymen, in days to come, will approve also of dancing in one's birthday suit, after the manner of King David. Future modernist parsons will explain that the wise old king was the pioneer of air-bathing, and that most of our hygienic discoveries were known to the Biblical worthies.

A Lieut.-General, at King's College, the other week, talked of possible wars and future enemies. He expected a large war in twenty years time, and urged—as is the way of generals—Britain to be prepared. He wanted the Navy and Army kept large, well-trained and up-to-date, so that when the time should come they could be "aimed at targets which had been thought out carefully beforehand in time of peace." A curious thing about these war-mongers is that they are never able to tell us exactly how the slaughtering and maiming of thousands of men can settle a dispute between nations, and settle it according to accepted notions of equity. Still, perhaps after all a war is the best way of settling things, when we know that God ensures that the nation with justice and right on its side always wins. Christian priests say so. Therefore a reasonable inference is that God does not object to a war, properly conducted. It enables people to show their faith in God and right by praying for a victory; it enables God to reveal his power by granting their request; and it gives the priests an opportunity of bringing the blessed consolation of religion to the bereaved. Altogether, there seems a lot to be said in favour of a Christian war; so we had better not cry down the war-mongers.

There is not in South Africa any Christian Church which will admit a black man to membership, nor any educational institution, attended by children of whites, which will admit a black child. There is no recognition of the "brotherhood of man" in South Africa. This is what a late professor of Sociology at Durban, Mr. R. J. Hall, told a Manchester audience of Christians the other week. The white Christians of South Africa, like those of America and India, evidently are interested only in a brotherhood of white believers. That being so, the statement that Christians are out to achieve merely a "brotherhood of believers," and not the brotherhood of man, seems correct.

England has become great because of its trust in God. Dr. W. C. Poole told the Christ Church Brotherhood, of London, this, and added: "When a nation goes straight it can bank on God helping it; when a nation goes wrong it can bank on God thwarting it." By way of interpretation we will add that, a nation "goes wrong" when it laughs at the crudities and superstitions of the Christian religion, ignores the dictums of Christian priests, and refuses to support hordes of clerical parasites. The God of Love dislikes these sorts of things being done; and for a nation guilty of them he keeps all kinds of dreadful calamities in store. The Old Testament affirms this. And Dr. Poole and other Christian priests tell the nation about it in order that people will be frightened into worshipping a God of Love.

Preaching at Bristol, Dr. Hutton said that when people were worrying themselves unnecessarily about great con-

troversial matters, it would be a very good thing if preachers would confine themselves to the things which they knew were true. This suggests that "great controversial matters" equals matters of doubtful truth. It certainly does seem absurd to discuss matters of that kind or to preach about them; especially as there can be no possibility of proving them true, they being matters of faith. As for the things preachers know are true, it must puzzle the parson as to where he shall look for them, since all the matters concerning religion are based on faith, not knowledge, and since the great controversial matters are inextricably linked in with every other religious thing. Dr. Hutton's advice would appear to be not particularly helpful, after all. But the fact will not prevent preachers from thanking Dr. Hutton for words of wise leadership.

This paragraph was omitted by accident last week, but it is too good not to find a place in these columns. News from Montreal relates that representatives of the six Indian tribes—the Iroquois, Mohawks, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas have resolved to repudiate the white man's God, and to go back to the worship of their ancient deity "Gitchee Manitou." They say that the white man's God has brought them nothing but evil. They have lost their lands, their rights and have nothing left. The wife of one of the chiefs (evidently a medium) has, in a trance, delivered a message from the "Great Spirit" approving of this resolution, so everything is in order, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle will hardly question the correctness of the step, once a medium has backed it. But we wonder what the missionaries will have to say about it.

Altogether the step shows rather more manliness in dealing with a God than is shown by the average Christian. The proper Christian attitude is, the worse God treats you the lower you grovel. If he treats you well, you strut round and talk of the favour of God, and the blessings of Providence. If he treats you badly, you go down on your stomach in the hopes that he will be placated by your humility and readiness to submit to a whipping. On the other hand, it is not at all unusual for "savages," when they find that their gods are not doing what they ought to do, to call them to book for their lack of attention. And on the whole, we much prefer the attitude of the "savage" to that of the Christian. There seems a greater measure of manliness about it.

Apropos of nothing in particular, the English religious instinct is so deeply embedded that fifty thousand priestly excavators, working hard seven days a week, are necessary for digging it out and keeping it active.

The Battle of the Bishops.

AN OPEN LETTER TO BISHOP BARNES

By Chapman Cohen.

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

Price ONE PENNY (16 pp.)

5/- per 100, for Propagandists.

A large edition of this pamphlet has been printed, and they should be put into circulation at once.

THE PIONEER PRESS, 61 FARRINGTON STREET, E.C.4.

The "Freethinker" Endowment Trust.

Nor much progress is to be reported this week with this Fund. There is still £364 12s. 3d. to be subscribed during the next five weeks, if we are to secure the £1,615 promised. I have every confidence that it will be forthcoming, but the sooner the better. It is not likely that, having reached where we are, this effort, one of the greatest made in the history of the party, is now going to fall short of achievement. I can, this week, only impress upon everyone interested, the importance of getting the matter finished as soon as possible.

We must have collected by December 31, the sum of £6,385 or we lose £1,615.

There was an error in the addition in last week's issue, but this has now been corrected. Also "A. Wilcox 16s. 3d.," should have been "A. Wilson."

TENTH LIST OF SUBSCRIPITONS.

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Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the Freethinker Endowment Trust, and crossed Clerkenwell Branch, Midland Bank, and directed to me at 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Those Subscribers who receive their copy of the "Freethinker" in a GREEN WRAPPER will please take it that a 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.

H. H. HURRELL.—We all feel the passing of the years, but as they do not appear to diminish friendships, but often accentuate them, there are compensations.

S. WILLIAMS.—Mr. Cohen has never "challenged" anyone to debate in his life. He is always ready to meet anyone whom he regards as worthy of being met. But he has no

time to waste on raving evangelists or people out to advertise themselves.

R. S.—It really does not matter whether someone existed who furnished the framework for Jesus Christ. The only question that matters is whether the Jesus Christ of the New Testament existed. And his existence is just about as likely as that of the seven-headed giants of our fairy-tale days.

A. KEMP.—We really do not see the point of your question. Man, as he is, represents the work of a series of stages going back to the dawn of animal life. Things in nature do not suddenly appear anywhere, nor do they remain absolutely stationary anywhere. The whole of nature is in a constant state of change.

A. W. COLEMAN.—Thanks. Will find room for it later.

J. REEVES.—Shall appear as soon as possible, but we are very crowded just now.

S. YOUNG.—Perhaps you will not mind our saying that your letter is just nonsense. Reflect that in the whole of London there is not a clergyman of repute who has the courage to meet in public discussion a representative Freethinker. One can hardly assume that this is because they are unwilling to expose the weakness of the Freethought case.

D. MACCONNELL.—Thanks for remittance to Fund, in discharge of your promise made earlier in the year. Thanks also for promise to send again if possible.

J. FLINTOFF.—We appreciate more than we can say, those whose contributions to the Trust Fund is a real indication of their attachment to the paper. The last weeks of the great attempt are getting quite interesting.

F. WATSON.—Thanks. We are quite well, and hope to remain so.

E. BOOR.—There is a great deal to be said in favour of communications to a doctor being really secret. They are, in many cases, confidential, and the feeling that they would remain so, might often result in the patient withholding valuable information.

W. OWEN.—Sorry to hear of your accident. Shall look forward to seeing you when we come to Glasgow again.

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

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

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

When the services of the National Secular Society in connexion with Secular Burial Services are required, all communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Mr. F. Mann, giving as long notice as possible.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sugar Plums.

The "Open Letter to Bishop Barnes" is now on sale and is going well. It covers much ground in the course of sixteen pages, and will be found exceedingly useful for propagandist purposes. As the pamphlet is being sent out at 5s. per hundred, and is well printed on good paper, it will be seen that it is not a profit-making enterprise. But at this rate there should be hundreds of our readers who will send for at least one hundred copies, and so circulate them where they would do most good. They could be sent through the post, or otherwise put

into circulation. We should receive a large number of orders within the next week or two.

To-day (November 20) Mr. Cohen will lecture in the Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester, on "The Battle of the Bishops." The lecture commences at 6.30, and should attract a bumper audience.

Mr. Cohen paid a highly successful visit to the new Chester-le-Street Branch on Sunday last. Both meetings were well attended, and the members are full of energy and enthusiasm. The meetings were as pleasing to the lecturer as they appeared to be to the listeners, and it served as the occasion for meeting many old friends, whom Mr. Cohen had not seen for many years. There were friends present from Newcastle, South Shields, West Stanley, Darlington, Durham, and other places. The interest of all seemed as keen as ever in the "Best of Causes," and Chester-le-Street, thanks to the general motor 'bus service is easily got at from all near towns. Mr. Brighton occupied the chair in the afternoon, and Mr. Brown in the evening. Both made strong appeals for members, and we hope, with good effect. Mr. Cohen has promised a return visit before the season comes to an end.

On Sunday next, Mr. Cohen will speak in the Town Hall, Stratford, on "The New Warfare Between Religion and Science." There is always a good audience here, and it is easy of access from all parts of London. Trams and 'buses pass the door, and it is within a few minutes' walk of Stratford Railway Station. We hope that Freethinkers will do their best to bring some enquiring Christians along with them.

If we were given to trumpet-blowing, we should be inclined to say that our "Views and Opinions" of July 31, dealing with the use made of war memorials, parades, etc., to keep the spirit of militarism alive, had set a lead to the British Press. Soon after its publication, we noted echoes of it in other papers, and we are glad to note the number is increasing. Here are a few expressions from an article in the *Sunday Pictorial* of November 13, which will show what we mean:—

Armistice Day should be an opportunity for bringing home the despicable horror of warfare . . . There is a danger of getting back into the old attitude of the splendid glory of warfare . . . It is time some practical attempt was made to crush war, damn it, and despise it as a low barbaric vice fit only for savages; but instead, we find a covert return of the suggested glamour of warfare.

This is one specimen out of many we have noted since we wrote on "War and War Memorials." Of course the *Freethinker* is not mentioned. One could hardly expect it. This journal has always been "damned good" to steal from, so far as wide-awake journalists are concerned. Sometimes we do receive a letter from the more friendly and conscientious knights of the Press, telling us what they have done, but confessing that mention of the *Freethinker* as the source of their inspiration would not be permitted. We have not the least objection, so long as the *ideas* for which we stand get into circulation we are content. It may be noted that the article which attracted so much interest is included in Mr. Cohen's new volume of *Essays in Freethinking*.

Mr. R. H. Rosetti will to-day (November 20) lecture in the Co-operative Hall, Plymouth, at 3 and 7. This is not Mr. Rosetti's first visit to Plymouth, and there should be good meetings—at least, we hope so.

Mr. Whitehead is spending a few days lecturing in the Glasgow district, and will speak to-day in the City Hall, at 11.30 and 6.30. Clydeside friends will please note.

Volume two of Mr. Cohen's *Essays in Freethinking* will be published almost immediately. They should be delivered from the binders by the time this issue of the *Freethinker* is in the hands of its readers. The volume will be uniform with the first series, cloth gilt, and at the same price, 2s. 6d., postage 2½d. extra. The two volumes will be sent post free for 5s.

The Amazing Achievement of Atheism.

(Continued from page 733.)

"But when you find him out you have him ever after."

THE modern history of wheat is the story of a wonderful human achievement. Science—human reason, ordered knowledge, and experiment—has done that; and ALL SCIENCE IS ATHEISTIC. Human effort produced wheat that will resist rust and other disease, that will grow in land where wheat would not grow before, and a berry that will provide far more human sustenance from an acre than has been possible hitherto. The fable of the loaves and fishes fades into insignificance, when compared to the wonderful—but true—story of the human development of wheat.

So column after column of the old *Freethinker* might be filled, dealing with every sphere of thought and every field of action of humankind—were there not an editor. Much as he may admire our beautiful grey eyes, he might draw the blue pencil line at that! However, all Freethinkers and all who appreciate the *Freethinker* will be able, doubtless, to fill in the picture for themselves. In penology, and criminology, and psychology—as in ethics generally—the Atheist state of mind has been equally noteworthy. The idea of REVENGE—either "God's" revenge or (in)human revenge—has been nearly killed, along with its concomitant—the fantastic idea of "free will." The recognition that the human will, human "choice," human conduct, is conditioned—not UN-conditioned, caused—not UN-caused, is another victory for Philosophic Atheism. The principle of Cause and Effect, extended to the field of Human activities—Individual and Social—gives us hope for the future of humankind, which the irresponsibility of "free-will" could never do. Moral causation accepted, philosophic Atheism scores again; and, as for "God," it is expelled from still another human territory.

The same can be seen in the Co-operative Movement, which has done so much for the British people—and others; and which shall yet achieve still greater things. That great movement is not only, *in excelsis*, practical Atheism ("I thank thee," unwise parson, "for teaching me that word."); but many of those who started to build it were avowed Atheists as well. The very "spirit" of the Co-op. is directly antagonistic against the teaching and example of the mythical Jesus Christ of the canonical gospels. It is true that—here and there—some directors, committee folk, or members, do endeavour, at times, to inject a dose of Godism into the healthy Co-op. body. Such sporadic and spasmodic attempts only add to the already overwhelming proof that the Godists—or most of them—are always ready to drag us backward or downward. We can find a warning here, too, to many Freethinkers. "Progress is only possible through liberty—which is at once a right and a duty." "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"; and that you can find—and help—in the N.S.S.

What I have written about the food supply and the development of the Atheist mind brings us—naturally and logically—to the latest, and straightest, and clearest-cut, issue between the forces of "God" and the advance of Atheism. When victory for Atheism is attained—and that gain is not afar off—that will be the most crushing and the most distinctive defeat that "God" has suffered in its career and in its retreat. Already many of the paid Christians are beginning to "trim"; so that they may retain their jobs, with something of their evil power, for themselves and their friends. They have done the

same before—after every defeat. They are cunning in adapting themselves *and* their creeds, for survival. To keep their place *and* pay, they cheerfully accept the negation of their creed. They would accept, quite as cheerfully, the negation of the negation—for a price. At the same time, it is not for nothing, in the past, that Godists generally—not merely Roman Catholic, Anglican, and other sections—have fought so bitterly against the principle and practice of positive birth-control. Religion—especially the Christian brand of religion—is the historic enemy of human progress. In most—if not all—of the fights for increased freedom and well-being in *this* world, religion has had to be fought: but in few, if any, such struggles—except perhaps in the fight for biological evolution—has the opposition and obstruction been so distinctively and peculiarly religious as in the fight for birth-control. Naturally so—before they know. Birth-control is a direct challenge to “God” at the very fount of life itself. Positive birth-control—in principle and in practice—mocks, and prevents, the exercise of “God’s” (supposed) “creative power.” “God” is mocked—after all! “God,” in its work of “creating” “souls,” is likely to be—if not unemployed—at least only partially employed. It will be done in Heaven, even as it is on Earth—short time. There will be work for only two or three days in the week: The rest will be rest—instead of but the seventh. Nay, worse than that will result. These “souls” after being “created,” are supposed to inhabit human tenements; before a small percentage of them goes up to “Heaven,” and a large proportion down to “Hell.” This birth-control will limit the population of “Heaven,” and “Hell,” as well as of this Earth—if Christianity be true. Considering that countless thousands consider this Earth, Hell; that “were a consummation devoutly to be wished.” This last advance of Atheism completely reverses the old French saying that “Man proposes, but “God” disposes.” We must now say, ““God” proposes, but Man disposes.”

The same process that has taken place after any one of “God’s” defeats in the past, is in operation now—and will continue to develop. Look back—for a moment—at the bitter fight that was waged against the principle of biological evolution. Darwin, Huxley, Tyndal, and others, were denounced in the vilest language—real religious language—by Bishops and other Godists. Religious vituperation—and none is worse—poured from nearly every pulpit in “our” unpleasant land, upon the idea of evolution and all the advocates thereof. About the mildest “argument” against evolution was that it was a Devil’s doctrine; but, again, the “Devil” won. The Godists said that, if evolution were true, Christianity was false—and that statement, certainly, was true. Their first “line of defence” was the more sincere and the more correct in fact and in logic. Then—as the “Devil” gained the day—they accepted, more and more, the Devil’s doctrine. To-day—in that respect—“the Devil’s doctrine” has become the “God’s” truth.

So it is, now, with the principle and practice of positive birth-control—only more so. Again religious vituperation of the very worst was thrown against all the advocates of birth-control; and that vituperation is by no means dead yet. It was denounced as Atheism in the extreme—which was true; and it still is. Wherever possible, intolerant suppression and persecution were exercised against these enemies of “God”—and still are. It was, again, a vile “Devil’s doctrine”; and, as yet, only a (comparative) few of the cuter Godists have come over to the “Devil’s” side: but their number is

steadily increasing—and will increase. Only a few years ago, one of the King’s physicians spoke strongly on the subject at the Annual Conference of the Church of England. On that occasion, the *Sunday Express* emitted an hysterical shriek against the daring doctor and his doctrine, which was damned as a revival of the obscene Atheism of Bradlaugh; and the removal of Sir Wm. Dawson’s name from the list of King’s physicians was demanded. There—and elsewhere—we have the proof that, though every day in every way our cause grows stronger and stronger, still “we’ve got a long way to go.”

ATHOS ZENO.

(To be concluded.)

The Study of Origins.

Corn from Egypt, by M. GOMPERTZ.

The Golden Age, by H. J. MASSINGHAM.

New Year’s Day, by S. H. HOOKE.

(Gerald Howe, 2s. 6d. each.)

THE growth of the doctrine of evolution has inevitably thrown man back upon the study of origins. And in each one of the books before us, the authors offer a challenge to the generally accepted teachings of what must now be called the orthodox school of anthropologists. This theory is, broadly, that the similarity of beliefs and customs found amongst savages and primitive people results from a similarity of mental processes, which in a substantially similar environment have come to the same general conclusions concerning natural forces and processes. All religious ideas are thus the outcome of a primitive error.

The three books before us, each of them clearly and easily written, agree that religious ideas are based on primitive error, but they do not agree that one can arrange civilization on the serial plan adopted by the orthodox anthropologists, and they are inclined to give to religion an origin somewhat different from the one usually accepted. Civilization, said Spencer, many years ago, is not an accident, but a necessity. Civilization, say each of the three writers, is not a necessity but an accident. Following the lead given by Professors W. J. Perry and Elliot Smith, they argue that a proper classification of the inhabitants of the world show that some races never achieve civilization, others acquire a certain amount of culture, but quite clearly from intercourse with an intruding civilization, while only the few become civilized in the larger sense of the word. Something of this kind was pointed out many years ago by Sir Henry Maine, although it was not supported by the body of evidence which this new school is able to bring forward.

Broadly, the claims of the three writers before us, and of the school to which they belong, is that civilization is too rare a thing to be part of a general law of human development which emerges in the course of all human history. The beginnings of civilization, they argue, were of the nature of a lucky accident—the accidental happenings of certain natural conditions combined with a primitive genius fortunate enough to take advantage of them. The claim set forth is that the one place in the world where conditions existed such as would raise man from the level of food gatherers, with whom a progressive civilization does not exist, to the level of food-producers, with which we get the conditions of a settled life and a developing civilization, occurred in the Nile Valley. There a natural system of irrigation existed, and to Egypt the beginnings of civilized life are traced.

In his “Origin of Agriculture,” Dr. Gompertz takes his readers on an extremely interesting excursion with him in his search for the beginnings of our cultivated food plants, and scatters a great deal of useful and, sometimes out of the way information by the way. The very existence of a calendar, he shows, is bound up with the cultivation of food plants, such an invention being useless to men who merely gathered their food. Incidentally we have much interesting writing here on the

development of agricultural implements, and certain aspects of mythology. One is inclined to look with much greater veneration at a field of growing crops after reading this little volume.

Working on the lines of the same general theory, Mr. Hooke traces the growth of the calendar, and shows that "behind the calendar lie the growth of the kingship, the making of men into gods, the growth of the ritual process by which this may be done, the mythology that springs up along with the ritual, and the deep-rooted sense of a mysterious bond that connects together all natural processes and phenomena in earth and heaven."

In *The Golden Age*, Mr. Massingham traces the existing stories of a period which was at least free from the rule of brute force, out of which the later, and in many respects ruder, forms of civilizations grew. Man from being a peaceful agriculturist became a warlike predatory animal, elaborating systems of mythology from which all our existing religious beliefs are derived. Of course, if man had been a scientific animal from the outset this would not have happened. But while he did manage to invent agriculture, he also invented a number of "occult" forces to account for what he actually did, and for the food he produced. The whole process is very elaborately set forth in such other and larger works as W. J. Perry's *Children of the Sun* and Elliot Smith's *Evolution of the Dragon*, who are the fathers of this school of historical anthropologists.

But right or wrong, here is a school of writers who must be seriously reckoned with. Their appeal is to facts, and deductions from known facts. Many of their conclusions cut right across those of the older and now established school of anthropologists, and their case is no light one to be easily brushed aside.

But if they disturb existing anthropological theories they provide no comfort for the hard-pressed religionist. The writers we have noted are all, apparently, Free-thinkers. The Gods are to them inventions, and from their creation many of the ills of the world are to be traced. They challenge one theory of the origin of the gods—that is all. We cordially commend the works to the attention of our readers.

Books and Life.

Two small books exquisitely printed and nicely bound have come our way. In the technical work of Jonathan Cape there is much to be admired, and in the "Traveler's library," the reader who is not circumscribed by prejudice or tame writing may find much to interest him in a catalogue in this series of some forty-six diverse novels, essays and dramas. We renewed acquaintance with that strange genius Ambrose Bierce in his short novel, *The Monk and the Hangman's Daughter*. He writes with restraint, but it is effective, and the undertone of savage irony leaves no doubt in the reader's mind as to his opinions on everything that is symbolized by the monk. It is dramatic writing, but the sense of wistful pity for his characters is never absent. When the Superior takes the monk to task for pitying the Hangman's Daughter, and asks why, he replies: "Because all the people shun her as if she were mortal sin itself, and because she is wholly blameless. It certainly is not her fault that her father is a hangman, nor his either, since, alas, hangmen must be." The question of determinism is gently touched at this point, and in the pathetic climax, the truth of the mystery of the way of a man with a maid proves that at least one biblical writer knew what he was talking about. A collection of brilliant fables included, make up a book to be bought, read and kept. In "The Seagull," and "The Cherry Orchard," two plays by Tchekoff, the short introductory chapters by George Calderon, are a real joy to read in clarity of exposition, and also as a light on Tchekoff as a dramatist; Mr. Calderon states a truth that is none the worse for brevity; "Mankind will always adjust itself to the truth, if only the authorities will allow it." In another part he also stirs a question that may have given a careful thinker something to ponder about—and also to make up his mind—the question of evil. By implication he will have it that conscious evil-doing is rare. For this lesson of man's evil nature has

been consistently and insistently preached, screeched and yelped by interested bodies for so long, that many have come to believe it. Conversely, the horde of phrase-mongers are capable of seeing that their occupation is gone when man thinks and knows himself to be something better than a sick cat, only fit for the ministrations of a medical attendant with a balloon full of words. The "Cherry Orchard" is a fine play, full of male and female Hamlets—a "job-lot," as one character describes them. Its quality and value are, in our opinion, in its objectivity and detachment, and its insistence on the law of change. These volumes are published at three shillings and sixpence each; they are distinctive in appearance, and models of good taste in book publishing.

George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 68-74 Carter Lane, E.C., have published *The Teachings of Maimonides*, at the price of seven shillings and sixpence. There does not appear to be much known of Maimonides, who was a Spanish Jew, born in 1135, at Cordova. At the age of twenty-five he had to fly with his family to escape persecution by a fanatical sect of Mohammedans, who "presented the Jewish and Christian inhabitants with the alternative of apostacy or death." The reader will not be greatly interested in the chapters on Prophecy, The Torah or Divine Providence, but on coming to Reward and Punishment, Psychology and Ethics, the forerunner of the illustrious Spinoza will be recognized. Very sound, even in this day, are Maimonide's instructions concerning bodily health, but he gives us a taste of his quality in the following:—

"It is in fact ignorance or a kind of madness to weary our minds with finding out things which are beyond our reach, without having the means of approaching them."

And with his characteristic pride in learning he tells us that:—

"The wise man is a greater asset to a nation than is a King."

He is convinced that man is neither born good nor evil, and if we remember that the twelfth century was a period in which the inhabitants of Tennessee would be thoroughly at home, we must admire his boldness as much as we respect his subtleties. In the chapter on Psychology, the student will recognize many similarities to those found in the Aphorisms of Patanjali, and we recommend *The Teachings of Maimonides* to all those who are in search of wisdom. To the making of a wise man go many things; up to a point the preparations run parallel in nearly all the various methods as diverse as those in Bushido, in the Aphorisms mentioned above, in Xenophon's *Cyropædia*, or in the Bhagavad-Gita. It would appear that any extraneous religious belief tacked on to them is merely a matter of geography, or expediency, but for those who find one world at a time enough to go on with, the secular wisdom in them all will not disqualify them for future rewards (if any), and the world will not be overcrowded with the wise old lads who desire nothing and fear nothing.

An ardent, unknown Platonist has a preface to an old book published in 1793. He is enthusiastic, vigorous, and argumentative, and as a proof of the faith that is in him, he writes: "He (the reader) will find that the theology of Plato is the progeny of the most consummate science and wisdom, and that it is as much superior to all other theological systems which oppose it, as reality to fiction, or intellect to irrational opinion." That reads well until one goes to Landor for a critical study of Platonism to be found in the "Imaginary Conversations," where a dialogue takes place between Diogenes and Plato. The unknown Platonist mentioned above appeared to think that a theology was a necessity, yet Landor, in this dialogue, perhaps his best, disposes of Plato with applied common sense. "Prythee," says Diogenes to Plato, "hold thy loose tongue, twinkling and glittering like a serpent's in the midst of luxuriance and rankness." And then follows Diogene's well known definition of philosophy—well-known, perhaps, but not

well-understood and yet not widely put into practice by those who hold the leading strings of mankind: "This is philosophy: to make remote things tangible, common things extensively useful, useful things extensively common, and to leave the least necessary for the last." No speaker, writer, or publicist, need be short of work if he understands Landor here. Perhaps the hullabaloo in connexion with the Sacrament is a case of the last being the first. We have forgotten to mention the title of the old book; it is *Two Orations of the Emperor Julian*, and we were driven to it after reading Merezhkovsky's novel, *The Death of the Gods*—a fine work, full of good sense, and possessing the Russian quality of detachment in pictorial history.

Cheap paper-covered editions of George Meredith's novels may still be found by those who haunt second-hand bookshops. For threepence we acquired *The Tragic Comedians*; for a similar figure we have also possessed *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, *Rhoda Fleming* and *The Egoist*. We think that "memorable" as a quality may be applied to all his novels, for they leave a distinct impression in the mind. We would not part with our dog-eared copies and yellowing pages for the finest editions; they were our first loves. And although time may slightly dim the memory, we remember what Meredith wrote, if we cannot recall it perfectly. A solitary spark capable of lighting up and fixing mysticism for the thing that it is may be found in these few lines from *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*: "When people do not themselves know what they mean, they succeed in deceiving and imposing on others." There is a wealth of substance in his work, something as it were, to bite on, and there are no indications of haste. In his poetry, Meredith is as diffuse as Browning, but Anglo-Saxon in his thought, and intensely so in his worship of beauty in wood, field and sky. His answer to Fame will still be heard long after newspapers have finished chiming on the bells of Chesterton, Belloc and Wells, and his novels might profitably be taken up by our new and old aristocracy as an elementary guide to the art of ruling.

A pocket edition of *The Renaissance*, by Count Arthur De Gobineau, has been published by George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., at seven shillings and sixpence. Dr. Oscar Levy has a preface and introduction, both more provocative and downright than Mr. George Bernard Shaw is capable of in his best moments, excepting perhaps his preface to *Androcles and the Lion*. Dr. Levy, in all his works, has hawk's eyes for quality, and it must have been a labour of love to present Gobineau in an English dress. Five outstanding figures are taken from the morning of history called the Renaissance: Savonarola, Cæsar, Borgia, Julius II, Leo X, and Michael Angelo, and throughout they are presented in the form of scenes from a play. Savonarola and Michael Angelo show the struggle of art against ecclesiastical forces; the former gives a particularly impressive picture of the monkish streak at work. Machiavelli is introduced, and as a satirical touch to the character of the author of *The Prince*, the story of Savonarola is concluded. "There is a noise," Machiavelli says, "It's Monna Marietta my wife . . . She is scolding the maid. I am going out so as to avoid being scolded myself." If my readers have studied *The Renaissance*, by the late Prof. W. H. Hudson, together with that of Pater, they will come to Count De Gobineau's version with all the delight of having made a discovery, for it has intense vitality, all the characters live, and the book is rich in inspiration for those who are not impressed with the culture of to-day personified by a Rolls-Royce and a big cigar, or children standing in the draughty corridor of a public-house within the meaning of the act.

WILLIAM REPTON.

I should wish that it could be said of me, that I always plucked the thistle and planted the flower where I thought the flower would grow.—*Abraham Lincoln*.

If you shut your door to all errors truth will be shut out.—*Tagore*.

Correspondence.

DESIGN IN NATURE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—I read with interest your very able leader on Dr. Barnes's sermon, in a recent *Freethinker*. In the comparatively short space which you weekly allot to yourself, the vital points in the sermon were trenchantly dealt with. The issues raised by the Doctor, however, were so numerous, and involved so many possible aspects of criticism, that I make so bold as to submit a few reflections on one or two of those aspects which appealed to me as specially inviting comment.

The Doctor's thesis, it is true, embodied, in the main, the time-worn argument from design. But in following the premises on which it was grounded, one was forced to the conclusion that it was even worse than "the commonest and cheapest kind of argument." It destroyed, by implication, the very basis on which it purported to rest.

In substance, the design argument depends upon the discovery in natural circumstances or processes, of a state of things similar to states of things which we know to follow from the exercise of human intelligence, and proceeds, of course, to the inference that behind those natural processes there must lie an intelligence similar to our own. The particular state of things cited by Dr. Barnes for the establishment of his case, comprised a certain remarkable coincidence. It was the coincidence of the conditions of life, established and rendered persistent on one particular planet in a Universe of worlds. Here, to the Doctor, there seemed an element of "luck," an "accident" altogether too fortunate (for us) to be considered apart from the interference of an intelligent agent in a scheme of things not normally tending to such a happy condition.

The amazing thing to me is that the implications of the argument appear to have escaped him. In order to stress the unique character of our planet he emphasizes the great multitude of others. If we may be permitted an analogy, we are to contemplate, therefore, a being who builds millions of houses in order that, in the end, he may erect a single habitable domicile, and in that contemplation we are to discover a state of things similar to the state of things which we know to follow from the exercise of human intelligence!

We have heard of wastefulness in nature, but we have never heard it attributed to the exercise of intelligence. The alternative which you offer to Dr. Barnes in solving the problem of the wasted worlds, he would, of course, emphatically reject, viz., the frustrated efforts of the Deity, the necessity of preliminary experimentation, or simply His absence from the scheme of their existence. The consideration which evidently weighs with the Doctor, is that our planet is to be regarded as a case of special (and moreover conscious) selection. If God had been attempting the same thing elsewhere, then His failure there would provide as much and as little evidence of his activity as His success here. And if He were absent elsewhere, then there is no case of selection here, and the results of His activity here cannot be regarded as a coincidence. The Doctor's whole point depends upon the existence and activity of God everywhere, and the unique character of His attention to Earth and Man. The point which I wish to drive home is that he is *not* dwelling upon the mere spectacle of life. If he were, then there is no need to mention the other worlds. This one is sufficient to prove God according to his thesis. He is dwelling upon the spectacle of singularity—upon the fact that this world has been specially singled out by a process which might conceivably have applied to any other. And that is where he cannot help emphasizing the wastefulness involved in the creation of others.

If there is any real singularity about the matter, it is the singularity of the case chosen by the Doctor in support of the argument from design. For it emphasizes those very points to which our attention is drawn by the critics of the argument; and it minimizes that very element which the argument seeks to demonstrate, viz., the element of intelligence. But that is not the most astonishing feature of Dr. Barnes' dialectic. When he refers to the singular condition of this world of ours, he

does not mean that it is singular only in the sense of being unique. He makes it quite clear that it is singular also in the sense of being arresting. He finds it remarkable that such a concatenation of events should have occurred. But in order to impress us also with this striking spectacle, he dwells upon the number of cases in which it has not occurred, viz., in which the conditions of life have presumably either never appeared, or failed to persist. It seems to have escaped him that the more cases we can find where an unusual combination of events has not taken place, the less we will be astonished when it eventually does take place. And this, after all, is a very commonplace observation on the subject of coincidence. It is when a coincidence keeps on recurring that we are arrested, not when it occurs once in a multitude of instances. Here again, then, we find the Doctor emphasizing those points which tend to the destruction of his argument; but, in fairness to him, we must remember that his difficulties arise, all along the line, from the necessity of assuming what he has set out to prove, a fallacy into which he is forced rather by the inherent weakness of the case he must needs defend, than by any notable defect in his intellectual equipment.

MEDICUS.

Obituary.

MR. T. BENNETT.

I regret to report that Mr. T. Bennett, an old Free-thinker, died on October 30, at Tynwydd, Treherbert. A number of local Secularists were present at the cremation on November 3, when a Secular Burial Service was read.—W. M.

Society News.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH.

MR. ROSETTI lectured on Sunday to the Birmingham Branch of the N.S.S., at the Bristol Street Schools. The subject of the address, "God, Evolution, and Sir A. Keith's Presidential Address," was topical, and raised a fine crop of questions. The attendance at the meeting was good, and the audience obviously appreciated the adequate knowledge and careful thought that is characteristic of all Mr. Rosetti's lectures.—M. A.

MANCHESTER BRANCH.

MR. FRED MANN lectured on Sunday, for the first time, to the Manchester Branch. In the afternoon the speaker dealt with Spiritualism along rather unusual lines. The points dealt with seemed to be new to many of those who were present, and after the lecture, at the chairman's invitation, a local spiritualist mounted the platform and offered opposition. A number of questions were asked. In the evening, Mr. Mann addressed the Branch on "Lenin and Mussolini." More people wished to take part in the discussion after the lecture than time permitted, and the discussion was thoughtful and well-informed. The attendance at both meetings was good. The hall was full in the evening, and the members at the literature stall were busy. Mr. Greenall was able to report the sale of a considerable number of copies of "An Open Letter to Bishop Barnes." Mr. Seferian took the chair at the meetings, and easily discharged what is always a difficult duty.—A. B.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH.

MR. GEORGE SAVILLE's delightful address on "Substance and Shadow," created great interest last Sunday, and provoked a really "live" discussion. As a teacher, Mr. Saville spoke with authority and from experience on the subject of education. Replying to a question as to the withdrawal of children from religious instruction, Mr. Saville's experience had been that Jew, Roman Catholic and Nonconformists frequently withdrew their children, but he had no experience of Freethinkers having done so. Will Freethinkers please note? We hope to have another address from Mr. Saville before our indoor meetings close. To-night, Mr. Rex Roberts, who is a great favourite with North Londoners, opens the discussion on "National Needs."—K.B.K.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

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

LONDON. INDOOR.

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

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (30 Brixton Road, S.W., near Oval Station): 7.15, Mr. P. Ryan—"Morality."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): 7.0, G. F. Holland—"Thomas Hardy's 'The Dynasts.'"

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (The London Institution Theatre, South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11.0, John A. Hobson, M.A.—"The Worker as Politician."

STRATFORD TOWN HALL.—Chapman Cohen will deliver an address on: "The New Warfare Between Science and Religion." Chair at 7 p.m. (See advt. on page 752).

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (34, George Street, Manchester Square, W.1): 7.30, Mr. Botting—"Evolution and its Implications." Thursday, November 24, at 7.30: Social and Dance at 101 Tottenham Court Road, W.1. Entrance, 1s.

OUTDOOR.

FREETHOUGHT MEETING (corner of North End Road, Fulham, near Walham Green Church): Saturday 7.30, Speakers—F. Bryant, A. J. Mathie. Local Freethinkers' attendance invited.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Clapham Common): 11.30, Mr. W. Sandford. Wednesday, November 23, at 8 p.m. Clapham Old Town): Mr. W. Sandford.

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (Hyde Park): 3.0, Speakers—Messrs. Botting, Baker and Parton.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.0, Messrs. Hyatt and E. C. Saphin. At 6.0, Messrs. Campbell-Everden, Le Maine, and Darby. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.0, W. P. Campbell-Everden—A Lecture. Freethought meetings every Wednesday and Friday in Hyde Park at 7.30. Various lecturers.

COUNTRY.

INDOOR.

CHESTER-LE-STREET BRANCH N.S.S. (Assembly Rooms, Front Street): Open daily for reading, etc., from 10 a.m., All Freethinkers and enquirers welcome.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S. (No 2 Room, City Hall, Albion Street): 11.30 and 6.30, Mr. Geo. Whitehead will lecture on "Physiological Cures for the Defects of Humanity" (morning) and "Psychological Cures for the Defects of Humanity" (evening).

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (18 Colquitt Street, off Bold Street): 7.30, Mr. F. B. Monks (of Manchester)—A Lecture.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH N.S.S. (Co-operative Hall, Franfort Street, Plymouth): Mr. R. H. Rosetti, 3.0, "Bishop Barnes, the Church and Common Sense." 7.0, "God, Evolution, and Sir A. Keith's Presidential Address." Admission Free. Reserved seats, 1s. and 6d.

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