

SCIENCE AND MATERIALISM.

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FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

EDITED BY CHAPMAN COHEN · · · EDITOR · 1881-1915 · G·W·FOOTE

VOL. XLVIII.—No. 2

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 1928

PRICE THREEPENCE

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Views and Opinions.

Science and Materialism.

IN his *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, Mr. Tawney remarks that “The children of the mind are like the children of the body. Once born, they grow by a law of their own being.” There is a truth here, too easily overlooked, and very easily misused. But it is certain that some of these “children of the mind,” particularly when they happen to run agreeably with certain established prejudices, evince a vitality that almost defies attack. Take as an example the following from the opening of an article in the *Church Times*: “Recent advances in physical science have undermined the old-fashioned materialistic determinism.” Of course one is not quite certain as to what precisely is meant by “old-fashioned determinism”; it may mean something that either never existed, or never ought to have existed. But the intention of the sentence is quite clear. The foundations of Materialism and Determinism have been undermined by recent advances in physical science. And that is something which could not be said by anyone with an understanding of the principles underlying the whole of the physical sciences, and with a resolve to speak the truth on the matter. For if there is one sphere in which the principles of Materialism and Determinism have been triumphantly vindicated and established, it is in connexion with the physical sciences. But this is a typical child of the mind. It may have been born of pure misunderstanding; but, having once drawn the breath of life, it gains sustenance from the fact that it chimes well with religious prejudice and popular ignorance. It is probably written by a parson, and so expresses what a parson would wish to be the case. And it is quite certain that constant repetition will induce about ninety-five per cent. to accept it as an unquestionable truth.

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The Advance of Materialism.

I have dealt pretty exhaustively with this argument in my *Materialism Re-stated*, but an answer

may be given from another and, to a Christian, a more authoritative source. In the exceedingly useful *Psyche Miniature Series* (published at the modest price of 2s. 6d.), Messrs. Kegan Paul & Co., have just issued four volumes, which are about as deterministic and materialistic in tone and teaching as one could wish. These are: *Fatalism and Freedom* (C. J. Herrick), *On History* (A. L. Rowse), *Emergent Evolution* (W. M. Wheeler), and *Man a Machine* (Joseph Needham). These four books, well written, clearly expressed, daintily got up, represent the points of view of a biologist, a historian, a naturalist, and a chemist; and while I do not, naturally, endorse all that each writer has to say—more often it is his way of saying it with which I should quarrel—they all supply a definitely mechanistic and materialistic conception of nature and of man. Mr. Herrick says quite definitely, “Human conduct, including human thinking, which is one of the mainsprings of our own behaviour, follows in causal sequence just as truly as does the behaviour of a soap bubble or a reflex arc,” and he proceeds to develop a conception of “freedom” on all-fours with my own *Determinism or Free-Will?* published many years ago. Mr. Rowse will have nothing to do with anything that lies outside a strictly historic determinism. And Mr. Wheeler’s thesis is that of the emergence of new phenomena, each of which is connected in terms of the most rigid determinism with what has gone before, and he pours scorn upon the “organizing factors,” the “élan vital,” “life force,” etc., etc., of Bergson, Driesch, Eldridge, Shaw and others. There is a common agreement that the anti-mechanistic view is sterile or misleading, or both.

* * *

A Challenge.

But the most striking one of the four books noted is that by Mr. Needham, the well-known Cambridge bio-chemist. There is a deliberate challenge in the title. It is the title, avowedly so, of one of the most famous—religious writers would say the most infamous—materialistic books of the eighteenth century. *Man a Machine*, was written by Julian de la Mettrie, in 1748; it had the honour of being publicly burned, and the author the distinction of having to leave the country to avoid arrest. Mr. Needham actually reprints the title page of the English edition (London, 1750). Somehow the people here got a translation of definitely anti-religious books sooner in the eighteenth century than we do to-day—perhaps the publishers were not so well under control as at present.) He then sets out to justify, with the equipment of the very latest science, the main contention of this very much hated atheistic writer. Professor Needham points out that since 1900 there has been a determined effort on the part of certain writers to propagate the view that anywhere outside physics

and chemistry the mechanistic idea ought to be abandoned. These men, in their anxiety to save as much as possible for the "non-deterministic" position, "fastened attention upon those phases of animal life most difficult to deal with physico-chemically." They were aided in this by the fact that the "general mass of thinkers know nothing of special biological problems, but who see the necessity of taking what biology has to say into account in the construction of a world-view." Meanwhile, the army of bio-chemists and biologists went on working with their own problems, leaving the field clear to those voices of ancient religious ideas in a new and apparently scientific dress. And all the time, "The mechanistic theory of life needs a Lucretius, a poet inspired to a red-hot enthusiasm by the inflexible laws of the atoms, by the unshakable determinism of physico-chemical explanations, and by the exquisite harmonies and adjustments of which pure physico-chemical systems are capable."

* * *

Man a Machine.

Professor Needham's little book is written by way of a reply to Professor Rignano, Editor of *Scientia*, and author of an earlier work in the Psyche series, entitled *Man Not a Machine* (again, one of the titles used against La Mettrie's work), and there is a passage here that ought to be cited. Says Professor Needham:—

I cannot claim to be that Lucretian poet I spoke of, but when the generals are lacking, the captains must take command. *Man a Machine, Man More than a Machine, Man Not a Machine, Man a Machine* again—so runs the cycle; and it may be noted that though the devil's advocates change their titles, the affirmators hold theirs constant and unmoved. At the beginning of the second phase of the duel, I salute my predecessor, Julian Offray de la Mettrie; I salute in him, under the surface of his extravagances, that same nobility of soul which shone in Epicurus, passing alone beyond the flaming ramparts of the world, and bringing in a seed to men the beneficent characteristics of the scientific mind.

I am tempted to give many other passages, but to give all I should like to give would be to reprint the little work as it stands. I am quite sure that those who have written so enthusiastically about my own small work on Materialism will recognize it as an authoritative endorsement of much that is said therein, and particularly of the main position taken up. Professor Needham will have nothing to do with vitalistic ideas in any form. "They perpetually impede the progress of biology," and in dealing with Haldane and others, he shows that there is a constantly veiled appeal to ignorance rather than to knowledge. To those who think it is not possible to describe the living organism as due to the interaction of purely natural forces, he presents the following—with approval—from A. V. Hill:—

The living creature is a very strange thing. Here it is in a chemical, mechanical universe, showing the most extreme dependence on physical conditions. It dies if it be frozen or boiled, or deprived of food . . . At the same time it shows in its simplest forms a complexity, and apparent purposiveness, an individuality defying any physical hypothesis . . . But deprive the brain of consciousness for a few seconds and consciousness is gone, remove the thyroid gland and a beautiful and intelligent child becomes a hideous imbecile, subject the egg-cell of some species to an appropriate salt solution and an individual will develop without a father . . . Wherever we look we find life in only one form, composed of compounds of hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, and carbon, living between certain narrow limits of temperature, giving out exactly as much as

it takes in, dependent on the supply of foodstuffs from outside, exhibiting certain electrical properties, and destroyed by the most absurdly small doses of certain chemical substances.

Somewhat in the tone of the tone of the sentence we quoted from the *Church Times*, Professor Rignano said that Mechanists (Materialists) were willing to regard mental phenomena as outside their province. Professor Needham meets this with a plain denial, and says that he finds "no great difficulty in regarding the events of our mental life from a mechanist point of view." And he agrees with Lange that "Materialism is the only philosophy on which science can get to work; methodologically it is essential . . . In science, man is a machine; or if he is not, then he is nothing at all . . . At all times the need for a materialism has been experienced, because without it science became impossible." And if Professor Needham cannot lay claim to being a second Lucretius, the following passages will show that he is not lacking in poetic imagination, or scientific fervour:—

Existing infinite ages before man appeared, destined to exist ages after his disappearance, the universe moved in its cycles, treating his whole realm of interests with complete indifference . . . The world which had brought him forth would one day swallow him up; he was a colony and a vassal of it. Minute and feeble, powerless to alter one of its dealings with himself, he could gain no satisfaction from it save by charting it and studying it in the manner of the scientist. All other forms of activity seemed futile and far-fetched; attempts to blind oneself to what was real; spiritual drugs, the opium not only of the proletariat but of all mankind.

On the other hand, who can deny that the Sion of Natural knowledge is a fair city? In the polity of science things may be complicated, but they are also orderly; they may appear as wanton, but they are impelled by necessity; they may be diverse, but they are organized. Nothing capricious, nothing sentimental, nothing incoherent, nothing mysterious, is to be found there. Freedom is replaced by co-operation as of a team, unaccountable eccentricity by harmonic regularity, and what is individual merges in what is general. The unique altogether disappears and the group takes its place. The richness of the poetic imagination passes over into another sort of richness, not dependent on the rise of the unconditioned out of the unknown, but due to the majesty and clarity of mechanical relationships. Yet the ecstasy with which the scientific investigator greets for the first time some new experimental result or penetrates deeper than usual into the causes of things, is very like that of the mystic in his moments of union with the One, and cannot greatly differ from the depths of æsthetic experience. It is indeed through these similarities of spiritual exercise that all the innumerable kinds of men are really at one.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

Pain's Mission.

I UNDERSTAND what mean those fingers twined;
I know why nails are dug within the palm;
I sympathize, but cannot bring you balm,
Nor do I know where you that balm shall find.
You smiling said that you would never mind
And faced the world with your accustomed calm,
But I who watch have seen each secret qualm,
For long ago your sorrow I devined.
I have no anodyne for grief's harsh bed,
Nor know I where your comfort shall be found;
Maybe it does not dwell above the ground
But in the grave, where sleep the happy dead.
One thing I guess, that in the cosmic plan
Pain comes to teach us all to play the man.

BAYARD SIMMONS.

Heading for Disestablishment.

"No man ever saw a religion die."

Charles Bradlaugh

"Naught may endure but mutability.—*Shelley*."

"Never kneel in front of a priest unless you keep your hands in your pockets."—*Voltaire*."

THE ROMANIST PARTY in the Established Church, which numbers all the Bishops, save four; eighty per cent. of the higher ecclesiastics; and a huge following among the rank and file, is really alarmed at the checkmate to its plans caused by the House of Commons' vote against the proposed new Prayer Book. Not only was this antagonistic vote unexpected by the Anglo-Catholics, but it is a most serious setback to thirty years' insidious campaign, which had for its object the capture of the national State Church, by a body as closely resembling the Roman Catholic Church as margarine resembles butter.

For thirty years preferment has been given by the Church Authorities to the Anglo-Catholics, with a sop now and again to the Broad Churchmen to save appearances. A new and revised Prayer Book is carefully prepared, ostensibly to replace the three centuries' old book already in use, but in reality, to obtain Parliamentary sanction for many Popish practices expressly excluded from the earlier volume. If the House of Commons had approved this apparently innocent volume, this would have meant that all the enormous endowments and well-oiled machinery of the State Church would have been used to make this country Roman Catholic in everything except name. And Popery, with its sly confessionals, and eternal itching for temporal power, is a far worse tyranny than the State Church as we know it, and for Englishmen it would mean all the difference between being in the frying-pan or the fire.

Fortunately, the House of Commons is a composite body and includes men of all creeds, and of no creed, and this saved the position. Members of Parliament are not theologians, nor are they well versed in clerical camouflage, but they know a petticoated priest when they see one. And the Nonconformists, with the help of a few Freethinkers, did what was necessary, despite the blandishments of the clerical catspaws.

That adverse vote of the House of Commons has brought the question of disestablishment, not only nearer, but well into the region of practical politics. And it is well to remember that the matter of disestablishment is by no means a new thing, for the branches of the Anglican Church in Ireland, and also in Wales, have both been disestablished and relegated to the position of other sects. The reasons advanced in those two instances were that the Irish and Welsh people, as a whole, were not in sympathy with the English Church, which was to them an alien body.

It is true now that the Established Church in England is no longer the Church of the English people. Only a small percentage of the population attend the Anglican Church's services, and the authority of the ecclesiastic is fast decaying. For example, Easter, the most sacred of the Church's festivals, has become an ordinary Bank holiday instead of a holy day. The Church frowns at divorce, and the records of the Divorce Courts show that the priestly precepts and public practice are at complete variance. Nor, from a High Churchman's point of view, is the matter more satisfactory. His Church, "the Bride of Christ," is subject to the House of Commons, a body whose members include almost every shade of opinion from Hard-shell Baptists to Parsees, and even Freethinkers. Bishops are appointed by the Prime

Minister of the day, who may be a Nonconformist, or a worldly politician with a turn for philosophy. So, with all the talk of "apostolic succession," the Right Reverend Fathers-in-God find their appointments due, not to the Holy Ghost, but to a politician with one eye on the voters' lists, and the other on the continuance of his salary.

Indeed, the priest in politics is a constant menace to democracy. In Republican France and in Soviet Russia the State has had to fight the priests openly, and not always with complete success. The present crisis in England is not a petty squabble between two rival Churches, Roman Catholic and Protestant. If it were, it would merit no more attention than the scuffling of kites. It is the far more serious question as to whether the huge endowments of the State Church are to be used to further the interests of the very worst form of Christianity, outside of Abyssinia. The State Church controls, under Parliament, millions of money, sufficient to form the revenue of a small country. It has a huge army of 20,000 priests to do its bidding. It controls hundreds of schools and tens of thousands of scholars; and it bosses the Universities of the nation. And last, but not least, it has the support of the English newspaper press, the most lick-spittle and sycophantic press in the world, in spite of its hypocritical profession of independence and fearlessness.

At a time when education is in dire need of money, and when the very culture of the nation is in danger through lack of funds, it is astonishing that thoughtful men can view the handing over of power to that section of the State Church which is most antagonistic to progress in all shapes. To us, no less than to the France of Gambetta's day, Clericalism is the prime enemy. It perpetuates a clerical caste and supports privilege and sectarian supremacy. It insists on men kneeling before priests, and Democracy wants all men upright and independent. It teaches ancient ignorance, and Democracy asks for more intellectual light. At nearly every point Clericalism insults the reason. To place great resources and great power in the hands of men with the religion of South Sea Islanders is to render a grave disservice to one's country, and to do a serious mischief to Freedom. What is needed is the disestablishment and disendowment of the Anglican Church, and the devotion of its enormous revenues to the welfare of the people of this country. So long as there are mountains of money behind Priestcraft, so long will priests dupe their fellow men, and feather their own nests. Take the money away, and there will no longer be the same incentive for bamboozling simple folks.

A clergyman's little daughter watched her father leave his home arrayed in full war paint for a special ceremonial occasion. "What fun some grown up people do have," remarked the little one. The child was quite right. Priests do have great fun, but, unfortunately, it is at the expense of better men than themselves.

MIMNERMUS.

We who live in the bleak days after the great crisis need be no more discouraged by the apparent indifference of the present time than are fields that are ploughed and sown by the wet days of February and the cold indifference of the winds of early March. The ploughing has been done, the seed is in the ground, and the World State stirs in a multitude of germinating minds.

H. G. Wells.

When one is attempting noble things, it is surely noble also to suffer patiently whatsoever befall us to suffer.—*Plato*.

Spiritualism amongst Pagan and Savage Races and as Revealed in the Bible.

(Continued from page 5.)

THERE is, for the searching, to be found in the Scriptures not a little information, even if professedly insecure and on occasion chaotic, respecting survival after death. That immortality was the teaching of the scribes of old, as of Jesus and his Apostles, there can be no question. However vague, unsatisfactory, and at times contradictory may be the evidence as to the precise nature of this immortality, its actuality is stated repeatedly and emphatically. Straggling as is the description of the pneumatological world and its inhabitants which can in truth only be completed by a synthetic reading of the whole of the New Testament, the resultant picture, if disappointingly indefinite in some respects, is much clearer and precise than the average Bible reader and even professional theologian realizes or admits. Just as there are two universes, the spiritual (heaven) and corporeal (Earth, planets and stars), so likewise are there spiritual and corporeal beings. General as is the assumption conveyed through a popular hymn that Heaven is some distant and indefinable place, my reading of the New Testament is that the spiritual world is at any rate in part interpenetrative and co-existent with the corporeal, with Heaven itself as the residence of God. In any case the reigning monarch of the spiritual world is the Lord God Jehovah, with a hierarchy of angels as bodyguard and servants-in-chief. As purely antithetic is Satan, chief of an army of demons, resident in Hell, but roaming, the lot of them, the whole universe with the solitary exception of Heaven itself. Now it is stated with pellucid clearness, and by no less an authority than Paul, that the inhabitants of this spiritual land differ from earth residents.

There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one and the glory of the terrestrial is another. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.—(1 Cor. xv. 40-44.)

And again:—

And this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be all changed.—(1 Cor. xv. 50-51.)

Whatever may be the nature of the change here indicated, the soul which survives the body beyond doubt assumes its characteristic earthly appearance. This contention, so strongly held by modern spiritualists, is fully borne out by the visions which besprinkle the Bible. Jesus himself, with Peter, James and John as witnesses, saw and recognized Moses (Matt. xvii. 3; Mark ix. 4; Luke ix. 30); Saul, through the mediumship of a witch, conversed with Samuel; while Paul, James, Cephas and five hundred others all saw Christ after the resurrection. (1 Cor. xv. 5-8.) Unless these are exceptions (and there is nothing in the Scriptures to indicate this) we are to assume that the good spirits of the dead, whilst awaiting the Judgment Day, are on occasion visible to certain persons and retain sufficient of their earthly character to be plainly and readily recognizable.³ It will be noticed I say good

spirits. This I do advisedly for I can find no cases of recognition of evil spirits, although devils or demons are met with at every turn throughout the two Testaments. It is exuberantly evident that these demons or evil spirits are intangible and retain no personality; they invade other personalities causing mental and bodily disease; they even possess the power of transference from human beings to swine.⁴ Christ was constantly casting out devils; the four gospels are besprinkled with such exorcisms.

Abundantly confirmatory in its reiteration is the denouncement throughout the whole of the Scriptures of the worship of the spirits of the dead, or of any attempt at communication with these spirits. Their existence is never so much as denied. On the contrary it is re-stated again and again, the grounds on which intercourse is forbidden being that these spirits are evil, that they are not the real spirits of the dead, but demons impersonating for their own wicked purposes these departed souls. Obviously the inference is that while the souls of the dead are existent they do not possess the power of communication; that these thaumaturgic powers are reserved for God and his angels, though presumably through some arcane means the demons of Hell have also secured something of the same power. Such then is the conception of the spiritual world as gleanable from the Bible: God, his angels and a spiritual paradise with Heaven as its empyrean on the one hand; Satan, his devils or demons, and Hell or a region of eternal damnation on the other. Immortality of the soul is definitely promised by Jesus, the son of God, and his inspired disciples; the Lord himself or his angels are seen and spoken with by Adam, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Baalam, Gideon, Solomon, Zacharia, Mary, Paul, Peter and others.

The precise destination of the soul immediately after departure from the body is presumably an intermediate world (Heb. xii. 22-23) between and interpenetrable with Earth on the one hand and Heaven on the other: the astral plane of spiritualists and theosophists. There are indications, as in Peter, that the soul is capable of receiving information. (1 Peter iii. 18-20; iv. 6.) Again, Paul's visit to Heaven implies a sectional Paradise. (2 Cor. xii. 1-4.)

At this stage it may be well to examine the evidences of transcendental powers bestrewed so plentifully throughout the Scriptures. That these arcane and magical practices were common enough is certain. Daniel the magician, Joseph the diviner, are

its comparison with the spiritualistic conception of after life will reveal a striking parallelism: "There is every reason to suppose that the diversities of the human intellect and tastes in each individual will still survive, and be perfected. For these special aptitudes and tendencies were bestowed by the Creator, as part of that limited likeness to Him in which we were formed. So amongst us now one man or woman loves the great thoughts and fit words of literature, another the perfection of art in painting or sculpture or music, another the infinite varieties of beauty in nature, another the search after the laws of the material world, another philosophy, another religious musing; not one of us all is the exact pattern of any other in tastes or capacities, yet every one has the gifts of God. It is impossible to doubt that all these diversities of ministration of the same Spirit will survive in the purified and exalted soul, and will reach to an infinitely higher stage of enjoyment. There is boundless room for each to develop more fully, and with reward more ample than has been possible under the limitations of earth. For the weary there will be rest, and for the active work, but to everyone something of the measure of the fulness of God."

⁴ This transference of spirits into animals is paralleled in the beliefs of savages. The natives of Siam hold that the souls of the dead are liable to incarnation in elephants. A somewhat similar belief is held in Sumatra. Witches believed their god to be incarnate in bulls, dogs, cats, goats, sheep and occasionally other animals, as well as men.

³ The following quotation from *The Foundations of Religion*, by John Boyd Kinnear is a good example of the theological interpretation of the nature of eternal life, and

well known examples. Elisha the prophet possessed clairaudient powers, telling the King of Israel the secret words whispered by the King of Syria in the privacy of his bedroom. (2 Kings vi. 12.) He possessed other goetic powers as well, eclipsing those of the greatest of modern seers: witnessing his father whirled into Heaven in a chariot of fire. (2 Kings ii. 11-12.) Visions, as I have already pointed out, were remarkably common; evil spirits were evidently responsible for most diseases and afflictions. Jesus saw the spirit of God descend in the form of a dove (Matt. iii. 16-17); the two Marys together witnessed an angel roll back the stone blocking the entrance to Christ's sepulchre (Matt. xxviii. 2-4); Belshazzar after a drunken orgie saw a hand writing on the wall (Dan. v. 5); Balaam's ass, after seeing an angel spoke to Balaam (Numbers xxii. 28); the famous witch of Endor actually materialized a ghost:—

And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee. And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing. Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself. And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? (1 Samuel xxviii. 6-15.)

A comparison of this seance, for it was nothing else, with the materialization of, say, Katie King in Crooke's laboratory will show how impossible it is to say the one transcends the other or is any the more incredible. Compare the spirit writing in Belshazzar's palace with homologous phenomena at sittings held by Slade, or the Fox girls, or Home, or Eusapia Palladino. Is there anything more unbelievable in the apparitions that crowd the pages of Violet Tweedale's *Ghosts I Have Seen* than in those which are bestrewn through the books of the Bible from Genesis to Revelations? Hickson's *Heal the Sick*, published in the year of grace 1924, read, like a modernized version of St. Matthew. Nothing that D. D. Home accomplished excelled the levitation of the axe by Elisha.

GEORGE R. SCOTT.

(To be continued.)

When we look into the long avenue of the future and see the good there is for each one of us to do, we realize after all what a beautiful thing it is to work, and to live, and be happy.—R. L. Stevenson.

Why Free-Think?

THIS subtle and puckish word "Why" may be used in two senses. It may seek to trace the impulse of liberty to the constitution and essence of the universe at large, as if something in the ether, stars, and unfrontiered spaces naturally prompted us to give play to the spirit of inquiry. This may be called the Kosmic "Why." It is not the "Why" I am now asking. Nevertheless, I would remark, in passing, that man has repeated this "Why" through the ages, nor, for my part, should I wish to hinder his doing so. But, amid all his questionings, he must needs remember that his "answers," such as they are, to this Kosmic "Why," are not explanations from the soul of things (as theologians would say), but the talk of a child—or a poet—to himself, when picturing his own universe, and inventing answers relative solely to his own conception. That is what philosophers mean by anthropomorphism.

The other "Why" is my present friend. I will call it the historical "Why." Why "free-think"? Put in the shortest and simplest terms, the answer is that the people who have thought freely, in spite of hindrances, have, as a matter of fact, found the process good both for themselves and others. The answer, please note, implies history; it implies experiences in the past ages. We need not wander in a vague moralizing, and say that we *ought* to think freely. Every *ought* looks backward; it considers what has been attempted, what has been done, and what has proved good. But the theologian makes all his *oughts* start fresh, without experience, and as the "word of God"; and he bids you do a thing because God commands. And even certain moralists, who do not base ethics on God's will, are apt to speak of a Moral Imperative, as if moral ideas were judges in robes, or policemen in helmets, enforcing a "law" on us, whether we have found a value in it or not. In such a narrow, mechanical intention, there are no moral laws. All true moral laws are as man-made (anthropomorphic) as motor-cars, or oil-paintings, or poems. But the phrase "man-made" does not mean invented on the spur of the moment, or in a fit of temper. It means shapen by the observation, experiment, prudence, reflexion and discussion of generations of men and women. This fact throws light on the word *moral* itself. The word comes from the Latin *mos*, or custom, or manner; and (plural) *mores*, or customs, or manners. In other words, a way of talking, or acting, or thinking has been so tested, time after time, that it is recognized as good manners—and I hardly need point out that we are not now alluding to "manners" in the thin sense of etiquette, or "manners" of the table, visits, etc.

It is important to observe that, in origin, free-thinking is associated with the common things of daily life. For example, a clan of primitive folk might have dwelt many years near a river, and never thought of irrigation. One day, a bright spirit would dig a groove, or canal, and carry the precious liquid to ground hitherto dry and barren; or he guided it along a pipe or reed (Latin, "canna"); and so, to this very year, 1928, the idea of a canal has remained as a *mos*, or custom. Material civilization is made up of such free-thinking. Sometimes the new method is adopted quickly. Sometimes it lingers on its way. As the human race grows older, it is readier to pick up a novel proposal in machinery and labour-saving devices, and retain it as a *mos*, until a better one claims attention. Of course, the terms "mos" and "morals" are not usually applied to customs in the sphere of machines; but the habit of

mind just sketched is continuous with the habit of discovery, trial and custom in the realm of general conduct, or "morality." And as to establish a conduct custom is far more difficult than to establish the popularity of a machine, so to establish a sounder mode of thinking in place of a more irrational one is far more difficult than to establish a moral law, such as honesty in regard to property. But (and here I reach the main point) the purpose of free-thinking is the establishment of a new and better *mos*, or custom, of the mind in society at large. We who "free-think" take the unaccustomed or heretical course, not because we are sour-tempered (at least, I hope not), or obstinate (at least, I hope not), but because we desire to extend and deepen good sense, and intellectual order, in the social majority. We know, by a study of the past centuries, that this free-thinking promotes the health and efficiency of the community. That is "why" we "free-think." I trust I may now venture on the proposition that a genuine freethinker only acts as a member of a minority because he expects that, sooner or later, his present protest and his present unorthodoxy may be accepted as a "moral" or normal element in the thinking of the majority.

In effect, freethought aims at a superior type of mental order. The poet, Alexander Pope, affirmed that "Order is Heaven's first law." I will not be rude, and chatter on behalf of Heaven; and so I leave Heaven to speak for itself. Meanwhile, I assert that "Order is humanity's first law." Here, again, I go to history. Man's whole record displays a growing genius for order. Take a few examples step-wise. A gardener is an agent of order, and a good garden is one of the most attractive expressions of order, in its paths, beds, cleanliness, and beauty. A watch is, in my opinion, the most admirable of all machines, and nothing can exceed the splendour of its orderly indication of the passage of the seconds, minutes and hours. A printed page, with its types, lines and columns is a striking system of orderly conveyance of messages from mind to mind. A scheme of thought, such as the Aristotelian, or Platonic, or Cartesian, or Spinozist, or Kantian, or Comtian, is an effort (all philosophies are efforts) to map out the largest possible view of nature and man. What we name "freethought" in the agitations of a Voltaire, a Paine, a Bradlaugh, a Foote, a Nietzsche, an Ingersoll, and the rest is, fundamentally, a striving to erect a finer and stronger order of thought in the contemplation of man and nature. The explanation of man and nature as the creation of gods is denounced as irrational, that is, unordered. In my judgment, it was an orderly interpretation to the Greeks, Romans, medieval Catholics, Moslems, Hindus, and others in periods past. It has become an unserviceable *mos*, or morality, or custom for us. The modern world demands a higher, a more effective, and (in the purest sense of the term) more artistic order. Why "free-think"? Because it is a joy, however mingled with personal stress and possible suffering, to construct a more magnificent order of insight, social standard, and scientific outlook.

The first freethinking lecture I ever heard was given at St. George's Hall, Langham Place, London, by Miss Fenwick Miller. It was quite simple in type, being just a sensible warning against "Mental Epidemics," or Gospel-Revivalism. To me then it seemed a blow at the divine order. That was in 1876. Since that far-off day, I have joined the strenuous minority who are anti-theological because they seek a nobler order. I have mingled with a highly varied crowd of heretical thinkers; and I would like, in closing, to emphasize one special consideration.

It has been to me a pleasure to witness the extremely diversified modes in which the pioneers laboured. Many of them have gone to work in a way quite different from my own. It has always appeared to me, not only a rule of courtesy, but a stern requirement of reason itself, that each should "free-think" in the manner most natural and spontaneous, and each should welcome freedom of methods for others. To give one instance—I may state that, on countless occasions, I have spoken commendation of Nietzsche and of Sir James Frazer; and perhaps no two intellectual pioneers could stand and toil farther apart. Both these men have aided the disintegration of the ancient theology. Both have assisted the modern order.

If I were ever appointed to function as St. Ratio at the gate of the City of Freethought, for the examination of applicants for citizenship, I should make no bones over their difference of spirit in attack on outworn beliefs—damning, critical, ironical, academic and all that; but I should make sure that each attacked because he wished to aid the creation of a more orderly thought-world. Then I should say: "Pass, Damnation! Pass, Criticism! Pass, Pickaxe! Pass, Razor! Pass, Hurricane! Pass, Zephyr!" And then, after a proper pause:

"Pass, Creator!"

F. J. GOULD.

Acid Drops.

We suppose that a number of people get pleasure from writing them—and others from reading them—otherwise editors of papers that live by tickling the immature palates of their readers would not publish the many letters that appear describing how certain people have drifted from the horrible waters of Atheism to the peaceful stream of religious conviction. A cutting, for instance, lies before us from *John O' London's Weekly*, for December 31, in which someone explains that, at twenty, he was in the sterile seas of Atheistic Materialism; at forty, he was in the calm but stagnant waters of Agnosticism; and now, at sixty, he agrees with Carlyle in the belief in "the essential spirituality of the universe." We can imagine Carlyle saying that the universe would heave a deep sigh of thankfulness on learning that this gentleman believed in its essential spirituality, although he might well ask what the devil he means by it. But this kind of thing does help the Freethinker to more fully realize the kind of half-baked mentality that goes to the making up of religion as purveyed by certain popular papers. We undertake to say that if *John O' London* received letters from men and women, telling how they sailed from the very muddy waters of religious belief to the clear sunlit seas of reasoned Freethought, they would soon be consigned to the W.P.B. That is one of the methods by which these papers keep up the pretence that all is well with "essential" religion.

A writer in the *Church Times*, in the course of a review of J. B. S. Haldane's *Possible Worlds and Other Essays*, cites the author as saying that few educated people nowadays believe in the miraculous element in religion or in the infallibility of the Bible. "This is largely due to T. H. Huxley." We have no desire to belittle Huxley's work, but we cite the passage as an example of the manner in which history is written. There is no recognition of the many men and women who, for many years before Huxley wrote a word against miracles or the infallibility of the Bible, had been writing and speaking against these things all over the country. As a matter of fact, when Huxley did write against these things, in high class magazines, his particular arguments were getting quite old-fashioned, and were terribly familiar in Freethought writings and speeches. It was the work of Paine, and Carlile, and Hetherington, and Holyoake, and Bradlaugh and others that had made

these particular beliefs so disreputable that a man in Huxley's position ran no risk in repeating their arguments. We wonder when justice will be done to these pioneer Freethinkers. Perhaps only when the *Freethinker* itself has sufficient funds at its command to reprint the most striking of their works, and see that they are well distributed amongst the people.

The death of Robert Keable is announced, and he will be remembered as the author of a novel *Simon called Peter*, in which he displayed many problems in narrative form. He was ordained for the ministry in 1911, but after eight years of it, he resigned, and the reason he gave is no compliment to organized religion. He wrote:—

I have left it because of intellectual worries throughout the whole of the eight years, the war giving the final knock-out blow.

We are informed that the Government instructions to the B.B.C. are to refrain from broadcasting speeches or lectures containing statements on topics of political, religious, or industrial controversy. At any rate, from this attitude, the Government intends that it shall never be guilty of causing listeners to think, but it is difficult to see why medieval speech and thought should be broadcast by the various representatives of religion, if this is the Government's object. Possibly we expect too much, and we must accept, as the peak of intellectual development in England, the listening-in of millions to the entry of the New Year, accompanied by half an hour's advertisement of the church—with a fanfare of trumpets.

Some light on the reason why the House of Commons rejected the revised Prayer Book, by the Rev. H. R. H. Hill, in a sermon preached at St. Luke's Church, Leamington. First, "the Lord God intervened in defence of his own truth," by making Mr. Bridgeman halting and faltering, caused Lord Hugh Cecil to stammer and stutter, etc., and having thus demoralized one side, "the Lord God," "inspired the flaming words of Mr. Rosslyn Mitchell, gave calm, cool reasoning power to Sir John Simon . . . and gave to Sir William Joynson Hicks a persuasive power surpassing everything that that brilliant speaker had yet accomplished." After that assurance it is rather rough for Lord Birkenhead to say that the whole debate would have done no credit to a class of schoolboys. For our own part, and we were certainly in the position of being quite impartial on this matter, the mental weakness of the whole thing was very striking. And for a body of men who stand as the nation's legislators to be carried away by the "Thank-God-England-is-still-Protestant-and-Christian" of Mr. Rosslyn Mitchell, is about the severest indictment of the House of Commons we have yet seen.

The vast majority of Americans would swear to the United States being a true blue 100 per cent. Christian country. And just at the present time, it will be as full as all other Christian countries about Christianity being the only religion that teaches men to love each other like brothers. So it is the more interesting to clip the following from a leading article in the *Chicago Tribune*:—

The attorney-general of Alabama has withdrawn from the prosecution of the flogging cases in his state, saying that the state enforcement department exhibited only a desire to help the defense. Two men accused of floggings have been acquitted, and it is conceded that the whole prosecution has about broken down.

One of the cases involved a Negro resident of Alabama. It would be an irony to call him a citizen. It is apparent that he was respectable and that his family was orderly and unobtrusive, but he owned a farm on which he made his living. He was offered an unfair price for the farm and would not sell. Then he was taken at night and flogged until he was half dead. Subsequently he sold the farm at a ridiculous price, and when the deed was recorded the owner was found to be a white man of place in the community and church and a former leader in the klux.

It has been impossible to get any justice for this Negro. Washington has no remedies. There is apparently nothing in the constitution of the United States which protects him. There is nothing in the law of Alabama which helps him. The men who flayed and robbed him can't be prosecuted or convicted. He is apparently as helpless, wherever he now is, as if he were a Negro in an Arab camp. Probably the worst reflection which could be made on the United States would be to call this man an American citizen.

In Michigan a man, obviously not the most desirable citizen in the world, although white, has been sentenced to the penitentiary for life because, when prohibition enforcement officers found a pint of gin in his possession and he was convicted of having it, that conviction, under Michigan law, constituted his fourth conviction of a felony. Under Michigan law, the state acting concurrently with the federal government, as provided by the eighteenth amendment for the enforcement of the Volstead Act, the possession of a pint of gin is a felony.

That certainly helps us to realize the quality of the love, brotherhood, and sense of justice developed under the influence of the Christian religion.

A newspaper reader says he doesn't attend church because he is looking for a parson who is a man in every sense of the word. The type of parsons he admires are the old war padres, who "were men, inasmuch as they were one of us." We do not admire his taste. The war padre used his holy vocation to get him exempted from doing any fighting. His principal jobs in the war areas were; praying for and blessing the fighting-men, mumbling prayers over the dead, and doing occasionally a little first-aid work (at officer's pay) when a battle was raging. Quite a manly occupation was that. And we leave the reader to judge whether the war padre deserved the fighting man's decorations he received for his gallant services.

A Methodist journal is collecting money for "worn-out ministers." The Bible relates as fact a tale about some thoughtful ravens that looked after the welfare of Elijah, a servant of the Lord. Has the process of evolution eliminated this useful species of bird? Or was the tale only a "sacred" fact? If so, would it not be advisable to tell youngsters in Methodist Sunday Schools the truth of the matter? Otherwise they may discover it for themselves when they grow up, and may lose faith in God's Truth.

The Rev. W. Hodson Smith, President of the Wesleyan Conference, says in his New Year's Message: "Our's is a Gospel based on the sacred Scriptures." That is worth noting. The chief of the Wesleyans, an educated man, refers to a collection of myth and folk-lore as being "sacred"! Freethinkers are still flogging a dead horse—perhaps.

What arouses the wonder of the Bishop of London is that the boys of London slums are as good as they are. That kind of wonder is quite natural in a Christian bishop affirming the beautiful dogma of "original sin." A more legitimate cause for wonder is that priests are so good as they are, seeing that they befog their intelligence and reason with absurd and degrading beliefs.

Dean Inge believes that the habit of private prayer does more than anything to keep at bay that fatty degeneration of character which sets in at the age of fifty. On the other hand, we believe that when a man starts whining to a god, fatty degeneration of character has already set in.

Mr. E. R. Thompson, M.A., says that for more than sixty years the influence of Charles Dickens has persisted because he radiated kind thoughts and cheerful courage, and preached humanity and kindness and faith in his fellow-men. That is true. What Dickens did was to teach middle-class Christians of the Victorian era to be less Christian and more humane.

Dr. T. R. Glover, in the *Daily News*, in winding up his 1927 discourses to his pious readers exhorts them to change their common sense for real sense. There is an ocean of optimism here, for, if his readers could stand the verbal juggling of the learned writer, there is little hope of the miracle he requires, even on the mighty assumption that they have common sense to change. His articles are frozen theology—of course, you would say, frost-bitten.

Miss Florence Bone, in a pious contemporary, says:—

Commend me to settled, easy-going, middle-aged people for want of thought. It is at the bottom of most evils—that, and lack of knowledge which often comes from thought. Thinking is very hard and dangerous work. It sometimes lands us where we least wish to be. It pushes us into action when we meant to be idle, and it makes us have to take up unpopular points-of-view which we would rather leave alone. Sometimes it makes us hesitate where we used to be quite certain that we knew what we were talking about.

We agree with what this good lady says about thinking. It has certainly made a very large number of Christians hesitate where they used to be quite certain. And it has pushed a good few of these into the Freethought camp, and to champion an unpopular point of view. Thinking is the one mental activity that brings most gains to Freethought and most losses to religion and the Churches.

Viscount Ullswater thinks that the general level of intelligence among M.P.'s is higher to-day than when he first entered the House of Commons. In justice to the Viscount, we haste to add that he said it before the Prayer Book measure was discussed. He has probably amended his opinion by now. Anyway, the statement sounds like a very harsh criticism of the dead, and a questionable compliment to the living.

The Rev. C. E. Morton, vicar of Leamington, has protested against anonymous letters couched in scurrilous terms, criticizing the form of Christian service used at the burial of his son. That Christians haven't the decency to respect human grief is an excellent comment on the kind of brotherly love Christian beliefs engender.

Mr. Jack Jones, M.P., told his fellow members of Parliament recently, that the great mass of the workers are more interested in the rent-book than in the Prayer-Book. Which indicates how terribly unspiritual people have become in these days. The next thing we shall be told is that people are more interested in getting built a decent house to live in than in building a house for God. Then we shall know that the people have become utterly materialized; and the parsons will sigh for the good old days when the masses were content to live in hovels so long as they had a beautiful house with coloured windows in which to thank God for their blessings.

A weekly contemporary permits a reader to suggest that the majority of his fellow-countrymen would welcome more consideration of the unemployment problem by our legislators, instead of their squabbling over the new Prayer Book. The times have changed. Just fancy the Christian letters of expostulation that would have been sent to the editor if such a suggestion had been made fifty years ago. I imagine the cries of "Radical" or "infidel" that would have greeted a remark implying that the Christian Prayer Book was really of little importance in comparison with an economic difficulty.

Trying to scare its fundamentalist readers, the *English Churchman* says that when Prayer Book revision has been settled, a demand will be made for revision of the Bible. Perhaps, after all, there is much to be said for revision. A nice bowdlerized version of Holy Writ could be very useful. It might arrest the present growing disgust at pornographic godliness being forced upon innocent children, and so help to keep the Bible in the

schools. It might assist the Churches to retain the more intelligent and sensitive persons who are now leaving. And it might even induce a few "reverent Agnostics" to venture back into the Christian fold. Anyway, revision of the Prayer Book has established a precedent for revision of the Bible. If the Prayer Book needed revision, a reasonable assumption is that the inspiration of God was faulty. And if it was faulty in the one case, it is likely to have been faulty in the other.

Lord Wrenbury recently told the *Times* that he supported the revised Prayer Book, because notwithstanding its encouragement of superstition, it widens the scope of the Church and makes it easier for everyone to believe and do what he likes. His lordship, we gather, visualizes Anglican religion as an indiarubber cap which will fit narrow heads, broad heads, and even fat heads, with perfect ease. The vision should commend itself to that astute old diplomatist, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Mrs. Charlotte Gentle, fortune-teller, of Fulham, has been fined £20. Some of her clients became ill as the result of fright induced by her prophecies. This woman is only one of the many hundreds of exploiters of human ignorance and credulity. That these characteristics are so common and so easily exploited is not exactly a testimonial to the work achieved by our educationalists. But perhaps they will retort that they can do little so long as every Sunday School and church in the land inculcates belief in the supernatural and interest in the mystical.

Christians have a modest habit of claiming good deeds as "Christian," and the doers as being "true Christians," even though these may be non-Christians. A variation of this little practice appears in the *Scout*, the official organ of the Boy Scout movement. Edwin Orchard, who was not a Scout, saved six lives, but the last rescue rendered him an invalid, and he has now died. The *Scout* says: "We may well salute him, for he was a true Scout at heart." No one could doubt that the Scout movement was getting properly Christianized after reading that.

Mrs. Fawcett: "I think the modern girl perfectly splendid." It wouldn't be necessary to make such a defensive statement, if there were no pulpit slanderers.

The history of the Earth, declares Prof. J. B. S. Haldane, may be broadcast to Venus millions of years hence. One may be permitted to hope that the history will not include an account of the part played by religious ideas (Christian and other). Else the inhabitants of Venus might think Earth's human creatures were a pretty degraded type of animal. But if the truth must be told, perhaps the broadcasting of Swift's criticism of the human race (*Gulliver's Travels*) would serve as well as any authentic history—anyway, for the Christian era.

An Egyptian Minister is reported as saying to an Englishman: "Shakespeare is your best ambassador in Egypt." The minister is no diplomat. He ought to have said that the best ambassadors were the English Bible and the missionaries. He would then have won the affection of all the Bible-punchers of England.

The most stolid and unimaginative minds, says the Rev. R. J. Campbell, are influenced to some extent by the story of the birth of Mary's Child in a stable long ago. We are glad we are not stolid and unimaginative.

Says the Bishop of Ripon, the master interest of the English people is in religion and its relations to the State. If this be fact, one is puzzled to account for the clerical wailing about the widespread indifference to religion and the churches, and the periodical diatribes against the people's absorbing interest in such material things as dancing, whist drives, cinemas, sports, and dog racing. Someone must be telling untruths.

Mr. J. T. Lloyd.

I AM extremely sorry not to be able to report good news concerning the health of Mr. J. T. Lloyd. Some five weeks ago he experienced a hæmorrhage of the brain, which resulted in a partial paralysis of the left side. Since then he has been confined to his bed, and although not worse, he is not better. His doctor expressed the opinion that he may recover, but in any case it will be some time before his ever welcome pen will again be seen in these pages.

Since his illness I have had several letters from friends, enquiring as to his financial circumstances, and to these I have replied personally. But the other day I had a visit from a gentleman, who brought to my notice a report that is going round to the effect that Mr. Lloyd is in very straightened circumstances, and surprise has been expressed that the Freethought Party, and myself in particular, should have been so neglectful of one held in so high esteem by all as Mr. Lloyd. There is not a word of truth in these statements.

In these circumstances, the best way to kill such stories, inspired more by malice towards others than by concern for Mr. Lloyd, is to say exactly how the case stands.

When Mr. Lloyd gave up platform work, I wrote to a number of friends suggesting that they should contribute a sum of money yearly, sufficient to secure him an income of £2 per week. This was arranged without any trouble, and without any publicity. As I had plenty of other things to take up my time, I induced Mr. Collette Jones to act as Secretary to the Fund, a post he filled for several years, to be succeeded by Mr. Dixon, of Pontadawe, S. Wales. Since the Fund was established Mr. Lloyd has received his monthly cheque with absolute regularity, and is still receiving it.

In addition to this, there is a weekly payment for his articles in the *Freethinker*, which has also been paid him with absolute regularity. That, too, is still being paid, his cheque for December was sent on the last day of the old year.

In these circumstances it is absolutely untrue to say that Mr. Lloyd was living in distressed circumstances, or that he had been neglected by the Freethought Party. I know that he has been living, not in affluence, but at least in comfort, and all reasonable requirements have been met.

I did not want to make this matter public, but since malicious tongues have been at work, the only silencer is to explain the precise facts.

In these matters I regard myself as the custodian of the honour of the National Secular Society and of the *Freethinker*, and I think those who know me will trust me to see that their responsibilities are recognized and discharged. If Mr. Lloyd had been in want, I should have been the first to call attention to the fact.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

"Freethinker" Endowment Trust.

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On January 2 we received from Mr. P. G. Peabody a cheque for £1,000. He was as pleased to give as the Trustees were to receive. All the promises have now been redeemed.

Corrections.—"Ajax, £5," acknowledged in the issue for December 25, should have been £3. The total of last week is, therefore less by £2. Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Wilcock, in above list, should have appeared last week.

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.

M. L. DEWAR.—Letters have been forwarded. Thanks for congratulations.

R. D. VOSS (S.A.).—No apology is needed. We know the spirit that lies behind, and appreciate it.

FROM our old friend Captain Latham, writing from South Africa, "I enclose £5 more for your blasted Endowment Trust, and 15s. subscription for your scurrilous rag. May you suffer what you deserve in the fire prepared for the Devil and his like." Quite a nice kind of New Year's greeting. All we can say is that whatever we may suffer, we shall only have to turn our head to see J.L. nicely toasting on a specially prepared plate. And on the whole, we would prefer certain climatic inconveniences for the sake of the better company.

W. J. MILLS.—We have had no communication from the source you name. We were very pleased to meet your son, and hope to see more of him if he pays the old country another visit. Thanks for good wishes.

G. POWER.—The Endowment Trust will remain open for subscriptions for some time. There are plenty of ways in which whatever comes along may be profitably employed.

A. B. MOSS.—Thanks for New Year's greetings. We hope to be able to reciprocate for many years to come.

H. C. ATKINSON.—Pleased to have your opinion that the *Freethinker* has never done better work than that of the last few years, and we heartily agree with you that it is likely to be more necessary in the future than in the past.

J. C. (Durham).—Capital! The correspondence is bound to do good, but you will be unusually fortunate if you manage to get the reverend gentleman to deal with what is the central issue. Still, others may see the point if he will not.

L. MORRIS.—The National Secular Society is never pleased to carry out a Secular funeral, since that means the death of another Freethinker, but is always ready to do what it can to carry out a Secular Service when the request reaches it. Application should be made to the General Secretary.

S. OLSEN.—Sorry to hear of your illness. Best wishes for a quick and complete recovery.

C. C. DOVE.—We appreciate your good wishes, but all above the actual £8,000 subscribed will go to the Endowment Trust Fund.

W. L. ENGLISH.—We know of no conclusive evidence in favour of telepathy. And to cite it in favour of a belief in a future life is absurdly irrelevant.

W. KENT.—You may best get the *intention* of the passage in *Materialism Re-stated*, by reflecting on Lord Acton's

praise of "historical thinking, which is better than historical learning." The difference between learning and thinking is always important, and so often vital.

H. HERBERT.—We do not know that a special tax was levied for the purpose of building the Mansion House, but special fines were imposed upon Dissenters and devoted to that purpose. In the earlier part of the eighteenth century, no one could serve as a Sheriff who had not previously taken the Sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. In view of this, the Corporation passed a by-law imposing a fine of £400 on any person who, on being nominated by the Lord Mayor for the post, refused to stand, and £600 on anyone who being elected refused to serve. As many dissenters refused to take the Sacrament, this was quite an easy way of raising money. And care was taken that those nominated were in a position to pay the fines.

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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.

On Sunday next (January 15) Mr. Cohen will lecture in the Picton Hall, Liverpool. He is taking for his subject, "The Priest and the Child, the Fight for the Future," and it will include a discussion of the influence of environment on religious ideas. Admission will be free, but there will be a number of reserved seat tickets at 1s. A social will also be held on the Saturday evening preceding Mr. Cohen's visit. Admission will be 1s. 6d., which will include refreshments. Mr. Cohen hopes to be in Liverpool in time to be present.

We are now within a fortnight of the Society's Annual Dinner, full particulars of which will be found on the back page of this issue. There is no need to say that the dinner will be an excellent one, the management of the Midland Grand Hotel is a guarantee of that. But we should like to see a good muster of provincial friends present, and the fact of the dinner being held on a Saturday evening will enable them to come with a minimum of inconvenience. But those who do intend coming should write for their tickets as early as possible. A successful function of this kind means a lot of work behind the scenes, and to know in good time how many are coming, is a very considerable help.

The reception of Mr. Cohen's *Materialism Re-stated*, by all classes of readers, has been very gratifying to the author. Frankly, it is not everyone's book, because it deals with a topic that requires some amount of close attention, and that it has received this, and won much unasked-for praise, is a compliment to the quality of *Freethinker* readers. We have quoted several letters from British readers, we now venture on two more—one

from an American, the other from a South African reader. Dr. R. K. Noyes, of Boston, writes:—

Philosophy has worried and confused me until *Materialism Re-stated* came. I have read the ancients and moderns to some extent, but have never found satisfaction as to Materialism and so-called Spiritism, until reading Cohen and your paper. I wish all your books and lectures could be placed in every public library.

Those who happen to have read Dr. Noyes's *Views on Religion*, with its thousands of quotations from all kinds of writers, ancient and modern, will better appreciate the "to some extent" of Dr. Noyes's reading. For the rest we can say that we are always sending books to libraries that will accept them. With lectures it is impossible, as Mr. Cohen's lectures are extempore addresses—that is, they are not written before delivery.

The other opinion comes from Mr. D. Mathews, Transvaal. He says:—

I have just completed the perusal of your little work *Materialism Re-stated*, and must congratulate you on the manner in which you have succeeded in encompassing an extensive subject in so small a space. The work contains a large fund of information, and at the same time is interesting and instructive. This is what the average reader wants—a brief outline of a subject which covers a wide field, and which provides him with all that is worth knowing of the subject. The reason why so many works, otherwise quite interesting and informative, become monotonous and insipid, is because of their unnecessary verbosity. We require the most important facts of a matter, and leave it to others to fight about minor details. Parsons and their partisans are too indolent and too much of theological sciolists to face the cardinal points of any subject of controversy. They are generally great in the small things and small in the great things.

We are afraid that it is too much the custom with writers on philosophy to write for and to each other, and without considering that there are large numbers of people sufficiently interested to read and enjoy if books are written in a human way, and published at a little less than the extravagantly high prices that rule in the publishing world in this country.

Apropos of the last sentence. We note in a recent list the *Ingersoll Lecture on Immortality*, 39 pages, 4s. 6d. Nothing can justify so high a price but the determination of publishers to bleed the reading public. At the side of this we are looking longingly at a work on primitive man, at the price of 36s. How many people can afford to pay this price for a book. How many books can one person buy at that price? Is it any wonder that the British public is not a reading one, apart from the almost worthless daily press?

On January 18th, Mr. Cohen is lecturing in the Public Hall, Croydon. His subject there will be "Things Christians Ought to Know," and we hope there will be plenty of Christians present to listen. Helpers are wanted to undertake the task of distributing advertising slips in the district, and those willing to help should send their names and addresses to the General Secretary.

The following reaches us from our ever welcome contributor, Mr. C. C. Dove:—

On behalf of myself, and also, as I am sure, on behalf of many others, I would ask you to find space for the following note in your paper.

"Cover-point," who is not unknown to readers of the *Freethinker*, begs me to insert the following extract from his letter, because he is assured that it expresses what many besides himself are feeling on this occasion:—

"It is to be feared that you may think me somewhat tardy in sending my congratulations; but, to confess the truth, I was a little apprehensive, remembering the old saw about the cup and the lip. Now that success is beyond peril, felicitations are equally safe. The response testifies splendidly to the love of our people for 'the best of causes,' and also to their admiration for the heroism of 'the great Achilles whom we know.'"

We have to acknowledge this week a cheque for £100 from the Secular Society, Limited, as a grant to the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust. We know that most Freethinkers will be glad to see this. We are making a statement about the Trust at an early date, and we may say at once that the Trustees have resolved to keep the Trust open for donations until at least the sum of £10,000 has been secured as capital. There are numerous ways in which the income can be expended in the interests of the paper, which means in the interest of the Freethought Cause.

A lady reader sends us the following, taken from a letter sent by her soldier son in India:—

I do not know whether I have mentioned it before, but it sometimes happens that there is no church parade on Sundays for us, due to the chaplain being away from the station, and it is one of our diversions to speculate on the probability of there being church on the following Sunday. Last week was apparently one of our lucky weeks, for until Saturday afternoon it was certain there would be no service. Then came the order that there was to be a voluntary service, which means that the troops can go if they wish to, but the poor church orchestra has to be there whether they like it or not . . . But what did just about reduce us to tears, was that when we got there, there was one single solitary volunteer. And there we were (the orchestra) going through all that canting nonsense for one man, the chaplain and the band doing the service between them, the bandmaster saying the responses for the congregation. It is just about time someone woke up to the fact that church is a waste of valuable time, so far as the army is concerned.

Everyone connected with the army knows it is a waste of time. The soldiers certainly do not want it. But we do not doubt but that if the Bishop of London paid a visit to this particular regiment, he would find the men bubbling over with religion. It is his trade to find it.

Rationalism and Education.

(By a retired school inspector, Author of the "World-Story.")

III.

ONE of the fashionable features that has developed during the present century is the laudation of the Middle Ages—"The Ages of Faith," as the period is fondly called by Roman Catholics. The well-based and significant term, "The Dark Ages," which was formerly in common use for the earlier centuries following the full establishment of Christianity (say from 438 A.D., when, by the Code of Theodosius, heresy first became a legal crime), has largely disappeared from the works of some European writers, and some of them strongly deprecate its use. And of course we have still with us some so-called "idealists," who look back with longing to the medieval era of ignorance and superstition: as, for example, a German professor, who wrote a few years ago in the *Hibbert Journal*, stating that he and others who are associated with him hold that "science is being replaced by culture" (!), and that they "look for an ideal rather to the Middle Ages, the contemplative culture of ancient India, and the pious peasant life of Russia" (probably Czarist Russia was meant). Speaking generally, one is now inclined to go to the books of American writers, who are less deeply imbued with European tradition, for a dependable account of the many centuries of intellectual and educational darkness which accompanied the dominance of the Church and the Papacy in Western Europe.

It has become a highly favoured theory in some quarters, that learning and education were preserved and maintained by the Church. But that this cannot be true, so far as secular affairs were concerned, is clear from the pronouncements of eminent churchmen. Arnobius, who became a Christian about 300 A.D., said, "Science is a vain pursuit. What busi-

ness is it of man to speculate whether the sun is larger than the earth? Leave such things to God. Knowledge of Him is more urgent, for Hell is upon us if we are ignorant of Him." I have already mentioned Pope Gregory's condemnation of the "idle vanities of secular learning"; and the degree of intellectual degradation at this time (about 600 A.D.) may be gauged by the following passage from Prof. Robinson's *Medieval and Modern Times*: "Just as Gregory assumed office a great plague was raging in the city. In true medieval fashion he arranged a solemn procession in order to obtain from heaven a cessation of the pest. Then the archangel Michael was seen over the tomb of Hadrian sheathing his fiery sword as a sign that the wrath of the Lord had been turned away . . . Gregory enjoyed an unrivalled reputation during the Middle Ages as a writer . . . His most popular book was his *Dialogues*, a collection of accounts of miracles and popular legends. It is hard to believe that it could have been composed by the greatest man of his time and that it was written for adults."

So, with variation of content, but with the same astounding fatuity, such pronouncements as those of Arnobius and Gregory continued, one of the later gems being issued in 1631 by Father Inchofer (who may have become more fervidly orthodox after the first edition of one of his books had been put on the *Index Expurgatorius*). He said that of all heresies "the most abominable, the most pernicious, the most scandalous" was the notion that the earth went round the sun.

As regards the schools of the Middle Ages which were maintained by the Church, we might suppose, after reading some of our own historians of education, that real, if narrow and elementary, educational institutions were maintained. Of course, reading was taught, some writing, and less arithmetic, as these were necessary for the purposes of the church; but it has become clear that beyond this little or nothing was taught but theology and its accompaniments, and these almost exclusively to the clergy and their assistants. The so-called "secular schools" were schools for the "secular" as distinguished from the regular clergy, and not for people who were outside of the ecclesiastical system.

As is now well known, the only tolerably intellectual and educational centre in Europe during the 10th and 11th centuries was Spain, which was in the hands of the Moslems. Here the new "Arabic" numerals, devised in India, were in use, and the Moors were teaching mathematics, science and philosophy in their colleges; and we note the significant facts that "while Christian Europe was enforcing as a religious belief the idea that the earth was flat, the Moors were teaching geography from globes," and that "when the Christians finally conquered the Mohammedans, for want of knowledge of any other use, turned their astronomical observatories into belfries."

By constant reiteration, enforced by the threat of damnation, the Inquisition, the expected end of the world, and so on, the obsession of other-worldliness became firmly established. Words of an intellectual significance lost their meaning. "Wisdom among the Hebrews . . . was applied to the faculty of acute observation, shrewdness in discovery or device, cleverness of initiation"; but in Christian Europe it came to mean "the fear of the Lord" and the like.

Recovery of rationality was a very slow process; and even when legal obstacles to freedom of thought had largely disappeared, the old, powerful tradition remained. Comenius, the great Moravian educationist of the seventeenth century, put in one of his

educational books a chapter on angels and "divels." And when about this time the teaching of reading from printed matter was spreading, the scholars read from the hornbook, and from the primer which followed it, such matter as:—

"In Adam's fall we sinned all."

"Zaccheus he did climb the tree his Lord to see."

And hymns containing such stuff as the following:—

"That I was led to see I can do nothing well;
And whither shall a sinner flee to save himself from Hell."

Many adults were, at this time and later, reading that very popular book—popular for more than a century after its original publication in 1662—"The Day of Doom, a poetical description of the Great and Last Judgment, with a Short Discourse about Eternity"; and the following is supposed to be the answer of the Judge to the plea of mercy for the children:—

"You sinners are, and such a share
As sinners may expect,
Such you shall have; for I do save
None but my own elect.
Yet to compare your sin with *their*
Who lived a longer time,
I do confess yours so much less,
Though every sin's a crime.
A crime it is, therefore in bliss
You may not hope to dwell;
But unto you I shall allow
The easiest room in Hell."

We may fairly conclude that the long dominance of other-worldliness and allied forms of irrationality seriously retarded the progress toward a right view of education, long after modern universities had been formed, and the elementary schooling of the people had begun in or about the sixteenth century. The pietistic view was naturally common. Even a great educationist like Herbert (1776-1841) said that the term "virtue" expressed the whole of education, though his developed theory and practice were greatly in advance of that dictum. Arnold of Rugby, a generation or two later, said (when he was over forty years of age) that he was clear as to what alone education was, viz., "the forming of the moral principles and habits of men." It may be added, however, that he afterwards added "intellectual ability"; but, although he was a professor of history, he apparently did not progress to the appreciation of knowledge as a main element of education, and it is said that he had no sympathy with science.

Some, including a number of eminent poets, took the vacuous view that "nothing can be known." Others, like Wordsworth, thought that knowledge resulted from the "light of nature," or contemplation, in a "vernal wood" or elsewhere; and accompanying all this we had the lingering plaint of the pietists, and, it must be added of the richer classes generally, which went on freely almost to our own day. Hannah More, who did a good deal for the rudimentary education of the poorer people of the district in which she lived, said that they should be able to read the Bible, "but not to write or be enabled to read Tom Paine, or be encouraged to rise above their stations"; and Samuel Parr, a noted schoolmaster, advised cautious procedure, as the Deity had "fixed a great gulph between us and them."

J. REEVES.

SUNDAY PLAYS.

THE BISHOP: "I don't think I've had the pleasure of seeing you act. What sort of plays do you act in?"

ACTRESS: "My dear Bishop, I'm afraid they wouldn't suit you. You see, they're the sort that can be played only on a Sunday."—*The Humorist*.

The Wicked Husbandmen.¹

(Mark xii, 1-9. Matthew xxi, 33-41. Luke xx, 9-16.)
(Concluded from page 11.)

III.

AUTHENTICITY.

The Synoptists refer this parable to the last days of Jesus; and agree exactly as to the circumstances under which he spoke it. The occasion and the effects are very natural. The highly provocative character of the tale is a feature which it has in common with the stories of the *Kindly Wayfarer*, the *Pharisee and the Publican*, and the *Rejected Invitations*, whilst the persons traduced in all these narratives are the same that Jesus is elsewhere represented as traducing with great virulence. The account in *Mark* conserves a primitive trait. For, after speaking of the various servants already dispatched, it says of their master, "He had yet one, a beloved son." This is how the passage stands in our Revised Version, the sense depending upon a comma and an indefinite article. But as indefinite articles do not exist in the Greek language, except by implication, it might appear that the original said, "He had yet one beloved son." Fortunately, however, in the Greek text prepared by Professor Eberhard Nestle, D.D., of Maulbronn, for the Centenary of the British and Foreign Bible Society (1904), the signification of the passage is perfectly clear, the literal translation being, "Still one he had, a beloved son." Here the sense does not depend upon the comma, and the indefinite article is obviously implied. Thus the "son" so far from being represented as the proto-creature of Paul, or the inferior divinity of John is reckoned among the servants of the Almighty. Now, in the Psalms, the Lord declares, "I have found David my servant . . . I also will make him my first-born;"² whilst David himself exclaims, "I will tell of the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, 'This day have I begotten thee;'"³ and these are just the passages that a Messianic maniac would apply to his own pretensions. Again in *Isaiah*⁴ we read, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold . . . my chosen in whom my soul delighteth"; and the Greek version used by the early Christians, that called the Septuagint, gives *pais* as the rendering for *servant* in the Hebrew original. But, according to *Acts*, the apostles in the early days of their ministry often referred to Jesus as the *pais* of God;⁵ and long after then, Matthew, using the word *pais*, applies the passage as a divine testimony to Jesus, quoting it as follows:—

Behold, my servant whom I have chosen,
My beloved in whom my soul is well pleased.⁶

As concerns the references in *Acts*, the Vulgate twice renders *pais* with *filium*, whilst our Authorized Version has "son" twice, and "child" twice. This is because *pais* sometimes means "child," especially "child" in relation to "parent." Hence it is possible that the original Greek source of the present parable had *pais* in the sense of "servant"; and that Mark, or some earlier borrower, influenced by the Pauline teaching, took the word to mean "child," and therefore altered it for the existing term *hwios*, which only means "son." But for my part, I believe that Jesus regarded himself as a "servant" made by adoption into a "son"; and

¹ This is one of the very few parables existing in three versions. As all commentators agree, it is adapted from a similitude in *Isaiah* (v. 1-7); but whoever compares the two will perceive that both in the avoidance of incongruities, and in the exhibition of beauties, the original immeasurably surpasses the adaptation.

² lxxxix. 20, 27. ³ ii. 7. ⁴ xlii. 1. ⁵ iii. 13, 26. iv. 27, 30. ⁶ xii. 18.

therefore it seems to me quite likely that, as Mark says, he spoke this parable, claiming therein to be both the Lord's "servant" and his "beloved son."

The chief objection to the authenticity of the *Wicked Husbandmen* proceeds from the indiscretion of the orthodox who hold that the parable teaches the rejection of the Jews for the Gentiles in the scheme of salvation. But, as we have seen already, the story, though it made the Jewish authorities feel injured and vengeful, was so far from having any such effect upon the Jewish people, that the fear of them was the only thing which caused the others to delay their vengeance. This result was inevitable, for the parable blames none but the husbandmen. Moreover, immediately after speaking it, Jesus, changing the figure of husbandmen for the one of builders, predicted that the authorities would fail to prevent his success by rejecting him; even as he had predicted, that they would reject him, and take his life. The passage is as follows:—

MARK.	MATTHEW.	LUKE.
Have ye not read even this scripture;	Did ye never read in the scriptures,	What then is this that is written,
The stone which the builders rejected,	The stone which the builders rejected,	The stone which the builders rejected,
The same was made the head of the corner :	The same was made the head of the corner :	The same was made the head of the corner ?
This was from the Lord,	This was from the Lord,	
And it is marvellous in our eyes ?	And it is marvellous in our eyes ?	
	Therefore I say unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.	
	And he that falleth on this stone shall be broken to pieces ; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust.	Everyone that falleth on that stone shall be broken to pieces ; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will scatter him as dust.

This pericope is worth considerably more notice than what is permitted by the brief space at my disposal, for it illustrates many features of the Synoptics. The quotation about the stone is from the twenty-second and twenty-third verses of the one hundred and eighteenth Psalm. The three evangelists give it exactly alike in the part which they have in common; and, according to Hartwell Horne, the complete version coincides perfectly with the Hebrew.⁷ The remark on the effect of the stone is an allusion to one of Isaiah's prophecies.⁸ In reporting this, Matthew and Luke use fifteen words each, of which the last eight are the same in both cases. The close connexion in Luke's account between the quotation and the allusion, is ruthlessly severed in Matthew's by the insertion of an intermediate verse, which, as it mentions "fruits" obviously refers to the "vineyard," and not to the "stone." This verse is evidently an interpolation; and as the interpolator says that the *ethnos* or *nation* would be deprived of the divine kingdom, he must have desired to make out that the moral of the parable was the rejection of the Jews for the Gentiles, instead of being what it really is, the rejection of the Jewish leaders then in authority for others with more discernment. The case is a fine illustration of how the moral of a parable may be altered to suit the ideas of a later age. The only remaining objection appears to

be that the tragic end of Jesus is so plainly foretold in the story that this must have been invented after his death. But the Synoptics often report Jesus as saying that he was destined to perish by violence at the hands of the authorities; and I could never see why the orthodox accepted these predictions as evidence of his possessing supernatural power, nor why the heterodox rejected them as implying this possession. For, if there is any truth at all in the records of his life, his intelligence must have been less than human, had it not suggested to him the great probability that he would finish as he did finish. In this parable and in other vituperative discourses, Jesus might seem to have no other object than to relieve his feelings by exasperating his enemies. But he may have had a more sinister design. It is whispered that the learned author of the *Anatomy of Melancholy* having predicted his own decease took measures to insure the fulfilment of this prediction.⁹ The conduct of Jesus renders him liable to the same charge. If with the logic of madness he came to believe that his death was in some way or other necessary for the success of his mission, he might feel impelled to accelerate its approach. But here I would emphasize the fact that no efficacy of any kind whatever is attached to the death of the "son" in this parable.

C. CLAYTON DOVE.

Correspondence.

WOMAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—The report *re* Mr. F. Mann's lecture at the North London Branch was, I fancy, written by one of the fair sex. Women are often very charming, but are not always logical. I was present at the meeting, and I venture to think that the "surprising amount of antagonism to women" was more apparent than real.

If, in the lady's opinion, it existed, why did she not avail herself of the opportunity of speaking for five minutes and squashing the wicked men?

On the Debates List is printed these words: "We seek for Truth."

That being our desire we must not be put out if we sometimes find it.

I think a lot of trouble in this weary world might be saved if we made an effort to look on the humorous side of things.

It has saved many a person from the mental hospital. Let me quote a little verse from *Punch*:—

"Although your heart is full of gloom,
Forget it for a while;
The rose can flourish o'er a tomb,
And you may learn to smile!"

A. L. BRAINE.

IS TELEPATHY A FACT?

SIR,—Mr. Boyd Freeman, in his *Towards the Answer*, propounds a problem of two trains, and to my mind arrives at a fool solution. Has he read Einstein. It seems obvious to an observer in either train, that the other train is approaching at a speed of thirty miles an hour, so the trains must ultimately meet and pass. Obscuring the issue with A and B's does not help one.

Further, Mr. Freeman writes as if telepathy is an accepted fact. Is this so? He does not quote any instance of scientific proof of the same. He gives the old excuse. "A scoffing sceptic like the late Mr. Labouchere, simply wrecks the show." That is if one looks for the phenomenon it does not happen. Does it ever happen?

Personally, I like to see these things on a practical basis. One would think that a husband and wife, living together, sleeping together, and all else, would be "en rapport." How many times has it happened that wives

⁷ Introduction P. i. cix. S. i. ⁸ viii. 14, 15.

⁹ Chambers' *Cyclopædia of English Literature*, 1844.

have poisoned husbands and husbands poisoned wives, without the victim being any the wiser? In these cases must the victim have been a "scoffing sceptic?" Would there be so many divorce cases if the wife or husband knew, or are they also scoffing sceptics?

Old Moore tells us a lot, but so far not next year's Derby. Perhaps you would refer to this in your notes.

QUERULOUS.

Parliamentary Debate on Spiritualism.

"THAT there is no evidence of a future life for the individual," was the proposition selected by the Workers Educational Association Debating Society for discussion at their last parliamentary night in December. The leaders of debate were Mr. George Whitehead, representing the National Secular Society, and Mr. Hunt, who represented one of the London Spiritualist organizations.

Mr. Whitehead, after commenting on the manner in which the proposition was stated, set out the main reasons why he rejected the Spiritualistic explanation of the phenomena of the seance room, putting a number of questions to his opponent. Mr. Hunt, in reply, developed the stock case for Spiritualism, and waxed eloquent about "spirit" finger-prints in putty. The debate was carried on by visitors and members of the Society. Amongst the speakers was a church of England clergyman, who indignantly denied that the Church believed in the resurrection of the body.

In his last speech, Mr. Hunt appealed to those present to show their belief in a future life by voting against the proposition. Mr. Whitehead, in winding up the debate, analysed the arguments put forward by his Spiritualistic opponent, pointed out that his questions had not been answered, and demonstrated that the survival of the physical body was accepted by both the Spiritualist and members of the Church of England. Most of those who took part in the debate were believers in some form of a future life, and the applause was louder for speakers against the proposition. Mr. Whitehead's masterly speech at the conclusion of the discussion obviously changed the opinions of quite a number of people, and the voting resulted in twice as many votes being recorded for the proposition as there were against it. It was a triumph for the Secularist attitude towards life, and for the speaker, who stated that view on behalf of the National Secular Society.—X.

Society News.

NORTH LONDON BRANCH.

OUR Spring Session at the St. Pancras Reform Club opens this evening with a Debate between Mr. Alexander Thomson, of the United Kingdom Alliance, and Mr. T. F. Palmer, on "The Desirability or Otherwise of the Liquor Traffic by the Will of the People." Both these gentlemen are excellent debaters, and we hope for a good audience.—K.B.K.

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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.

ETHICS BASED ON THE LAWS OF NATURE (Emerson Club, 1 Little George Street, Westminster): 3.30, Lecture in French by Madame Haegler on "Pythagore." All are invited.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 59 Finchley Road, N.W.8): 11.15, Miss Dorothy Matthews, B.A.—"What is Psychological Freedom?" Tuesday, January 10, at 8.30 p.m., Miss Dorothy Matthews, B.A., will open a discussion at 41 Cholmley Gardens, N.W.6, on: "What is Psychological Freedom?"

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N. W.): 7.30, Debate: "Is it Desirable that the Liquor Traffic should be suppressed by the Will of the People?" *Affirmative*: Mr. Alexander Thomson, U.K.A. *Negative*: Mr. T. F. Palmer.

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (30 Brixton Road, S.W., near Oval Station): 7.15, Mr. C. Ratcliffe—"Thoughts on Love."

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): 7.0, Chapman Cohen—"The Priest and the Child."

THE METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (34, George Street, Manchester Square, W.1.): 7.30, Mr. Botting—"An Evening with Omar Khayyám." Thursday, 7.30 p.m., Mr. Lombardi—"Crime and its Causes."

OUTDOOR.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 3.0, Messrs. Saphin and Jackson; 6.0, Messrs. Hyatt, Campbell-Everden and Le Maine. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith, W.): 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): 7.15, Mr. J. T. Brighton—"Conscience." Chairman: Mr. W. Raine.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S. (No 2 Room, City Hall, Albion Street): 6.30, Mr. J. Grant—"Is the Belief in a Future Life a Menace to Progress?"

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Surg.-Rear-Admiral C. M. Beadnell—"Evolution—Human." (Lantern illustrations). Admission free. Collection. Questions.

LIVERPOOL BRANCH N.S.S. (18 Colquitt Street off Bold Street): 7.30, Mr. E. Cheshire, P.L.G.—"Poor Law." Saturday, January 14—"Social" at above address at 7.30 p.m. Admission 1s. 6d. (includes refreshments).

OUTDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S.—Meetings held in the Bull Ring on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at 7 p.m.

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