

GOD SAVE SUNDAY!

The
FREETHINKER

FOUNDED · 1881

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

Vol. XLIX.—No. 7

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1929

PRICE THREEPENCE

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>God Save Sunday!—The Editor</i> - - - - -	97
<i>The Black Army and Brotherhood.—Mimnermus</i> - - - - -	98
<i>The Evolution of Life.—W. Mann</i> - - - - -	99
<i>A Notable Pioneer.—H. Cutner</i> - - - - -	100
<i>A Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity.—E. Upasaka</i> - - - - -	105
<i>The Value of Religion.—J. Reeves</i> - - - - -	106
<i>Herd Instinct.—R. North</i> - - - - -	107
<i>Done!—Tab Can</i> - - - - -	109

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

Views and Opinions.

God Save Sunday

THERE are a number of freak candidates at every general election, and the coming one will certainly not be without them. In all probability there will be some Prayer Book candidates, and these survivals of the Stone Age will, one may imagine, have the warm support of the present Home Secretary. There were to have been Spiritualist candidates, but they are not, it seems, going to materialize. Perhaps Spiritualists can bring enough spirit influence to bear to get what they want. If the spirits can paint pictures, or write books, through the brains and hands of a medium, they surely ought to be equal to the task of influencing a number of members of parliament to do what is required. There will certainly be some Prohibition candidates, who will try to make England as "dry" as the United States, and we should not be surprised if the American "rum-runners" subscribe to this party's funds. We understand they are the biggest supporters of the present American drink laws. Anyway, "Prohibition" is a word that appeals very strongly to the puritan mind. The puritan idea of making things better is always to pass a number of regulations saying what people shall *not* do. Their ideal of happiness is summed up in the word "Interference," and they never enjoy themselves quite so much as when they are preventing others enjoying themselves, from the child playing ball in the street on Sunday and the boy reading a penny dreadful, to the adult trying to buy a packet of cigarettes after eight o'clock. Presumably, making people better in this way gives the puritan a fine feeling of satisfaction with his own excellence. And one may add that, thanks to the belief in the divine right of kings having given place to the divine right of Parliament and officials generally, there are not many countries in the world more likely to submit to Prohibition than this one.

Something for the General Election.

That curious body, the Lord's Day Observance Society, has decidedly made up its mind for a "big push" at the election. In the new Parliament it intends trying to get legislation passed that will:—

Stop all Sunday games and Sunday pleasure rides by motor, omnibuses and motor-coaches.

Stop all Sunday newspapers.

Stop all Sunday concerts, dances, cinemas, theatres, and the Sunday opening of the Zoo.

Close all shops, of every description, on Sunday.

Close all public houses all day on Sunday.

I think that what lawyers would call the governing clause in the above programme is the first; and the all-important word, on which everything else in the programme is commentary, is "pleasure." For nearly everything the programme aims at preventing is in the nature of pleasure. If, for example, a motor-coach or tram carries a Christian to church or chapel, that would not be prohibited. The defence would be that this could not be called a journey of pleasure. It would come under the head of necessity, since no one can reasonably be expected to go to church unless it is in some sense necessary—because his wife takes him, or because he wants a wife to take him, or because some other person's wife takes him, or because he must try to get a sleep somewhere, and the children kick up such a devil of a row at home. It is the sight of people enjoying themselves on the Lord's day that is disturbing. That is why it is games, and concerts, and pictures, and pleasure rides that are to be stopped. Prove that these things are not productive of pleasure, and the root objection to them will disappear. People have all the rest of the week in which to enjoy themselves. It is surely not too much to give one day to the misery of contemplating the wisdom and goodness of God.

* * *

Let's be Thorough.

But extensive as the programme is, it does not go far enough. It may stop the demoralization of the children of the nation by preventing them playing in the gymnasiums in the parks, the development of vice may be checked by stopping Sunday tennis, and men and women may no longer parade their vice by walking round the animals' cages in the Zoo. But all wickedness does not transpire in public places. It may occur equally well within private enclosures. The man who does not desecrate the Lord's Day by feeding the bears, or playing with the monkeys, may within his own house have romps with his dog, throw crumbs to his goldfish, or amuse himself with the "harmless, necessary cat." They who do not go to cinemas on Sunday may still look over picture books; those who cannot attend a concert may turn on a gramophone; the good Christian coming home from chapel may have his feelings outraged

by hearing the sound of music and song coming from the houses of those who will not spend Sunday as the Lord's Day Observance Society says they ought to spend it. What is to be done with all these people? What is the good of stopping pleasure rides by motor-coach, if people are still allowed to run about the country in their own cars on Sunday, and even take friends with them? Call you that doing the Lord's work?

Legislation of the kind named must be only preparatory. We must aim not merely at getting back to the kind of thing that "Jix" learned at his mother's knee, but what she learned at her mother's knee, and even a little beyond that. We ought to get back to the good old days, when "seizers" were empowered to walk the streets and arrest all who were found walking about during sermon time, or when constables were ordered "to restrain all persons from swimming, or unnecessary walking in the fields, or following their secular occasions or recreations in the evening preceding the Lord's Day." That last point seems very important, because it is well that people should enter on the Lord's Day in a properly reverent state of misery. We should be thorough while we are about it. To prevent the desecration of Sunday in public, while permitting it in private, is foolish. Moreover, no member of the Lord's Day Observance Society would sleep with a contented mind feeling that somewhere near there was someone who was actually enjoying the Day of Rest.

* * *

Prompting Providence.

If one may venture a suggestion on this question, one may point out that—not Our Lord, but the older person of the Trinity is to blame for this growth of happiness on the Lord's Day. A hundred years ago, just when "Jix's" grandmother was holding the views which she passed on to his mother, and which he guides his life by to-day, Christian Societies were publishing circumstantial accounts of the number of fatalities attending those who ventured to desecrate the Sabbath. There were boys who went sliding on the ice, and the Lord caused the ice to crack and they were drowned. There were other children who spent on lollypops the pennies they should have given to the Church, and were promptly choked to death. There were men who went out riding during church hours, and their horses were divinely inspired to throw them and break their necks; and there were others who ended up at Tyburn Green, and who gave sorrowful accounts of how their first steps towards the end were in the shape of neglecting Sunday worship. There were many thousands of these tracts distributed, each with its appropriate woodcut, and all "as true as gospel." It was the Lord's Day, and the Lord was attending to it. While he did this there was no growth of Sunday amusements. But the Lord got careless. He allowed people to get drowned on Monday who went to Church on Sunday, and he omitted to drown the boy who went sliding on the ice from dawn to dusk on the Sabbath. He managed things so that a man was as likely to get his neck broken through his horse bolting when he went to church as when he stayed at home. People began to see the lack of sense in managing affairs in this way. If the Lord will settle down to business again and promptly make it hot or uncomfortable for such as desecrate the Sabbath, things may look up again.

There is one other point that needs attention. Police officials all over the country report that the opening of places of healthy entertainment on Sunday has led to an improvement in manners on the

part of young men and women. They say that not merely are their own duties made lighter, but the streets are freer from horseplay. Owing to the facilities offered for Sunday excursions, others report a decrease in drunkenness. Medical men write that healthy recreation on Sundays, games, gymnastic exercise, etc., have as good an effect, physically and mentally, as they have on other days. Others point out that Sunday is the day when the working man has most leisure to visit museums and art galleries; they dwell upon the enjoyment of people in these places. All this kind of insidious anti-Sabbatarian propaganda should be stopped. Officials should be cautioned that no such reports may be issued. Non-official reports should be placed under the Blasphemy laws, for such things are certainly calculated to outrage the feelings of Christians. The Christian Sunday was not instituted to make people mentally or physically or morally better. It is not called the day of man, but the day of the Lord. It was instituted so that on that day man might worship and adore the Lord. And how can a sincere Christian do that and enjoy himself? We have to make up our minds whether we are desirous of promoting mere human happiness and worldly well-being, or whether we wish to magnify and glorify the Lord. We cannot do both.

N.B.—We claim no copyright in this article, and the Lord's Day Observance Society is welcome to reprint it without further communication with the writer.

CHAPMAN COHEN.

The Black Army and Brotherhood

"Nature is made better by no mean,
But Nature makes that mean."—*Shakespeare.*

"Man's knowledge of nature has outgrown theology."
Robert Blatchford.

THE clergy never tire of telling people nowadays that the brotherhood of man is one of the primary elements of their Christian doctrine. They now ignore all their patriotic platitudes concerning a "god of battles," and bid men and women turn their eyes to a "prince of peace." The legendary poor carpenter, whom they pretend founded their Oriental Superstition, is said to have proclaimed "blessed are the peacemakers." The clergy themselves are not peacemakers, but pacemakers, which is a distinction with a big difference. Priests have never earned for themselves any benediction for advocating peace, for the grim fact remains that the clergy never set themselves in opposition to militarism itself.

Turn to the history of our own country, and refer to the record of the Church of England since the Reformation. Britain has waged over a hundred wars great and small. During that period we have fought not only the principal nations of Europe, but almost every country of consequence in the world. In every instance the Church of England has been the obedient, humble handmaiden of the Government in power; blessed the regimental flags, christened the battleships, sung "Te Deums" for victory. *The Book of Common Prayer*, issued with the sanction of both Houses of Parliament, assumes always that justice is on our side, and reminds credulous worshippers that "there is none other that fighteth for us but only Thou, O God."

In the late war whole nations, professedly Christian, were engaged for years in wholesale murder. Europe was a streaming slaughter-house, in which perished a large part of the manhood of one generation. It is a complete indictment of the Christian Religion, which has proved itself the most useless and hypocritical thing on earth. The

millions who professed to be followers of a "prince of peace" were entirely unaffected by Christian teaching. When passion or self-interest was aroused, every precept and every commandment was forgotten. Nor is this all of the sorry story, for a few persons were actually treated as criminals for attempting to take the Christian religion seriously, as with the Quakers, and some Conscientious Objectors in England and in America.

So far as the prelates of the many different Christian Churches are concerned, the profession of Christian ethics is a delusion and a mockery. Whether they be Roman Catholic Cardinals, Anglican bishops, Nonconformist divines, or priests of the Greek Church, the blunt fact remains the same. As for the brotherhood of man, no one remembering the awful treatment of Jews and Freethinkers throughout Europe, and the sufferings of African slaves, can but see that Christian doctrines are of one aspect, but its practices of quite another kind.

The clergy are now very anxious to persuade everybody that they have had a very important share in the improvement of the condition of the British people. They wish to forget the great war, and their own shameful share in it. Why is the tiger so anxious to shed its stripes—and bleat like a lamb? Is it possible that the growth of the Labour Movement, and the advent of a General Election, has frightened the clergy, and they are preparing for the day when Labour is enthroned in power at Westminster?

"Where are the snows of yesteryear?" Where are the hymns of hate, the spiritual songs of hell and the blood of the Lamb? Why is the Union Jack hid behind the vestry-door, and not placed conspicuously among the sacred symbols of the Christian Religion? Without unduly elaborating the matter, this change of front is disingenuous and by no means clever. Someone ought really to remind the Black Army of priests that it is within the bounds of possibility that second-century beliefs may be found quite incompatible with material efficiency in the twentieth century. With every generation the social conscience becomes quickened and more sensitive; men and women cannot accept quietly to-day ideas which were accepted blindly by their imperfectly educated forefathers.

Willy nilly, this Christian Religion concerns us all, because the legal theory of this country makes us all parties to the constitution of this Church of England, which is the State form of religion. If it were in the United States, or the British Colonies, where no such thing as a State Church exists, we need not care a pin what humbug or hypocrisy went on in a particular church, for it would be none of our affair. But the legislation of our own Parliament makes us all partners in this Church of England, and compels us to be, as it were, privy to its chicanery and its dishonesty.

The records of this State-made Church make very curious reading. Its bishops sit as lords in the House of Lords, and play their part in legislating. The votes of these prelates show how hopelessly this Church of England is out of touch with democratic aspirations. Bishops voted against admitting Nonconformists to the Universities of their own country. Bishops opposed the introduction of free education, and voted against removing the civil disabilities of Catholics, Jews, and Freethinkers. Bishops voted against the extension of the franchise to women. No progressive measures, large or small, escaped their hostility. They were as hostile to the abolition of flogging in the Army and Navy as to the introduction of seats for hard-working shop assistants.

It is as plain as a pikestaff that the priests of this State Church hope to consolidate their political posi-

tion by a cool piece of camouflage which they hope will deceive the new and untried electorate. Should Labour be returned to power, they hope to keep "in the middle of the boat," instead of being tossed overboard. In spite of priests, however, things do change in the course of the years. The advent of a Labour Party in politics is an augury of what is to come. But present-day priests, robed in the garments of the Middle Ages, are too like the priests of other generations who burned their opponents for daring to differ from them.

Priests wish to feather their own nests, and they use the pretence of being the friend of the poor and the protector of the downtrodden. It is shameful humbug on their part. Put them into power and there are no more heartless despots, no one with a more cynical contempt for the working-classes than priests, be they prelates or parsons. Priests are simply exploiters and not benefactors of humanity. They do not want people to have more freedom, they want them to have less. They do not want them to have more happiness, because they regard happiness as something that belongs to another world. Democracy should have no room for a clerical caste, or a State Church, which simply perpetuates Feudalism.

MIMNERMUS.

The Evolution of Life.

VERY few of the old school of biologists, who declared that it was impossible that life could have arisen from inorganic, or dead matter, by evolution, now remain. The few that do are voices crying in the wilderness, quite out of touch with the times, and invariably under the influence of religious ideas. As Professor Henderson observes: "Science has finally put the old teleology to death. Its disembodied spirit, freed from vitalism and all material ties, immortal, alone lives on, and from such a ghost science has nothing to fear."¹ The old defenders pass away, and there are none to take their place in the generation which follows them. Precisely in the way that Darwin declared that his own views on the descent of man would ultimately be accepted. Writing in December, 1860, he says: "I can pretty plainly see that if my view is ever to be generally accepted, it will be by young men growing up and replacing the old workers, and then young ones finding that they can group the facts and search out the new lines of investigating better on the notion of descent than on that of creation."

In a letter to Hooker, in the same year, he declares: "nearly all men past a moderate age, either in actual age or in mind are, I am fully convinced, incapable of looking at facts under a new point of view."²

Even the more advanced, or better informed, among the leaders of the Churches are preparing to evacuate the position they have for so long and so strenuously defended, but which they now see is becoming indefensible. The gaps in our knowledge are rapidly being filled up by the workers in our scientific laboratories, and, as Dean Inge has remarked: "Those who take refuge in gaps find themselves in a tight place when the gaps begin to close."³

While the opponents of evolution have been busy

¹ L. J. Henderson: *The Fitness of the Environment*. p. 311.

² F. Darwin. *Life of Charles Darwin*. (1860). pp. 230-244.

³ *Science, Religion and Reality*. (Essays edited by J. Needham). p. 366.

declaring that it was impossible that life could have evolved from matter; but was the result of a special "Vital Force," quite distinct from chemical or electrical forces, the chemists were silently at work pursuing their experiments in their laboratories—with very significant results. Step by step they are approaching the final solution of the riddle of life. It is a long and tedious process, but you cannot expect to produce by experiment, in a short time, something that probably only appeared spontaneously once during a certain phase of the evolution of the Earth, and may have been the result of a long process of infinitesimal steps before the actual achievement of life.

It has always been a great mystery how the plant prepares the food upon which its life and growth depends. In other words, how it turns the carbonic acid or the solution of carbon dioxide it obtains from the air, along with the water it obtains from its roots, into carbohydrates such as starch and sugar. A "chemical process," says Professor Baly, which "is the fundamental basis of the whole of terrestrial life. This may truly be asserted because the production of the protein is very closely associated with it and the initial stage is common to the two."⁴ The mystery is a mystery no longer. It has been solved by Professor Baly in the laboratory of the University of Liverpool. After many long, tedious, and delicate experiments, some of which Professor Baly describes, he concludes: "To sum up the results, so far as they have been described, it has been found possible in the laboratory to produce carbohydrates directly from carbonic acid by a process which is physically similar to that of the living plant." And further:—

The reason why no one succeeded until now in inducing these reactions to take place is because no one has hitherto been able to supply the large energy increment necessary. I believe that we find in this the key which unlocks the door of the vital chemistry of life is one of high energy, our laboratory experience being confined to the chemistry of low energy. From this view-point, I see a wondrous vista unfold itself, wherein new understandings, new hopes, and new possibilities reveal themselves. . . . We gain an insight into the chemistry of vitamins which, in the light of our new knowledge, reveal themselves as stores of high energy, which yield their energy to restore and maintain the vitality of decadent tissues.

Professor F. L. Donnan, in a lecture delivered at the meeting of the British Association at Glasgow, on September 11, 1928, declares that when the energy that activates the brain, and results in consciousness and thought, is discovered, "it will be no twilight will-o'-the-wisp, no elusive entelechy or shadowy vital impulse, but an addition to our knowledge of a character permitting of exact measurement and of exact expression by means of mathematical equations." After referring to the chemistry and energy changes of muscle, recently discovered by Meyerhof in Germany, and by A. V. Hill and others in England, Professor Donnan points out:—

Everything proceeds according to the laws of physics and chemistry. Here we see one of the elementary phenomena of life already to a great extent analysed and elucidated. . . . What is the lesson to be drawn from these examples? No less than that the elementary phenomena of life are *deterministic*; that is to say, that events compensate or succeed each other just as in the physico-chemical world of inanimate things, and that their compensations and successions can be exactly measured and expressed in the form of precise mathematical equations. The investigations of general physiology, so far pursued, indicate that the elementary phenomena of life are quite as fully deter-

ministic as phenomena on a corresponding scale of magnitude in the inanimate physio-chemical world.

Our leading scientific journal, *Nature* (October 6, 1928), in its editorial leading article, commenting on this, observes:—

That the laws which govern the phenomena of life are undiscoverable, that the basis of life is some vital principle, the nature of which can never be known, is a position which few would hold to-day, leading as it does to a paralysis of the power of investigation, and refuted, as it is, by our rapidly increasing knowledge of these very phenomena."

W. MANN.

(To be concluded.)

A Notable Pioneer.

The obituary notice of Doctor Alice Drysdale Vickery, which appeared in these columns some few weeks back, could do but little justice to her work or her personality. She passed away very quietly at an advanced age, and public opinion has, in the years since the war, so changed on the questions she was so intimately connected with, that her work as a vigorous and uncompromising pioneer seems to have been completely forgotten.

People have, notoriously, short memories. Not so long ago, to avow oneself a Neo-Malthusian, was to avow oneself an Atheist, and to say you were an Atheist was to associate yourself with all that was vile and degrading. Huxley, Spencer, Tyndal and many other leading scientists of their day frantically denied their Atheism. "Call us what you will," they cried, despairingly, "but never Atheists!" Even later advocates of Birth Control like Dr. Marie Stopes, though the way had been completely smoothed for them by Atheists like Francis Place and Charles Bradlaugh, objected strongly to the odious word and are moving heaven and earth to prove that Birth Control is not only an adjunct of pure theism, but a revelation from God Himself.

Somehow or other people are no longer frightened either by the word Neo-Malthusianism or Birth Control or even Atheism. Deeds, not words, are mostly the criterion of modern philosophy. If an Atheist turns out to be a "good" sort of chap, we are complacently told that the dear man was a Christian without knowing it, and that it was obvious what he objected to was not the pure religion of Jesus, but "Churchianity"—whatever that meant. At all events, people no longer shrink with horror from the avowed Atheist. As for Neo-Malthusianism, well, the tables are so completely turned that if you do avow yourself a believer in bigger and bigger families for the poor, you are looked upon as completely hopeless in matters economic, or even as an utter fool. Even Socialists, who have always prided themselves on being able to riddle Malthus to bits, and who have written long works to prove the enormous capacity of a land to feed an ever-increasing population, are being sharply pulled to task by their own women-kind. The prospect of rearing enormous families on the dole or on the Socialist living wage, no longer appeals to working women, and they are even more sceptical about the alleged paradise they are all going to have "in my Father's mansions." To have a good time here and now is their ideal, unconsciously agreeing with Ingersol, and those who can by deeds, not words, help them to attain their ideal is the man (or woman) for them.

Well, it would be interesting to go among the women who are now preaching Birth Control, who are advancing theories of greater sexual equality, who find in the Gospel of Secularism all that is needed to attain happiness in this world, and ask how many know of the work of Dr. Vickery? How many people realize that for fifty years she assiduously preached in the teeth of bitter opposition—and from her own sex, too—many of those ideals of modern life which fill columns of our newspapers, and are the substance of innumerable lectures? The work was done, the path was cleared. We can go gaily down it without a speck of mud turning up on our shoes. We are the pioneers now, don't you know!

⁴ *Nature*. August 11, 1928.

She was born in 1844, in Devonshire, that famous county of many pioneers, and when the family moved to London, studied and qualified in pharmacy. After that she attended the Royal Free Hospital, where Dr. C. R. Drysdale gave medical lectures. Determined on a medical career she went to Paris and studied there, and was one of the band of four women who became doctors after Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, by taking her degree of L.K.Q.C.P.I. at Dublin. She married Dr. Drysdale and had two sons. So much for this part of her life. But in 1876 came the world-famous trial of Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant for publishing the Knowlton pamphlet. Bradlaugh took his stand on the principle of Freethought, on the right of publishing a work dealing with things every man and woman should know, no matter whether they were rich or poor. That right was contested by Authority, and time has proved that Authority was absolutely wrong and Charles Bradlaugh, the Atheist, was absolutely right. The extraordinary thing is this, that twenty years previously, a far more outspoken work on sex subjects than the Knowlton pamphlet had been published, and not a word was said by Authority. *The Elements of Social Science*, written by Dr. George Drysdale, at the age of twenty-seven or thereabouts, is one of those great pioneer works fifty years ahead of its time, which has never received the recognition due to its great merits. It was published anonymously, and here again Bradlaugh had to bear the brunt of foul attacks, mostly from Christians, for forty years. Time has again vindicated him in this as in dozens of other things.

But Bradlaugh also had many devoted disciples, and on the question of Birth Control none more so than Dr. Vickery. She gladly came forward as a witness in the famous trial, and it seems incredible nowadays that anyone could ever have disputed her evidence. What she said reads like mere commonplaces. Her experiences in medical schools and hospitals gave her authority to speak, not "with books but with facts. I am speaking," she said, "of my knowledge of families and of the mothers who bear them." That sentence is the keynote of her life. She knew, as a medical woman, what women had to go through from practical experience, and not merely from books, but because of her experience, she never deviated one iota in her advocacy of sexual reform. She helped to form the Malthusian League of which her husband was first President, and she lectured and wrote for years and years in the teeth of fierce opposition from men and women of all ranks and stations. They were a "fanatical" little body, those early Malthusians, but they felt they were right, and their work bore such fruit that the League, its work done, was able to disband.

On the question of marriage reform, on Feminism, on the Vote, Dr. Vickery was ever ready to devote her time and—what is often just as important—her money. These forlorn "cranky" movements depend on financial support, and Dr. Vickery's hand was always in her pocket metaphorically speaking.

On the death of Dr. C. R. Drysdale, in 1907, she became President of the League, and also President of the International Federation of Neo-Malthusians, and as she grew older herself, lived quietly apart, only writing occasional pamphlets. For the last five years her home was in Brighton, and on the 12th of January, 1929, she passed away and was buried in the grave of her husband at Brookwood Cemetery.

Her work was done. The Cause for which she so ardently toiled had achieved its purpose. One cannot do really much in a life-time, it is too short. But Dr. Vickery has left a splendid record of achievement behind her. Other problems have to be faced, other difficulties arise. Life is a ceaseless struggle, and no decisive solution has yet been found to make it a haven of rest for the bulk of mankind. One does what one can, and judged by that, Dr. Vickery deserves well of humanity.

Finally, it must be noted that she was a Freethinker. But she felt that Freethought was already ably advocated by many of her friends, and so concentrated on questions of sex reform. She was, needless to say, helped in her work by her son, Dr. C. V. Drysdale, and his charming wife, who both have won international reputations on social and economic questions. To these

and the grave problems continually arising in our daily life, they are now devoting themselves, following the noble example set by their mother. The work of social reform is never done, but we, at least, must never allow the memory of the great pioneers ever to be forgotten. And among them not the least was the late Dr. Alice Drysdale Vickery.

H. CUTNER.

Acid Drops.

In the *Evening Standard* for February 6, Dean Inge writes on Christianity and the Social Order. As usual, he will not please a great many Christians with what he says; in fact, he says he has hopes of converting many to his point of view. We expect not, because he happens to be taking a generally sensible view of what was the aim of early Christianity—if we leave out the important consideration that the vital thing about it was the saving of the individual's soul in the next world. There was, he says, no thought of founding a Socialist Commonwealth among the first Christians. "To the first Christian, the Church was a mere stop-gap till the Kingdom of God should come." We are also glad to see him neatly pricking the bubble that tricky Catholic apologists like Chesterton and Belloc are fond of blowing, namely, that Christianity was opposed to private property. There was no question of the right of holding property about the monkish orders, it was merely a gratification of the ascetic ideal for a few, with the wish to be independent of externals.

The man who sets out with the notion that primitive Christianity aimed at a mere social regeneration, either does not or will not understand Christianity. The frame-work of the Christian teaching is that a number of wandering teachers who believed the end of the world was at hand, who thought the salvation of each one's soul the chief end of life, and whose like can be seen to-day in the East whenever one meets with a wandering fakir living on the alms of the passers by. What was the use of virgin births, and resurrections from the dead, and miracles, and angels and devils, to the creation of a new social order? Attention to social requirements only became imperative when the Christian Church became the Church of the State, and was exerting power and control over the whole of society. Then, unless the Church had made its teaching a little more sensible, and cleanly, and wholesome, it would have destroyed society if society had not destroyed the Church. So the Church became more reasonable; and the story of the modification of Christian teaching which began with the Christian Church in order to hold the people, is continued to-day in the Christian Socialist who finds that the devil-hunting, miracle-working, end-of-the-world-expecting Jesus of the Gospels came to nationalize the mines or establish the rule of the Independent Labour Party.

The *Church Times* thinks the visit of the Prime Minister to an official Baptist gathering a distinct departure from tradition. It is so as a matter of form, but not as a matter of principle. In earlier years a Conservative Prime Minister would not have done so because the Conservative Party was then the champion of the Established Church, and also because the vote was then of a more restricted character. But to-day, all the political leaders, Labour, Liberal, and Conservative, are out to get the "block" vote; the general election is drawing near, and any move that will get support from Church or Chapel is advisable. The principle is what it always was, it is only the form of its application that has changed.

The game is made the easier to play because of the desperately amorphous character of current Christianity. So long as a speaker will drop his voice when he refers to Jesus, talk with charming vagueness about "true Christianity," the "Spirit of Christ," etc., he need not strive after precision of thought and speech. The politician believes he is fooling his audience, Church and Chapel leaders know they are muzzling

the politician, and thus the ends of both are served. It is the poor public that comes badly out of the mess. They are misled by being told that the power rests with them—as it does, if they only knew how to use it—while all the time it is a selected few who are pulling the strings.

We gather that after the next General Election, re-organization of the national educational system will interest the politicians. Since this reorganization raises the question of religion in the schools, *The New Chronicle* (a Sunday School weekly) suggests that ecclesiastics are preparing for action. Our contemporary mentions a suggestion that the Roman Church must be watched, and adds that the Archbishop's Commission on Religion and Education, which has been at work for two years, has dark designs which will appear after the Election. *The New Chronicle* adds:—

The unsatisfactory situation in the schools to-day is the direct result of controversy between the Churches in past years. The rival camps have insisted either on claiming a monopoly, or on keeping the other people out even at the cost of excluding religious teaching, other than purely historical and literary lessons on the Bible, altogether. If anything like the internecine conflict of 1902 is revived the mass of the electorate—which now is outside the Churches—is all too likely to say "A plague on both your houses," and declare for secularism as it has done elsewhere within the British Commonwealth, as well as in other countries. No solution is possible, even if it were equitable—as clearly it could not be, unless full allowance is made for different interpretations of a common faith.

The New Chronicle adds that the secular solution is declared by some to be obviously right because it lays upon the home, the Sunday School, and the Church full responsibility for what is after all their special function and duty. But, says our contemporary, this contention tells only half the truth; denominational teaching is confused with religious teaching. Our friend argues that the information on all subjects given in the schools must be unified and given significance in relation to the child's whole personality as a member of society. It must be a "humane education," and therefore it must of necessity be religious in spirit or be the opposite; it cannot be neutral.

Clergymen are not usually in the habit of blowing their own trumpet, says Mr. Mead, the London magistrate. Perhaps there is no need. There are always plenty of people ready to oblige—job-hunters and hangers-on.

The Rev. H. C. Carter, a Congregationalist minister of Cambridge, recently occupied the Broadcast Pulpit. According to a brief report, his sermon was a powerful appeal to people who felt they had but little faith and moral energy to use what they had. For thus alone would they attain to full religious experience. He particularly appealed to young people not to allow purely intellectual difficulties to quench the spiritual forces within them, since religion is more than a matter of the intellect, although it is enriched and strengthened by every acquisition of sound knowledge. The rev. gent strikes the right note. If the young people have intellectual difficulties as a result of using their reason, the best thing they can do—from the religious point of view—is chuck reason overboard and give blind belief and sloppy emotion full rein. By these means cometh the perfect peace that surpasseth all understanding.

All the way from Belfast come words of wisdom from the Rev. T. B. Stewart Thomson, as per sample:—

If we preachers are to recover the lost note of power in our message, we must be purveyors of that power rather than exponents of theological problems; we must deal not with aspects of the Gospel only, but with its very marrow and blood.

But the trouble is that as soon as the preacher deals with the "very marrow and blood," the theological problems will arise in his hearers' minds. Theological problems are the inevitable result of the enunciation of Christian beliefs, and interpretations of the Bible.

The Burgomaster of Frankfort says: "He who is preaching war to-day should be examined for insanity." But no one is to-day openly preaching war. On the other hand, nothing or little is being done to alter the conditions of things that cause war. It is the people who refuse to alter the conditions that produce war who should be examined for insanity.

A clever man has invented a means of giving a metal coating to wood, plaster or porcelain, which makes them enormously stronger. Modernist geniuses in the Christian trade have been experimenting on somewhat kindred lines. They have been trying to put a sugar-coating to the rotten timbers of the Christian creed, with the object of strengthening it. Their efforts, however, have not been particularly successful.

The old literature of the Bible, says a preacher, "treasures new truth; it helps us to know God." Enlightened students of the Bible will certainly agree that the Old Testament helps one to know God. But we regret to say that the knowledge thus acquired is not to the God's advantage. It also helps one to know the mentality of the men who wrote the Old Testament, and to understand how their notions of religion arose.

The B.B.C. has at least one satisfied licence-holder. He thinks that the daily religious service is well worth the ten shillings paid for a licence, apart from the other items broadcast. Well, there's nothing to stop him from sending another ten shillings to the Corporation for value received, and as a token of gratitude.

Twenty-five flats are provided for the comfort of overseas missionaries home on holiday in the Missionary Guest House at Birmingham. We wonder what other trade offers such good things to its followers—a long holiday on full pay, and every comfort when they return to the country they left for their country's good. It is hardly credible that the working-men who provide the missionaries with all these things are willing to do so, while they themselves get nothing in the way of "plums" like these.

Mr. Henry Ford, of motor-car fame, has abolished the midnight shift at his works because hours after midnight are not productive enough. It is just as well to know the reason. Some half-baked preacher is quite likely to tell the world that Mr. Ford was animated by a Christ-like motive.

Dr. F. Ballard believes that the only hope of securing the maintenance and triumph of Christianity against materialism is by strengthening the unity between the various kinds of Christians—Romanist, Evangelical, and Liberal. But he thinks such a unity is "not only at present difficult, but in future prospect impossible." Anything more than the Apostles' "unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace" is really unthinkable. Dr. Ballard's final words are:—

There is no hope whatever of any alliance, beyond mere philanthropy—and generally not even that—between those millions who have sworn submission to the Pope, the corresponding host of those who are Protestants in the "Evangelical" sense. Whilst the extent to which the Evangelical attitude is now inevitable, and rightly, being influenced by modern scientific and critical knowledge, makes it more impossible to think of harmonizing it with the dogged obscurantism of Fundamentalism.

By the sound of all this, the pure and simple religion of Christ seems to be causing a lot of trouble in the world. The creed that claimed to be the ideal for bringing men together as brothers, has quite successfully alienated great groups of men one from the other. There's one thing to be thankful for. Civilizing influences outside religion have persuaded Christians into giving up their traditional practice of killing one another to settle their differences of opinion.

Miss K. Stuart, of London, S.W., writes to a pious weekly:—

The position of the Modernist often puzzles me. He professes to believe in Jesus Christ, and yet will not accept much of the Old Testament teaching which He who is the Truth accepted and taught. If one cannot believe ALL the Bible, how can one know how much to believe?

One simply guesses. One is just as likely to be right by this method as by any other. It has, however, a slight drawback. One has not the glorious certainty so essential for urging one to badger other folk with the "glad tidings."

Dr. A. B. Hazel, Principal of Jesus College, says: "The future of national education will rest more in the hands of the politicians than the priests." We don't suppose education will be any the worse for that. There's one thing, politicians will not be allowed much opportunity to exploit education for their own ends, in the way priests have done for their particular ends.

Is the Sunday opening of theatres likely to be detrimental to the welfare of the community? The *Methodist Times* asks the question, and answers: "We believe it is, and that it is the duty of all good citizens to oppose it." Our friend is confusing the welfare of the community with the welfare of the Churches. There is a world of difference between the two. But we don't expect a Sabbatarian fanatic in an editorial chair to appreciate that difference.

Baptist ministers are now to get a superannuation allowance at the age of sixty-five. The faithful Baptist sheep have provided for this purpose £300,000. Formerly, they left God to look after his labourers in his vineyard. But Baptist faith in this direction is not what it was. So the pastors have persuaded the sheep to cough up £300,000. More materialism! Even the Churches are becoming infected with it.

A God is an expensive luxury. The Wesleyan denomination has, during the last thirty years, spent £12,000,000 on new chapels, halls, Sunday schools, ministers' houses, enlargements, and organs. The most costly block of buildings was the Westminster Central Hall, costing £350,000. The Leysian Mission buildings cost £120,000. This is only one Christian denomination. The reader can busy himself estimating the total wastage on God through all the Churches. Now suppose these many millions of pounds had been used for colleges, public libraries, and "seven-day" playing fields for the benefit of the whole community . . .

A Blackpool reader of a religious weekly has been greatly pained to notice the prominence given by that paper to Modernist teaching. He is also grieved that articles dealing with the "great certainties" are strangely lacking. Maybe the explanation is that the new Modernist editor is none too sure where there are any great certainties left since the Higher Criticism got busy. The same reader is anxious to know, with regard to the inspiration of the Bible, where he can find anchorage, and when he can really say, on reading the Bible, "Thus saith the Lord." If we were an honest Modernist editor we should reply—"nowhere!" We should further explain that, though the Lord inspired the Bible writers to say what they did, and to say "Thus saith the Lord," nevertheless, according to up-to-date Christian thinkers, the writers ought not to have said, "Thus saith the Lord." We should add that the question of inspiration is somewhat complicated by the fact that God was revealing only bits of pure truth at any one period, and that these bits were mixed with semi-truth, demi-semi-truth and downright nonsense. So that nowadays no one can be quite sure which is which. But a lot of clever thinkers are making guesses. The one thing upon which they are all agreed is that the Bible, mixed as it is, reveals the mind of God.

"In the *Sunday Express*, this week, I read the touching complaint of Mr. James Douglas of the failure of the 'highbrows' to support him in his noble effort to cleanse the 'sewer' of literature. 'I have tried,' he wails, 'to set up a standard of literary restraint, but the mandarins of literature have not supported me.' But has he really tried very hard? I wondered, when I turned to another page in the paper and, ensnared by the headline 'Belinda has Loved Many Times,' read that 'on the whole the happiest marriages are usually between people who have had many love affairs . . . Innocence has shown a very poor list of successes against knowledge, and by far the happiest marriages are those where not only the man but the woman also, has had a considerable amount of sex-experience before marrying!' No, I doubt whether Mr. Douglas has applied his 'standard of literary restraint with sufficient severity—to the *Sunday Express*, for example." (From "Life and Politics," by Kappa. *The Nation*, February 2, 1929.)

Youth and the Church is the title of a report issued by the Stockholm Conference of the Christian Churches. In the closing chapter, Canon Raven says:—

There is much, very much, to do, both on the part of the Churches and of those concerned with the training of the new generation. But of that generation's best products I should say, without fear of contradiction, that they are growing up with a wider, deeper, and more consistent understanding of the religion of Jesus Christ than any of their predecessors.

Perhaps this wider and deeper understanding is what is preventing many educated intelligences from volunteering for a parson's job, and what is also keeping many outside the churches.

Mr. A. M. Chirgwin, M.A., writes in a religious journal as follows:—

Perhaps the outstanding feature in educational thought and practice to-day is its emphasis on character and personality. There is a respect for personality, even the personality of quite little children, which is not only new, but fundamentally Christian.

This statement is quite Christian. The Christian Churches have troubled little about respecting individual personality. Their aim was to get everybody to believe and think in a certain way, and dutifully to perform certain prescribed practices. Individual thinking which is a result of individual personality is the one thing the Churches did their best—or worst—to eliminate.

Many Methodist elders are still sure that dancing is an ungodly pastime. At a full-blooded revival meeting, a decorous Methodist (male or female) may shout and sing, and even hug his or her neighbour, when the spirit of the Lord gets properly warmed up. But to dance to music and get enjoyment from doing so—well, that's something which brings one, not "in tune with the infinite," but in step with Old Nick. In the Wesleyan Church to-day, it is the younger element that favours dancing and is amused at the antique notion that dancing is equivalent to going to the devil. In a Wesleyan journal the question is being warmly debated. One good man says: "All forms of amusement have been, or are being, taken under the wing of the Church, and if we continue on this course the line of demarcation between the world and the Church will cease to exist." He wants to know whether the providing of amusement by the Churches has either brought in the young people or raised the Church to a higher standard of spiritual power. The social side of the Church flourishes, he says, but the devotional side languishes; and he asks pathetically, "Where does Christ come in?" Quite so; but get rid of all the social and recreational activities of the Church, and what a shrinkage there would be in the membership roll!

A man from the Moselle Department of France is being rolled in a wine barrel to Paris; the rolling is estimated to last seventy days. This seems a painful method of addling one's brains. The poor fellow could do it painlessly by joining some red hot, hell-fire Gospel shop.

Nicholas Newcroft, in a religious weekly, says: "To find religion is one thing: to keep it is another, and is impossible save as a perpetual re-discovery and re-interpretation." Possibly this is a polite way of saying that if a man is to be kept within the Church, he must be perpetually inoculated with religious dope of various kinds. We are glad to say that many who "find religion" make the discovery that what they found is worthless, and that as long as they keep it they have to "keep" the parson too!

A reader of a pious weekly says: "It has been, and is to-day, men of Evangelical faith and Puritan ideals who stand for religious, civil, and social liberty." We invite him to watch the antics of the Lord's Day Observance Society and the pious temperance fanatics. There would be precious little "civil and social liberty" if they had the ordering of things. There are also various "purity" gangs who carry morbid minds into cinemas and theatres to discover indecency where none exists. But the less said about them the better.

The Rev. C. W. Andrews (Wesleyan) does not take kindly to modern psychology. He issues the warning that its speculations are not yet proved. Maybe the rev. gent sees trouble ahead for his profession. If the New Psychology succeeds in explaining man's various emotional states, feelings, desires and fears, priests will experience difficulty in exploiting them. The more men know about their mental make-up, the harder will become the priest's job of getting his misinterpretations of human feelings, desires and fears accepted.

The Rev. Geo. E. Grieve says he has known many among his flock who are "inhibited and confined by fear of the unorthodox, outwardly giving silent assent to religious ideas that inwardly they cannot accept." He thinks there is too little frankness among members as to their beliefs and doubts. We should prefer to say that many Church-goers are too cowardly to state openly how few of the Church's dogmas they really believe in. They are afraid to be frank for fear of social or economic boycott.

"Our God," says the Rev. W. L. Hannam, "is not beyond the sky. Down here in London he is working out his own gracious purposes." Yes; and quite likely "our God" is encouraging the *Freethinker*, in order to make the parsons work harder. We present this suggestion to Mr. Hannam for his next sermon.

It all depends upon the point of view. In England, the foolish film "Ben-Hur" was praised because of the "reverential" air with which it handled "sacred" characters. In Canton, the Bureau of Education has, we see from the *Peking and Tientsin Times* of January 17, told the proprietor of the Pearl Theatre to cut out the "objectionable and superstitious" parts of the "Ben-Hur" picture. It prescribes the picture of the birth of Jesus Christ and the descending of the star, the resurrection of the dead child and the curing of leprosy by Christ, the earthquake and similar phenomena during the crucifixion. The reasons given are:—

These things are not only absurd and fictitious but also tend to beguile people to believe in superstition. Moving pictures such as "Ben Hur" have a powerful effect on social education. They tend to undermine social progress and promote superstition. The whole picture is nothing but Christian propaganda, absurd in the extreme.

The "Heathen Chinee" appears to be getting his own back. By the way, it might not be a bad idea to get an educated "Heathen" to sit on the licensing board for British films, and one on the licensing bench of Magistrates. It would prevent such absurdities as not permitting people to smoke while the "King of Kings" was being shown. Anything that would prevent Christians crying their idiocy to the high heavens would be advisable.

The *Radio Times* stumbles deeper than ever in the quagmire of self-contradiction. The Editor would not admit that there was the least desire for an alternative programme to the incredibly fatuous Sunday sermon. One of his advertisers gives him the lie direct. In large type, an advertisement for the Lissen S.G.3 Receiver recommends readers to "Spend Sunday in Vienna's Dance Halls." Really, this will never do. What are the parsonic broadcasters thinking about? Why have a committee to safeguard the religious business if free trade with devilish Vienna can be suggested in a paper that the committee is supposed to control? The only remedy for this state of affairs is a rigid censorship of all advertisements in the *Radio Times*. Payment for this suggestion can be sent by the committee to the *Freethinker* Endowment Fund.

Mr. Beverley Nichols, in the *Star-Spangled Manner*, tells of his experience as one of an audience of five thousand at the Temple, Los Angeles:—

As each minute passed, the advent of the Presence became evidently nearer and nearer. One felt her spiritual influence in the crescendo of saxophones from the band, one sensed it in the ever-increasing mass of expensive roses which they were piling up on the platform. And when the organ eventually burst into a thunderous peal, and we all rose to our feet, we knew that at any moment She—She, the Ageless and the Spotless one—would be in our midst. Louder, louder, grew the voices: She is coming . . . coming . . .

Christians our Saviour, our Salvation . . . She is here! The door on the left has swung open. A spotlight sweeps down. It lights up a smiling bowing figure, making its way to the stage. The figure holds an immense bouquet of roses. The smile is brilliant, dominating. She turns and kisses her hand to right and left. There is a roar of applause. She mounts the steps like any *prima donna*. More bows, more hand-wavings—always the brilliant smile. The Star is here. I have a feeling that the light has faded from the picture of Christ, that it is all flooding down upon "Mrs. Aimée McPherson.

Her eyes are large, bright, and restless. Nothing escapes them . . . Her smiles remains her outstanding characteristic . . . it appears to be perpetual. It says "See how happy I am in the love of Jesus Christ! Gee—I feel swell! All my troubles gone, all my burdens on His shoulders! Isn't He a dandy friend?" (That last phrase is an actual quotation from one of her more lyrical utterances.)

I drew back against the wall. The air was hot with menace. Out of these close pressed thousands a corporate spirit was being welded, a spirit fierce and avenging, animated by the sullen brutality of the Old Testament God . . . I seemed to hear hoarse voices denouncing me, calling me to confess my sins, or pay the consequences.

The Pilgrim Fathers set off across the ocean because they felt an imperative call to worship God after their own fashion, and longed to live in a land where liberty of conscience was allowed . . . They brought with them a burning flame of religious excitement, and were as full of the zeal of persecution as the ecclesiastical authorities from which they had escaped. Religious cruelties in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were as natural in the new lands as in the old, and the men and women who had left their homes for Christ's sake expelled heretics from their midst, and even burnt and hanged them with a holy joy, firmly believing that everyone who did not share their convictions would be damned. (Ray Strachey: *Religious Fanaticism*. pp. 22-23.)

Parson Yaldon was known for his habit of genially engaging the batsman in conversation while the bowler was intent on getting him out, and I have heard of at least one occasion when he tried this little trick on the wrong man. The pestered batsman rounded on the rather foxy-faced clergyman with: "I bin playing cricket nigh on thirty years, and parson or no parson, I take the liberty of telling you to hold your blasted gab."—*Memoirs of a Fox-hunting Man* (By Siegfried Sasson).

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.

V. NEUBURG.—Whenever convenient. We are very full up at the moment.

C. HARPER.—Will appear next week. Received too late for use in this issue.

C. YOUNG.—Mr. Cohen's articles will continue monthly in the *Controversialist*—for some time, at least.

H. EDWARDS (and others).—Thanks. Mr. Cohen is not quite better yet, but he hopes to be quite recovered in the course of a few days. It was probably a touch of the prevailing epidemic. It is not often that he bothers about fashions, but exceptions will occur with the most particular.

A. B. MOSS.—Shall probably act on your advice, but the week is young at the time of writing this.

J. B. SAUNDERS.—Shall be very pleased to meet you when you return to England. Don't forget to advise us.

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

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

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

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

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."

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

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

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

The "Freethinker" will be forwarded direct from the publishing office at the following rates (Home and Abroad):—

One year, 15/-; half year 7/6; three months, 3/9.

Sugar Plums.

To-day (February 17), Mr. Cohen will lecture in the Spinners' Hall, Bolton, at 7.30. His subject will be, "What is the use of a Future Life?" The chair will be taken at 7.30. On Sunday next, Mr. Cohen will lecture twice in the City Hall, Glasgow.

Miss Ettie Rout will pay her first visit to Glasgow to-day (February 17), and will lecture in the No. 2 Room, City Hall, at 6.30. Her subject is, "Practical Birth Control." We are glad to learn that Mr. Saphin had good meetings at Glasgow on Sunday last, and that his lectures were much appreciated by those present.

We publish in another column a letter from Mr. Dennis Bradley, dealing with a paragraph which appeared in the *Freethinker* for February 3. Mr. Bradley says we have misrepresented him, although all we did was to follow an article by Lord Charles Hope; and Mr. Bradley's complaint should be against him, and not against us. Mr. Bradley said he had had direct spirit

voices speaking about thirty different languages, including archaic Chinese. Mr. Bradley repeats the statement in the letter, and seems to think that repeating the statement is equal to proving it. We are sorry, but we cannot agree with him.

So far as the gramophone records are concerned, these were taken in the apartments of Lord Charles Hope, and Mr. Bradley has, it appears, been citing Lord Charles as evidence of the truth of spirit communication. It was because of this that in self defence Lord Charles wrote an article in the *Daily News* for January 25, pointing out that he does not believe the voices were those of spirits, that there was no restriction laid on the medium, and no precautions whatever taken; he says he is surprised to learn of the number of languages cited by Mr. Bradley, and among the sounds heard there were only a few words of Italian that could be understood. Lord Charles says that, in his opinion, the experiment had failed. As to the archaic Chinese, heard on some other occasion, the witness is Dr. Whyman, and Lord Charles says pretty plainly that he would like corroborative evidence of this, as he knows how easy it is "to be illusioned in the dark." So much for the boasted gramophone records, and Mr. Bradley's evidence.

Mr. Bradley says, and Lord Charles agrees with him, that "the registration of the voices on the gramophone records prove that the voices were not hallucinatory. It looks as though Mr. Bradley imagines that not hallucinatory, and of spirit origin, are the same thing. But it is obviously nothing of the kind. Not hallucinatory means only that the sounds were not imaginary, they were objective. But that is not the point at all. The real issue is, did the sounds come from spirits or were they produced by some one, or by some mechanism in the room? Lord Charles Hope, in whose room the records were made, is quite evidently not a believer in the spirit origin at all, and his article shows that he strongly dislikes Mr. Bradley parading him as a "witness to the unseen." It looks like another case of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the psychic picture.

We have received part three of Mr. J. M. Robertson's *History of Freethought* (Watts & Co., 1s. 6d.), and can only repeat of it what we said of the first two parts—that Mr. Robertson has placed the Freethought Movement under a debt by its appearance. Only those who realize the extent to which the part played by Freethought during the nineteenth century has been systematically hidden by ordinary historians, will thoroughly appreciate the immense amount of work that has gone to the compiling of the work. A writer of any ordinary history has the ground pretty well prepared for him, the documents are all in order, and all he has to do is to elaborate along this or that line. In this case the material itself has had, in large part, to be dug up, literally resurrected from forgotten journals, pamphlets, and books. Only those who have already some knowledge of the subject can at all appreciate all this has meant in the shape of sheer labour. It was work for a staff of assistants rather than for one man. And the appreciative reader will not forget the very large background of material that must exist in the mind of the writer to write a history of the scope of this one. And it is no belittling of the present work to say that when it is finished it will have provided the jumping off point for other histories of a similar kind. It is emphatically a work that no Freethinker should be without, and which every intelligent Christian would be the better for possessing.

On Sunday (February 17), Mr. R. H. Rosetti is to lecture to the Birmingham Branch of the National Secular Society. The meeting, which commences at 7 p.m., will be held in the Bristol Street Schools, and Mr. Rosetti has chosen as his subject, "The Churches and War." We hope to hear that the attendance at the meeting was excellent, and would suggest that the subject provides a particularly good opportunity for Secularists to invite Christian friends to be present.

A Heathen's Thoughts on Christianity.

WHAT OF TO-DAY?

(Concluded from page 86.)

TO-DAY, in the West, we see a very manifest tendency to throw off the shackles of Christianity. But, considering the achievements of modern knowledge, it is surprising how slow the process is.

To the educated Heathen, who realizes the state of modern knowledge, real knowledge, exact knowledge, positive knowledge, it is a matter of astonishment that so puerile, so childish, so *insane*, a superstition as Christianity still retains its hold. A people, educated as are those of England, of Europe, of America, ought to be ashamed of such a religion. It is a standing reproach to their civilization.

An English friend, who has read over this manuscript, gives some explanation when he points out that organized Christianity is a great vested interest upon which many thousands of clergy, and others, depend for a living. Further, he says that large numbers of people are not yet educated above those of the Middle Ages. They can read, but they never read what is likely to teach them anything. This I can well believe from certain books that have been lent me, and from conversations I have had with people who say they are convinced Christians. These do not seem to know anything about their own religion, and very little about the knowledge of their times.

My friend says that I must remember how slow social and intellectual evolution really is. It took many millions of years to evolve the human race. It takes many centuries to evolve a civilization, and the world has only just emerged from a long night of utter barbarism.

But the fog of Christianity is lifting, although it is still thick and black in many places. The sunshine of free thought is breaking through the murk of superstition, and is stimulating the reason of increasing numbers of people. Thus we see a steady indifference to religion on every hand. More and more people are falling away from the churches. It is said that not more than 25 per cent of the population are members of any religious denomination in England. And what is the result? A higher standard of humanity, of morality, of behaviour in every direction. There can be no doubt that, in all these respects, the Western world is incomparably better than it was fifty years ago.

As regards the Heathen East, it says to the West: Give us your science, your medicine, your hygiene; give us your industrial machinery; give us your *secular* knowledge; but—keep your armaments, and, above all, your superstitions, to yourselves. Of these last we have more than enough of our own. We are coming to see that we shall have to root these out, and we shall do so. But we do not want the religion which your own people are rejecting. We know all about your god, we do not like him, we do not want him, and we will not have him. We have better gods of our own, and these, we are beginning to realize, are growing old, obsolete and useless. Their twilight is approaching, and when they have passed out into the night from whence they came, we shall not desire to replace them.

Religion is said to be instinctive to the human mind. It is nothing of the kind. Religion, in the commonly accepted sense of the word, and as it is understood by the priests, is the offspring of ignorance and superstition. Fear of the unknown is instinctive to all living beings, animal as well as human. The un-

known is always mysterious, and it is upon this fear and mystery that the priests of all religions, in all ages and countries, work—to their own profit and advantage. Whether it be the witch-doctor of Central Africa, the Brahmin priest, the Mohammedan mullah, the Christian priest or parson, they are all of the same trade. Their business is to exploit the fear of the unknown and to play upon the credulity of the ignorant. It is therefore to their interest to foster ignorance, and this is why they are all in accord in their hatred of knowledge, and particularly of science, that is, systematized knowledge. Science, indeed, is their deadliest enemy, and therefore they have always fought against it, and endeavour to deprecate and belittle it whenever they have an opportunity.

What would the world be like without religion?—It would be a better place to live in than it ever has been, or is now. As religion declines, we find higher standards of human conduct establishing themselves. It is coming to be understood that the affairs that really matter are those of this world. Nothing is known, or can be known, of any world that may be "hereafter," or if there is one. If there is to be any religion at all, let it be the religion of humanity in its true sense, a "binding together" of the human race in one great bond of common humanity, with the establishment of a "heaven" on earth, here and now. This religion has no need of priests, for the ideal of every man and of every woman would be to serve, not an imaginary god, but their fellows, and themselves, than whom there are no beings higher. When they come to realize this, the churches and temples, dedicated to fear, will become halls of true learning and enlightenment, instead of centres of ignorance, superstition and obscurantism.

E. UPASAKA.

The Value of Religion.

It has been said that the chief value of religious and allied belief lies, or has lain, in the feeling of comfort or security that is engendered by reliance on supernatural or other preternatural aid. This is probably true, so far, at least, as comparatively ignorant persons and communities are concerned.

It is now well known that uncivilized peoples, with the exception of a few of the lowest, have magico-religious beliefs and practices, in various stages of development, and that they suppose that spirits and other unreal beings and influences are to be propitiated or checkmated by a variety of artifices and observances. There are plain indications that the same features existed in Europe and the near East among our Stone Age ancestors. And we know of the continuation and further development (chiefly by a process of reduction) during the long period of early civilization in Egypt and elsewhere. It does not seem likely that sane people, no matter how ignorant, would cling so long and closely to such tenets, and spend so much of their time, energy and substance upon the associated rites, unless some advantage, however suppositious, were gained. These considerations apply, in large measure, to the system which dominated the Middle Ages of Europe. In describing the condition of the decaying Roman Empire, soon after the establishment of Christianity, Lecky tells us of the widespread corruption, "even in institutions that appeared the most holy," of the depravity existing within, as well as without, the Church, including the degradation of Christian love-feasts to "scenes of drunkenness and riot," and of the common "combination of vice and superstition"; and he adds the significant remark that "undoubt-

ing belief in superstitious rites calmed the imagination and allayed the terrors of conscience."

But the recognition of this "comforting" element does not involve the admission that there is anything that may be rightly called "truth" in the beliefs concerned. We have to reject the contention of Mr. H. G. Wells that a great and long-lasting system such as Christianity must be partly if not wholly true, and also the more general and frequently reiterated statement that "there is a soul of truth in things erroneous." These statements evidently confuse truth with utility; and an ancient transcendental belief or system is at least as likely to be erroneous as a more modern one. Magic is probably as old as anything which may be called religion, but it has practically disappeared, as also have totemism and fetichism, from civilized societies.

But utility is not the only reason for the lasting character of a belief. The rise of systems, such as the magico-religious cults of ancient Egypt and neighbouring states, and then of the Christian system, alters the complexion of affairs; and we see the formation of many powerful influences in support of the cults, and which tend toward their persistence. In fact, a sort of close, artificial environment is provided for them.

Thus, in the "Ages of Faith," we note, in addition to the substantive beliefs, such as the fear of hell and the hope of heaven, a variety of environmental developments, such as the Inquisition, the control of such education as existed, combined with the opposition to science and other secular learning, the prohibition or limitation of printing, of teaching and of reading (the *Index Expurgatorius*). To this we have to add the powerful weapon of excommunication, which turned men into outlaws, who might be attacked and maltreated by members of both the lower and the higher ecclesiastical orders, and, as Hallam tells us, caused the victims to be shunned, like men infected with leprosy, by their servants, their friends and their families, while they were cut off from the Church and the hope of salvation; and we are not surprised to learn that though the penance imposed was often very severe, including public whipping, the excommunicates usually submitted to it and returned to the fold. We note also the general inquisitorial system which practically made people spies upon one another.

It is not surprising, with these and many other, more detailed, influences at its disposal, that the Roman Catholic Church so long retained its stranglehold upon the people. But happily we seem to be approaching the end of these degrading features, the decline of which has been commensurate with the progress of knowledge and thought and with the rise of moral standards.

Recognizing these facts, rationalists invite those who still retain theological beliefs to consider the probability that all such doctrines—which undoubtedly first arose among our primitive and necessarily ignorant ancestors, developed principally during the childhood of civilization and the darkness of the Middle Ages—are as baseless as the belief in magic, totemism and fetichism; and that mental satisfaction of a more legitimate and a higher kind than that which is based on unreal beliefs may be derived from the exploration of reality and the exercise of the rational thought that is securely based upon it.

J. REEVES.

Herd Instinct.

THERE are books that give a new orientation to the mind. One realizes that one has never faced *that* way before, has never beheld the view from *that* particular hill; and the revelation, though often bad for one's complacency, is good for one's education. Such a book is *The Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*, by W. Trotter, and which has now been before the public for some time.

The work is a study of mass psychology and its plan is as follows. The early part was written ten years before the war, and deals theoretically with gregariousness as a ruling instinct in man; the middle part was written in 1915, and seeks to apply to the war—particularly to the two principal contestants, Germany and England—the theoretical conclusions arrived at ten years earlier; and there is a postscript, written in 1919, in which the anticipations of 1915 are reviewed in the light of what actually happened. Although the war provided, on a large a scale as any empiric could desire, the materials to test the conclusions of the theorist, and although this book came out of such a test with what the author modestly calls a "not inconsiderable correspondence" between anticipations and events, but what may well be more warmly described as a triumphant fulfilment of his prophesies, I nevertheless propose to deal in this paper only with the theories put forward in the work and not with their justification during the course of the war.

The main thesis of the early essays is that the three instincts of sex, nutrition, and self-preservation do not embrace the whole field of man's behaviour; that a very large area of that field is governed by the promptings of some other impulse; and that this fourth impulse is derived from man's gregariousness. Association, or the social habit, Mr. Trotter raises to the significance of a fundamental instinct of profound importance, places it upon a throne as exalted as those of the other three already crowned kings, and gives it a sceptre as autocratic and compelling as theirs. To the student of human affairs the supreme importance of this discovery is that it accounts for non-rational opinion. One of the necessary conditions of association is that individuals of the herd shall accept with readiness the group suggestions, and it is to this suggestibility that the non-rational opinion to which man is so notoriously addicted owes its persistence. For it is to be observed that the voice of the herd is equally imperative whether its elicits have the qualities of truth, rationality, justice, etc., or not. The test is not whether they are virtuous or needful, but whether they come from the accepted source.

It is humiliating to have to admit this wide dominion of prejudice, and to acknowledge that the process of sifting which admits opinions into the mind or excludes them from it is the work of some more compelling but less respectable agent than the unfettered intellect to which it is universally ascribed. The educated classes in particular will find it difficult to admit that the proud efforts by which their beliefs have been made unassailably rational for them are but the festoons that decorate a monument, whose builder is prejudice. And it must be said that resistance to this new idea is not without a very plausible appearance of justification. For it is to be observed that all suggestions, even though they come bearing the seal of the herd's approval, are subjected by the individual mind to a sort of check or criticism. There is always at work a mechanism of rationalization. But the persuasion of community feeling gives so great a bias, that the work of the intellect is in no sense a fair or discriminating selection,

Can man get on without God? That is not an important question. The important thing is, can God get on without man?

but a process of mere justification, and the most irrational belief is made rational because it has arrived by the approved route. It is this process that obscures the herd origin of opinion, and its operation is cruelly deceptive. For Fate to present to man, in the disguise of an illuminating guide, an endowment that in reality does little but obscure is a piece of whimsical devilry difficult to match even in the repertoire of so ingenious an artist.

But reflection will furnish rich testimony to the truth of Mr. Trotter's theory, and to the objective observer of society in the mass it explains human conduct as Newton's work explains Kepler's. Now we know why the most ingenious and grotesque devices of the intellect pass for reason. Now we know why the resistive mind, clinging fondly to some communal hereditary legacy of doctrine, will say that he believes it *because of* his inquiries, while all the time he means *in spite of* them. Now we know the parentage of those evil twins sophistry and casuistry, and why dissimulation is called policy. Now we know why reason is not on the throne—throne space is strictly limited and is already filled.

The reigning tyrant's name is custom, and obedience to his enactments is enforced by the dread of isolation from herd opinion. For how many beliefs is there no better reason than that the parents of the believer held them? On what ground other than that of a reaction to inherited custom can we explain the survival in civilized communities of a priest class? That the sophistries, shifts, and subterfuges, the wriggles and distortions, of the last half century—all the mental acrobatics that have been employed in the attempt to make post-Darwin science square with pre-Darwin dogmas—could by any possibility be accepted as the real reasons upon which those dogmas were based is a striking proof of the persistence with which, in the face of the strongest evidence, man attributes to reason what is due to instinct. Even in the trivial acts of life—perhaps, indeed, more noticeably so there—there is abundant testimony to instinctive reactions. Mr. Trotter compares what he amusingly calls the "orientation and technique" in the ceremony of recognition between dogs with the "similar, and it is supposed more dignified, mechanisms in man." He sees the passions of the pack in the newspaper hue and cry after notorious criminals. And he can trace in the ritual of conversation between strangers—the feeling for marks of identity or differentiation and the disagreeable shock on discovering association with the wrong pack—the unmistakable operation of the gregarious instinct.

The study of the human species from such a point of view as is assumed in this work leads the author to no hopeful conclusions as to its future. That does not, of course, matter; the inquirer must follow the evidence, though it leads to death. Simple gregariousness tends ever towards greater and greater unity of the individual members in the mass, and their closer and closer identification with it; and its ultimate goal is a homogeneity as complete and perfect as we see it in the beehive. But this tendency is, in man, seriously hindered by his rich variety of modes of reaction to the gregarious impulse. It is Mr. Trotter's view that the social instinct develops most freely in a society whose individuals are of limited intelligence, and whose reactions to its demands are therefore simple, as in the case of the bee; that increased brain power checks its progress by multiplying the methods of response; and that this widening of responsiveness splits up the community into a series of groups, each of which satisfies the social demand through the responses observed only within it. Thus, though there is no

diminution of the strength of the herd instinct, it is dissipated or spread, and the tendency to homogeneity is continually frustrated by the habit of segregation. A glance at such institutions as, say, freemasonry and the brotherhoods of the professional classes in civilized communities will show at once the striking difference between the ready obedience of their members to the voice of their group and the resistance to suggestions from outside it. A diminishing scale of obedience to the impulse can be seen if we compare an individual's attitude first towards men of the same town, then towards men of the same country, then towards men of the same colour, and then towards mankind in general. In this widespread and increasingly exclusive segregation our author can see the germ of man's extinction. To how great an extent it can check the tendency to unity is seen in the fact that it persisted, with no very noticeable modifications, among all the combant nations, even during the unprecedented disturbances of 1914-1918, when the most complete unanimity of purpose was essential, and division was threatened with dread consequences. The facts do indeed hint that simple gregariousness has run its course in man, and that, for all his pride, man may prove, as Mr. Trotter says in a fine passage, "but one more of Nature's failures, ignominiously to be swept from her work-table to make room for another venture of her tireless curiosity and patience." But prophecy is the rarest of gifts. The path of any species from birth to death is a long one, and from no point in that path can success or failure be foretold, for there may be unexpected turnings invisible to the longest sight. Hints at some of these turnings illumine the sombre conclusions of the author with flashes of hope, and those readers of the book who are temperamentally disposed to regard the impermanence of mankind as a tragedy will find consolation and promise in them.

I have said enough to show that the work under notice is of no common order. It is, indeed, of that quality which impels the astonished reader to ask, as soon as he has recovered from his first shock of delight, "Why didn't somebody think of this before?" All great work, by making obvious the truth of the principles it espouses, has that effect. In the present instance the question will answer itself if the questioner will only step back some fifty years. In 1859 there was opened a door to a region in which the inquisitive mind was to find boundless opportunity. Before the publication of *The Origin of Species* no one had dreamt of regarding man as an animal. What may be called the popular literary view presupposed a differentiation radical, fundamental, and essential, between man and the rest of the conscious universe; and no one in that class thought of assailing it, the philosophic view argued it loftily to a more cultured but equally receptive group; and the religious view not only asserted it with characteristic vigour, but employed a luxuriance of persuasive devices to convince the hesitant. In such an atmosphere the birth of such a book as we are considering would have been a miracle of miracles. The prior discovery was necessary that man is an animal, and that only by regarding him as all of a piece with the ape, the serpent, the creeping things of the primordial slime, can he yield his grain to the tiny heap of golden truth which informed and persistent purpose has extracted from reluctant nature. This imperial idea Darwin gave us, and among its consequences was the birth of an objective non-introspective psychology, to which this work is so important a contribution. Our thanks and applause are due to the pioneer who first sets foot in the new territory. And the future is full of promise.

In this particular region there is an infinity of discovery for equipped curiosity. One's imagination would indeed be dull if it failed to appreciate that the new land of promise will be occupied by the psychologist. The signposts erected in the present book point to measureless lands to be explored, and it needs no insight to predict that the conquests of the adventurer therein will startle the unprepared.

R. NORTH.

Done!

PALMEIRA was a nice flapper, but, like most of the weaker spirits, was swayed by conventions. Thus, she used to cut her hair short and wear plain practical garments.

Then a group of big shopkeepers got together and exploited the herd-instinct. They decreed, for a change, that hair should be fluffy, and the skirts sea-weedy. And most of the foolish virgins did follow the trade's behest.

In the same folly of "fashion," she wore a girdle, not round her waist, but below the hip-bones. This gave her the appearance of having a tremendously long body and too short legs, though, by nature, she was gracefully built.

"She's been done," Mariana said to me. "Did it take?" I asked, thinking of vaccination. "No, no, stupid," came the answer, "I don't mean that, but Palmeira has been confirmed."

I mildly expostulated. "I don't care what you say," she continued, "the child must, and shall, be properly started. What chance is she to have in life if she isn't?"

Her mother does not know Pilate from Paul, or the difference between Buddha and Mohammed. But she will just conform to whatever may be the fashion prevailing. If she had been an Australian native, she would undoubtedly have had her sons' two front-teeth carefully knocked out. If she had been an Aztec, she would have squeezed her children's foreheads between two boards till they looked like sheer idiots. And if she had been a Chinese lady of the old school, she would have cramped up her daughters' feet. As it is, Palmeira has been only confirmed, and it did not "take," in her case, for she has never given another thought to the imposition—of hands.

These are the sort of people who make up the amorphous millions who are classed as Christians in Europe and in America. The Churches and Chapels perform certain social functions in connexion with births, marriages, and deaths, and people accept these services without really acquiescing or criticizing the dogmas, in many of which the more enlightened clergy can no longer believe.

Religion has sobered down into a part of the social round, and is only taken seriously by frightened children, morbid fanatics, and elderly people who, having exploited all that could be obtained in the present world, try to secure a sleeping-car and tickets for heaven. But Death receives all folk, unclad as they first arrived, and never asks any questions concerning them.

TAB CAN.

Correspondence.

GHOSTS AND GRAMAPHONES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "FREETHINKER."

SIR,—In your issue of February 3, when referring to an article written by me in the *Daily News*, the following paragraph appears in your editorial columns:—

Among other things, Mr. Bradley said that at certain seances the direct voice had spoken in about thirty languages, "archaic Chinese" was among them, and nearly all of which were quite unknown to those present. No one appears to have wondered how any-

one knew there were thirty languages when most of them were quite unknown to those present, and how they discovered one to be archaic Chinese. Presumably the spirit voice must have told those present it was.

This is a distinct mis-quotation. In my article I made the statement, which I now repeat, that I have heard conversations carried on in my own house in German, French, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Danish, Basque, Chinese, Japanese, and idiomatic Welsh. I have heard the language change suddenly from Danish to Russian, from Italian to French, and the "spirit voices" have replied with unhesitating fluency. Portuguese, Arabic, Sanscrit, and Hindustani have also been recorded.

It is essential to know that these conversations have been carried on in these languages by persons present at these seances who have a thorough academic knowledge of the languages spoken.

Lord Charles Hope, in his article, refers only to the gramophone records, which were taken of a few "voices."

One experiment only was made, and it was made only with the purpose of proving scientifically whether super-normal sound could be registered. The nine "voices" recorded are of a distinct and individual type, and Lord Charles Hope stated in the *Daily News*, on April 2, 1927, that he was satisfied there was no evidence of fraud. The result of the experiment therefore was of very decided scientific value. It was made under considerable difficulties. The sound had to be transmitted by a private telephone wire to the Columbia Recording Offices—nearly a mile away, and by such a process the coherency of sound was, to a certain extent, naturally affected. If the human voice were recorded under similar conditions there would inevitably be much distortion, and a certain lack of clarity.

In regard to the "voices" which were recorded, those which spoke English are entities who have manifested on hundreds of occasions, and their particular vocal intonations are easily recognisable. All these entities have previously given the whole of their careers on earth. The Italian "voice" of Cristo d'Angelo has also manifested on innumerable occasions, not only through Valiantine, but during the last two years at the "voice" sittings of the Marquise Centurione, where this "voice" (Cristo d'Angelo) has given a full account of his earth existence. These particulars are recorded in detail by Professor Ernesto Bozzano.

In regard to the Archaic Chinese "voice," I could personally testify to the identity of these tones, so also could Dr. Neville Whyman, with whom the "voice" has carried on long conversations, the details of which occupy many pages of manuscript. Of the two Indian "voices," one is not only known to me, by its peculiar type of delivery, but it is also known and can be testified to by literally hundreds of people. The Hindustani "voice" I did not know, but Lord Charles Hope classified it as Hindustani in an interview with the *Daily News* in 1927.

The registration of these "voices" upon the gramophone does prove entirely that they are objective and dispenses with the hallucination theory.

H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

[We deal with Mr. Bradley's letter in the "Sugar Plum" Column.—ED.]

"WHY I AM NOT AN ATHEIST."

SIR,—It is always an occasion for surprise when we find a student of Freethought expressing the view that Atheism embodies a "negative position"; and our astonishment is in no measure diminished when Mr. A. S. E. Panton figures as the champion of this opinion.

To those acquainted with the history of philosophy it should be apparent that the rejection of Supernaturalism implies the acceptance of Naturalism. The two positions form the respective sides of the same intellectual fact; and if, therefore, we are to consider Religion as the embodiment of Supernaturalism (for what else is it?), we must look upon Atheism as the embodiment of Naturalism. Surely Mr. Panton will not suggest that Naturalism conveys something negative! In truth, it embraces the entire field of positive conceptions on which the structure of science is founded.

But that is not all. Atheism deals with the world as

it appears to philosophy; and this is no more than the world as we see and know it. It comprises human life in all its phases, leaving out nothing that belongs to human thought and feeling. I am altogether at a loss to catch the meaning of those gentlemen who talk as if Religion and Atheism belonged to separate compartments of the human make-up. I submit that Religion stands for one attitude towards the Universe and Atheism for another; but in each case the whole being is involved in the attitude, and the attitude is towards the whole Universe. What the Religionist contends is that a whole atheist is something less than a whole believer; that when we subtract the former from the latter we have spirituality left. And a pious person, therefore, will ask of an atheist, "If I embrace your doctrine, what am I to do with my spirituality? In your world it is going a-begging." This would be a logical attitude on the part of a pious person, but not on the part of Mr. Panton; for, if he accepts Naturalism, then he will regard all our feelings as having a natural origin in the conditions of human life, and as capable, therefore of a purely human expression. To the atheist it should appear a psychological blunder to say that some compartment of our feelings has a relation only to things divine, and cannot find full outlet through the affairs of this world. To him, spirituality, and the emotional life as a whole, are social products; and their deflection into religious channels is secondary and artificial.

Far from leaving no place for this side of our nature, Atheism reveals to us its true place in our hearts and its true sphere in our work; and if Mr. Panton feels that Religion has enhanced our emotional life or enriched its possibilities in a degree which could not have resulted from a mere contact with humanity, then we invite him to name an emotion that assumes, in its religious expression, a character more noble or more dignified than that which would be imparted to it by secular life.

MEDICUS.

"SUNDAY."

SIR,—The answer to the question you put to me re the Day of Rest (*Freethinker*, February 3), is: one day rest in seven is the Divine order, and no other day of the week is as good for the purpose as "Sunday."

Many toilers who have allowed themselves to be fobbed off with another day of rest have eventually found themselves deprived of even that rest day by grasping capitalists. Sunday, as the agreed Rest Day, is in our opinion far better because of its restful atmosphere, because of its fuller opportunities for the enjoyment of home life, and because of its facilities for the worship of our Creator and Redeemer.

It is not dishonest to seek to guard the Sunday Rest Day for the people. Indeed, we are constantly receiving appeals from the victims of Sunday Labour who, unlike yourself, regard the Lord's Day Observance Society as benefactors in seeking to emancipate them from their bondage.

H. H. MARTIN.

THE END AND THE MEANS.

SIR,—Said Dickens: "All good ends can be worked out by good means." That is a truism. Whenever the question arises of employing doubtful means to achieve a good end, we should ask: "Are these the only means, or are there better means?" I believe that in every case the ingenuity of man can discover good means for any good end. But what too often stands in the way is the unethical doctrine that the end justifies the means. It is a Reason doping doctrine that serves as an excuse for following the line of least resistance and taking the first means that offer, rather than search for better.

Not so very long ago, cruelty to horses to make them work, and cruelty to children to make them learn or to be good, was a means which the defenders of cruelty thought justified by the end. Other and better means have been discovered, tried and accepted. So do all evil means to a good end get discredited sooner or later. Cruelty to animals for the benefit of humanity is another doomed to go to the same road. D.P.S.

SUNDAY LECTURE NOTICES, Etc.

Lecture notices must reach 61 Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, by the FIRST POST ON TUESDAY, or they will not be inserted.

LONDON. INDOOR.

HAMPSTEAD ETHICAL INSTITUTE (The Studio Theatre, 59 Finchley Road, N.W.8): 11.15, Mr. J. Katz—"The Challenge of Death."

NORTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (St. Pancras Reform Club, 15 Victoria Road, N.W.1): 7.30, Mr. George Whitehead—"Constructive Secularism."

SOUTH LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (30 Brixton Road, S.W., near Oval Station): 7.15, Annual General Meeting. Members only.

SOUTH LONDON ETHICAL SOCIETY (Oliver Goldsmith School, Peckham Road, S.E.): Free Sunday Lectures at 7 p.m. Margaret McMillan—"Nursery Schools: A New Basis for Education."

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY (The London Institution Theatre, South Place, Moorgate, E.C.2): 11.0, C. E. M. Joad, B.A.—"The Future of Civilization."

THE NON-POLITICAL METROPOLITAN SECULAR SOCIETY (The Orange Tree Hotel, Euston Road, N.W.1): 7.30, Mr. E. Baker—"Human Progress." On February 21, at 101 Tottenham Court Road, a Social and Dance. Members and friends. Admission 1s.

WEST HAM BRANCH N.S.S.—Saturday, February 16. Visit to South Kensington Natural History Museum. Meet inside Main Entrance at 3.30. Party will be conducted and lecture given by the officially appointed lecturer.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Eclipse Restaurant, 4 Mill Street, Conduit Street, W.1): 7.30, Debate on "That there is a God." *Affir.*: Rev. W. H. Claxton. *Neg.*: Mr. W. P. Campbell-Everden.

OUTDOOR.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH N.S.S. (corner of Shorrolds Road, North End Road, Walham Green): Every Saturday at 8 p.m. Speakers—Messrs. Campbell-Everden, Bryant, Mathie and others.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Hyde Park): 12 noon, Mr. James Hart. 3.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. Every Wednesday at 7.30, Mr. W. P. Campbell-Everden. Every Friday at 7.30, Mr. B. A. Le Maine. The *Freethinker* is on sale outside the Park at all our meetings.

WEST LONDON BRANCH N.S.S. (Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith): 3.0, Mr. W. P. Campbell-Everden.

COUNTRY. INDOOR.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH N.S.S. (The Mecca Cafe, Waterloo Street): Saturday, February 16, at 6.30—Whist and Social. Tickets, 1s. 6d. (Bristol Street Council Schools): Sunday, February 17, at 7.0, Mr. R. H. Rosetti—"The Churches and War."

BOLTON BRANCH N.S.S. (Large Spinners' Hall, St. George's Road): 7.30, Mr. Chapman Cohen—"What is the Use of a Future Life?" Tickets 6d. and 1s. Meetings every Sunday, at 6.30 p.m., in Small Borough Hall, Corporation Street. Christianity and Biology studied.

GLASGOW SECULAR SOCIETY, Branch of the N.S.S. (No. 2 Room, City Hall, Albion Street): 6.30, Miss Ettie A. Rout (London)—"Practical Birth Control."

LEICESTER SECULAR SOCIETY (Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate): 6.30, Mr. F. W. Pethick Lawrence, M.P.—"The Local Government Bill."

OUTDOOR.

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

UNWANTED CHILDREN

In a Civilized Community there should be no UNWANTED Children.

For an Illustrated Descriptive List (68 pages) of Birth Control Requisites and Books, send a 1/4d. stamp to—

J. R. HOLMES, East Hanney, Wantage, Berks.
(Established nearly Forty Years.)

More Than Satisfaction

Means more than ordinary satisfaction. In dealing with us you obtain it. You get the satisfaction testified to below, plus the satisfaction—delight, if you will—of being clothed by militant Freethinkers.



Our new season's arrangements are proving the biggest of all our successes. Write **TO-DAY** for any of the following patterns:—

SUITS		OVERCOATS	
No. 1 Card	- - prices from 64/-	D & E	- - - prices from 48/-
No. 2 Card	- - prices from 97/-	F & G	- - - prices from 60/-
No. 1 B Serges	- - - from 76/-	H & E	- - - prices from 68/-
No. 2 B Serges	- - - from 99/-	J to L	- - - prices from 77/-

WHAT WE AIM AT, AND PROOF OF OUR ACHIEVING IT:

I have received the suit, and hasten to reply that I am perfectly satisfied. It fits perfectly and I am more than delighted with it. I need hardly say that it gave great satisfaction to receive the suit on Saturday morning, bearing in mind that it was only on Monday in the same week that you set to work upon it. The local business people need at least two weeks to fulfil the order. I shall be pleased to recommend your firm to anyone in this locality.
S. A. (Rhydney Bridge).

MACCONNELL & MABE, LTD.
New Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire

CHEST DISEASES

"Umckaloabo acts as regards Tuberculosis as a real specific."

(Dr. Sechchaye in the "Swiss Medical Review.")

"It appears to me to have a specific destructive influence on the Tubercle Bacilli in the same way that Quinine has upon Malaria."

(Dr. Grun in the King's Bench Division.)

If you are suffering from any disease of the chest or lungs—spasmodic or cardiac asthma excluded—ask your doctor about Umckaloabo, or send a post card for particulars of it to Chas. H. Stevens, 204-206, Worple Road, Wimbledon, London, S.W.20, who post same to you **Free of Charge**.

Readers, especially T.Bs., will see in the above few lines more wonderful news than is to be found in many volumes on the same subject.

SOME PIONEER PRESS PUBLICATIONS:

- THE MARTYRDOM OF HYPATIA. By M. M. MANGASARIAN. 1d., postage 1/2d.
- PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN MORALITY. By W. MANN. 2d., postage 1/2d.
- THEISM OR ATHEISM? By CHAPMAN COHEN. The Great Alternative. An Exhaustive Examination of the Evidences on behalf of Theism, with a Statement of the Case for Atheism. Bound in full Cloth, Gilt Lettered, 3s. 6d., postage 2 1/2d.
- THE FOURTH AGE. By W. REPTON. A Psychological Study of the Great Civil War, 1914-1918. 1s., postage 1d.
- DETERMINISM OR FREE-WILL? By CHAPMAN COHEN. An Exposition of the Subject in the Light of the Doctrines of Evolution. Second Edition. Half-Cloth, 2s. 6d., postage 2 1/2d.; Paper, 1s. 9d., postage 2d.
- THE LIFE-WORSHIP OF RICHARD JEFFERIES. By A. F. THORN. Portrait. 3d., postage 1d.
- SCIENCE AND THE SOUL. By W. MANN. With a Chapter on Infidel Death-Beds. 3d., postage 1d.

Some Pioneer Press Publications—

- SOCIETY AND SUPERSTITION, By ROBERT ARCH. A Commonsense View of Religion and its Influence on Social Life. 4d., postage 1/2d.
- RELIGION AND SEX. By CHAPMAN COHEN. Studies in the Pathology of Religious Development. 6s., postage 6d.
- THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH. By COL. R. G. INGERSOLL. 1d., postage 1/2d.
- WHAT IS RELIGION? By COL. R. G. INGERSOLL. Contains Col. Ingersoll's Confession of Faith. 1d., postage 1/2d.
- THE ROBES OF PAN. By A. MILLAR. Literary Essays. 6d., postage 1d.
- CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA. By W. MANN. An Exposure of Foreign Missions. Price 6d., postage 1d.
- REALISTIC APHORISMS AND PURPLE PATCHES. By ARTHUR FALLOWS. Paper Covers, 3s. 6d., postage 4 1/2d.
- AN ESSAY ON SUICIDE. By DAVID HUME. With an Historical and Critical Introduction by G. W. FOOTE. 1d., postage 1/2d.
- THE OTHER SIDE OF DEATH. By CHAPMAN COHEN. A Critical Examination of the Belief in a Future Life, with a Study of Spiritualism from the Standpoint of the New Psychology. Paper Covers, 2s., postage 1 1/2d.; Cloth Bound, 3s. 6d., postage 2d.
- MAN AND HIS GODS. By GEORGE WHITEHEAD. 2d., postage 1/2d.
- THE COMING OF THE SUPERMAN. By GEORGE WHITEHEAD. 2d., postage 1/2d.
- COMMUNISM AND CHRISTIANITY. By Rt. Rev. W. M. BROWN. Analysed and Contrasted from the Standpoint of Darwinism and Marxism. With Portraits. 1s., post free. (Paper.) Cloth 4s.
- THE CASE AGAINST THEISM. By GEORGE WHITEHEAD. A Reasonable View of God. Cloth Bound, 2s. 6d., postage 2 1/2d.
- CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION. By Prof. J. W. DRAPER. A Chapter from *The History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*. 2d., postage 1/2d.
- THE HISTORICAL JESUS AND MYTHICAL CHRIST. By GERALD MASSEY. A Demonstration of the Origin of Christian Doctrines in the Egyptian Mythology. 6d., postage 1d.

Now Ready—

FOUR LECTURES ON FREETHOUGHT AND LIFE

By Chapman Cohen

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

Four Lectures delivered in the
Secular Hall, Leicester, on
Nov. 4, 11, 18 & 25,
1928

Contains Lectures on:

THE MEANING AND VALUE OF FREE-
THOUGHT—FREETHOUGHT AND GOD—
FREETHOUGHT AND DEATH—FREE-
THOUGHT AND MORALS.

Price One Shilling

Postage 1½d.

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

THE "Freethinker" Endowment Trust

A Great Scheme for a Great Purpose

THE *Freethinker* Endowment Trust was registered on the 25th of August, 1925, its object being to raise a sum of not less than £8,000, which, by investment, would yield sufficient to cover the estimated annual loss incurred in the maintenance of the *Freethinker*. The Trust is controlled and administered by five Trustees, of which number the Editor of the *Freethinker* is one in virtue of his office. By the terms of the Trust Deed the Trustees are prohibited from deriving anything from the Trust in the shape of profit, emoluments, or payment, and in the event of the *Freethinker* at any time, in the opinion of the Trustees, rendering the Fund unnecessary, it may be brought to an end, and the capital sum handed over to the National Secular Society.

The Trustees set themselves the task of raising a minimum sum of £8,000. This was accomplished by the end of December, 1927. At the suggestion of some of the larger subscribers, it has since been resolved to increase the Trust to a round £10,000, and there is every hope of this being done within a reasonably short time.

The Trust may be benefited by donations of cash, or shares already held, or by bequests. All contributions will be acknowledged in the columns of this journal, and may be sent to either the Editor, or to the Secretary of the Trust, Mr. H. Jessop, Hollyshaw, Whitkirk, Nr. Leeds. Any further information concerning the Trust will be supplied on application.

There is no need to say more about the *Freethinker* itself, than that its invaluable service to the Freethought Cause is recognized and acknowledged by all. It is the mouthpiece of militant Freethought in this country, and places its columns, without charge, at the service of the movement.

The address of the *Freethinker* Endowment Trust is 61 FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

Essays in Freethinking

(Third Series)

By CHAPMAN COHEN.

Contains Essays on:

ATHEISM: ENGLISH AND FRENCH—RELIGION
AND THE FEAR OF DEATH—GOD AND MAN—
RELIGION AND THE STATE—DESIGN IN
NATURE—GOD AND HIS BIOGRAPHERS—GOD
AND MORALS—FASTING AND FAITH—WITCH
DOCTORS IN LONDON, Etc., Etc.

CLOTH BOUND 2/6 POSTAGE 3d.

The three Vols. of *Essays in Freethinking* will be sent post free for 7/6.

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

Materialism Re-stated

BY

CHAPMAN COHEN

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

A clear and concise statement of one of the most important issues in the history of science and philosophy.

Contains Chapters on:—A Question of Prejudice—Some Critics of Materialism—Materialism in History—What is Materialism?—Science and Pseudo-Science—On Cause and Effect—The Problem of Personality.

Cloth Bound, price 2/6. Postage 2½d.

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

RELIGION AND WOMAN

(Issued by the Secular Society, Ltd.)

By George Whitehead

A psycho-analytic study of the influence of religious beliefs on the position of woman.

Price Sixpence. Postage 1d.

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

History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science

By PROF. J. W. DRAPER.

This is an unabridged edition of Draper's great work, of which the standard price is 7/6.

Cloth Bound. 396 Pages.

PRICE 2/-. POSTAGE 4½d.

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